

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly angled view of the American flag. The stars and stripes are visible, with a dark, almost black, textured overlay. In the top right corner, there is a solid white circle.

Introduction To American Literature

Overview



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- During its early history, America was a series of British colonies on the eastern coast of the present-day United States.

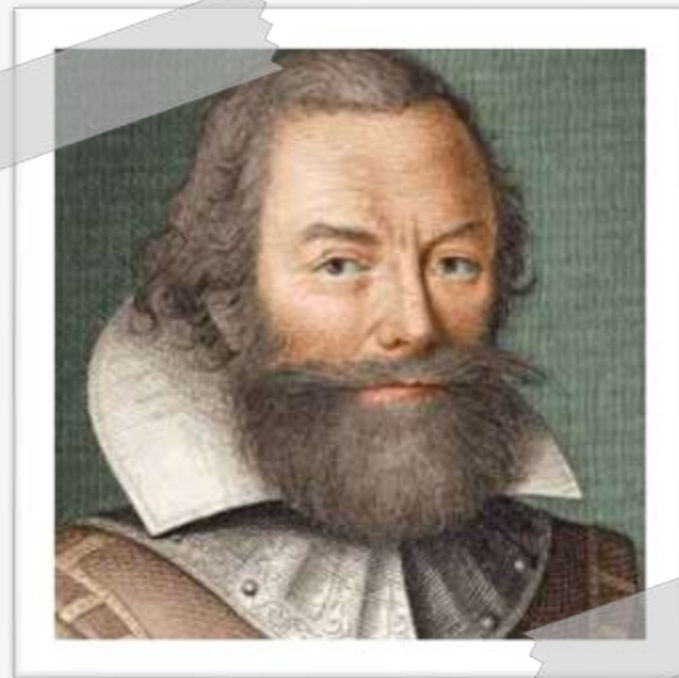
Native American Period (pre-1600's)



- Oral tradition of song and stories
 - Original authors unknown
 - Written accounts come after colonization
 - Include creation stories, myths, totems
 - archetypes of trickster and conjurer
- Focuses on
 - the natural world as sacred
 - Importance of land and place

Some of the earliest forms of American literature...

- Were pamphlets and writing extolling the benefits of the colonies to both a European and colonist audience.
- Captain John Smith could be considered the first American author with his works: *A True Relation of... Virginia* (1608).



American Lit. in the 1600's – 1700's



Thomas Paine



Anne
Bradstreet



Benjamin
Franklin

Anne Bradstreet (1612 – 1672)



- Also known as *The Tenth Muse*.
- A Puritan wife.

"Let Greeks be Greeks, and Women what they are,

Men have precedence, and still excel,

It is but vain, unjustly to wage war,

Men can do best, and Women know it well."

- Whether or not "men can do best," men did not. The person who deserves to be called the first American poet was a woman.

*To My Dear
and Loving
Husband
by Anne
Bradstreet*



If ever two were one, then surely we.

If ever man were loved by wife, then thee.

If ever wife was happy in a man,

Compare with me, ye women, if you can.

I prize thy love more than whole mines of gold,

Or all the riches that the East doth hold.

My love is such that rivers cannot quench,

Nor ought but love from thee give recompense.

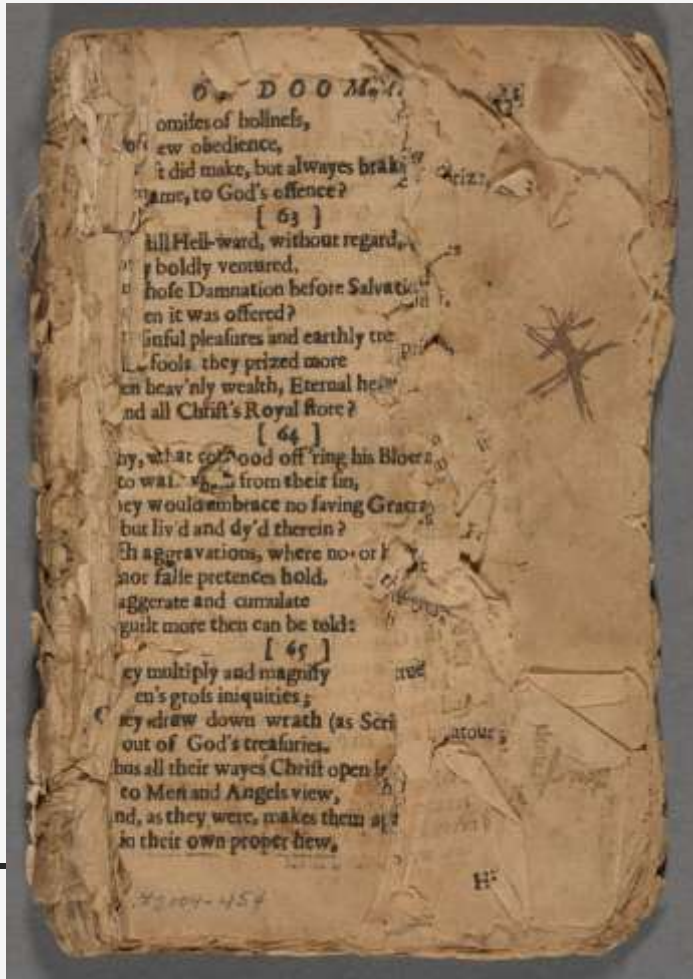
Thy love is such I can no way repay;

The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.

Then while we live, in love let's so persevere,

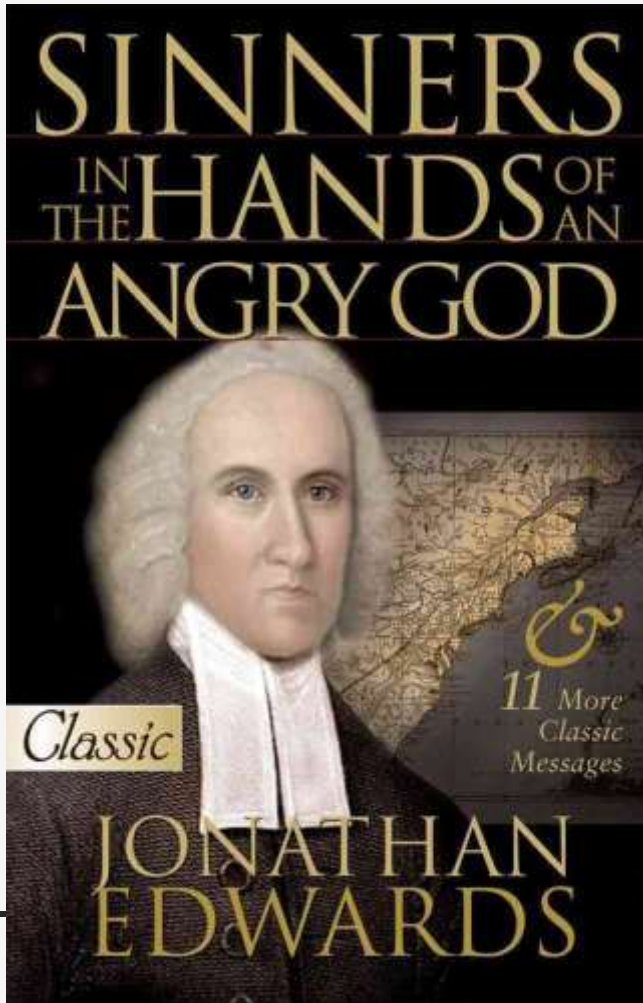
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

Michael Wigglesworth



- Wrote the immensely popular (at the time) poem entitled, "*The Day of Doom*," which talks about the end of the world in context. It is 275 stanzas long.
- It sold 1800 copies in its first year, and according to the *Norton Anthology of American Literature* (Volume 1), "about one out of every twenty persons in New England bought it" (284).

Jonathan Edwards



- A Theologian, a preacher, and a philosopher.
- Wrote one of the most famous sermons in the Great Awakening, the Puritan sermon, "*Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God.*"

Philip Morin Freneau



- Was an American poet, nationalist (also known as Federalist), polemicist, sea captain and newspaper editor sometimes called the "Poet of the American Revolution".

Here—for they could not help but die—
The daughters of the Rose-Bush lie:
Here rest, interred without a stone,
What dear Lucinda gave to none,—
What forward beau, or curious belle,
Could hardly touch, and rarely smell.

Dear Rose! of all the blooming kind
You had a happier place assigned,
And nearer grew to all that 's fair,
And more engaged Lucinda's care,
Than ever courting, coaxing swain,
Or ever all who love, shall gain.

Benjamin Franklin



- One of the founding fathers of the U.S.A.
- His works, "Poor Richard's Almanac" and his own autobiography were recordings of his rise from a state of poverty and obscurity to wealth and fame.
- Some of the mottos we hear today came from him.

"Lost time is never found again."

"A penny saved is a penny earned."

"Fish and visitors stink in three days."

"Early to bed and early to rise makes a man healthy, wealthy, and wise."

Thomas Paine

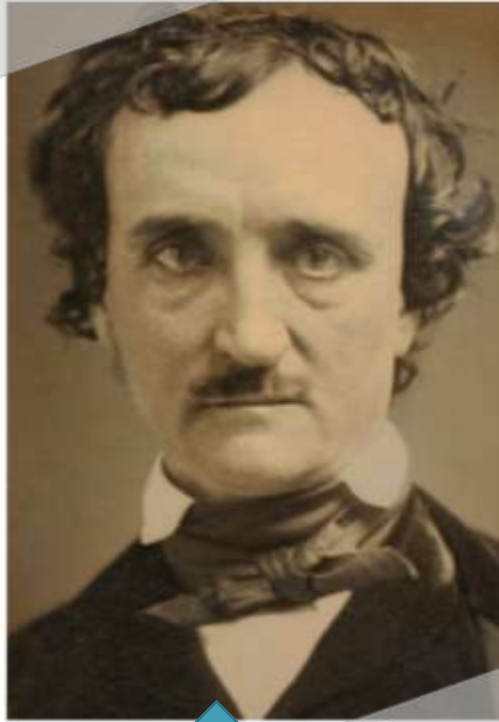


- Wrote a very powerful pamphlet entitled, "*Common Sense*," which virtually every rebel read. It was proportionally the all-time-best-selling American title which crystallized the rebellious demand for independence from Great Britain.
- His next work entitled, "*The American Crisis*" was a prerevolutionary pamphlet series that was so influential that John Adams said, "Without the pen of the author of *Common Sense*, the sword of Washington would have been raised in vain."

The 1800's!!



Washington
Irving



Edgar Allan
Poe



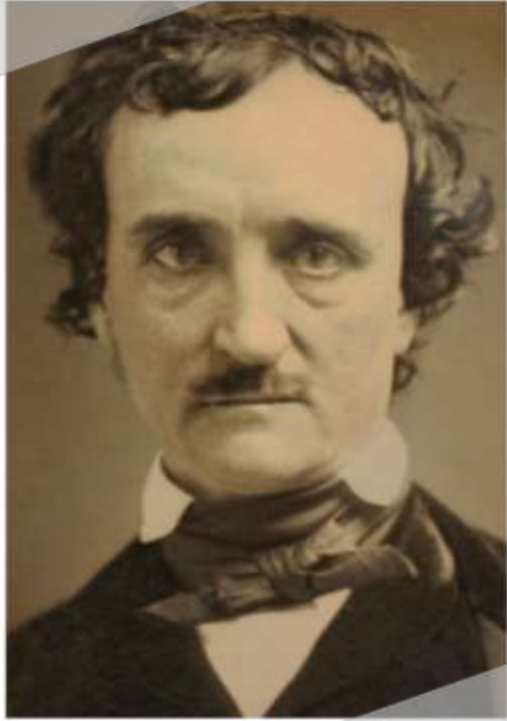
Harriet Beecher
Stowe

Washington Irving



- *Wrote the famous short story, "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow," which is about the tale of the headless horseman. (1820)*
- *Was among the first American writers to earn acclaim in Europe, and Irving encouraged American authors such as Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Edgar Allan Poe. Irving was also admired by some European writers, including Walter Scott, Lord Byron, Thomas Campbell, Francis Jeffrey, and Charles Dickens.*

Edgar Allan Poe

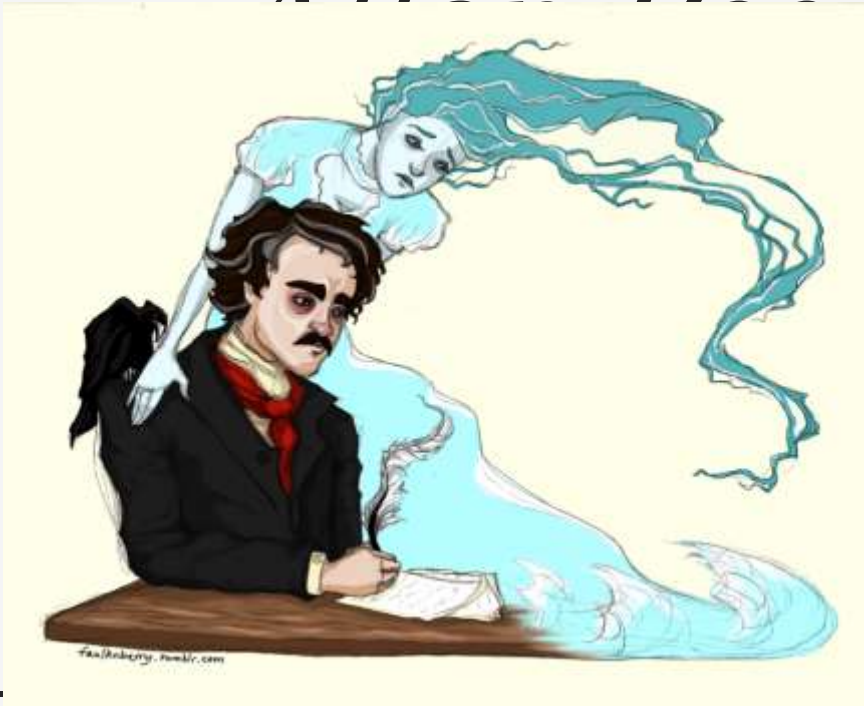


- Was an American writer, editor, and literary critic. Poe is best known for his poetry and short stories, particularly his tales of mystery and the macabre.
- A very renowned writer who is still known today.

Annabel Lee by Edgar Allan Poe

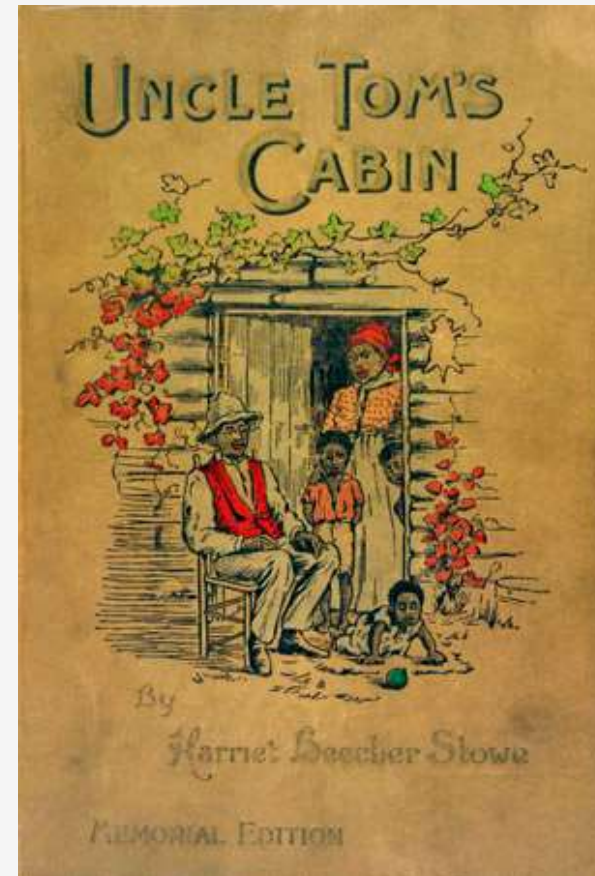
- is the last complete poem^[1] composed by American author [Edgar Allan Poe](#). Like many of Poe's poems, it explores the theme of the death of a beautiful woman. The narrator, who fell in love with Annabel Lee when they were young, has a love for her so strong that even angels are envious. He retains his love for her even after her death.

“But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we—
Of many far wiser than we—
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea
Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;”

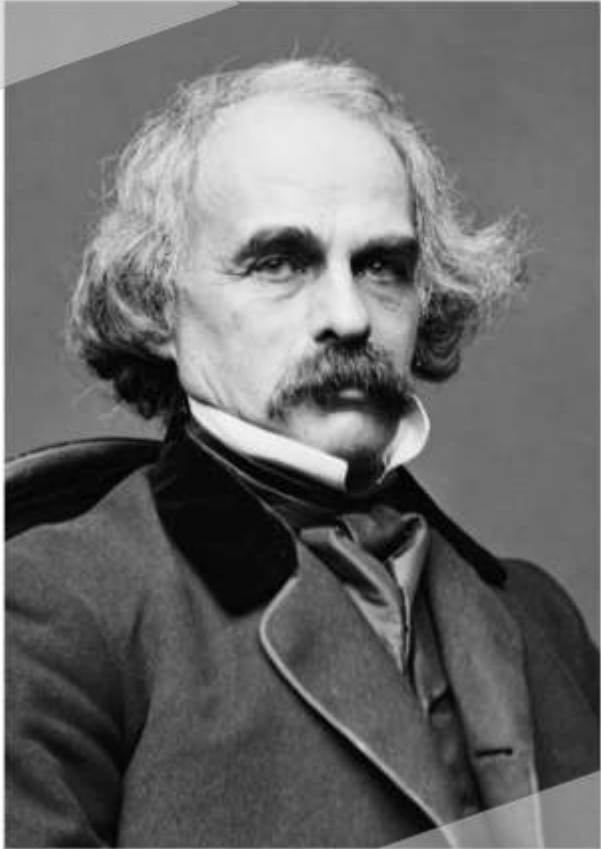


Harriet Beecher Stowe

- She came from a famous religious family and is best known for her novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (1852). It depicts the harsh life for African Americans under slavery.



Nathaniel Hawthorne



- was an American novelist, Dark Romantic, and short story writer.
- Best known for his work, *The Scarlet Letter*, an 1850 work of fiction in a historical setting, written by Nathaniel Hawthorne, and is considered to be his best work.
- Set in 17th-century Puritan Boston, Massachusetts, during the years 1642 to 1649, it tells the story of Hester Prynne, who conceives a daughter through an affair and struggles to create a new life of repentance and dignity. Throughout the book, Hawthorne explores themes of legalism, sin, and guilt.

Herman Melville



- An American novelist, short story writer, and poet from the American Renaissance period.
- Best known for his whaling work, *Moby Dick*, which was about a sailor who calls himself Ishmael narrates the obsessive quest of Ahab, captain of the whaler *Pequod*, for revenge on the white whale Moby Dick, which on a previous voyage destroyed his ship and severed his leg at the knee.

The 1900's!!

T.S. Eliot



Walt Whitman



Samuel
Langhorne
Clemens



Emily
Dickinson



Walter Whitman



- An American poet, essayist and journalist.
- Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. His work was very controversial in its time, particularly his poetry collection *Leaves of Grass*, which was described as obscene for its overt sexuality

"I celebrate myself, and sing myself,
And what I assume you shall assume,
For every atom belonging to me as good
belongs to you"

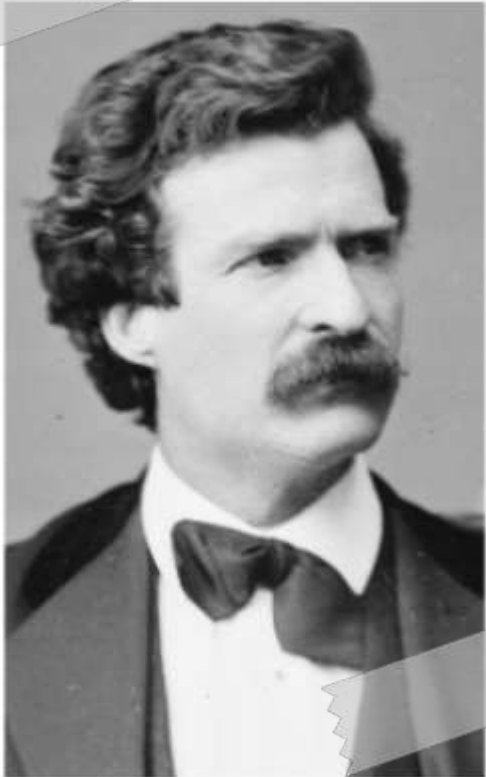
Thomas Stearns Eliot



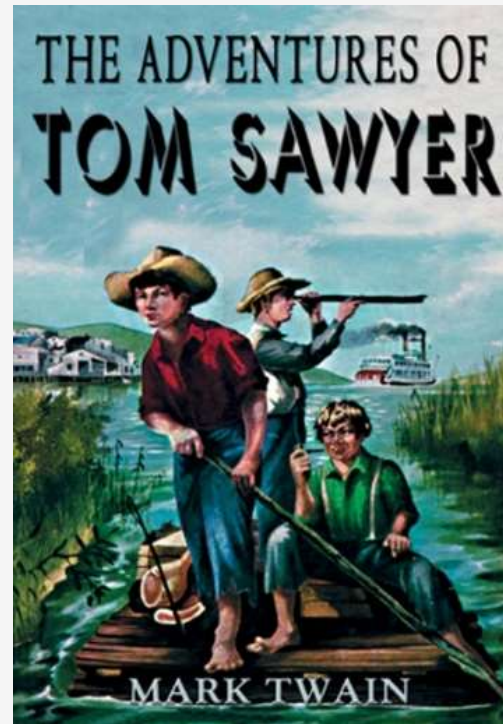
- a British, American-born essayist, publisher, playwright, literary and social critic.
- Known for his poem *The Hollow Men* (1925) which is concerned most with post-World War I Europe.
- Stephen King's *The Dark Tower* series makes numerous references to *The Hollow Men*.

"This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
This is the way the world ends
Not with a bang but a whimper."

Samuel Langhorne Clemens



- Better known by his pen name, Mark Twain.
- An American author and humorist. He wrote *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and its sequel, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), the latter often called "The Great American Novel".



Emily Dickinson



- An American poet. Dickinson was born in Amherst, Massachusetts.
- “**MUCH** madness is divinest sense
To a discerning eye ;
Much sense the starkest madness.
'T is the majority
In this, as all, prevails.
Assent, and you are sane ;
Demur, — you're straightway dangerous,
And handled with a chain.”

Depression Era Writers (1930's)

John
Steinbeck



Harper Lee

Nelle Harper Lee



- an American novelist widely known for *To Kill a Mockingbird*, published in 1960. Immediately successful, it won the 1961 Pulitzer Prize and has become a classic of modern American literature. Though Lee had only published this single book, in 2007 she was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom for her contribution to literature.
- She passed away on the 19th of February 2016.

John Steinbeck



- an American author of twenty-seven books, including sixteen novels, six non-fiction books, and five collections of short stories.
- Widely known for his award-winning work, *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939).

“How can you frighten a man whose hunger is not only in his own cramped stomach but in the wretched bellies of his children? You can't scare him – he has known a fear beyond every other.”

- *Chapter 19, The Grapes of Wrath*

Norman Mailer



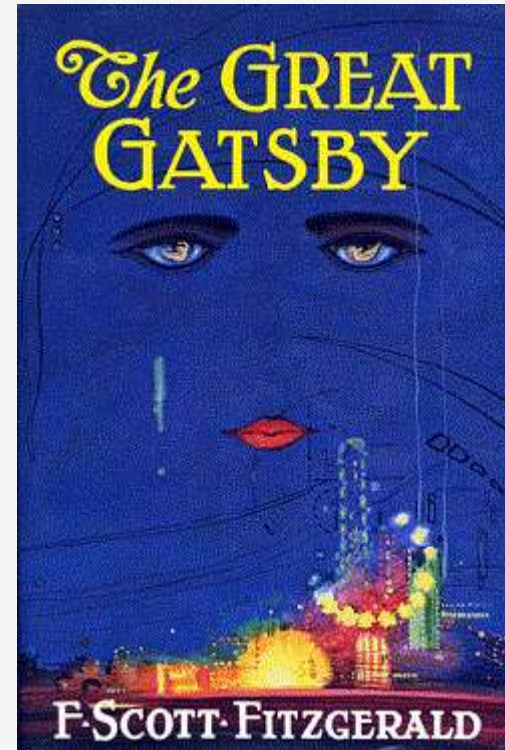
- an American novelist, journalist, essayist, playwright, film-maker, actor and political activist.
- His best-known work was widely considered to be *The Executioner's Song*, which was published in 1979, and for which he won one of his two Pulitzer Prizes. In addition to the Pulitzer Prize, his book *Armies of the Night* was awarded the National Book Award.
- In his analysis of *The Executioner's Song*, critic Mark Edmundson said that

"from the point where Gilmore decides that he is willing to die, he takes on a certain dignity [...] Gilmore has developed something of a romantic faith. Gilmore's effort, from about the time he enters prison, is to conduct himself so that he can die what he would himself credit as a 'good death.'"

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald



- an American novelist and short story writer, whose works are the paradigmatic writings of the Jazz Age.
- Best known for his work, *The Great Gatsby* (1925).



Thank
you for
listenin'~
lol 😊

