Unit 11

MODERNIST PORTRAITS

Experimentations in Style,
World War I to World War II

Authors and Works

Featured in the Video:
Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (series of still lives)
F. Scott Fitzgerald, *Tender Is the Night*, *The Great Gatsby* (novels), "Babylon Revisited" (short story)
Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (novel), "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (short story)

Discussed in This Unit:
Susan Glaspell, *Trifles* (play)
Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* (series of short stories)
Wallace Stevens, "The Snow Man," "The Emperor of Ice-Cream," "Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock," "Sunday Morning," "Gubbinal," "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (poems)
Marianne Moore, "Poetry," "Nevertheless," "In Distrust of Merits" (poems)
Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (novella)
John Dos Passos, *The Big Money* (novel)
Hart Crane, "Chaplinesque," *The Bridge* (poems)

Overview Questions

■ What issues shaped Americans' thinking during the modern era? How did American literature respond to the societal transformations of the post–World War I period?

■ How did political events, such as war and labor conflict, affect the works of the writers included in this unit?

■ What impact did World War I have on the way people thought about the modern world? What technological innovations influenced the way people perceived society and the individual's place within it?

■ How did the stylistic innovations of modernist prose affect the way later authors used language and narrative structure?

■ How were the myths of the "public enemy" shaped by historical and cultural changes during the modern era? How is this related to shifting notions of the American success story?

■ How did modernity transform the traditional notions of American self-reliance and independence? How did authors consider and rework modern social relations in their writing?

Learning Objectives

After students have viewed the video, read the headnotes and literary selections in *The Norton Anthology of American Literature,* and explored related archival materials on the *American Passages* Web site, they should be able to

1. recognize the different types of formal experimentation in the fiction of modernist writers such as Stein, Hemingway, Anderson, and Dos Passos, as well as in the poetry of Stevens, Moore, and Crane;
2. appreciate the diversity of modernist authors, especially the difference in subject matter treated by authors such as Glaspell, Fitzgerald, Larsen, Hemingway, and Stein;
3. understand the implications of the social and political transformations that reshaped American life during the modern era and the effect of these changes on the literature produced;
4. see connections between the art and literature of the modern era and be able to identify how popular culture informs both.

Instructor Overview

Between World War I and World War II, the lives of the majority of Americans underwent dramatic transformations. Though America did not officially participate in World War I until 1917, its entrance into the conflict marked a new level of U.S. involvement in European affairs and made a significant impression on those who served in the war, including a large number of writers. Following the war, and in part spurred by the increased production of a wartime economy, American consumer capitalism exploded, and the age of advertising and mass consumption reshaped the day-to-day lives of many Americans. The automobile, which debuted before the turn of the century, became an ever-increasing fact of daily life: in 1900 there were only eight thousand cars in America; by 1940 there were thirty-two million. Telephones and electrification, both innovations of the late nineteenth century, also became commonplace in American homes.

After the turn of the century, increasing numbers of Americans invested their money on Wall Street, which had become America's most prominent financial exchange in the second half of the nineteenth century. After World War I, the practice of investing by borrowing on "margin"—that is, investing money that investors themselves did not have—became more commonplace, enabling more people to invest—or gamble—in the market, often beyond their own means. Some became rich beyond their wildest dreams through Wall Street speculations in the 1920s; many more lost everything they had in the Wall Street crash of 1929. The ensuing Great Depression revealed that the booming capitalist economy of the 1920s was less stable than many had previously believed; in 1932 the federal government, led by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, began formulating the "New Deal," which initiated new ways to regulate business and the U.S. economy. In the meantime, nearly a quarter of the workforce was unemployed, and hunger and poverty remained widespread until the economy began to recover at the end of the decade, when World War II began in Europe.

Political changes likewise reshaped American life: after years of agitation for suffrage, women finally won the right to vote in 1919 (the Nineteenth Amendment was officially ratified in 1920). Also in 1919, Congress enacted the Eighteenth Amendment, ushering in the era of Prohibition by outlawing "the manufacture, sale, or transportation of intoxicating liquors." This law fueled a widespread illegal trade in alcohol; many historians believe that the increase in organized crime during Prohibition was a direct result of the new opportunities for illegal money-making provided by the Eighteenth Amendment. Prohibition, also known as the Volstead Act, was repealed in 1933, in part because politicians thought that reviving the liquor industry might provide jobs for the unemployed.

To a great extent the world of art and literature reflected the new pace and interests of American life, though many American practitioners of what would be labeled "modern" art lived in Europe, believing that the conventional values of American culture stifled their creativity. T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound led the way for other authors who sought a cultural climate conducive to the production of great literature; from 1920 through 1929, more and more American authors took up residence in the culturally vibrant cities of Europe, especially Paris. Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and others formed a coterie in Paris and together strived to create a type of literature appropriate to what they considered a new "modern" world following World War I. Artists and writers alike developed new techniques and addressed new subjects in reaction to a now-outdated traditionalism.

Modernism also responded to a prevalent sense of loss and bewilderment prompted by the societal and technological changes of the early twentieth century. Disillusionment, confusion, and in some cases a sense of freedom characterized the "Modern Temper" of the first half of the twentieth century. It became increasingly evident that many traditional moral and social standards had shifted dramatically, particularly those governing the behavior of women, who began to assert new freedoms such as going out unchaperoned, wearing less constrictive clothing, and smoking in public. The pace of urbanization intensified, and more Americans lived in urban centers than in rural areas. This shift fundamentally changed the way people in communities interacted: whereas neighbors all knew each other in villages, residents were largely anonymous in cities, where the population tended to change rapidly. (This sense of the anonymity of the city appears in such works

as *The Great Gatsby* and *Quicksand*, for example.) Further, immigration from Europe had accelerated markedly in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and cities appeared to be filled with foreigners. People thinking of themselves as native-born Americans pressed for reduced quotas of those immigrants whose cultures seemed most different from their own. Nativist sentiment helped push through stringent immigration acts in the first decades of the century, and immigrants faced discrimination and prejudice as they tried to adjust to American life (for more about immigration and literature see Unit 12). Ironically, those Americans who were truly native to the United States—American Indians—continued to face discrimination, and many lived on reservations where they had little access to paid work or adequate health care. Congress officially made all Native Americans citizens in 1924, but citizenship did not materially change the living conditions of most Native Americans; the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934 finally allowed Native Americans a greater measure of self-government.

This unit includes authors who represent diverse strands of modernism and who experimented with prose and poetry in a variety of ways. Gertrude Stein and Ernest Hemingway exemplify some of the ways prose writers tried to "make it new" following World War I: Hemingway's spare style and efforts to create "one true sentence" may be linked to the streamlining of other areas of American life during this period, while Stein's prose, which often defies reader comprehension, has ties to the fragmented images visible in Cubist art. F. Scott Fitzgerald, whose prose style breaks conventions less radically than either Stein's or Hemingway's, chronicled many of the changes in the lifestyle of wealthy Americans during what he called the "Jazz Age." Sherwood Anderson and Susan Glaspell exemplify the continuation of regionalism—Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio* examines the emotional and psychological lives of characters in a small midwestern town, and Glaspell's *Trifles* focuses on the trials faced by women in the isolated farm country of Iowa. The selection from John Dos Passos's *The Big Money* reveals another type of stylistic innovation: by incorporating snippets of popular culture materials in the text of his novel, Dos Passos calls our attention to the juxtaposition of national propaganda and the realities of labor strife that readers of a daily newspaper might otherwise miss. Nella Larsen's *Quicksand* provides an example of the fiction produced during the Harlem Renaissance; also experimenting with style and considering the possibilities for individuality in America and Europe, Larsen's novel questions the essence of African American identity in the larger context of the American arts. The poets Marianne Moore, Hart Crane, and Wallace Stevens share many of the same concerns as the prose writers, examining in their poetry the place of the individual in the complex and confusing modern world, while experimenting with form and style in their work.

Many of these writers spent significant periods of time abroad, especially in Paris, where they became involved with the Parisian artistic community, much of which centered around Stein's salon. The impact of European modernism was felt by all, however, whether or not they joined the expatriate community for any length of time. In their poetry and prose, these and other writers of the early twentieth century worked to create a literature appropriate to their time, breaking with tradition and reformulating the function of literature and art in the life of the individual and society at large.

In this unit, students will become familiar with many of the issues concerning prose modernism and its response to the modern world. The video focuses on Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald and introduces students to some of the images and ideas linked to literary modernism, which may be further traced in the fiction of such authors as Nella Larsen and John Dos Passos, as well as in the poetry of Marianne Moore, Wallace Stevens, and Hart Crane. The work of Sherwood Anderson and Susan Glaspell provides a counterpoint to modern authors' focus on the city, revealing how ideas about modernity and the individual's place in the modern world also played out in rural settings. Together with the archive, this unit allows students to explore the formal characteristics of modernist prose, the diverse strains of American modernism, the relationships between modern literature and art, as well as a number of the sociopolitical contexts of this period in American history.

Several other units address different facets of modernism and have significant links to the works and ideas covered in this unit, including Unit 10, which examines the works of the leading expatriate

modernist poets; Unit 12, which considers the social and political activism that informs the literature of immigration; Unit 13, which looks at the ways modernism played out in the writing of southern authors; and Unit 14, which shows the continuation of concerns about war and the conditions of everyday life in the work of writers after World War II.

Student Overview

The period between World War I and World War II was one of dramatic transformation for many Americans. The horror of World War I (1914–18), the most destructive conflict the world had yet seen, demonstrated to those who had blindly believed in technological progress that technology could also destroy. Postwar America and Europe underwent significant social change, resulting in a pervasive feeling of bewilderment and disillusion. The accelerated pace of urbanization during this period only heightened this sense of change, as did increasing immigration from eastern Europe and Asia. Americans found themselves living in a world that previous generations would not have recognized.

Also during this time, America's consumer economy took shape, as mass consumption and advertising became facts of American life. Many technological innovations became commonplace, and millions of Americans owned cars and telephones by the end of this period. American music changed as well; African American musicians created a new sound, introducing **jazz** to American audiences, and thereby changing popular music forever. The film industry burgeoned, and the 1927 film *The Jazz Singer* heralded the age of talking pictures. Political changes also transformed American life: following decades of struggle for suffrage, the Nineteenth Amendment gave women the right to vote in 1920. Congress also enacted the Eighteenth Amendment in 1919, which made it illegal to manufacture or sell alcohol: thus began **Prohibition**. The practice of "bootlegging" liquor fueled a thriving business in the trade of illegal alcohol, which helped to create a network of criminal organizations ruled by mob "bosses" such as Al Capone. These gangsters stirred the public imagination, and their lives of crime and extravagance were followed in the press and fictionalized by Hollywood in such films as *Public Enemy* (1931).

In this age of consumption and changing morals, greater numbers of Americans invested in Wall Street stocks, frequently by borrowing money on the "margin" to make their purchases—that is, investors used money that they themselves did not actually have. Though some became extremely wealthy through these investments, many Americans lost everything they owned in the crash of 1929. The Great Depression followed, lasting over a decade, until World War II (1939–45) helped to stimulate the economy once again.

Art and literature responded to many of these changes in American life, as artists and writers sought to make sense of societal transformations and provide a new form of art in tune with the modern world. Many American modernists actually chose to live in Europe rather than the United States, as they found the cultural climate of Europe more conducive to and tolerant of their experimental artistic endeavors. Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, F. Scott Fitzgerald, and others met one another in Paris while working to create a new type of art, one that discarded conventions of narrative structure and form. Painters and sculptors such as Pablo Picasso and Marcel Duchamp also rejected traditional artistic techniques and created abstract works that completely changed the way people thought about art. The innovations of these writers and artists profoundly altered the literature and art that would follow, as these "modernists" endeavored to create work that helped to define the modern world.

Video Overview

➢ **Authors covered:** Gertrude Stein, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway

➢ **Who's interviewed:** Emory Elliott, professor of English (the University of California, Riverside); Pancho Savery, professor of English (Reed College); Catharine Stimpson, Dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science (New York University); Robert Stone, novelist, poet, and professor of English (Yale University); Linda Watts, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences director and professor of American studies (University of Washington, Bothell)

➢ **Points covered:**

- Following the devastation of World War I, many intellectuals and writers felt a sense of disillusionment with and alienation from modern, and especially modern American, culture.
- Numerous writers and artists sought refuge in Paris, which seemed more tolerant and appreciative of artistic pursuits. Paris became a center for writers seeking to create a new kind of literature.
- Societal standards and morals seemed to be changing, and the so-called "Lost Generation" tried to make sense of these societal changes in their writing, experimenting with form and style.
- Reacting against rigid Victorian value systems, people were increasingly attracted to Freud's ideas about the subconscious. Jazz allowed a freedom of expression not condoned by traditional moral codes.
- Gertrude Stein, a poet and prose writer interested in psychology and modern art, moved to Paris in the early twentieth century and soon became a central figure in the modern art movement there.
- Stein's home became an informal salon where numerous writers and artists congregated, and she promoted the work of other artists who later became influential figures, such as Hemingway and Picasso.
- Like other modernists, Stein chose to write character-driven, rather than plot-driven, fiction. Stein's "portraits" attempted to illuminate the inner workings of the human mind and investigate how language and consciousness interacted. She was less interested in representation than in words themselves and employed successive repetitions of words and phrases to force readers to look carefully at the words without thinking of them as representations of objects.
- Ernest Hemingway, another stylistic innovator, returned from service in World War I questioning much of what he had been taught about heroism and patriotism. He brought to his writing a journalist's eye for accuracy, stripping away rhetoric that had proved meaningless and creating a crisp and powerful prose style that would influence generations of writers to follow.
- Hemingway's characters search for meaning in exotic locations, such as Spain or the plains of Africa. "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," like much of Hemingway's writing, follows the thoughts of a dissatisfied man looking back on his life and questioning his place in the world.
- F. Scott Fitzgerald also moved to Paris following the war, having made a name for himself in the United States as a chronicler of what he termed the "Jazz Age" with his novel *This Side of Paradise*.
- Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* examines the dark underside of the American dream. His work is haunted by loss, a sense that something is lacking in most modern American lives.

PREVIEW

- **Preview the video:** The video focuses on the three experimental prose writers of this period: Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. Responding to the disillusion following World War I and the excesses of the "roaring twenties," these expatriate writers looked for meaning in language and, in the process, profoundly influenced fiction writers who followed. Stein's sometimes incomprehensible prose portraits questioned the function of language and humans' ability to pin down meanings, while Hemingway's pared-down style offered readers what seemed a more accessible presentation of the world than fiction had previously provided. Fitzgerald's work examined the social mores of the "Jazz Age" and highlighted inconsistencies in the "American dream." Paris became a center where these and other authors congregated and helped to foster a flowering of modernist literature and art.
- **What to think about while watching:** What is new about these writers? How do they expand the definition of what it means to be American? How do they respond to the social and political tensions of the time? Ask students to think about why American authors found it easier to write about their subjects in Paris than in the United States. What aspects of these authors' work might have challenged conventions still in force in America?
- **Tying the video to the unit content:** This unit focuses on modernist writing between the world wars. In addition to the three prose writers addressed in the video, less-studied authors such as Sherwood Anderson, Nella Larsen, John Dos Passos, and Susan Glaspell provide

Video Overview *(continued)*

further context for the prose that was produced in this period, while Wallace Stevens, Marianne Moore, and Hart Crane furnish examples of experimental poetry at the time. The archive material will allow more detailed consideration of the links between the experiments of writers and artists of the period and provide background information on World War I, mechanization, modern art, Paris, and the transatlantic nature of modernism.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR THE VIDEO

	What is an American? How does American literature create conceptions of the American experience and identity?	***How do place and time shape literature and our understanding of it?***	***How are American myths created, challenged, and reimagined through these works of literature?***
Comprehension Questions	What brought the writers featured in the video to Europe?	What impact did World War I have on the thinking and writing of these authors?	What myths of American manhood did writers such as Hemingway believe in, and what shattered these myths?
Context Questions	What about the writing of Stein, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald struck readers as very "new"?	These writers lived much of their lives in Europe, especially Paris. Why did Europe seem more conducive to art than the United States?	In what way was the "Lost Generation" lost?
Exploration Questions	How are Stein, Hemingway, and Fitzgerald commenting on the behavior of Americans? What do they seem to be saying about the country of their birth?	Why do you think Hemingway's style appealed so strongly to his reading public? Why did he have such a pronounced influence on other writers?	What does Fitzgerald's portrayal of the American dream suggest about its viability in the modern world?

TIMELINE

	Texts	Contexts
1910s	Gertrude Stein, *Tender Buttons* (1914) Wallace Stevens, "Sunday Morning" (1915) Susan Glaspell, *Trifles* (1916) Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919)	World War I (1914–18) Modernism in the arts begins around this time; artists and writers take new approaches to their work, often denying historical meanings and methods America officially enters World War I (1917) The 18th Amendment, also called the Volstead Act, is created, beginning Prohibition, which outlaws "the manufacture, sale or transportation of intoxicating liquors" (1919)
1920s	Marianne Moore, "Poetry" (1921) Hart Crane, "Chaplinesque" (1921), *The Bridge* (1926) F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Winter Dreams" (1922), *The Great Gatsby* (1925) Wallace Stevens, "The Emperor of Ice-Cream" (1923) Gertrude Stein, *The Making of Americans* (1925) Nella Larsen, *Quicksand* (1928) Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929)	Women gain the right to vote (1920) Immigration controls are introduced, making it more difficult to enter the United States (1921) Congress officially makes Native Americans U.S. citizens (1924) The first talking film is created, *The Jazz Singer* (1927) Wall Street stock market crash spurs the Great Depression (1929)
1930s	F. Scott Fitzgerald, "Babylon Revisited" (1931), *Tender Is the Night* (1934) Wallace Stevens, "The Snow Man," "Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock," "Gubbinal," "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" (1931) John Dos Passos, *The Big Money* (1936) Ernest Hemingway, "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1936)	Franklin Delano Roosevelt is president; in 1933 he begins to implement the "New Deal" (1933–45) The 18th Amendment is repealed to provide jobs (1933) World War II (1939–45)
1940s	Marianne Moore, "Nevertheless" (1941), "In Distrust of Merits" (1944)	The Japanese attack Pearl Harbor, prompting the United States to enter World War II (1941)

AUTHOR/TEXT REVIEW

Gertrude Stein (1874–1946)

Gertrude Stein lived most of her life in Europe, yet considered herself an American, famously declaring that "America is my country and Paris is my hometown." In 1903, after dropping out of medical school, she joined her brother Leo in Paris and began to write. She and her brother began collecting modern art; paintings by Matisse, Picasso, and other avant-garde artists hung on the walls of her studio. In Paris she developed friendships with some of the foremost artists and writers of her time: Picasso, Hemingway, Matisse, and Fitzgerald, among many others. Her home at 27 Rue de Fleurus became a well-known gathering place for the artistic avant-garde as well as intellectuals and up-and-coming writers, who received advice and encouragement from Stein. In 1913 her brother Leo moved out and they divided their art collection. Her longtime companion and lover Alice B. Toklas lived with her from 1909 until Stein's death in 1946, and the two traveled together and hosted artists and expatriates at their house in Paris. Together they served France in both world wars, amassed an impressive collection of modern art, and created a gathering place for literati and artists seeking one another in a time of artistic experimentation.

[4004] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-103680].

Her first published book, *Three Lives* (1909), was composed of three stories written while examining a Cezanne painting and struck her as being "the first definite step away from the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century in literature." In the five hundred novels, stories, articles, plays, and poems Stein would write in her lifetime, she remained committed to experimentation with language and to breaking away from the traditions of the past. Her radical outlook on art and the central role she played in the modern art world made Stein a celebrity in America and Europe, and following World War I, she gave lectures at Oxford and Cambridge, as well as in numerous American cities on a lecture tour in the 1930s.

Stein is known for her radical experiments with language; in *The Making of Americans* (1925) she employs stream-of-consciousness and repetition to draw readers' attention to her language. *Tender Buttons* (1914) likewise challenges readers: Stein invents her own system of language here, and often meaning is not possible to determine. Stein wished to separate language from its use in representing the world of objects in the same way that abstract painters tried to separate painting from representation.

TEACHING TIPS

■ In *Really Reading Gertrude Stein*, poet Judy Grahn offers several suggestions that may help students appreciate what Stein was trying to do with her often confusing prose. Grahn suggests reading Stein's work aloud to help readers appreciate the sound of her writing and to involve them actively in the language Stein chooses. Grahn also cautions against being too serious in one's pursuit of meaning in Stein,

STEIN WEB ARCHIVE

[4003] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Gertrude Stein, New York* (1934), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-103678]. Stein became a celebrity in the United States and Europe because of her radical experiments with language and her importance to the world of modern art.

[4004] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Gertrude Stein* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-103680]. Photograph of Stein standing in front of American flag. Although Stein considered herself American, she lived in Paris, where she offered patronage to many promising expatriate American writers.

[4024] Henri Matisse, *Goldfish and Sculpture (Les Poissons)* (1911), courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art. Painting by modern artist Henri Matisse. Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo began collecting original works of modern art in the early 1900s, including paintings by Matisse and Picasso.

[7849] Linda Watts, Interview: "Gertrude Stein's Relationship to Feminism" (2002), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Watts, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences director and professor of American studies (University of Washington, Bothell), discusses Stein's feminist beliefs and commitment to women's rights. Although not aligned with the suffrage movement, Stein challenged restrictive gender norms.

[7850] Catharine Stimpson, Interview: "Gertrude Stein, Experimentalism, and Science" (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Stimpson, dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science (New York University), discusses the influence of Stein's scientific training on her literary work, particularly the expectations of trial and error in experiments.

and invites readers to skip around Stein's sometimes exceedingly lengthy meditations on people and objects. She reminds readers that there are ideas lurking behind the jumble of words and recommends paying attention to point of view in particular. It might be useful to tell students that getting a handle on Stein isn't supposed to be easy and that there isn't one right "answer."

■ To help students navigate the repetitious prose of *The Making of Americans*, preview the first few paragraphs in class before you ask students to read the selection in its entirety. A brief introduction to what Stein was trying to accomplish could be followed by a look at what she outlines as her project in the opening paragraphs. You might ask students to speculate about what "it" is in these paragraphs and about why so many people don't want to know "it" and why Stein does.

■ In a consideration of modernism, you might compare Stein's repetition in *The Making of Americans* to Ezra Pound's extremely spare poem "In a Station of the Metro" and ask students to think about how modernism can take such different forms. Ask them to speculate how these different techniques might achieve some similar ends (e.g., working in fragments, and thereby emphasizing the modern sense of perception as fragmentary).

■ *Tender Buttons* can be read as a series of still lives, or portraits of objects. Traditionally, a still life is a painting of an inanimate object, such as flowers, food, or books. Still lives allowed artists to demonstrate their skill in representing these objects realistically and by manipulating color, light, and texture. Like elegies, still lives emphasize life's fleeting qualities and offer a stay against mortality by immortalizing these objects in paint. Using reproductions of modernist still lives by Cezanne, discuss with your students what innovations painters made in this genre in the first decades of the twentieth century. Was the goal to be as realistic as possible? If not, what was the goal of the modernist painter of still lives? How may you apply these conclusions to the still lives Stein presents in *Tender Buttons*?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Try to pinpoint some of the ways Stein uses the terms she has selected. What exactly does she mean by "repeating," in *The Making of Americans*, for example? What is it exactly that she repeatedly intends to "begin"?

Comprehension: What are the objects examined in *Tender Buttons*? Are there any hints about why they are described as they are? What is "A Piece of Coffee"? Why do you think "A Red Hat" begins, "A dark grey, a very dark grey, a quite dark grey is monstrous ordinarily"?

Context: Much of modern art and literature shows an interest in displaying the world as bewilderingly fractured and fragmented. Consider the fragmentation of Stein's writing in conjunction with a contemporary work of art by a cubist painter and with John Dos Passos's pastiche of headlines and newsreel materials. How do all these works represent the modern world and what comment might they be making on modern modes of living?

Exploration: You might make fruitful comparisons between Stein's *The Making of Americans* and Walt Whitman's *Song of Myself*, which seeks common attributes of humanity while also celebrating diversity. Find passages in both works that suggest to you common threads in the two writers' projects. Where do they diverge?

Susan Glaspell (1876–1948)

Born in Davenport, Iowa, Susan Glaspell grew up in a Midwest that was settled only decades before, but was developing rapidly as the post–Civil War economic boom transformed the United States. After graduating from high school, Glaspell worked as a reporter for the *Davenport Morning Republican* and then for Davenport's *Weekly Outlook*, where she edited the society pages. As a student at Drake University, Glaspell began writing for the college newspaper, and following her graduation became a statehouse reporter for the Des Moines *Daily News*, where she gained familiarity with the workings of American government. After two years as a journalist, she turned her attention to fiction, and her short stories appeared in magazines such as the *Ladies' Home Journal* and *Harper's*. For a short time in 1903, she studied English at the University of Chicago's graduate school. Her first novel, *The Glory of the Conquered*, was published in 1909.

[6016] Arthur Rothstein, *Douglas County Farmsteads, Nebraska* (1936), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-004276-D DLC].

Glaspell gave up journalism in 1901 and returned to Davenport, where she met the free-thinking George Cram Cook, a fellow member of the local progressive organization called the Monist Society. Though Cook was married when they met, he left his wife and married Glaspell, then thirty-six, and together they moved to the East Coast in 1913. Over the next ten years, they lived part of each year in New York's Greenwich Village and part in Provincetown, Massachusetts. Cook was a writer as well as a theatrical director, and the couple helped to found the Provincetown Players, a landmark organization in the development of American theater. The most famous of its members, Eugene O'Neill, authored plays such as *Long Day's Journey into Night* and *The Iceman Cometh*. Glaspell wrote nine plays for the Provincetown Players from 1916 to 1922, including her best-known one-act play *Trifles*. The commercial success of the Provincetown Players in some ways limited the company's ability to experiment, and in 1922 Glaspell and her husband left the group.

Glaspell continued to write through the 1930s and 1940s, publishing drama and fiction and remaining committed to writing experimental and overtly social work. Her play *Alison's Room*, which received the Pulitzer Prize for drama in 1930, follows the struggles of Alison Stanhope, a poet modeled upon Emily Dickinson, and considers the difficulties female artists face as a result of their gender. Much of Glaspell's work considers women's roles in society and the conflicts

faced by American women who pursue individual fulfillment. *Trifles* examines the ways that expectations of women can confine them and offers a potential remedy for this problem in the communal efforts of women resisting the traditional roles to which men assign them. Glaspell's focus on the lives of women and their roles in American society challenged conventions of what could be shown on the American stage, and her stylistic innovations and promotion of new experiments in drama helped to shape American theater. After decades of critical neglect, Glaspell's significant contribution to the development of American drama has begun to be recognized.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Like many other female authors writing about women, Susan Glaspell did not receive much critical attention until the "rediscovery" of forgotten texts during the feminist movement of the 1960s and 1970s. *Trifles* is an especially effective play to help students consider what influences both our cultural values and the literary canon: the male characters' dismissal of women's realm of expertise parallels decisions made about what characterizes "great" literature. Students may have difficulty seeing what is at stake in the play's subtle storyline; the "clues" the women find in Minnie Wright's housekeeping may not be immediately obvious to students, as they are not to the men who ignore them. To be certain that they have understood the subtext of the dialogue and stage directions, you might ask students to explain what happens in several of the moments when the female characters discover something that the men cannot see.

■ Ask students to think about the dramatic form and their experience of reading a text that was not meant to be read but performed. You might ask them to consider the added dimensions of authorship in the case of drama: is the author of the script the sole author, or do the director, actors, and set and lighting designers complicate how we assign authorship? Ask them to think about how the dialogue and stage directions move the plot forward, and how the dramatic form shifts the way the story is presented. Glaspell adapted this play to the short-story form in "A Jury of Her Peers," which you might read in conjunction with the play to answer some of these questions.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What do Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale discover in Minnie Wright's house? How do you explain their decision not to tell the Sheriff and County Attorney about what they found? Why do you think the title of the play is *Trifles*?

Comprehension: According to Mrs. Peters and Mrs. Hale, what is the life of a farmer's wife like? How does the description of the life Minnie Wright must have led help to make sense of her behavior?

Context: At the time this play was produced, the suffrage movement in the United States had come close to reaching its goal: suffrage

GLASPELL WEB ARCHIVE

[6016] Arthur Rothstein, *Douglas County Farmsteads, Nebraska* (1936), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-004276-D DLC]. Landscape of field, farmhouses, trees, and sky. Often termed a regionalist, Susan Glaspell centered much of her work in the Midwest, where she was born.

[7286] Federal Art Project, *Alison's House by Susan Glaspell: A Poetic Romance* (c. 1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1151]. Poster for production of *Alison's House* at the Mayan Theatre in Los Angeles. Glaspell's experimental plays often explored women's roles in the society.

[7287] Russell Lee, *Farmhouse on the Heavily Mortgaged Farm of Theodore F. Frank* (1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-010149-D]. Farmhouse and surrounding land in the Midwest. Glaspell, who was born in Iowa, often explored the lives of women in agricultural and rural settings.

[7288] John Vachon, *Members of the Women's Club Making a Quilt, Granger Homesteads, Iowa* (c. 1940), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-060927-D]. Domestic scene of group of women quilting. Glaspell incorporated scenes of women working in domestic settings into her plays.

was granted to women in 1919. What does this play suggest about the way society viewed women and their fields of "expertise" (largely centered in the home)? Why do you think society evaluated women in this way?

Context: Examine the photograph of the "Women's club making a quilt" featured in the archive. What does the image suggest to you about the lives of these people? How does the image help you to understand what Mrs. Hale and Mrs. Peters say about the life of a farm woman?

Exploration: Consider other texts that deal with the challenges women face in their lives. What connections can you draw between *Trifles* and Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (1861), Louisa May Alcott's *Work* (1873), Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-paper" (1892), Willa Cather's *O Pioneers!* (1913), and Maxine Hong Kingston's *The Woman Warrior* (1976)? What shapes the female characters' beliefs about themselves and their place in society? How do cultural traditions inform gender roles in these texts?

Sherwood Anderson (1876–1941)

Born in southern Ohio, Sherwood Anderson was the middle child of seven. His father, a harness maker, moved the family around a great deal during Anderson's childhood in search of work. In 1894 the family settled in Clyde, Ohio, which probably served as the model for Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, though Anderson claimed he had no particular town in mind. After working in a variety of jobs and serving in the U.S. Army during the Spanish-American War, Anderson married into a successful business family and began managing businesses himself in 1906. Six years later he left both business and family and moved to Chicago, where he began his literary career. In Chicago he met many writers involved in what became known as the "Chicago Renaissance," including Theodore Dreiser, Edgar Lee Masters, and Carl Sandburg. In 1916 he published his first novel, *Windy McPherson's Son*, about a man who leaves a small town in Iowa to search for the meaning of life. In 1917 he published *Marching Men*, which follows a lawyer's efforts to reform the factory in his town. These works, like much of his other writing, examine individuals' search for meaning in small towns, removed from the developments of modern industry.

[7201] Dorothea Lange, *Lobby of Only Hotel in Small Town* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-021148-E DLC].

Anderson's best-known work is *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919), a collection of connected stories about residents of a small midwestern town. This work applied some of the experimental techniques of modernism (multiple perspectives and an interest in psychology in particular) to

fiction and met with critical praise for its innovation and realism. Anderson's style of storytelling is simple, though the ideas his work contains are complex; following the lives of characters repressed by a society unsympathetic to individual desire, the stories reveal the inner workings of characters in conflict with societal expectations. Reviewing *Winesburg, Ohio*, a *Chicago Tribune* writer noted that "Mr. Anderson is frequently crude in his employment of English; he has not a nice sense of word values; but he has an intense vision of life; he is a cautious and interpretative observer; and he has recorded here a bit of life which should rank him with the most important contemporary writers in this country." H. L. Mencken called the book "some of the most remarkable writing done in America in our time."

None of Anderson's many subsequent publications proved as successful as *Winesburg, Ohio*. He published numerous novels and collections of stories and essays in the next two decades, including the novels *Poor White* (1920), *Many Marriages* (1923), and *Beyond Desire* (1932), as well as the short-story collections *The Triumph of the Egg* (1921) and *Horses and Men* (1923). The simplicity of his prose style and his choice of subject matter influenced many writers who followed him, most notably Hemingway and Faulkner, but these writers tended to belittle his contribution to literature and to their own work. Anderson died of peritonitis en route to South America on a goodwill trip.

ANDERSON WEB ARCHIVE

[3062] Carl Mydans, *House on Laconia Street in a Suburb of Cincinnati, Ohio* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-000658-D]. Suburban scene of houses, street, and sidewalk. Anderson's most acclaimed work, *Winesburg, Ohio,* was likely based on his own childhood experiences in Ohio.

[5965] Carl Van Vechten, *Sherwood Anderson* (1933), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-42477]. Photograph of Anderson seated in front of wall of books. Anderson, who frequently wrote about the Midwest, was often considered a regionalist.

[5966] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Sherwood Anderson, Central Park* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-117920]. Although Sherwood Anderson is often considered a midwestern regionalist, this photograph was taken in New York, an important center for many modernist writers and visual artists.

[7201] Dorothea Lange, *Lobby of Only Hotel in Small Town* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-021148-E DLC]. This photograph of a hotel lobby depicts one of the many intimate settings provided by small-town life. Such an environment contrasted sharply with the hustle and bustle of America's rapidly growing cities.

TEACHING TIP

■ Students may find Anderson's spare tales confusing; their lack of narrative commentary and surprising plot developments might leave students wondering about "the point" of each story as well as the collection as a whole. You might start a class on these texts by addressing students' confusion, finding out what perplexed them about these characters' behavior, and asking them to speculate on what Anderson might be exploring in these plot twists. They will likely begin to notice that the three main characters have somehow been thwarted in the attainment of their desires and lash out in helpless protest against the restrictions in their lives.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What does Elizabeth Willard want for her son George? Why does she want "to cry out with joy" at the end of the story and why has "the expression of joy . . . become impossible"?

Comprehension: What troubles Elmer in "Queer"? Why is he so threatened by George Willard? What is he trying to escape at the end of the story?

Context: What links these stories together? What picture do they draw of the pressures of living in a small town?

Exploration: Sherwood Anderson's fiction may in part be considered "regionalist," writing that tends to look at areas of America removed from the more settled and populated areas of the

Northeast. What links do you see between *Winesburg, Ohio* and earlier stories we now label as "regionalist"? What connections can you make to the work of Sarah Orne Jewett and Mary Wilkins Freeman, for example, or to that of other writers in Unit 8? Where do Anderson's stories seem to diverge from the work of earlier regionalists?

Wallace Stevens (1879–1955)

Wallace Stevens grew up in Pennsylvania and attended Harvard University for three years, leaving in 1897 to pursue a career as a writer. At the age of twenty-one, he joined the editorial staff of *The New York Tribune*, but discovered that he did not enjoy journalism. A year later he enrolled at New York Law School and was admitted to the Bar in 1904. He became a member of the legal staff of the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company in 1916 and remained with the company until he died in 1955. He prospered with the company and became vice president, all the time working on his writing. In 1914, he began publishing his poetry in the popular "little magazines" of the period. He joined the literary culture of New York City in the early part of his career and became friends with such figures as Marianne Moore and William Carlos Williams.

Harmonium (1923), his first published collection, sold fewer than one hundred copies but was reviewed favorably and established Stevens as a leading poet of his day. His second volume of poetry, *Ideas of Order*, did not appear until 1935, and in 1936 he followed it with *Owl's Clover*. *The Man with a Blue Guitar* was published in 1937, *Parts of a World* in 1942, *Transport to Summer* in 1947, and *The Auroras of Autumn* in 1950. His work is characterized by an interest in imagery and an attention to language, often revealing his belief that much of human meaning was created in the act of regarding the material world. In response to the modernist suspicion that humans could be sure of nothing, Stevens emphasized the importance of the activity of perception; though our perception is always extremely subjective, it is nonetheless meaningful. In "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird," for example, the speaker takes pleasure in the different ways one may perceive a single object. In a world where religion had lost its force, Stevens believed that an appreciation of beauty—of nature, of music, of language—might help to reestablish human faith.

Three works in particular have received extensive critical attention: "Sunday Morning," in which a woman enjoys a Sunday at home rather than worshipping in church, and "The Comedian as the Letter C" and "Peter Quince at the Clavier," which consider the life of the mind and the life of the senses, locating meaning within appreciation of the world. Stevens's wit, insight, and careful diction earned him a place as one of the foremost poets of the twentieth century.

[6041] Paul Cezanne, *Bend in the Road* (1900), courtesy of the National Gallery of Art.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Though students may find Stevens's poetry difficult, some of the ways his poems engage the central concerns of modernism are quite

STEVENS WEB ARCHIVE

[6041] Paul Cezanne, *Bend in the Road* (1900), courtesy of the National Gallery of Art. Wallace Stevens argued that human faith could be found in the appreciation of beauty in nature, music, and art, rather than religion.

[8009] Gottscho-Schleisner, Inc., National Fire Group, Hartford, Connecticut, *Long View of First-Floor Office* (1942), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G613-T-41579]. Poet Wallace Stevens earned his living at an office building like this: the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company in Hartford, Connecticut, where he worked from 1916 until his death.

accessible. To help students better understand the issue of multiple perspectives, ask them to explain why the speaker of "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" feels it is important to look at the blackbird from so many different vantage points. You might include a creative response to help them further appreciate the idea of perspective by asking them to compose a similar poem of their own.

■ You might include Stevens in a consideration of other modern poets who use material objects to comment on the human condition in the modern world. The poetry of William Carlos Williams or Marianne Moore, for example, would help to elaborate on the modernist search for meaning in a world that challenges humans' ability to locate it.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Several of Stevens's poems question the possibility of finding meaning in one's life. What is meant by "the nothing that is" in "The Snow Man"? What is the significance of the statement "The only emperor is the emperor of ice-cream" in "The Emperor of Ice-Cream"? What do you think the speaker is disillusioned about in "Disillusionment of Ten O'Clock"?

Comprehension: What is "Sunday Morning" saying about organized religion and the individual's pursuit of pleasure? What is the significance of the question "What is divinity if it can come / Only in silent shadows and in dreams"?

Context: Consider what "Gubbinal" and "Thirteen Ways of Looking at a Blackbird" seem to be saying about the possibility for human objectivity. How might you interpret these poems as being especially modernist in their outlook on the primacy of individual perception? Do you see connections between this interest in multiple perspectives and the work of modern artists, such as Picasso, Duchamp, or Braque?

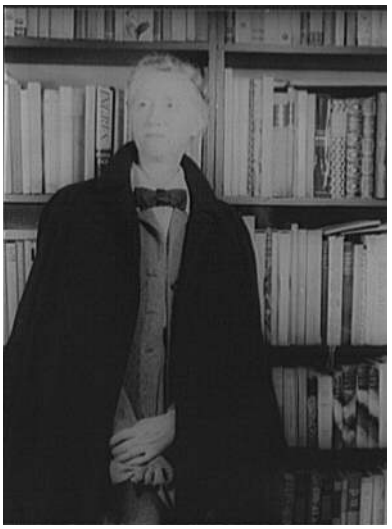
Exploration: Do you see similar concerns in Stevens's poetry as in T. S. Eliot's or Marianne Moore's? What issues seem to preoccupy these and other modernist poets? Do other writers (poets and fiction writers) from this time period or other time periods also seem concerned with these issues?

Marianne Moore (1887–1972)

Moore, like many other authors in this unit, was born in the Midwest but eventually settled in the East. She graduated from Bryn Mawr College in 1909, and, after traveling for two years with her mother abroad, taught at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania for four years. She continued to live with her family and in 1916 moved with her mother to Brooklyn, New York, to be with her brother, who was a minister there. In New York, Moore worked as a teacher and librarian, all the while producing poetry. Her first poems came out in "little magazines" such as *Poetry* and *Egoist*, and her connections with them introduced her to the artistic avant-garde. Unknown to Moore, in 1921

the poets H.D. and Winifred Bryher published her volume *Poems*. In 1924 Moore published another collection, *Observations*, which received the *Dial* magazine award for poetry. Moore became editor of the *Dial* in 1925 and remained there until the magazine ceased publication in 1929. Her work on the *Dial* introduced her to many key literary figures of the time, including Ezra Pound, Hart Crane, and James Joyce. Though she did not write much poetry while editing the *Dial*, her work for the magazine helped to sharpen her critical abilities, and her next book, *Selected Poems* (1935), is considered one of her most important. This volume contained some of her best-known poems, including "The Jerboa" and "Poetry." Moore was also an insightful critic and published many essays of literary criticism. In 1951 Moore's *Collected Poems* won the Pulitzer Prize, the Bollingen Prize, and the National Book Award, and she became something of a celebrity; the Brooklyn Dodgers, a baseball team Moore followed avidly, once asked her to throw out the ball that would open their season.

Moore's poetry is characterized by an attention to careful observation of the natural world in an attempt to find new connections between poetry and the world. She includes many references to scientific and historical texts that inform her thinking about the natural world; notably, she avoids literary allusions that would link her poetry to a literary tradition. Her verse structure and meter are subtle and complex, and readers must look carefully to understand her formal and linguistic choices. She came to favor a simpler style of diction in her later work, and her language is considerably more ornate in her earlier poems than in her later ones. In the face of World War II, many of Moore's poems became more social in theme, expressing her desire that humankind would work toward becoming more humane. In her poem "In Distrust of Merits," for example, she posits that the mutual distrust that promotes war may be overcome, suggesting that "contagion of trust can make trust." She asks readers to look inward to understand the causes of war and offers hope that if one can win internal battles, war may be averted in the future.



[4011] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Marianne Moore* (1948), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-42513].

TEACHING TIPS

■ Moore's poetry is a good place for students to start thinking about the different ways in which poems can be organized. For example, poems may be structured around a description, story, meditation, or argument. Choose a poem by Moore that has a more straightforward narrative, such as "A Grave" or "Baseball and Writing," and divide it into three to five parts that you feel correspond to the structural divisions of the poem. The more advanced students are, the more parts you can divide the poem into. Break students into groups and give each group one segment of the poem and ask them to determine where in the order of the poem the passage falls. Ask them to support their claim by hypothesizing about *why* they believe it is a particular section of the poem and what beginnings, middles, or ends usually look like. After having made their own claims, groups should talk with one another to compare passages and to determine the relationship

MOORE WEB ARCHIVE

[4011] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Marianne Moore* (1948), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-42513]. Moore, wearing bowtie, poses in front of a wall of books. Moore's poetry emphasized the natural world and, during and after World War II, social themes.

[5365] Frances Benjamin Johnston, *Carlisle Indian School* (1901), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-119133]. Photograph of students at the Carlisle Indian School in Pennsylvania. Poet Marianne Moore taught at the school for four years, after graduating from Bryn Mawr College.

between the various sections. This can be followed by a full class discussion of the poem and an analysis of one of Moore's more difficult structures, such as "Poetry" or "The Paper Nautilus."

■ The absence of specifically female experience in Moore's poetry is also worth noting and may become more apparent to students when contrasted to the work of Sylvia Plath or Anne Sexton, for example. Students might discuss why Moore felt that her identity as a woman and her identity as a poet were incompatible and then examine how her work takes on experiences that can be generalized to all of humankind, rather than focusing on the experience of women.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: After reading "Poetry," consider what Moore says about why readers should care about poetry. What does she believe makes certain kinds of poetry important? What would she classify as "not poetry"?

Comprehension: What is "In Distrust of Merits" about? According to Moore, how does war happen? What does she mean in the last stanza of the poem when she says that "There never was a war that was / not inward"?

Context: How does Moore's poetic form communicate ideas differently than if, for instance, these poems were written as essays? What can "Nevertheless" or "In Distrust of Merits" achieve in poetic form that it could not attain as prose? How do the rhyme and rhythm of the poems influence your reading of them?

Context: In "Poetry," Moore describes how some poetry becomes too far removed from the things that are truly important and useful. Consider some of the other modernist poems you have read (by Eliot or Pound, for example); what do you believe Moore (or the speaker in this poem) would think about poems that rely heavily on literary allusions?

Exploration: Moore was a mentor to the poet Elizabeth Bishop, which Bishop acknowledges in her poem "Invitation to Miss Marianne Moore." Both poets are known for their animal poems, some of which are odes, poems that use the subject or occasion for the poem to investigate the potential power of the poet. Compare Bishop's "The Fish" to Moore's "To a Snail." What attracts the speaker of the poem to these animals? To what extent is the animal or the viewer of the animal like a poet? From what source does the power of the poet arise? What are the limitations of this power?

Nella Larsen (1891–1964)

Nella Larsen, like *Quicksand*'s Helga, was born to parents of different races: her father was West Indian and her mother was Danish. After her father died (when Larsen was two), her mother married a white man and raised Larsen in an all-white environment. Her adopted family was embarrassed by her dark skin, and Larsen always felt that she did not belong. From 1907 to 1908 she studied at a high school associ-

ated with Fisk University. She left Fisk and spent the next three years with relatives in Denmark, auditing classes at the University of Copenhagen. In 1912 she returned to the United States and pursued a nursing degree and career in New York. She married Elmer Samuel Imes, an African American physicist who worked at Fisk University. Larsen gave up nursing in 1922 and worked for the New York Public Library. She became involved with the artistic community in Harlem, and four years later, she decided to pursue a career as a writer.

Larsen completed two novels—*Quicksand* (1928) and *Passing* (1929), about a light-skinned black woman passing herself as white—which the prestigious publishing firm Alfred A. Knopf published. She was assisted by a white patron of Harlem Renaissance writers, Carl Van Vechten, himself the author of the controversial novel *Nigger Heaven*. While many believed that a celebration of the "primitive" aspects of African American culture benefited the advancement of the race, others thought that the depictions of blacks, and especially black women, in Van Vechten's and other authors' works contributed to a construction of racial identity that severely limited possibilities for African Americans.

Quicksand wrestles overtly with this problem of establishing an "authentic" racial identity: Helga prizes much about upper-class white culture, but also longs to understand and appreciate those things that distinguish African Americans. Throughout the novel, the mixed-race Helga finds herself torn in her loyalties and disconnected from both whites and blacks.

Larsen's novels were well received, and in 1930 she was awarded a Guggenheim fellowship in creative writing, the first African American woman to win one. She went to Spain to work, but she published little after receiving the award. One short story drew allegations of plagiarism, and Larsen probably stopped writing as a result of the controversy over her work. She returned to nursing and withdrew from the literary circles of which she had been a part. Her novels were largely forgotten until they were reissued in 1986, when her reputation as a significant Harlem Renaissance writer was revived.

[4553] James Allen, *Portrait of Nella Larsen* (1928), courtesy of the Library of Congress.

TEACHING TIPS

■ *Quicksand* would work well in conjunction with a unit on the Harlem Renaissance as well as one on modernism. You might teach this novel and the concerns it raises about black identity and sexuality together with Langston Hughes's "I, Too," or "Mulatto," or works by Zora Neale Hurston, Countee Cullen, or James Weldon Johnson's *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*. *Quicksand* also shares many concerns with Harriet Jacobs's *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, and if you are reading *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, you might also consider how mixed-race women's sexuality is constructed (for more on the figure of the "tragic mulatta," see Unit 7). If you read *Quicksand* in the context of other Harlem Renaissance writers, you may want to spend some time giving students a sense of Harlem society in the 1920s. You could begin with a discussion of the "Great Migration" of African Americans

LARSEN WEB ARCHIVE

[4553] James Allen, *Portrait of Nella Larsen* (1928), courtesy of the Library of Congress. Author of *Quicksand*, Larsen wrote novels and short stories that explore the intersection of race, class, and gender. She composed during the Harlem Renaissance.

[7405] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Josephine Baker* (1949), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-93000]. Photograph of performer Josephine Baker in Paris. A major center for modernist artists, Paris was thought to be less restrictive than America.

[7406] *Duke Ellington, half-length portrait, seated at piano, facing right* (1965), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-123232]. Photograph of jazz musician Duke Ellington playing the piano. Rhythms and images from jazz influenced writers and visual artists of the Harlem Renaissance.

[7408] Carl Van Vechten, *Portrait of Bessie Smith Holding Feathers* (1936), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-94955]. Writers and musicians of the Harlem Renaissance debated how to best depict African Americans, especially in terms of gender. Some were influenced by primitivism, or an emphasis on earlier African images.

to the North and especially to northern cities as background for the coalescence of African American culture. The archive contains some photos you may want to assign or look at together in class; juxtaposing these with Larsen's descriptions of the activity and night life of Harlem could help locate Helga in a historical moment. For specific suggestions, see Unit 10.

■ *Quicksand* shares with other works in this unit a character's sense of alienation from America and search abroad for an environment more conducive to self-development. Like the selections by Fitzgerald and Hemingway, *Quicksand* concludes rather bleakly—Helga's attempted improvement of her life ends in ultimate failure, as does Dexter's, Charlie's, and Harry's. You might consider discussing with your class how Helga's difficulty adapting herself to American society differs from the problems the white authors explore.

■ You'll probably want to go over the varying positions different characters (Helga, Anne, Dr. Anderson, etc.) take on the "race problem," articulating the tenets of "uplift" and the concern that middle-class blacks were in danger of losing touch with their heritage. You may want to ask why certain characters find it intolerable to socialize with whites, even those sympathetic to the struggles facing African Americans. You might extend this discussion to consider contemporary viewpoints on African American identity and white America.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What does Helga find so objectionable about Naxos? What does she find appealing about social life in Harlem? Why do you think she tires of Harlem?

Comprehension: Helga wonders, "why couldn't she have two lives"? What are the two lives she wishes to lead and why do they seem to her so incompatible?

Comprehension: The furnishings of rooms and the clothing people wear receive a great deal of attention in this novel. What do furniture and clothing tell us about these characters? What is the impact of these descriptions on our understanding of the values and aspirations of Helga in particular?

Context: The novel begins with a poem by Langston Hughes about "Being neither white nor black." Why do you think Larsen presents Helga as being *neither* rather than being *both*?

Context: Bessie Smith's music is widely available. Compare her self-presentation in music and in the Van Vechten photo to that of Nella Larsen and her character. How does Smith's presentation of African American identity or culture complicate or contradict that presented in *Quicksand*?

Exploration: *Quicksand* follows Helga Crane's search for a place where she belongs. Consider how other works you've read also chronicle people's searches to find somewhere they feel at home. How are Helga's concerns similar to or different from those of the characters in Sherwood Anderson's *Winesburg, Ohio*, the speaker in

T. S. Eliot's "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock," the narrator in Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-paper," or other characters in works you've read? How do the issues raised in this novel contribute to your understanding of the work of other Harlem Renaissance writers such as Jean Toomer, Langston Hughes, Claude McKay, or Countee Cullen?

Exploration: Consider *Quicksand* in conjunction with Alice Walker's short story "Everyday Use." What does *Quicksand* have to say about the preservation of ethnic heritage, and how does Walker's story respond? These works were written over four decades apart; what seems to be different for the characters in Walker's story and what seems to have remained the same?

F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896–1940)

F. Scott Fitzgerald's best-known work, *The Great Gatsby,* has made him familiar to generations of students of American literature. Though the book sold poorly when it was first published, it has since become one of the most widely read American novels and justified Fitzgerald's reputation as one of the foremost chroniclers of the 1920s, which he famously labeled the "Jazz Age."

Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, and educated primarily in East Coast schools. He attended Princeton University for three years, leaving without his degree to enlist in the U.S. army during World War I, though peace was declared before he could see combat. While stationed in Alabama, he met and courted Zelda Sayre, who initially rejected him. He went to New York in 1919 to seek his fortune as a writer and to win over Zelda. His first novel, *This Side of Paradise*, became a best-seller and made Fitzgerald an overnight sensation; one week after its release he married Zelda. In addition to giving him fame and wealth, the book seemed to speak for the generation of which Fitzgerald was a part, and Fitzgerald's next books, two short-story collections called *Flappers and Philosophers* (1921) and *Tales of the Jazz Age* (1922), solidified his reputation as an insightful narrator of the social world of the 1920s.

[4893] Anonymous, *(F. Scott) Fitzgeralds on a Street in Paris*, courtesy of Princeton University Library.

Fitzgerald and Zelda lived well on the proceeds of these books and a second novel, *The Beautiful and Damned,* published in 1922. The couple had a daughter in 1921; in 1924 they moved to Europe to economize after several years of lavish living. In Europe they associated with other expatriate American writers, including Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, and Ernest Hemingway. While living in Paris, Fitzgerald composed *The Great Gatsby* (1925), the story of a self-made millionaire who pursues a corrupted version of the American dream, dealing in not-quite-legal businesses to make his fortune and win back the woman he loves.

Despite his success as a writer, Fitzgerald had difficulty getting out of debt, though he wrote prolifically and published short stories in

high-paying magazines such as the *Saturday Evening Post*. He abused alcohol, and in 1930 Zelda suffered a mental breakdown, which would lead to her spending much of the remainder of her life in mental institutions. After the stock market crash of 1929, Fitzgerald, like many other American expatriates, returned to the United States, where he wrote and published a fourth novel, *Tender Is the Night* (1934), which chronicles the decline of a young American psychiatrist, Dick Diver, whose marriage to a dependent patient interferes with his career. Though critics generally praised the novel, it sold poorly, and Fitzgerald tried screenwriting. He completed only one full screenplay, *Three Comrades* (1938), and was fired because of his drinking, which eventually ruined his health. He died of a heart attack when he was only forty-four.

TEACHING TIPS

■ The nuanced social interactions and high cultural styles that Fitzgerald describes in *The Great Gatsby* will probably seem somewhat alien to your students. In order to dramatize these scenes, you might show excerpts from the 1974 film version of the novel, starring Robert Redford and Mia Farrow, and ask students to compare their own visualizations of the scenes with the depictions in the movie. Have them focus on Fitzgerald's use of narrative point of view in one or more scenes, and ask them how it affects the presentation of these scenes in the film. Broaden the question to ask students about the significance of translating this novel—and other works, both popular and classic—into film versions.

■ Because *The Great Gatsby* is written in such a clear and evocative way, students may initially have trouble questioning the effects of Fitzgerald's use of language and other literary conventions such as point of view. Have students focus on certain descriptions—of setting, character, or even of mannerisms detailed in dialogue—and ask them to explain how the descriptions function to convey meaning in the novel. Additionally, ask students to imagine the story of *The Great Gatsby* retold from the point of view of a character other than Nick Carraway. How would such a change affect the structure of the narrative?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What about Judy Jones so fascinates Dexter in "Winter Dreams"? What in Judy's attitude attracts (or repels) Dexter? Why does the narrative describe her house repeatedly?

Comprehension: Though Dexter succeeds brilliantly in New York, we discover at the end of the story that his "dream was gone," that a part of himself has somehow been lost. What do you think Dexter has lost? Why does he come to recognize this after hearing about Judy seven years after he left Minnesota?

Comprehension: By calling his story "Babylon Revisited," Fitzgerald asks readers to compare the ancient city of Babylon—famed for its

FITZGERALD WEB ARCHIVE

[4879] Anonymous, *F. Scott Fitzgerald* (1919), courtesy of Princeton University Library. Portrait of F. Scott Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald attended Princeton for three years before enlisting in the U.S. Army during World War I.

[4893] Anonymous, *(F. Scott) Fitzgeralds on a Street in Paris*, courtesy of Princeton University Library. Photograph of Fitzgerald with his wife, Zelda, and their daughter, Scottie, in an urban street scene. Fitzgerald was an expatriate American author who lived and wrote in Paris.

[4905] Anonymous, *F. Scott Fitzgerald with Friends in Freshman Dinks* (1913), courtesy of Princeton University Library. Photograph of Fitzgerald with two male classmates at Princeton, all wearing college jackets. Fitzgerald often wrote about educated and wealthy Americans.

[7822] Emory Elliot, Interview: "F. Scott Fitzgerald and the American Dream" (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Elliot, professor of English at the University of California, Riverside, discusses Fitzgerald's mixed emotions concerning the American Dream. Some scholars argue that Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby* describes the corruption of this dream.

[7823] Catharine Stimpson, Interview: "F. Scott Fitzgerald's Alienation and Drinking" (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Stimpson, dean of the Graduate School of Arts and Science, New York University, discusses heartbreak, drinking, and masculinity in the work and life of Fitzgerald and his contemporaries.

wealth and decadence, which eventually led to its downfall—to Paris in the 1920s. Why do you think Charlie's return to Paris to retrieve his daughter is a revisiting of Babylon?

Context: While wandering through early 1930s Paris, Charlie reflects on the way he lived there before the 1929 stock market crash. In retrospect, how does he view his conduct when he was wealthy and seemingly carefree? In light of what you've read about the 1920s and the stock market crash, what does this story appear to be saying about the lives many Americans lived after World War I?

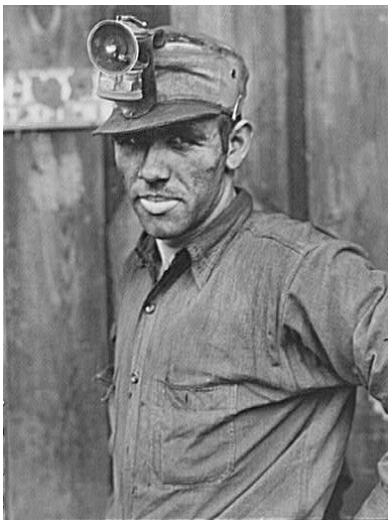
Exploration: Consider other stories and poems that look back with longing or regret to a time past. Consider "Birches" by Robert Frost or "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" by Ernest Hemingway—why do you think these texts dwell on this sense of loss and remorse? Are there historical events or cultural developments that help to explain this shared preoccupation?

John Dos Passos (1896–1970)

John Dos Passos is one of the most overtly political authors in this unit. Involved in many radical political movements, Dos Passos saw the expansion of consumer capitalism in the first decades of the twentieth century as a dangerous threat to the health of the nation. The son of unmarried Portuguese American parents, Dos Passos grew up in Chicago. He attended prestigious East Coast schools, first the Choate School and then Harvard University. He graduated from Harvard in 1916 and joined the war effort before the United States entered World War I, becoming a member of a volunteer ambulance corps and later serving in the American medical corps.

Following the war he became a freelance journalist, while also working on fiction, poetry, essays, and plays. He wrote a novel drawing on his war experiences, *Three Soldiers* (1921), but his 1925 novel *Manhattan Transfer* established him as a serious fiction writer and displayed many techniques that writers who followed him would emulate. Political reform underwrote much of his fiction, and in 1926 he joined the board of *The New Masses,* a Communist magazine. Though not a party member, Dos Passos participated in Communist activities until 1934, when the Communists' disruption of a Socialist rally convinced him that the Communists were more concerned with achieving power than with the social reform about which he cared passionately.

From 1930 to 1936, Dos Passos published three bitingly satirical novels about contemporary American life, *The 42nd Parallel*; *1919*; and *The Big Money*, an excerpt of which is discussed in this unit. Together the novels form a trilogy called *U.S.A.*, and they attack all levels of American society, from the wealthiest businessman to the leaders of the labor movement. Dos Passos believed that American society had been thoroughly corrupted by the greed its thriving capitalist system promoted, and he saw little hope for real reform of such an entrenched system. His novels experimented with new techniques, especially drawing on those of the cinema, a relatively new cultural form (see the Context "Mass Culture Invasion: The Rise of Motion Pictures," Unit



[7200] Jack Delano, *Portrait of a Coal Miner* (1940), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-041334-D].

DOS PASSOS WEB ARCHIVE

[5940] Dorothea Lange, *Labor Strikes: NYC* (1934), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration [NLR-PHOCO-A-71134]. Labor demonstration on New York City street. John Dos Passos wrote explicitly political novels and argued that the greed encouraged by capitalism was destroying America.

[7200] Jack Delano, *Portrait of a Coal Miner* (1940), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF34-041334-D]. Photograph of a coal miner in work clothes. Authors such as John Dos Passos wrote about working-class people and labor rights.

[7423] Anonymous, *Harvard Hall, Harvard University, Cambridge, Mass.* (1935), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-94158]. John Dos Passos attended prestigious schools on the East Coast, including Choate and Harvard University. Graduating from college in 1916, he joined the volunteer ambulance corps and served in World War I.

[7426] Herbert Photos, Inc., *Bartolomeo Vanzetti and Nicola Sacco, manacled together* (1927), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-124547]. Sacco and Vanzetti, Italian immigrants and anarchists, surrounded by a crowd of onlookers and guards before entering a Dedham, Massachusetts, courthouse. In a series of incidents representative of the first American "red scare," these political radicals were accused of murder and received the death penalty, despite a lack of evidence.

13). His "Newsreel" sections mimic the weekly newsreels shown before films at local cinemas, blending together a patchwork of clips from newspapers, popular music, and speeches.

Dos Passos's politics shifted radically following World War II, as he saw the political left, with which he had identified himself, becoming more restrictive of individual liberty than the political right. His trilogy *District of Columbia* (1952) reexamined American society from this new perspective, attacking political fanaticism and bureaucracy.

TEACHING TIPS

■ Students will likely be bewildered by the opening sections of the selections "Newsreel" and "The Camera Eye." Encourage them to note what the headlines are about and to see trends in the snapshots. They should eventually see that many of the headlines are about labor struggles and many others are about money-making and business. This should lead them to realize that these issues are very much interrelated. The relationship between the wealthy and the struggling workers will arise again in the "Mary French" section, and Dos Passos will not make explicit what he is saying about these coexisting groups. Students should speculate on what Dos Passos implies about the parallel lives of the wealthy and poor that intersect in the character Mary French. Some background on capitalist expansion and the labor movement would be useful to help students understand what exactly is at stake in the work that Mary does and in the description in "The Camera Eye."

■ A look at modern art, especially political art, would work well with this selection. The collages of Picasso and Braque, for example, demonstrate visually the fragmentation associated with modernity that appears in the "Newsreel" pastiche. You might break students into groups to look at different images together and make connections to the Dos Passos excerpt. You might also ask them about the role of popular culture in the making of art and discuss why taking clips of songs and newspapers (which Picasso's collages, for instance, also do) and pasting them together should be considered art.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What are the different attitudes toward the labor movement espoused by different characters in *The Big Money*?

Comprehension: How do the three sections—"Newsreel," "The Camera Eye," and "Mary French"—work in conjunction with one another? What links between and among them do you see? How does the "Mary French" section develop the ideas briefly enumerated in the headlines of the "Newsreel"? What do the parallel lives of the labor activists and the New York elite say about one another? Why do you think Dos Passos draws them together in this section?

Context: Like Nella Larsen's *Quicksand*, this story examines an individual as well as a large social movement. What do these two narratives suggest about the way individuals must wrestle with their

personal lives in the context of their involvement in larger social movements?

Context: Other works in this and other units use the form of the pastiche—the patching together of disparate elements, often with the intention of parodying the sources—that Dos Passos employs in the "Newsreel" section. Why do you think Dos Passos and authors such as T. S. Eliot and Gertrude Stein use this technique? What is the effect of jumbling together seemingly unrelated materials, and what does this technique achieve that could not be achieved any other way?

Exploration: Much modern art also patches together disparate elements to create a whole, as Dos Passos does in *The Big Money*. Take a look at some collage images. Picasso and Braque were especially fond of this technique and exhibited some of these works in the Armory Show of 1913. Do you see similarities between their work and Dos Passos's? What could their preference for such a technique be saying about modernity?

Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961)

Hemingway once stated that his goal as a writer was to create "one true sentence." The characteristic pared-down style he developed influenced a number of subsequent authors. Known for his emotionally recalcitrant characters, Hemingway created stories of men proving themselves in physically demanding conditions and trying to come to grips with a world that after the horror of World War I seemed largely out of their control.

Born and raised in a Chicago suburb, Hemingway was one of six children. His father was a doctor and his mother a schoolteacher. Following graduation from high school, Hemingway worked as a reporter for the *Kansas City Star*, but remained there only a few months. The eighteen-year-old Hemingway intended to join the army when the United States entered World War I in 1917, but a problem with his eye disqualified him. Instead, he became a volunteer ambulance driver in Italy and later served in the Italian infantry. He was wounded by shrapnel not long after and carried a fellow soldier to safety despite his own serious injury. This event profoundly influenced his future thinking about himself and his place in the world; brushes with death and the idea of wounds, both physical and psychological, would haunt his later fiction. As the first American wounded in Italy, Hemingway became known as a hero, which also became part of the persona he adopted in ensuing years. After only six months abroad, he returned to the United States, feeling that he had changed significantly while America had not. He became a correspondent for the *Toronto Star* and in 1920 married Hadley Richardson. The couple moved to Paris, where Hemingway met many significant literary figures, including

[3841] Anonymous, *Young Hemingway (far right) with His Family* (1906), courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library.

HEMINGWAY WEB ARCHIVE

[3841] Anonymous, *Young Hemingway (far right) with His Family* (1906), courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library. Photograph of Ernest Hemingway as a child with his father, mother, brother, and sister. His family was wealthy and lived in a suburb of Chicago where residents generally espoused conservative politics. Hemingway's mother would dress him in girl's clothing well into his childhood.

[3850] Anonymous, *Hemingway in His World War I Ambulance Driver's Uniform* (1917), courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library. Posed portrait of Hemingway in military dress. Hemingway incorporated into his works the brutality he witnessed during World War I.

[3854] Anonymous, *Hemingway Trying His Hand at Bullfighting in Pamplona, Spain* (1924), courtesy of the John F. Kennedy Library. Gelatin silver print of Hemingway in Spain. Bullfighting figures prominently in Hemingway's novel *The Sun Also Rises*.

[3860] Anonymous, *Hemingway on Safari in East Africa* (1934), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration, the John F. Kennedy Library. Hemingway posing with large antlers from animal carcass. Death and injury were important themes in Hemingway's writing, possibly due to the injuries he received and witnessed as an ambulance driver during World War I.

[4408] Anonymous, *Ernest Hemingway 1923 Passport Photograph* (1923), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration. Hemingway was one of many American authors who worked in Europe. The expatriate artists claimed that Europe offered freedom from restrictive American mores.

[5980] ABC Press Service, *Scene During the Siege of Teruel, Spain* (1938), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-112445]. Photograph of fighting, casualties, and old building in Teruel, Spain. Teruel was the site of a Republican victory in the Spanish Civil War. Hemingway supported the Republicans, writing *The Fifth Column* to promote their cause.

Gertrude Stein and Ezra Pound. Stein especially encouraged his literary efforts. Sherwood Anderson and F. Scott Fitzgerald read his work, gave him advice, and helped secure the publication of *In Our Time*, a collection of his stories.

The novel that established his reputation as a literary figure, however, was *The Sun Also Rises*, published in 1926. Written in what would become known as the "Hemingway style," the novel's terse prose and dialogue would pave the way for a new style of fiction writing, stripped-down and spare in comparison to the novels that preceded it. *Men without Women*, another collection of short stories, was published in 1927. *A Farewell to Arms*, about an American officer's romance with a British nurse, appeared in 1929. Hemingway's interest in politics heightened in the 1930s; between 1936 and 1939 he served as a newspaper correspondent in Spain, covering the Spanish Civil War, the setting of his novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls* (1940). During World War II he again served as a correspondent, and following the war he settled in Cuba. His marriage to Hadley broke up in 1927; he married three more times.

While traveling in Africa in 1953, Hemingway survived a plane crash, which injured him badly. His health was never fully restored, and in the 1950s, despite winning the 1953 Pulitzer Prize for *The Old Man and the Sea* and the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954, Hemingway suffered from recurrent bouts of depression as well as paranoia. He committed suicide in 1961, at the age of sixty-two.

TEACHING TIP

■ "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is a good text to use for considering how Hemingway defines masculinity. The places described in the story are largely places lacking women, places where men may prove themselves physically and mentally. Yet the story is ultimately about man's helplessness and powerlessness; as in other Hemingway works written following World War I (for example, *The Sun Also Rises*), masculinity is not particularly secure, and Hemingway's writing seeks to come to grips with this loss of power and control. Students may want to speculate about Harry's relationship with and attitude toward his wife and other women in his past.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Like Hemingway, the main character of "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is a writer. What does the story suggest about the way writers think? What is the significance of the subjects Harry wants to address in his writing? How do you interpret the settings of the stories he wishes to write and the setting in which he is dying? What could the dream at the end of the story mean? What is the significance of his going to Kilimanjaro?

Comprehension: Hemingway was known for his stylistic innovations. In this story, he uses italics to construct a parallel narrative to the primary one. How do the italicized and un-italicized sections of the

story work together? How are their styles different? What is revealed in the italicized sections that does not appear elsewhere?

Context: Harry is dying from gangrene that developed from a trivial and untreated scratch. What does this cause of death say about the masculine valor Harry prizes? Look at other post–World War I texts that deal with manhood and its relation to death, such as T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" or E. E. Cummings's "next to of course god america i." What commentary do these works make on the amount of power and control men have over their lives?

Exploration: What modernist techniques does this story employ? What do you see in the narrative structure or style as specifically modernist? Consider this work in conjunction with T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* or "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" or the spare poetry of William Carlos Williams.

[5981] Arribas, *18, Julio* (1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-3911]. Propaganda poster showing civilian with gun in front of ghost of soldier. On July 18, 1936, the Spanish Civil War began and Barrio, of the Republican Party, became prime minister.

[7824] Emory Elliot, Interview: "Hemingway's Masculinity" (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Emory Elliot, professor of English at the University of California, Riverside, hypothesizes about why masculinity was such a significant issue in Ernest Hemingway's life and work.

Hart Crane (1899–1932)

Though Hart Crane only lived thirty-three years, the rich poetry he produced provides readers with an alternative view of modernity—his poems seek connectedness and optimism in a world many of his contemporaries saw as fragmented and hopeless. His life was not an easy one; his relationship with his parents was strained, he drank heavily, and he was homosexual at a time when homosexuality was not openly discussed, much less tolerated. Born in Ohio, Hart Crane moved to New York at the age of eighteen to pursue a career as a writer. Two years later, he returned to Ohio to try his hand at business in order to support himself while he worked at the craft of writing. Though he was not especially successful in business, in his four years in Cleveland Crane developed friendships with a variety of intellectuals and published several of the poems that established his literary reputation. "Chaplinesque" appeared in 1921 and "For the Marriage of Faustus and Helen" was published in 1922. In 1923 he returned to New York City to begin his writing career in earnest.

His first four years in New York were very productive: he finished his sequence *Voyages* and in 1926 published his first collection of poetry, entitled *White Buildings*. Ten of the fifteen poems that constitute his long work *The Bridge* were also completed during this period. Though he worked occasionally, he was supported primarily by friends and family, in particular a banker named Otto Kahn, who became something of a patron.

Crane thought of himself as a visionary in the tradition of the celebratory optimism of Walt Whitman. Crane was interested in the methods of modernism, but did not share completely the modernist pessimism about the state of the contemporary world. Rather than bemoan the loss of a time past, Crane's work sought affirmation and hope in the fabric of everyday life. In *The Bridge*, Crane employs the Brooklyn Bridge as a symbol to suggest the unifying potential of the

[7194] Samuel H. Gottscho, *New York City Views. Financial District, framed by Brooklyn Bridge*, courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G612-T01-21249].

modern world: the bridge links far-flung reaches of the United States in a celebration of the possibilities of America and its people. Published in 1930, the poem did not receive favorable reviews from critics. It won an award from *Poetry* magazine, however, and Crane received a fellowship from the Guggenheim Foundation that year as well. Nonetheless, Crane was uncertain about his career in literature, and on his return from Mexico, where he had been working on another book, he jumped from the ship and drowned.

TEACHING TIPS

■ *The Bridge* could be fruitfully paired with Whitman's *Song of Myself* or "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," as both poets aim to encompass and represent all aspects of America and American life. Ask students to find parallels in imagery, structure, and ideology between Crane's and Whitman's poems. Ask them to consider the difference between the symbol of the bridge as that which links times and places together as opposed to Whitman's use of himself as the connector of people from different times and places.

■ Because Crane uses visual references as touchstones for his poems, you might want to make your class's study of his work multimedia. The archive provides an image of the Brooklyn Bridge, which was constructed in the 1880s, when it was an engineering feat that surpassed all previous bridge construction and joined two of the most populous cities in the world. Consider presenting this information to extend your students' thinking about Crane's choice of the bridge as a symbol. Also ask them to consider the form of the Brooklyn Bridge, which, despite its modern construction, employs an almost medieval architectural vocabulary. You might also show a clip from a Charlie Chaplin film in conjunction with Crane's "Chaplinesque" and ask some of the same questions—what is it about this icon of silent film that appeals to Crane? How might Chaplin's body movements and the plots he involves himself in be attractive as a subject for poetry?

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What does the speaker admire about Charlie Chaplin in "Chaplinesque"? What is the significance of the kitten in this poem? What do you think is meant by the assertion that the moon can "make / A grail of laughter of an empty ash can"?

Context: Look at photographs of the Brooklyn Bridge and read Crane's poem about it. Why does this bridge function as an effective symbol for Crane? What is the poem saying about contemporary American society? What is its attitude toward modernization?

Context: Crane's poetry relies heavily on metaphor, which he believed gave poetry its power to communicate with a reader. Choose a metaphor from one of Crane's poems and another from a poem by Marianne Moore. How do the two poets use these metaphors as vehicles for their ideas? What makes these metaphors effec-

CRANE WEB ARCHIVE

[6027] Walker Evans, *Portrait of Poet Hart Crane* (1930), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-122934]. Crane lived in New York City and socialized with important literary figures, including E. E. Cummings and Jean Toomer.

[6287] Frank Pearsall, *Walt Whitman, half-length portrait, seated, facing left, left hand under chin* (1869), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-89947]. Modernist poet Hart Crane considered himself an artist in Whitman's tradition of optimism and exuberance. Both tried to represent the vastness of America in life and modernity.

[6548] A. E. Marey, *Going to See Chaplin* (1920), courtesy of the Gazette du Bon Ton. Line outside theater in Paris. Technology made movies available to mass audiences and facilitated popular culture, which often crossed national boundaries. Hart Crane's poem "Chaplinesque" referenced Charlie Chaplin, a popular comic actor.

[7194] Samuel H. Gottscho, *New York City Views. Financial District, framed by Brooklyn Bridge,* courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G612-T01-21249]. Hart Crane used the Brooklyn Bridge to represent modernization's unifying potential, while some authors perceived technology and urbanization to be fragmenting.

[7656] Anonymous, Charlie Chaplin in *The Vagabond* (1916), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-6636]. In his poem "Chaplinesque," Hart Crane explored Chaplin's comic grace.

tive? What similarities and differences do you see in the poets' approaches?

Exploration: Read Walt Whitman's "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry" and consider what it has in common with Crane's *The Bridge*. Do you see similarities in their outlook on modern life? Both employ symbols of modernity—the ferry, which brings commuters to work in Manhattan, and the Brooklyn Bridge, which joined Brooklyn to Manhattan three decades after Whitman first published his poem. Why do you think both poems are set in this space between two cities? What does each poem say about the possibilities for connection between people? About the relation of the present to the past?

Suggested Author Pairings

NELLA LARSEN, F. SCOTT FITZGERALD, SHERWOOD ANDERSON, AND SUSAN GLASPELL

All these authors comment on the status of American society, criticizing the ways individuals are restricted by their race, gender, class, or personal desires. Set in very different locations, these authors' works allow students to reflect on some of the different ways society may limit the individual. You might use Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* to consider more fully the limitations of the American dream suggested by "Winter Dreams" and consider how gender complicates the limits on individual desires in *Trifles* and *Winesburg, Ohio*. *Quicksand* permits a discussion of the effects of both gender and race on the individual's pursuit of self-fulfillment. These texts may also be linked with texts from other units: you could pair some of Larsen's criticisms of race in America with those leveled by Harlem Renaissance poets such as Langston Hughes and Claude McKay. Glaspell's play connects well to several feminist authors in the nineteenth century; Fanny Fern's short essays and Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wall-paper" might usefully extend your discussion of restrictions placed upon women. You might also select works that query how men are likewise limited by gender: Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises*, John Cheever's "The Swimmer," and Raymond Carver's "Cathedral" would allow students to discuss how gender stereotypes may inhibit men as well as women. Anderson's stories would likewise complement this discussion, as *Winesburg, Ohio* examines the frustration of characters of both sexes.

GERTRUDE STEIN, JOHN DOS PASSOS, AND ERNEST HEMINGWAY

These authors' works highlight some of the stylistic innovations of modernism. Stein's idiosyncratic use of language, Dos Passos's inclusion of "newsreel" and "camera eye" materials, and Hemingway's nonlinear narrative all demonstrate some of the experiments being made by writers after World War I. These innovators in prose could also be taught with the most innovative of the modernist poets, Eliot, Pound,

and perhaps Williams. Class discussion might focus on the different types of experimentation found in this prose and poetry, from choice of word to subject matter to form. These authors' works could also be paired fruitfully with some archive images of modern art. This juxtaposition would allow students to consider the breaks with tradition, the fragmentations of perspectives, and the celebrations of streamlined forms that were concurrently taking place in modern art.

HART CRANE AND JOHN DOS PASSOS

These writers employ popular culture in their work, and you might create a multimedia unit in which you pair a screening of a Charlie Chaplin film such as *The Kid* (1921) with a reading of "Chaplinesque." Dos Passos's work incorporates the newsreel, and again you might bring footage to class for students to watch. Ask students to think about the intersections of popular culture and art, and about how the newsreel material of *The Big Money* functions with respect to the rest of the novel. Several William Carlos Williams poems also reference popular culture, especially advertising, and you might also discuss some of the collage art of the Cubists that incorporates remnants of newspapers and packaging.

WALLACE STEVENS, ERNEST HEMINGWAY, AND NELLA LARSEN

These authors all examine crises of faith and the difficulty of establishing meaning in the modern world. You might look at how the quest for meaning is treated differently in Stevens's poetry, Hemingway's short story, and Larsen's novel. "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" layers questions about meaning over concerns about authorship and artistic creativity, and *Quicksand* layers questions about personal identity and faith with those of race in America. This questioning of faith might also be traced through works in other units, especially in the modern poets Robert Frost and Langston Hughes.

SHERWOOD ANDERSON, MARIANNE MOORE, AND GERTRUDE STEIN

These writers employ something of a scientific approach to the world, observing people and objects carefully in their poetry and prose. Discussion might include a focus on individual psychology in the work of Stein and Anderson and the investigation of human nature in the works of Moore. Stein's portraits and descriptions focus less on the person or thing being described than on the variety of words one might use to describe them; the emphasis is on the language of communication rather than the information to be communicated. In contrast to Stein's look at the language of individual consciousness, Moore's poems seek universal truths and examine the vastly different effects of social forces on individuals.

CORE CONTEXTS

The War to End All Wars: The Impact of World War I

[6972] National Photo Company, *Tank ploughing its way through a trench and starting toward the German line, during World War I, near Saint Michel, France* (c. 1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115011].

Considered by contemporary observers to be "the war to end all wars," World War I radically shifted the way people thought about the world and the relationships between different nations. Beginning as a localized conflict between Austria and Serbia, the war escalated through a series of complex treaties and agreements among thirty-two nations of Europe, all of whom would eventually become involved in the war. Technological innovations had changed the face of warfare, which was now fought from a distance with bombs and poison gas. Opposing armies dug trenches on either side of contested areas of land, and soldiers found they could do little but wait for attack. The unimaginable horror of trench warfare—with the incredibly destructive bombs and deadly gas falling on soldiers waiting in wet and rat-infested holes—left a lasting impression on the soldiers lucky enough to return from the war. A new postwar condition emerged called "shell-shock"; many men returning home found themselves angry, depressed, confused, and haunted by nightmares of what they had seen on Europe's battlefields. Casualties reached staggeringly high numbers; it seemed that an entire generation of young men had died in the gruesome battles fought over mere yards of muddy ground. Ten million died in battle and twenty million more died of disease and hunger as a result of the war. Following the war, a severe flu epidemic spread around the globe as men returned home, and twenty million people died from complications associated with the flu.

In America, World War I had a lesser impact, though its effects were certainly felt. The American poet E. E. Cummings claimed that "World War I was the experience of my generation." Led by President Woodrow Wilson, the United States tried to maintain its isolation from the distant battles of European nations, believing America should not embroil itself in European squabbles. By 1917 the devastation that Europe had suffered along with the building pressure to protect U.S. economic interests in Europe swayed public opinion to support the war and "make the world safe for democracy." Despite patriotic propaganda, however, only 73,000 men volunteered to fill the million-man quota, and Congress called for a draft.

[6966] James Montgomery Flagg, *The Navy Needs You! Don't Read American History—Make It!* (1917), courtesy of the Library of Congress [2001700115].

Support for America's late entrance into the European war was hardly unified: in response to the criticism leveled at the government by numerous socialists, intellectuals, pacifists, and isolationists, the Espionage Act of 1917 made it a criminal offense to speak out against the war. The hypocritical patriotism promoted by the government angered dissenters, who claimed that the war was yet another opportunity for big business to protect and expand itself at the expense of common soldiers who went to die on distant battlefields. Socialist

[6971] Underwood and Underwood, *Learning of German retreat from her district, French woman returns to find her home a heap of ruins* (1917), courtesy of Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115012].

agitator Charles Schenck distributed leaflets protesting the war and calling the draft "involuntary servitude" against which the Constitution was supposed to protect Americans. He called the draft "a monstrous deed against humanity in the interests of the financiers of Wall Street" (Zinn 356). The Espionage Act denied rights to free speech protected by the Constitution, but the Supreme Court nonetheless upheld the act, and objectors were jailed.

Historian Howard Zinn describes the war as a powerful unifying tool for a country split by class conflict and racial tensions; both before and after the war, the country seemed to many on the brink of revolution. (See Unit 12 for more on socialism and unions in the early twentieth century.) In contrast, many of the writers covered in this unit felt strongly about service to countries struggling to defend themselves, and some participated in the war even before the United States entered it: Hemingway, Stein, and Dos Passos all volunteered to drive ambulances in Europe, and Fitzgerald enlisted in the U.S. army in 1917. Novelist Edith Wharton, then residing in France, also worked to help war refugees, for which she was awarded the Legion of Honor by the French government.

Fifty thousand American soldiers died in what became known as "The Great War" and those who returned home shared the disillusionment of their European counterparts. Many wrote about the war in the years following. It seemed proof positive that the frightening trends of modernization, advances in science and technology in particular, had terrifying and unimaginably destructive consequences. T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* depicts the world as a place devoid of life or meaning, a waste land not unlike the stretches of ground that separated opposing armies, over which they meaninglessly fought and refought, moving a few yards forward, only to be driven back, move forward, and be driven back again. Reporting in Europe generally neglected to mention the carnage on the battlefields, and the public was largely unaware of the extent of the destruction and the comparatively small gains made in return for the thousands of lives lost in each battle.

At the end of the war, the triumphant Allies—chief among them England, France, and the United States—demanded reparations from the defeated countries, especially Germany. Unable to make the reparation payments, Germany's economy collapsed. The harsh terms of the Treaty of Versailles in 1919 set the stage for Germany's aggressions leading up to what would become World War II.

Both during and after World War I, European and American writers expressed disillusionment with the lofty ideals that had led them into battle. In Britain a number of young writers such as Wilfred Owen and Sigfried Sassoon wrote poetry in response to what they had seen on the battlefields of France. E. E. Cummings—who, like Hemingway, Dos Passos, and Anderson, served as an ambulance driver in France—wrote "next to of course god america i," which questions the blind patriotism that young men like himself had been encouraged to feel. Their ideals shattered, young writers returning from war appeared to Gertrude Stein a "lost generation," a generation whose worldview had

"WAR TO END ALL WARS" WEB ARCHIVE

[6115] Charles Gustrine, *True Sons of Freedom* (1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-2426]. Photograph of segregated African American regiment during World War I. African American soldiers often worked for civil rights both during and after their military service.

[6556] Vincent Aderente, *Columbia Calls* (1916), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-8315]. Propaganda poster calling for Americans to enlist to fight in World War I.

[6963] American Lovers of Italy, *Ambulances in Italy, 1917* (1917), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-7387]. Many modernist writers, including John Dos Passos and Ernest Hemingway, served as ambulance drivers or in other capacities during World War I.

[6965] Committee on Public Information, *Under Four Flags*, Third United States Official War Picture

been radically altered by the most horrifying and destructive war anyone had yet experienced. The work these writers produced demonstrates their belief in the world as an uncertain and often illogical place, and their fiction and poetry often employ a similarly disorienting structure. By breaking with traditions of narrative and poetic form, these authors attempted to capture in the very fabric of their writing the confusion and dislocation fostered by modernity.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Why did World War I have such a pronounced impact on writers and thinkers? What made this war different from previous wars?

Comprehension: Examine the poster advertising war bonds located in the archive. How does this image appeal to its viewers? Why do you think this image was selected by the government? What does the text tell you about contemporary attitudes toward the war?

Comprehension: In Wallace Stevens's "Death of a Soldier," what is the speaker's attitude toward the death of this soldier? What does the poem seem to be saying about war in general? How does what you know about World War I help to explain this attitude?

Context: Read E. E. Cummings's "next to of course god america i." Pick out the different references to popular songs and sayings and consider what juxtaposing them in this way does to their meaning. What does the poem say about the popular rhetoric of patriotism? What is its attitude toward war?

Context: Though Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" is set in Africa, in Harry's flashback, readers get glimpses of his experiences in the war. How do the scenes of war figure in this story? How are they described and why do you think they are included in this story of a man dying in Africa? What comment do they make on war?

Context: Look at Robert Frost's poem "Fire and Ice" or T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*. Is there a way to read these poems as commenting on the war or its aftermath? What could Frost be saying about human nature and the effects of our actions or inactions? How does Eliot present the world he depicts? Why do you think the outlook of the poem is so bleak?

Exploration: Think of movies you've seen that depict wars. Consider different time periods: from *Birth of a Nation* (1915) to *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1930) to *Sergeant York* (1941) to *Paths of Glory* (1957) to *M*A*S*H* (1970) to *Platoon* (1986) to *Saving Private Ryan* (1998). How do these or other war movies you've seen portray war? Are conflicts shown as opportunities to demonstrate valor or pointless fights that ultimately achieve nothing (or a combination of both)? Which portrayals do you think are currently most accepted by society at large, and what do you think influences societal beliefs about war? How do you explain the shifting attitudes toward war represented in these films?

Exploration: Consider how World War I was presented to you in the history classes you've had. Did your class cover the protests against

(1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-947]. Poster for U.S. World War I propaganda film. The U.S. government tried to sway public opinion in favor of fighting with the Allied powers.

[6966] James Montgomery Flagg, *The Navy Needs You! Don't Read American History — Make It!* (1917), courtesy of the Library of Congress [2001700115]. Recruitment poster showing businessman, sailor, and female figure with American flag. Reversing its previous policy of isolationism, the government solicited volunteers for World War I.

[6971] Underwood and Underwood, *Learning of German Retreat from Her District, French Woman Returns to Find Her Home a Heap of Ruins* (1917), courtesy of Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115012]. Photograph of seated woman looking at the ruins of her home in the Somme region. Bombing damaged and destroyed many buildings in Europe. Images such as this illustrated the dangers of technology and modernization.

[6972] National Photo Company, *Tank Ploughing Its Way through a Trench and Starting toward the German Line, during World War I, near Saint Michel, France* (c. 1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115011]. Black-and-white photograph of a tank on a World War I battlefield. Devastation amplified by mechanized weapons and the horror of trench warfare created a sense of disillusionment in many modernist writers.

[6973] Central News Photo Service, *Another Sort of War Ruin—After Several Days in the Trenches* (1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-115013]. Photograph of badly wounded soldier, assisted by comrade. Although many Americans approached World War I with optimism, their experiences with brutal trench warfare and mechanized weaponry were disillusioning.

[7669] William Allen Rogers, *Buy a Liberty Bond To-day!* (1918), courtesy of the Library of Congress [CAI-Rogers, no. 232]. War bonds were an important way to rally nationalism as well as raise money for war efforts. Here the artist uses a melting pot motif to enlist the aid of recent immigrants. Originally pub-

lished in the *New York Herald*, May 1, 1918, p. 5.

[7803] Pancho Savery, Interview: "The Lost Generation Writing on World War I and Alienation" (2001), courtesy of Annenberg Media. Savery, of Reed College, discusses modernist writers' loss of innocence when faced with the brutal warfare of World War I and suggests that this disillusionment marks a break between the modern and Victorian eras.

[8246] George M. Cohan, *Over There!* [title page] (1917), courtesy of the Digital Scriptorium Rare Book, Manuscript, and Special Collections Library, Duke University. Title page for the sheet music to the song that rallied the nation to take action in World War I. Cohan also composed "You're a Grand Old Flag" and "Give My Regards to Broadway."

the war? If not, why do you suppose history books would leave out such things as the Espionage Act and the people who were imprisoned for violating it?

Exploration: Examine the images of World War I soldiers and battlefields included in the archive. How are these pictures presenting scenes of war? What do they seem to be asking the viewer to think and feel? Find other images of war you've seen in contemporary magazines and compare them to the World War I images. What has changed about the way war is presented visually to the public? What has remained the same? You might also look at some of the earliest photography of war: pictures of the Civil War. How was the camera being used to present war to newspaper readers?

Modernity and Technology: The Age of Machines

Americans' fascination with and dependence upon a variety of machines was well established by the closing years of the nineteenth century; in the early years of the twentieth century, this fascination only deepened as technological innovation became more and more widespread. Most major cities relied on some form of mechanized public transit to get residents from one side of growing metropolises to the other, and more Americans bought the automobiles Henry Ford turned out at astonishing rates. There were only eight thousand automobiles in America in 1900, and by 1920 there were more than eight million. By 1940 that number had risen to thirty-two million. Electricity became more common: in 1917, only 24 percent of homes in America were electrified, and in 1940, almost 90 percent were.

In his discussion of the machine age aesthetic, art historian Richard Guy Wilson contends that in America the machine became an integral part of the lives of a wider segment of society than was the case in Europe, infiltrating not only the workplace, but the home as well: refrigerators (up to seven million in 1934 from only sixty-five thousand in 1924), vacuum cleaners, and apartment building elevators became increasingly commonplace. The number of telephones jumped from one million in 1900 to twenty million in 1930, allowing Americans from far-flung parts of the country to communicate with one another. The radio, introduced in the 1920s, only enhanced the interconnectedness of Americans and their access to information and entertainment. (For more on the impact of the radio on American culture and poetry, see "Broadcasting Modernization: Radio and the Battle over Poetry" in Unit 10.)

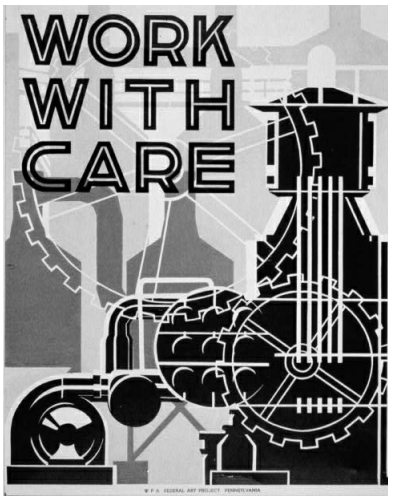
[7033] Wilbur Wright, *Orville Wright, Major John F. Curry, and Colonel Charles Lindbergh, who came to pay Orville a personal call at Wright Field* (1927), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-DIG-ppprs-00765].

The development of the film industry likewise brought the "moving pictures" to an ever-widening audience, which increasingly looked to Hollywood for cues that would determine cultural values. With the advent of sound at the end of the 1920s, film became one of the major

venues of American culture and Hollywood's influence expanded to become international in scope.

In 1903, brothers Wilbur and Orville Wright proved that man could fly; in Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, Orville had a successful flight of twelve seconds. In 1927 Charles Lindbergh completed the first transatlantic airplane flight, which took him more than thirty-three hours. After landing in Paris, he became an international hero and celebrity, one of the multiplying cultural links between the United States and Europe in an age of ever-faster international movement of people and ideas.

Literary critic Cecilia Tichi has argued that the machine age fundamentally changed the ways people viewed and thought about the world around them, as the human body itself came increasingly to be perceived as functioning like a machine. The efficiency expert Frederick Taylor developed a system to maximize profits by making factory workers as interchangeable as the parts in the machines they operated; as men and women came to be treated as interchangeable parts, their job security also lessened, for any worker could easily be replaced, a benefit for factory owners, but a significant disadvantage to the worker. These changes in the workplace certainly help to account for the rise in union membership coincident with the rise of **Taylorism**.



[7024] Nathan Sherman, *Work with Care* (c. 1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1172 DLC].

The power and possibility embodied by machines captured the imagination of everyday people, and especially fascinated artists and writers. The poet Hart Crane, for example, found the Brooklyn Bridge a compelling symbol of the possibility of the United States; his selecting a structure that represented the beginnings of American technological expertise and innovation suggests his belief in the potential of the machine-made world. Painters likewise turned to the machines of the early twentieth century for inspiration, finding the power and speed of machines appealing and adapting the streamlined look of ships and cars to their own work. Charles Sheeler, a painter and photographer working in the early twentieth century, likened the heavy machinery of industry to the massive architecture of European cathedrals, asserting that "Our factories are our substitutes for religious expression."

[7032] Samuel H. Gottscho, *New York City Views. From foot 32 E.R., to Chrysler, Derrick boom* (1932), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G612-T01-17832].

Architecture was also profoundly influenced by the possibilities opened up by machines, and city "skyscrapers" began to reach higher and higher. In 1909, the highest building in the world was the Metropolitan Life Tower, reaching 700 feet. In 1929, the Chrysler Building towered over it, its peak at an astounding 1046 feet. (It remained the tallest building in the world for only one year; the Empire State Building surpassed it in 1931.) The Chrysler Building, constructed for the Chrysler motorcar corporation, had a celebration of the machine built into its very fabric: architectural details used automotive motifs, and decorative elements were shaped like wheels and hood ornaments. The machine aesthetic influenced other areas of design as well,

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[4737] William France, *New York City, Northeast View from the Empire State Building* (1931), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-118869]. New York City's skyline symbolized the economic and technological developments that encouraged taller buildings and urbanization.

[4766] Aaron Douglas, *The Judgement Day* (1927), courtesy of The Walter O. Evans Collection of African American Art. Aaron Douglas, American (1899–1979). Gouache on paper; 11 3/4 x 9 in. Douglas's painting incorporated images from jazz and African traditions, including music and dancing.

[4841] Ben Shahn, *Vacuum Cleaner Factory, Arthurdale, West Virginia* (1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USF33-006352-M5]. Arthurdale was one of three New Deal subsistence farm projects in Preston County, West Virginia. Farming was intended to supplement other opportunities, such as in this vacuum factory or in the Mountain Craftsmen's Cooperative Association. Vacuum cleaners were a popular new item in the late 1920s and 1930s.

[4848] Jack Delano, *Blue Island, Illinois. Switching a Train with a Diesel Switch Engine on the Chicago and Rock Island Rail Road* (1943), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USW3-026606-E DLC]. The Chicago and Rock Island Rail Road Company began operation in 1848. The 1930s saw the development of a lighter diesel engine capable of producing more horsepower that in turn brought great innovations to freight trains and streamlined "lightweight" passenger trains.

[6547] Anonymous, *Miss Katherine Stinson and Her Curtiss Aeroplane* (1910), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-106324]. Curtiss biplane and early aviator Stinson (1891–1977), the fourth licensed woman pilot in the United States, was a talented stunt pilot who carried air mail, raised over two million dollars for the Red Cross, and trained pilots for the U.S. Air Force.

[6898] Anonymous, *Charles Lindbergh, Full-Length Portrait, Standing, Facing*

underpinning what came to be known as **art deco**, a streamlined style that drew on the vocabulary of machines, which designers applied to furniture, interior design, appliances, and jewelry. Music also experimented with the application of machine aesthetics to orchestral pieces, and works such as George Antheil's 1925 "Ballet Méchanique" were performed around the country.

The machine also demonstrated its tremendous power not only to create but to destroy in World War I, where distant machines lobbed powerful explosives at enemies too far away to see. Rather than facing individual enemies on the battlefield, combatants in World War I dug trenches and waited for shells and gas to drop on them, and the resulting casualties were gruesome and more numerous than in any previous war. No one had imagined that such horror was possible, and the dangers that modern mechanization imposed on humanity suddenly became apparent.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: Why do critics call the early twentieth century the Machine Age? What made machines so significant at that moment in time?

Comprehension: What are some of the effects of the proliferation of machines after the turn of the century? How did they change the way people lived their day-to-day lives?

Comprehension: What values are promoted by the machine aesthetic? What do you see in the details of the Chrysler Building, for example, that demonstrates these values?

Context: How does the Brooklyn Bridge function as a symbol in Hart Crane's *The Bridge*? What attitudes does the poem express about the place of machinery in contemporary life?

Context: How do the images in the archive (the Aaron Douglas paintings, for example) respond to the machine aesthetic? How do they employ the vocabulary of machinery and to what effect?

Context: How are the lives of the characters of Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams" affected by the machinery in it? What do the cars and boats that form part of the background say about Dexter and Judy Jones? (You might also consider this question in relation to Fitzgerald's novel *The Great Gatsby*.) What does this suggest to you about the role of machinery in the lives of the wealthy? Of the poor?

Exploration: Look at the advertisements included in the archive that juxtapose human bodies with machines. Why do you think this might be an attractive marketing strategy? Can you think of recent advertisements that ask consumers to think of their bodies in this way?

Exploration: How do different early-twentieth-century texts depict machines? Consider some of the novels, stories, and poems you've read from the first decades of the century—how does Fitzgerald portray the automobile in *The Great Gatsby*? What is the attitude expressed about machinery in Robert Frost's poem "Out, Out—"?

What is the function of the telephone in Dorothy Parker's story "The Telephone Call"? Do you see parallels in literature from other times or other nations? British novelist E. M. Forster's *Howards End*, for example? What do these connections suggest to you about the relationship of humans to machines?

Cultural Change, Cultural Exchange: The Jazz Age, the Depression, and Transatlantic Modernism

Popular history depicts the inter-war period as a time of raucous frivolity, speakeasies, flappers, and stock market millions. Indeed, unemployment during the 1920s in America was relatively low; some made sizable fortunes by speculating on Wall Street; and women wore shorter dresses and enjoyed a certain degree of freedom. But only an elite few enjoyed the easy lifestyle portrayed in overly nostalgic looks back at this decade; in America in the 1920s, one-tenth of a percent of the wealthiest families made as much money each year as 42 percent of the poorest families. Wealth was not enjoyed equally by everyone, and the twenties also witnessed growing numbers of labor strikes and a rise in what was called **nativism**, a preoccupation with protecting the interests of "native-born" Americans against those of increasing numbers of foreign immigrants. In 1924, the Immigration Act capped the number of immigrants permitted to enter the United States, particularly those from countries with cultures deemed unassimilable: while 34,000 British immigrants were allowed to enter, only 100 could come from any African nation or China.

At the same time in Europe, a spirit of experimentation and artistic freedom prevailed, and many artists moved abroad to find places to live that were more conducive to their work than the conservative and restrictive United States. These American expatriates contributed to the renovation of art and literature termed **modernism**. The label "modernist" applies to works of literature, art, and music produced during this time period that in a variety of ways reflect a "modern temper." Such work is characterized by a sense of loss, alienation, or confusion caused by changes in the social and physical world that served to dislocate individuals from traditional understandings of how the world functioned. Modernist works tend to break with conventions governing art: modernist writers often shied away from conventions of chronology, point of view, and coherence; modernist artists dismissed traditional conventions of representation, depicting fragmented and abstract images; composers rejected rules about melody and harmony. Much in modern society—moral values, gender roles, connection to one's work—seemed to have splintered apart, and modern art in some ways represented this sense of fragmentation. Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* provides a visual image of this fragmentation; John Dos Passos's pastiche of story and newspaper headlines textually represents a fragmented world.

Modernism was an international phenomenon; in the early twenti-

Front, Beside the Spirit of St. Louis (1927), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-93443]. Lindbergh became an international celebrity after he completed the first transatlantic flight.

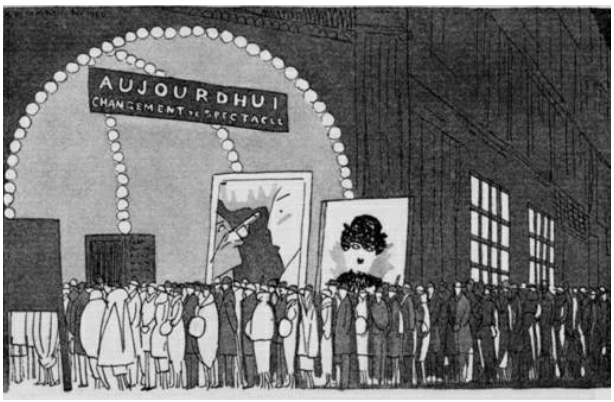
[7024] Nathan Sherman, *Work with Care* (c. 1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC2-1172 DLC]. This woodprint was created as part of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Art Project. The WPA provided over nine million people with sustaining wages by employing them to build roads, beautify buildings, play concerts, and write histories, along with a wide range of other activities. President Roosevelt's plan was to provide multiple forms of relief to the unemployed.

[7032] Samuel H. Gottscho, *New York City Views. From Foot 32 E.R., to Chrysler, Derrick Boom* (1932), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G612-T01-17832]. As technology developed, buildings grew taller and became known as "skyscrapers," making the modern cityscape profoundly different from the cityscapes of earlier ages.

[7033] Wilbur Wright, *Orville Wright, Major John F. Curry, and Colonel Charles Lindbergh, Who Came to Pay Orville a Personal Call at Wright Field* (1927), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-DIG-ppprs-00765]. These aviation and military leaders, photographed at Dayton, Ohio, helped mobilize developments in transportation, such as airplanes and automobiles, which facilitated cultural exchange between distant locations and contributed to a sense of rapid change.

[7194] Samuel H. Gottscho, *New York City Views. Financial District, Framed by Brooklyn Bridge,* courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-G612-T01-21249]. Hart Crane used the Brooklyn Bridge to represent modernization's unifying potential, while some authors perceived technology and urbanization to be fragmenting.

[7479] Ford Motor Company, *Ford Automobile, Made between 1900 and 1920* (c. 1915), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-118724]. The Ford Motor Company made automobiles available to more people, mass-producing and selling them for affordable prices.



[6548] A. E. Marey, *Going to See Chaplin* (1920), courtesy of the Gazette du Bon Ton.

[3547] Anonymous, *Louis Armstrong, Half-length Portrait, Facing Left, Playing Trumpet* (1937), courtesy of Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-118974].

eth century, travel and communication became increasingly easy, promoting the exchange of ideas among artists. Writers and artists in diverse countries answered the call to make a new kind of art for a new kind of world. They sought artistic inspiration from the cultural capitals of Europe; Fitzgerald, Hemingway, Stein, Anderson, Cummings, Joyce, and Picasso all lived and worked in Paris, which at the end of the nineteenth century had become a center for avant-garde art. Modernist artists of diverse nationalities worked in New York, Paris, and London, among a variety of other locations, and modernist thought traveled freely back and forth across the Atlantic and the borders of Europe through individuals and a vast array of publications. Paris was certainly a center for much of this thought, but modern art appeared in numerous other places, and modern architecture redefined cityscapes throughout the United States and Europe.

Nineteen thirteen was a watershed year for modernism: in New York, the Armory Show introduced abstract art to the American public, and in Paris music and dance took on new forms with the riot-provoking ballet *The Rite of Spring*, with its jarring music and erotic choreography. In her autobiography, arts patroness Mabel Dodge opined, "It seems as though everywhere, in that year of 1913, barriers went down and people reached each other who had never been in touch before; there were all sorts of new ways to communicate as well as new communications. The new spirit was abroad and swept us all together." In 1923, the sense that something important was happening in the world of letters that involved both Europe and America prompted Ford Madox Ford to start a magazine called *Transatlantic Review*, featuring the work of the multinational writers then residing, like Ford, in Paris.

European writers and artists also looked to other traditions for inspiration, especially in the cultures of Africa and Asia. Several historians have noted the significant influence of African American art and culture on the development of modernism. In part, modernists looked to the **primitive** as an antidote to the modern world and saw in African art and in people of African descent a link to a primordial past (for more on primitivism, see Unit 10). African American performers and writers found greater acceptance in Europe; Parisian audiences were fascinated by the new dance and music coming from performers Josephine Baker and Paul Robeson.

In 1929 the New York stock market crashed, wiping out the savings of millions of Americans and paralyzing industry; the economic collapse that ensued turned into a worldwide depression. Soon a quarter of the American work force was unemployed, and breadlines and soup kitchens attempted to meet the needs of the millions of Americans without sources of income or sustenance. Initially, economists and politicians predicted the depression would not last long, and those with money and power were unwilling to help the unemployed, whom

they believed to be out of work as a result of their own shortcomings. It was not until President Franklin D. Roosevelt's "New Deal" that the federal government began to provide relief to the unemployed, largely through new work programs created by government spending. The depression did not end until the onset of World War II, when production accelerated once again and more work became available. Many Americans in Europe returned home during the Depression, their sources of income destroyed by the crash. Nonetheless, the interaction of American and European artists had fundamentally changed the art and literature of the twentieth century.

[5935] Dorothea Lange, *Depression* (1935), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What made modernism a transatlantic phenomenon? Which technological and social developments contributed to this cultural exchange?

Comprehension: What attracted American authors to Europe? What did they find there that they couldn't find in the United States?

Comprehension: How did political and economic changes in the United States affect the cultural climate of Europe? What impact did the stock market crash and the depression have on Americans living abroad?

Context: In addition to its setting in Africa, Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" references numerous other locations where Harry had spent time. What function does this catalog of different locales serve in the story? Why does Harry reminisce about them as he lies dying in Africa? Why is he concerned that he hasn't written about these places?

Context: How does Paris figure in "Babylon Revisited"? As Charlie looks back on the end of the 1920s after the Wall Street crash, what does he think of the life he lived in Paris? What does he believe contributed to the lifestyle he led then?

Context: What does *Quicksand*'s Helga Crane criticize about American culture? What does she find different in Denmark? What options are open to her there that are not available in the United States? What limitations do Danish cultural values impose on her? What does the novel suggest about the influence of location on individuals' lives?

Exploration: Transatlantic exchanges were not new in the twentieth century. Look at some of the writings of early visitors to the United States and consider what they hoped to find. What did Alexis De Tocqueville, Fanny Trollope, and Charles Dickens have to say about the young republic? What did nineteenth-century American authors such as Hawthorne and James find lacking in American culture that they sought in Europe?

Exploration: The things that contributed to transatlantic exchanges

"CULTURAL CHANGE/ CULTURAL EXCHANGE" WEB ARCHIVE

[3334] Anonymous, *The Trading Floor of the New York Stock Exchange just after the Crash of 1929* (1929), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration [1930-67B]. Photograph taken from above the Stock Exchange floor. The crash and ensuing depression brought many expatriate artists back to the United States.

[3547] Anonymous, *Louis Armstrong, Half-length Portrait, Facing Left, Playing Trumpet* (1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-118974]. Innovations in music, prose, poetry, and painting mutually inspired each other. Writers tried to incorporate imagery and rhythms from jazz in their work. F. Scott Fitzgerald labeled the era the "Jazz Age."

[3548] Anonymous, *Louis Armstrong Conducting Band, NBC Microphone in Foreground* (1937), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-118977]. Louis Armstrong was one of

the best-known jazz musicians of the 1930s. Jazz was an important theme in modernist writing and visual art; its syncopated rhythms inspired both authors and painters.

[4022] Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase (No. 2)* (1912), courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Abstract painting exhibited at the Armory Show in New York in 1913. American audiences criticized and ridiculed the work, an example of cubism, a painting trend that incorporated fragmentation and geometrical shapes.

[5935] Dorothea Lange, *Depression* (1935), courtesy of the National Archives and Records Administration. Unemployed man leaning against vacant storefront. Many people lost their jobs and savings during the Great Depression. New Deal photographer Dorothea Lange captured many images of the hardships endured during this time.

[6520] Benson, Brown, Sterlin, and Lange, *Keep Jazzin' It Ras'* (1918), courtesy of the Brown University Library, Sheet Music Collection, The John Hay Library. Sheet music cover showing musicians and instruments. Jazz influenced poetry, prose, and painting, as artists tried to incorporate its images and rhythms.

[6540] Ethel M'Clellan Plummer, *Vanity Fair on the Avenue* (1914), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZC4-1408]. Four women in stylish attire. Popular culture and international cultural exchange, including high fashion, grew with technological advances.

[6548] A. E. Marey, *Going to see Chaplin* (1920), courtesy of the Gazette du Bon Ton. Individuals waiting to enter a theater in Paris. Technology made movies available to mass audiences and facilitated the production of popular culture, which often crossed national boundaries.

[6557] George Barbier, *La Belle Personne* (1925), courtesy of Chris Lowe. Painting of woman posed with fan, vase, and elegant curtain, table, and clothing. Definitions of female beauty and sexuality changed with modernization, diverging from restrictive Victorian standards.

between the world wars only intensified in the latter half of the twentieth century. How have jet airplanes, television, and the internet extended the cultural exchanges possible among distant nations? What are some examples of these exchanges and what impact do you think they have had on the development of art and literature? On national identity?

EXTENDED CONTEXTS

"An Explosion in a Shingle Factory": The Armory Show and the Advent of Modern Art

In 1913 the International Exhibition of Modern Art opened at the Sixty-Ninth Regiment Armory in New York City. Art historian Milton Brown calls it "the most important single exhibition ever held in America." Prior to what became known as the Armory Show, contemporary art and artists had received little attention from the American public, and this exhibition brought curious onlookers in numbers previously unimaginable. Displayed were works by avant-garde European artists such as Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, and Marcel Duchamp, all of whose abstract work had been shown in Europe beginning in 1905, with the *Fauviste* exhibition (where Gertrude Stein and her brother began collecting modern art). A similar exhibition in London in 1910 had prompted Virginia Woolf to tie a fundamental shift in the world to the display of those paintings, claiming that "on or about December 1910 human character changed." **Cubism**, a style of painting that emphasized the underlying geometric forms of objects, shocked American viewers, many of whom thought that the artists were trying to conceal their own lack of artistic talent or were simply insane. Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* caused the greatest public furor, standing for all that was wrong in modern art in the eyes of its critics. It became a target of public ridicule, and parodies of the work appeared in newspapers and journals. As Brown puts it, "American critics were as unprepared for the European visitation as they were for an exhibition of art from Mars." An art critic for the *New York Times* thought the work resembled "an explosion in a shingle factory."

Nonetheless, the show radically changed art in America. Shown alongside these ground-breaking works from Europe, and compared to **dadaist** and **surrealist** works of the late 1910s and 1920s, the work of the American artists thinking of themselves as revolutionaries seemed to pale by comparison. The artists representing the Ashcan School—including George Bellows, John Sloan, George Luks, and William Glackens—who had broken with American academic art in choosing to paint scenes of everyday, and especially working-class, life, found themselves considerably less revolutionary than they had thought. While works such as Bellows's *Stag at Sharkey's* and Luks's *Hester Street* depicted subject matter generally not considered appro-

priate to art, their paintings did not move toward the level of abstraction favored by Picasso and Duchamp, for example.

Other arts were also undergoing significant change at this time. When the Ballet Russe performed the modern ballet *The Rite of Spring* in Paris in 1913, the dissonant music by Stravinsky and the daring and sometimes erotic ballet choreography shocked the opening night audience and nearly provoked a riot. Stravinsky's rejection of conventions governing rhythm and melody paralleled poets' rejection of conventions governing the meter of verse.

By 1915 some critics were announcing that a shift had occurred in the artistic climate of the United States and that America would soon itself become a capital of culture. After the war, however, American politics became increasingly conservative, with the Volstead Act, the Red Scare, and restrictions on immigration, and American artists again looked to Europe. But throughout the 1920s the spirit of experimentation persisted in different groups, notably the European Surrealists, centered in New York, and by World War II artists in America were at the forefront of experimental art.

[6492] Anonymous, Armory Show Poster (1913), courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What was so new and shocking about the works exhibited in the Armory Show? How did these paintings differ from the art that had preceded them?

Context: What similarities can you see between the cubist paintings of the Armory Show and the literary techniques employed by writers like Stein and Dos Passos? Consider one of Picasso's cubist paintings and Stein's "Portrait of Picasso." How does Stein's use of language parallel the Cubists' use of paint?

Exploration: Research other exhibitions and consider their impact on people's perception of the world. Virginia Woolf believed that modern art actually changed the way people saw things and thought; are there other exhibits of art (e.g., Impressionist exhibits in France at the end of the nineteenth century, or an exhibit of Robert Mapplethorpe's photography in the late 1980s) that you believe have reshaped people's thinking? How did the many expositions of the nineteenth century (1851 in London, 1876 in Philadelphia, 1889 and 1900 in Paris, and the Columbian Exposition in Chicago in 1893, for example) change the way people understood the world they lived in? What is the role of the arts in shaping these beliefs and perceptions?

[4022] Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase* (No. 2) (1912), courtesy of the Philadephia Museum of Art.

Experimentation and Modernity: Paris, 1900–1930

Paris became the unofficial center of literary and artistic culture not long after the turn of the century. Following World War I, a number of American authors and painters moved to Paris; some had served in the army and remained in Europe after the Armistice, while others were lured from America by the vibrant cultural climate of the city and the

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[4022] Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending a Staircase* (No. 2) (1912), courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art. Abstract painting exhibited at the Armory Show in New York in 1913. American audiences criticized and ridiculed the work, an example of cubism, a style of painting that incorporated fragmentation and geometrical shapes.

[4024] Henri Matisse, *Goldfish and Sculpture* (*Les Poissons*) (1911), courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art. Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo began collecting works of modern art in the early 1900s, including paintings by Matisse and Picasso.

[4525] Joan Miro, *Shooting Star* (1938), courtesy of the National Gallery of Art. Surreal painting emphasizing the geometrical shapes and human forms in abstract art. Modern art was initially centered in Europe and met with hostility from American audiences.

[5303] Arthur B. Davies, *Dancers* (1914), courtesy of the Detroit Institute of Art. An example of modern art and cubism, showing geometric forms in nude human forms.

[6492] Anonymous, Armory Show Poster (1913), courtesy of the Smithsonian Institution, the Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden. The Armory Show was an exhibit of international modern art held in New York City. Many American viewers responded negatively to works by the European artists.

[7500] Anonymous, *Pablo Picasso in His Paris Studio* (1939), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-99813]. Photograph of Picasso, surrounded by furniture and art. Picasso was important to art scenes in both New York and Paris and associated with writers, including Gertrude Stein.

extremely favorable monetary exchange rate. Artists and writers sought inspiration in the older culture of France, and many felt that Paris accorded them freedoms unavailable in the United States, which was still influenced in part by the Puritan work ethic and a repression of individual desire. Gertrude Stein commented on America's opposition to art: "Of course they came to Paris a great many of them to paint pictures and naturally they could not do that at home, or write they could not do that at home either, they could be dentists at home." Ezra Pound believed that American culture was essentially anti-culture and squashed the creativity of would-be writers.

Gertrude Stein made Paris her permanent home in 1903 and turned her apartment into an informal salon where literati and artists would congregate as Paris became a locus of expatriate artistic endeavor in the decades following. Hemingway, Fitzgerald, Picasso, Joyce, and many others called Paris home in the first decades of the twentieth century. The American Sylvia Beach founded a bookstore and publishing company and helped struggling authors get their work published, including James Joyce's controversial *Ulysses* in 1922.

Paris was a place of permissiveness, where eccentricity in dress and lifestyle was not only tolerated but also to a large degree encouraged. At the same time, Paris was steeped in tradition, both in its architecture and in its history as a center for cultural and intellectual life. It was in Paris that African American performers and authors who struggled with their careers in the United States found appreciative audiences. The nightlife of Paris did not suffer from the restrictiveness of Prohibition, and its cafés and bars offered authors a place to meet one another.

Literary critic Malcolm Bradbury views Paris as a critical location for the meeting of the international authors who would create modernism:

> Paris was the meeting place of two potent forces. One was the peaking of European Modernism, an artistic movement born of a transformation of consciousness in a volatile, troubled Europe. The other was a new stirring of American Modernity, a fundamental process of technological and social change. And what helped to bring about the meeting was the inward transformation of an American culture that was becoming morally and behaviourally far less culturally stable, far more experimental, and so responsive to *avant-garde* sentiment.

The blossoming of arts and letters that took place in Paris fundamentally changed the character of the literature of the United States, as American literature ceased to be simply a derivative of English literature, but itself became a force in the shaping of international arts and letters.

QUESTIONS

Comprehension: What about Paris attracted so many artists and writers? How did Paris influence modern art and literature?

Context: What role does Paris play in Fitzgerald's short story "Babylon Revisited"? How does Paris affect Charlie's fate? What do you think it is that Harry in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" finds so appealing about Paris? Why does he want so much to have written about it?

Exploration: Why do you think Paris fostered the type of experimentation it did? What do you think contributes to the culture of a place?

[4930] Anonymous, *Hemingway in Paris*, courtesy of Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books.

[7204] George Barbier, *La Redingote, ou le retour aux traditions* (1920), courtesy of the Gazette du Bon Ton.

ASSIGNMENTS

Personal and Creative Responses

1. *Poet's Corner*: Choose a character from one of the prose works in this unit (e.g., "The Snows of Kilimanjaro," *Quicksand, Trifles*) and write a short poem from that character's point of view. You do not need to choose a main character. How, for example, do you believe Harry's wife ("The Snows of Kilimanjaro") would think? Or Minnie Wright, the absent focus of *Trifles*? How does the poetic form change the way you present information about the character?
2. *Journal:* Chronicle a moment in your life using the style of Gertrude Stein. Describe the same people and things from slightly different angles and experiment with departing from typical meanings of words. What happens to your thinking about your subject when you use this technique?
3. *Journal:* Imagine you are Nella Larsen and are considering your long-awaited third novella. What would this novella be about if you set it in present-day America? Where would you set it and what would happen?
4. *Doing History*: Look at the images of World War I and read the accounts by soldiers. Choose one image and write a narrative account of what you think is happening in it. What would an onlooker see, smell, and hear? What might a soldier feel and think? What's happened just before this picture was taken and what will happen next?
5. *Multimedia*: You have been asked to design a virtual museum exhibit that shows the principles underlying modernism in literature, art, and music. Using the archive, create exhibition "rooms" where visitors may read texts, hear music, and see artwork to help them better understand how these different art forms interpreted the principles of modernism. Write short explanatory notes to go with each image, text, or sound clip.

Problem-Based Learning Projects

1. You belong to a group in which the members call themselves "Modernists." It includes Gertrude Stein, Ernest Hemingway, Nella Larsen, and Susan Glaspell. Design a salon where you will hold

your meetings. What works of art, music, and literature would you want around you? Whom would you invite to join you?
2. You are an editor of children's books at a large publishing house, and you have been asked to put together a book on modernism for three age groups: ages 7–10, 11–13, and 14–17. How will you present modernism to each of these groups? What works will you use to explain the ideas behind modernism to them? How will you alter your presentation for different age groups?
3. You are a member of the team responsible for designing an interdisciplinary exhibition about modernity and the 1920s and 1930s at a local museum. What art works, literary texts, film clips, music, photographs, and everyday objects would you include in this exhibition? What do you hope visitors to your exhibit will learn from your installation?

GLOSSARY

art deco A style in decorative arts and architecture that emphasizes streamlined, geometric forms and an affinity to the shapes and materials of industrial products. A response to the elaborate, organic forms of the prevalent art nouveau style at the turn of the twentieth century, art deco designs such as the Chrysler Building often celebrated the machine. Beginning about 1910 and lasting until the mid-1930s, the art deco style influenced the design of many significant buildings and interiors.

cubism A style of painting that developed in Paris in the first decade of the twentieth century and which emphasizes abstract forms rather than realistic representation in painting and sculpture. Reacting to the tradition of realistic art, cubists painted the underlying geometric forms that they believed were the basis of natural forms. Cubist art often incorporated multiple perspectives, which many viewers found disorienting. Some of the foremost practitioners of Cubist art were Pablo Picasso, Georges Braque, and Fernand Leger.

dadaism A term used to describe a nihilist form of modern art. The word "dada" is a child's term for "hobbyhorse" in French and was picked at random from a dictionary by the original group of dada practitioners. Beginning in Zurich in 1916, with centers of activity in Berlin and Paris as well, dada was based on the principles of deliberate irrationality, anarchy, cynicism, and the rejection of the conventional laws of beauty and social organization. Dada is art designed to force viewers to question aesthetic conventions by shocking or confounding them. Unusual materials were often used; Marcel Duchamp, for example, displayed a urinal turned upside down and titled "Fountain." The dadaists disbanded in 1922, many of them becoming part of other modern art movements, particularly surrealism.

jazz Originated in cities such as New Orleans, St. Louis, and Chicago by African American musicians around the turn of the twentieth century, jazz developed in a variety of ways. Its roots are from

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[4930] Anonymous, *Hemingway in Paris*, courtesy of Princeton University Library, Department of Rare Books. A photograph of Ernest Hemingway with motorcycle in Paris. Hemingway was one of many expatriate American writers who lived and worked in Paris, arguing that the atmosphere was less stifling than that of the United States.

[4997] Janet Flanner-Solita Solano, *Group Portrait of American and European Artists and Performers in Paris* (1920), courtesy of the Library of Congress [LC-USZ62-113902]. Photograph of American and European artists in Paris, including Man Ray, Ezra Pound, and Martha Dennison. Many expatriate artists found inspiration in Paris's traditions and less restrictive culture.

[6560] Zyg Brunner, *France Imagines New York* (n.d.), courtesy of Chris Lowe. Political cartoon by Zyg Brunner, an artist known for art deco influences, published in a French magazine. Paris was a center of modern art and cubism. New York was the site of the Armory Show exhibition.

[6561] Zyg Brunner, *America Imagines Paris* (n.d.), courtesy of Chris Lowe. Political cartoon by Zyg Brunner, an artist known for art deco influences, published in a French magazine. Paris was a major center of modern art and was perceived by Americans as permissive.

[7204] George Barbier, *La Redingote, ou le retour aux traditions* (1920), courtesy of the Gazette du Bon Ton. Many American artists who lived in Paris rather than the United States argued that Paris offered freedom from "Puritanical" American traditions.

African American folk music, but as jazz developed, elements from other musical cultures—from contemporary Western classical music to musics of the Far East—were gradually assimilated, resulting in a broad range of sub-genres within the larger context known as "jazz." Jazz is characterized by solo and group improvisation, complex syncopation, and extended harmonies, as well as idiosyncratic interpretations of popular songs. Different styles of jazz have markedly different sounds, and the New Orleans jazz of Louis Armstrong sounds strikingly different from the urbane jazz of Duke Ellington in 1920s Harlem.

modernism A term that refers rather broadly to literature and art produced under the influence of "modernity"; that is, in response to the conditions of the modern world, with its technological innovation, increased urbanization, and accompanying sense of a world changing too quickly to comprehend. Modernists tended to self-consciously oppose traditional forms, which they believed to be out of step with the modern world. Recently, critics have noted the variety of ways artists and writers labeled "modernist" approach their work, and the allusive poetry of T. S. Eliot, the spare prose of Ernest Hemingway, the political poetry of Langston Hughes, the radical linguistic experimentation of Gertrude Stein, and the regionalist work of Sherwood Anderson have all fallen into the category of modernism.

nativism A term used to describe the sentiment of Americans who considered themselves "native," since their forebears had come to the United States generations earlier. Beginning in the late nineteenth century, millions of immigrants arrived in the United States each decade, and native-born Americans often found their different cultural attitudes difficult to tolerate. Increasing numbers of immigrants arrived from eastern European countries and Asia, whereas earlier waves of immigration had come primarily from northern and western European countries such as England, Ireland, and Germany. Immigration laws passed between 1917 and 1924 significantly restricted how many immigrants could come from each country, and they tended to allow many more immigrants from Germany and Ireland, for example, than from Asian or African nations.

primitivism A term used to describe artistic and literary styles that borrow from cultures (usually non-European) considered less advanced than the artist's own. Primitivism in painting enjoyed a vogue in the early decades of the twentieth century, and artists such as Picasso incorporated style and symbol from African art, while literary figures looked to rural settings and "simple" folk for their stories and poems. These seemingly less complex societies and modes of life appeared to provide an answer to the confusion caused by the modern world.

Prohibition The period in the United States between 1919 and 1933 when the Volstead Act or Eighteenth Amendment made it illegal to manufacture or sell alcohol. The law was not especially well enforced, and in the early years of the Depression, many felt that Prohibition was not only an infringement on personal liberty but a detriment to the failing U.S. economy.

surrealism An art and literary movement that aimed to tap the unconscious mind in the creation of art; founded by the French critic and poet André Breton in the mid-1920s. An outgrowth of dadaism, surrealism depicted scenes from dreams and employed Freudian symbolism. Some of the best-known surrealists are Salvador Dali and René Magritte. The surrealist movement in literature flourished mainly in France and often used automatic writing to establish a connection between the unconscious of the writer and that of the reader.

Taylorism An approach to maximizing the efficiency of production developed by the industrial engineer Frederick Taylor in the first decade of the twentieth century. Taylor made careful analysis of the ways industries organized their human labor and machines and created systems to reduce the waste of time and energy. By simplifying the tasks of any individual laborer, Taylor's "scientific management" not only maximized the efficiency of production, but also made the laborer's job more repetitive and tedious. In a time when immigrants comprised a significant portion of the work force, such simple tasks allowed businesses to employ unskilled workers and pay them very little. This change in manual labor practice further alienated workers from meaningful work and created environments that made workers quite like the machines they operated.

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