Modernism
Modernism

A term (the adjective is *modernistic*) which describes the element of rebellion and innovation in new work which attempts to break from tradition.

Catchall phrase for any kind of literary production between the Wars (1914-1945).
Modernistic Prose

Writers strove for directness, compression, and vividness; they were sparing of words.

Average novel was significantly shorter than in the nineteenth century.

Preferred a first person or limited narrator.

Narrator often a naïve or marginal person.
Modernistic Prose

IMPORTANT NOVELISTS

- Ernest Hemingway
- F. Scott Fitzgerald
- William Faulkner
- Sherwood Anderson
- John Steinbeck
Modernistic Poetry

Poems became shorter
Often written in bizarre patterns
Exercised “artistic freedom”
Black writers gained a voice
(Harlem Renaissance)
Modernistic Poetry

IMPORTANT POETS:

- Robert Frost
- T. S. Eliot
- Wallace Stevens
- Langston Hughes
- Marianne Moore
- Amy Lowell
- Edna St. Vincent Millay

- Carl Sandburg
- e e cummings
- Ezra Pound
- H. D.
- Claude McKay
- Countee Cullen
Modernistic Drama

Drama in America was slow to develop as a self-conscious literary form until 1920.

Eugene O’Neill – “first” American playwright

Common theme: Social commentary
Works Cited

Information from:

*The Norton Anthology of American Literature*, 5th edition, Nina Baym, General Editor