1900-Present Global Anglophone Literature

Global Anglophone Literature refers to literature in English produced beyond the “core” English-speaking countries (Great Britain, USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand) to include the postcolonial countries in Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean. Since British and American literatures are extensively covered in other exam areas, this list focuses mainly on literature in English from other countries. As a transnational field, global anglophone literature does not fit neatly into the frame of the national. As a product of the global history of English imperialism, it strongly reflects the hegemony of the English language. Students should therefore get a broad historical understanding of English imperialism and familiarize themselves with significant issues in postcolonial literary studies by reading at least one of the introductions to postcolonial literature recommended in the list. Questions about the role and use of the English language, including whether a writer from a non-English/non-western culture can or should write in English, how and in whose English, etc. are addressed in the small sample of criticism included in the list. Because the novel is arguably the dominant form of global anglophone literature (despite considerable literary output in other genres), the majority of the titles on this list are anglophone novels from around the world. Questions about the novel, its origins, growth, spread, adaptations, transformations, appropriations, aesthetics etc. are therefore central to the field. Other significant topics include (but are not limited to) the following: orientalism, imperialism, (neo)colonialism, nationalism, capitalism, tradition and modernity, westernization, identity, race, class, gender, sexuality, feminism, war, conflict and violence, urbanization and the city, nature and environment, human/humanity, modes of representation.
Anglophone lit:
1. Joseph Furphy (1843-1912)  Such is Life
2. Jean Rhys (1890-1979)  Wide Sargasso Sea
3. C.L.R. James (1901-1989)  Minty Alley
5. Patrick White (1912- )  Voss, A Fringe of Leaves
7. Nadine Gordimer (1923-2013)  July’s People OR Burger’s Daughter
8. Chinua Achebe (1920-1990)  Things Fall Apart
9. Derek Walcott  (1930- )  Omeros OR Selected Poems
10. V.S. Naipaul (1932-2018)  A House for Mr. Biswas
11. Wole Soyinka (1934)  A Dance of the Forests
12. David Malouf (1934-)  Remembering Babylon OR The Conversations at Curlew Creek
14. Ngugi wa Thiong’o (1938-)  Petals of Blood OR Devil on the Cross
15. Bapsi Sidhwa (1938-)  Cracking India
16. Margaret Atwood (1939-)  The Handmaid’s Tale OR Cat’s Eye
17. J. M. Coetzee (1940-)  Disgrace OR Waiting for the Barbarians
18. Ama Ata Aidoo (1942-)  Our Sister Killjoy
21. Keri Hulme (1947-)  Bone People
22. Salman Rushdie (1947-)  Midnight’s Children OR Satanic Verses
23. Jamaica Kincaid (1949-)  A Small Place OR Lucy
24. Jessica Hagedorn (1949-)  Dogeaters
25. George Lamming (1953-)  In the Castle of My Skin
26. Ha Jin (1956-)  Waiting, Under the Red Flag
27. Arundhati Roy (1961-)  The God of Small Things
29. Witi Ihimaera (1944-)  The Whale Rider
30. Kate Grenville (1950-)  The Secret River
31. Tsitsi Dangarembga (1959-)  Nervous Conditions
32. Kiran Desai (1971-)  The Inheritance of Loss
33. John Agard  “listen mr oxford don” (poem)


34. Criticism:
(a) Achebe: English and the African Writer (pdf)
(b) Ngugi: The Language of African Literature (pdf)
(c) Raja Rao: Foreword to Kantapura
(d) One of the following introductions to Postcolonial Literature
   Ashcroft et al (eds.) The Empire Writes Back
   Loomba, Colonialism/Postcolonialism
   Innes, The Cambridge Introduction to Postcolonial Literatures in English
Sample Questions:

1. Examine how the conflict between tradition and modernity is treated in three texts from the reading list.

2. Using three texts from the reading list, show how postcolonial writers “write back to empire” by appropriating, subverting, or challenging canonical Western texts. Your essay must examine specific strategies and techniques used in each text.

3. Colonialism and the English language constitute the twin foundations of Anglophone literature as a field. Using three texts from the reading list analyze how colonialism and/or the English language shapes the work in terms of plot, theme, character, form or style.

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