

Master's Exam Reading List: 2021

Chaucer, Troilus and Criseyde

Shakespeare, King Lear

Cavendish, The Blazing World

Bradstreet, "The Prologue," "In Honor of That High and Mighty Princess Queen Elizabeth of Happy Memory," "To the Memory of My Dear and Ever Honored Father Thomas Dudley Esq. Who Deceased, July 31, 1653," "To Her Father with Some Verses," "Contemplations," "The Flesh and the Spirit," "The Author to Her Book," "Before the Birth of One of her Children," "To My Dear and Loving Husband," "A Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment," "Another [Letter to Her Husband, Absent upon Public Employment]," "In Reference to Her Children, 23 June 1659," "In Memory of my Dear Grandchild Elizabeth Bradstreet, Who Deceased August, 1665, Being a Year and a Half Old," "In Memory of My Dear Grandchild, Anne Bradstreet, Who Deceased June 20, 1669, Being Three Years and Seven Months Old," "On My Dear Grandchild Simon Bradstreet, Who Died on 16 November, 1669, Being But a Month, and One Day Old," "For Deliverance from a Fever," "Here Follows Some Verses upon the Burning of Our House, July 10th, 1666," "to My Dear Children" [letter] [all selections may be found in Norton Anthology of American Literature]

Swift, Gulliver's Travels

Keats, "Letter to George and Tom Keats, December 21, 27, 1817," "Letter to Richard Woodhouse, October 27, 1818," "When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode to a Nightingale," "The Eve of St. Agnes," "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles," "Ode on Melancholy," "Ode to Psyche," "To Autumn," "La Belle Dame Sans Merci"

Douglass, Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass

Dickens, Our Mutual Friend

Hawthorne, The Scarlet Letter and "The Custom House"

Rossetti, Selected poems from Goblin Market and Other Poems (1862): "Goblin Market," "Maude Clare," "Cousin Kate," "No, Thank you, John," "A Triad," "A Birthday," "Spring," "After Death," "Rest," "A Better Resurrection."

Larsen, Passing

Hughes, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” “The Weary Blues,” “Theme for English B,” “I, Too,”
“Harlem (Dream Deferred),” “Note on Commercial Theatre,” “Song for a Dark Girl,”
“Freedom [1],” “Cross”

Williams, "Tract," "The Widow's Lament in Springtime," "Spring and All,"
"The Farmer," "The Red Wheelbarrow," "At the Ball Game," "This Is Just to Say," "The
Yachts," "These," "The Last Words of My English Grandmother," "The Ivy Crown," "Asphodel,
That Greeny Flower" -

Walker, The Color Purple

Roy, The God of Small Things

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M.A. Exam Guidelines

Students will normally be expected to take the new M.A. exam at the beginning of their final full semester. For most of you, that will be in January of 2021. In accordance with Graduate School Policy, students have one opportunity to retake the exam in the event that they fail on the first attempt.

There will be four one-hour questions, one of which will be an explication question on a work not previously announced. There will be no element of choice on the explication question. The other three one-hour questions will be from the reading list, and each will allow students to pick one question from a set of two.

In addition to the texts on the list, students should be conversant with broad issues concerning genre (the epic, the dramatic monologue, etc.) and literary history.

Each calendar year up to three works will rotate off the list and be replaced by up to three different ones. Copies of future reading lists will be made available.