

Primary Characteristics of 3 major 19th century literary movements

Use your class notes to supplement these ideas.

Romanticism:

1. Emotional (as opposed to reasonable)
2. Individualistic (rejection of both Locke and Rousseau, to an extent)
3. Revolutionary (as opposed to traditional in theme and form)
4. Solitary or Isolated (as opposed to urban and industrial)
5. Focused on Nature (as opposed to and in opposition to the industrial)
6. Fantastic or Exotic (as opposed to “reality”—really just more concerned with perception)
7. (Incredibly) Subjective (perception is everything, see W. Blake)
8. Ideal or Idealist in terms of philosophy (as opposed to materialistic)

Realism:

1. Insistence upon and defense of "the experienced commonplace".
2. Character more important than plot.
3. Emphasis upon morality often self-realized and upon an examination of idealism.
4. Concept of realism as a realization of democracy.
5. Emphasis on consequences (or a critique of the lack thereof)

Naturalism:

1. Determinism rules the day.
2. Characters are shaped and controlled by external and internal forces.
3. Characters lack freewill.
4. Characters are not heroic and, like Realism, are common folk, who often flawed but decent individuals.
5. Nature is simply another force in the world against which people find themselves struggling.