

**PARSIPPANY HIGH SCHOOL MEDIA CENTER**  
**British Literature: Selected Sources for Literary Research**

**BIOGRAPHICAL SOURCES**

1. British Authors of the Nineteenth Century (REF928.2 KU). Provides in a single volume brief, readable accounts of the lives of the major and minor British authors of the nineteenth century.
2. Chamber's Biographical Dictionary (REF 920.02 CH). A good small dictionary covering the great people of all nations throughout history.
3. Contemporary Authors (REF 928 CON). Open series. Use the latest cumulative index. Within each volume the arrangement is alphabetical by author. Brief, factual articles give biographical information and lists of works for current authors.
4. Dictionary of National Biography (REF 920.042 DIC). Signed, in-depth articles on deceased persons who lived in the British Isles. Part 1 consists of 22 volumes from the beginnings of time to 1900; Part 2 continues the series through the 20th century.
5. Dictionary of Literary Biography - Browning (REF 928 BRO). Covers in a single volume the entire range of English and American literature from the earliest times through the 50's . Includes the "low brows" and "best sellers" alongside the established classics.
6. Dictionary of World Biography (REF 920.02 DIC) 10 volumes. Covers the lives of important personages from the ancient world through the twentieth century.
7. Encyclopedia of World Biography (REF 920.02 ENC) 20 volumes. Articles on persons of importance to social and cultural history from every part of the world and from all time periods. Includes a biographical synopsis, portrait, and a short bibliography.
8. Great Lives From History: British and Commonwealth Series (REF 920.041 GRE) 5 volumes. The lives and achievements of outstanding British individuals from antiquity to 1987.
9. Webster's New Biographical Dictionary (REF 920.03 WEB). Brief entries of people both living and dead and of all nations. Living persons, whose biographies are virtually impossible to keep up-to-date in a book of this nature, are not included. See Current Biography.

**Bio-Critical Sources**

1. British Authors Before 1800 (REF928.2 KUR). Concise, pertinent biographical and critical information about the literary figures of the period defined.
2. Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction (REF 809.3 BEA) 14 volumes. Provides essays on and study activities for the works of authors of popular fiction. Includes biographical data, publishing history, and resources for the author of each analyzed work. Twelve appendices are designed to help readers identify titles, authors, and themes they want to research.
3. British Writers (REF 820.9 BRI) 8 volumes and supplements (volume VIII is a comprehensive index for volumes 1-VII). The articles range between 10,000 and 15,000 words in length; each one contains a discussion of the writer's life and time period and a critical assessment of the literature. Included at the beginning of each volume is a chronological table of important literary, political, social, and scientific events.

4. Cyclopedia of World Authors (REF 928 CYC) 5 volumes. Entries give biographical details, critical evaluations, and a list of each writer's principal works.
5. Dictionary of Literary Biography (REF 810.9 DIC). Open, multi-volume series. Each volume is organized by topic, period or genre. Encompasses all who have contributed to the greatness of literature in America, England, and elsewhere. Most entries deal with the subject's life, major works and critical reputation -i.e., the author's relationship to the social concerns and literary movements of the times. Use the index in the **last volume** with a **cumulative index** or Gale's Literary Index (see online resources).
6. Dictionary of Literary Biography: Documentary Series (REF 810.9 DIC) Open series. Supplements the DLB (Dictionary of Literary Biography). Provides key documents on which the essays in DLB are based. Each volume concentrates on the major figures of a particular literary period, movement or genre.
7. Encyclopedia of World Literature in the 20th Century (REF 803 ENC) 4 volumes. Articles on individual writers, major genres of literature, and the history of literature - alphabetically arranged. There are two sets on the shelves - one is a newer edition. Check both editions.
8. Great Writers of the English Language: Novelists (REF 809.3 VIN). An extensive and authoritative guide to the important figures writing in English since the Old English period. It provides biographical, bibliographical and critical information.  
Similar: Great Writers: Poets (REF 809.1 VIN)
9. Popular Contemporary Writers (REF 810.9 POP) 11 volumes A collection of signed articles on 96 contemporary writers. Arranged in 10 volumes in A-Z format with additional index volume. Sections include: The Writer's Life, The Writer's Work, The Reader's Guide to Major Works (critical analysis of two or more works), List of Published Works, and a critical bibliography.
10. Twayne Companion to Contemporary World Literature (REF 809.04 TWA) This title constitutes a global guide to contemporary literature from Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean and Europe. Includes reprinted book reviews from World Literature Today from 1977-2001 as well as choice essays covering the half-century from 1927-1976.  
Similar: Great Writers: Dramatists (REF 809.2 VIN)
11. World Authors 1900-1950 (REF 928 WOR). 4 volumes. Incisive accounts of writers' lives and works, including critical responses and bibliographies.  
Similar: You may use the Index to Wilson Authors Series (REF 928 IND).
  - a. World Authors 1950-1970
  - b. World Authors 1970-1975
  - c. World Authors 1975-1980
  - d. World Authors 1980-1985
  - e. World Authors 1985-1990
12. Literature and Its times. (REF 809.93). Arranged chronologically from ancient times to the present. Relates history to literature; includes novels, short stories, plays, poems, biographies, essays, speeches and documents.
13. World Literature and Its Times, V.3 , V.4: British and Irish Literature (REF 803 WOR) Volumes are arranged geographically. Essays help to make connections between the political/social climate during which books were written and the works themselves. Focuses on major fiction, poetry and nonfiction from a particular country or region.
14. Writers For Young Adults (REF 809.3 WRI) 3 volumes. Articles discuss the author's life and the importance and meaningfulness of his most popular and enduring titles.

## Sources For Literary Criticism

### A. Bibliographies and Indexes

1. Anatomy of Wonder: A Critical Guide to Science Fiction (REF 016.808 ANA). Each major era in Science Fiction writing is discussed, accompanied by a comprehensive, annotated bibliography of the novels and anthologies for each period.
2. Granger's Index to Poetry (REF 808.81 GRA). An index to individual poems in collections of poetry. It has three indexes: one by author, a subject and a title and first line index. The title index is the main entry and includes a symbol for the collection of poetry in which the poem will be found. A key to the symbols is located in the front of Granger's.  
Similar: Short Story Index (REF 808.83 SHO) No cumulative index.  
Play Index (808.82 PLA) No cumulative index.
3. Magill's Bibliography of Literary Criticism (REF 809 MAG). 4 Vols. Arranged alphabetically by author, then by title, then by authors of citations. Citations are from many sources - magazines, newspapers, parts of books and entire books.  
Similar: Twentieth Century Short Story Explication (REF 016.808 TWE)  
Drama Criticism Index (REF 016.809)

### B. General Critical Sources

1. Contemporary Literary Criticism (REF 809 CON) Open, multi-volume series. A companion series to Contemporary Authors. Excerpts from critical articles or reviews on the works of authors who are now living or who have died since January 1, 1960. Use the index in the last volume that has a **cumulative index**.  
Similar: Twentieth Century Literary Criticism (REF 809 TWE)  
Nineteenth Century Literary Criticism (REF 809.04 NIN)
2. The Critical Temper - Tucker (REF 820.9 CRI). 4 Vols. Designed to complement Moulton's Library of Literary Criticism of English and American Authors by providing 20th century comment and criticism on the same Anglo-American authors, 680 - 1904.
3. Library of Literary Criticism of English & American Authors-Moulton (REF 820.9 MOU). 8 Vols. Chronological by literary period. Brief biographical data plus selected quotations or excerpts from criticisms of each author's work. Critical material is chronological by date of publication. Covers year 680-1904.
4. Library of Literary Criticism: Modern British Literature-Tucker & Stein (REF 820.9 TEM) 5 Vols. Designed as a sequel to Moulton. Deals only with British authors writing after 1904.  
Similar: Modern Commonwealth Literature (REF 820.9 MOD)  
Modern Women Writers (REF 809.89 MOD)

### C. Genre Critical Sources

1. Critical Survey of Drama: English Language Series (REF 809.2 Mag). 7 Vols. Each author article reviews a dramatist's work by examining representative plays and identifying the themes and characteristics employed by that author. These entries are arranged alphabetically by author in volumes one through five. Volume six includes a glossary of terms, and essays covering historical periods, dramatic theory, staging and techniques, and an annotated bibliography.
2. Critical Survey of Long Fiction: English Language Series (REF 809.3 CRI) 9 Volumes. Covers classical and contemporary novelists from the United States and abroad. Arranged alphabetically by author. Volumes one to seven present essays analyzing important

aspects of each writer's life and work. Volume eight is a collection of essays discussing the history and different types of novels and novellas.

3. Critical Survey of Mystery and Detective Fiction (REF 809.3 CRI) 4 volumes. Presents critical studies of more than 290 authors from around the world dating from the mid-eighteenth century through 1988.
4. Critical Survey of Poetry: English Language Series (REF 809.1 CRI). 9 Vols. Arranged alphabetically by author. Contains essays on individual poets, the historical and critical background essential for reading poetry, and exhaustive indexing of poets by their given and pen names, titles of collections, titles of poems discussed, critical terminology, and literary movements. An 8 volume revised edition is also on the shelves.
5. Critical Survey of Short Fiction (REF 809.3 MAG). 8 Vols. For works longer than a short story. Volume one and volume two contain in-depth essays exploring many aspects of the genre and reviews of important new short fiction writers. Volumes two to six are arranged alphabetically by author. Articles include biographical data, author's influence, story characteristics, and a bibliography. Volume seven is the index. A seven volume revised edition is also on the shelves.
6. Encyclopedia of Allegorical Literature (REF 809.915 LEE). Concise articles covering all aspects of literary allegory: the device wherein characters, situations, and actions stand for ideas. Essays on the works include a brief overview of the work itself as well as an analysis of how closely it adheres to the definition of allegory. Extensive bibliographies.
7. Encyclopedia of Apocalyptic Literature (REF 809.933 ZIM). A comprehensive introduction defines four different categories of apocalyptic literature worldwide, traces their development, and discusses general themes, trends, and terminology. The essays provide detailed discussions of major authors and their visions, characters, and themes, as well as the historical context of their work.
8. Encyclopedia of Literary Epics (809.132 JAC)  
Analyzes the monumental works that are the cornerstones of the Western literary canon – from Vergil's Aeneid to twentieth-century works such as Ezra Pound's The Cantos and The Bridge by Hart Crane. Less familiar poems from the Western tradition and cultures around the world are also included.
9. Encyclopedia of Satirical Literature (REF 809.7 SNO). Commentary of some of the best and most influential satirical works from throughout history and around the world. Organized alphabetically, entries for individual works feature plot summaries and analyses of satirical content. Author entries include glimpses of colorful lives and masterly achievements.
10. Encyclopedia of Traditional Epics (REF 398.22 ENC)  
Focuses on the major world epics and related mythological topics. Most of the epics discussed are rooted in the oral tradition but a number of literary epics that incorporate traditional material are included.
11. Encyclopedia of Utopian Literature (REF 809.933 SNO). Concise summaries and insightful analyses of major titles. Provides biographical plus definitions of themes and terms as they pertain to utopian ideals.
12. McGraw-Hill Encyclopedia of World Drama (REF 809.2 McG). 5 Vols. A comprehensive bio-critical guide to all aspects of world drama. Articles range from African theater to Yugoslav drama. Entries on major dramatists include biographical data, an assessment of his/her creative achievements, synopsis of major plays, bibliographies.

13. Mystery and Suspense Writers: the Literature of Crime, Detection, & Espionage. (REF 809.3 MYS). 2 volumes. Furnishes both a look at the author's background and a genuine critical analysis of the major novels and stories.
14. Short Story Writers (REF 809.3 SHO) 3 volumes.  
Surveys the most important authors of short fiction. Essays are arranged alphabetically by author. Includes achievements, biographies, and analysis of various works. Volume three includes a glossary and techniques commonly used in the study of short fiction.
15. Survey of Science Fiction Literature - Magill (REF 809.38 Sur). 5 Vols. Essay reviews of outstanding science fiction novels and short story collections. Entries are arranged alphabetically by title and provide the author, publication dates along with the time and location of the action, brief description of the work and list of main characters. Bibliographies included.  
Similar: Survey of Modern Fantasy Literature - Magill (REF 808.8Mag)
16. Supernatural Fiction Writers: Fiction and Horror. (REF 809.9 Sup). 2 Vols. Critical survey of major writers of supernatural fiction from Greco-Roman times to the present. The articles include biography, description and interpretation of major works, critical evaluation, and assessment of the author's historical position. Bibliographies conclude each article.  
Similar: Science Fiction Writers - Bleiler (REF 809 Sci).  
Twentieth Century Science Fiction Writers (REF 809 Twe).

#### **D. Support References**

1. Masterplots - Magill (Media Center Office) (REF 808.8 Mag). 12 Vols. Organized alphabetically by title. Critiques and critical evaluations of world literature to 1956. Entries contain plot summaries and a list of characteristics. Use only for supplemental purposes. Author index in volume 12. A revised edition extends the range of the set from Antiquity to the 1990's.  
Similar: Masterplots II: American Fiction Series (REF 809.3 MAS)  
Masterplots II: Drama Series (REF 809.2 MAS)  
Masterplots II: Poetry Series (REF 809.1 MAS)  
Masterplots II: Short Story Series (REF 809.3 MAG)  
Masterplots II: World Fiction Series (REF 809.3 MAG)
2. Survey of Contemporary Literature - Magill (REF 809.04 M). 12 Vols. Alphabetical by title. Sequel to Masterplots covering titles between 1956 to 1976. Unlike Masterplots, this series contains no summaries of works - only criticism.
3. Magill's Literary Annuals (REF 809.04 MAG). Continues the series from 1976 to the present.

#### **E. In-Depth Criticism**

(Accessed through the card catalog **Library Explorer**)

1. Bloom's Major Short Story Writers - Biographical, critical, and bibliographical information on the author's best-known or most important short stories.
2. Greenhaven Press Literary Companion Series - comprehensive literary analysis and criticism.
3. Greenwood Press "Literature in Context" series-places literature in the historical, social, and cultural context of its time.
4. Modern Critical Interpretation Series - comprehensive analysis of a specific work.

5. Modern Critical Views - comprehensive analysis of a specific writer.
6. Norton critical series - Complete text with notes and critical essays.
7. Twayne author series - Comprehensive analysis of a specific author and his/her work.
8. Twayne's Masterwork Studies - comprehensive analysis of a specific work.
9. Twayne's Studies in Short Fiction Series - concise, sensitive surveys of the works of important writers of the short story.
10. Twentieth Century Views Series - Comprehensive analysis of a specific writer.
11. Twentieth Century Interpretations Series - Comprehensive analysis of a particular work.
12. Individual books of criticism (period, genre, person)

## **F. Histories**

1. A Critical History of English Literature - Daiches (REF 820.9 DAI). 2 Vols. A description, explanation, and critical interpretation of the poetry, prose, half of the 20th century. The literature of each period is related to the historical background in order to provide a sense of the continuity of English literature.
2. Cambridge History of English Literature (REF 820.9 CA). 15 volumes. A general history of English literature from the earliest times to the end of the 19th century. Chronological by time period. Use the index volume to retrieve information.
3. A Literary History of England - Baugh (REF 820.9 BAU). A comprehensive history of English literature from the Middle Ages through 1939. Chronologically arranged by time period.
4. The History of the English Novel (REF 823.09 ). 11 volumes. Traces the origins and growth of English prose fiction. Arranged chronologically.
5. The Oxford Illustrated History of English Literature (REF 820.9 OXF). Provides a basic core of information and invaluable supplemental material. Characterizes the broad sweep of ideas and the main concerns of British writers across the past thirteen centuries.

## **G. Handbooks**

1. Benet's Reader's Encyclopedia (REF 803 BEN). Concise entries deal with a vast variety of authors, topics, and titles from around the world.
2. Crowell's Handbook of Contemporary Drama (REF 809.2 CRO). Alphabetically arranged guide to the drama of Europe and the Americas since the Second World War. Authoritative entries biographical sketches, brief descriptions and critical evaluations of significant or representative plays of international interest.
3. Dictionary of Literary Terms - Cuddon (REF 803 CUD). Alphabetical listing of brief explanations of the words and phrases peculiar to the study of literature.
4. Oxford Companion to English Literature (REF 820.3 OXF) A one-volume guide to English literature, arranged alphabetically in a dictionary format. Features include plot summaries, entries on important fictional characters, biographical articles.

5. The Reader's Encyclopedia of World Drama - Gassner (REF 809.2 GA). A one-volume book with emphasis on drama as literature. Information on plays and playwrights from all countries.

## Book Reviews

Book Review Digest (REF 015 Boo). Excerpts of and citations to reviews of current fiction and non-fiction in the English language. Entries within each volume are alphabetical by author. Subject and title indexes follow the main body of the Digest.

**IMPORTANT:** You must know the publication date of your book in order to retrieve the information. Use the verso side of title page or card catalog to find the year of publication.

## On-Line Resources

### Online Subscriptions - Databases

(Available on the Media Center Home Page)

Infotrac Gale Database-

Discovering Collection – multiple databases offer illustrated biographies of authors and criticisms of their works.

Contemporary Authors – biographical information on current writers, as well as the most-studied literary figures of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, and authors from around the world whose works have been translated in English.

EBSCOhost

Provides access to full text articles published recently in important scholarly publications such as Literary Review, New England Quarterly, Latin American Literary Review, Essays in Criticism (Oxford), and Yale Journal of Criticism.

Curriculum Links - English

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1. Gale's Literary Index

Very useful tool to locate specific works and authors in any Gale Publications including Contemporary Literary Criticism, Nineteenth Century Literary Criticism, Twentieth Century Literary Criticism, Literature and Its Times and other multi-volume works.