Appendix H
Study Guide: An Era of Optimism

Thomas Cole

By the mid 1800s America was moving away from artistic reliance on Europe. This was largely due to artists like Thomas Cole. Cole, who immigrated with his family from England in 1801, settled in Steubenville, Ohio. Shortly thereafter, an itinerant German painter passed through the town and convinced Cole to join him in his travels as a “professional painter.” Life as an artist was initially difficult. Eventually, however, Cole gained the attention of the noted American poet William Cullen Bryant. Bryant publicly praised Cole’s paintings, saying they “carried the eye over scenes of wild grandeur peculiar to our country, over our arid mountain-tops with their mighty growth of forest never touched by the axe, along the banks of streams never deformed by culture, and into the depths of skies.” Bryant’s acclaim set Cole’s artistic career in motion, and from 1829 on, his reputation and influence steadily increased. By the time of his death in 1848 he had become known as “father of the Hudson River School,” the first distinctly American school of painters.

Introduction
(p. 138)

1. The first widely read American book was Washington Irving’s ________________________, which was published in ________________________.
2. During the period between 1820 and ________________________, an era known as ________________________, America finally achieved its literary independence from ________________________, chiefly through the works of ________________________, ________________________, and ________________________. All of these writers except Poe were writing during an especially creative period from 1850-1855 known as the ________________________.

National Tensions
(pp. 138-39)

1. As America gained confidence and became an economic leader among the nations of the world, nearly five million immigrants flooded the country and helped to ________________________, and ________________________.  
2. Technological achievements of the period included the ________________________, the ________________________, the ________________________, and ________________________, and ________________________.  
3. The subject matter for writers and speakers of the period celebrated America’s offers of ________________________ and ________________________.  
4. The two main issues undermining national optimism were ________________________ and ________________________.  
5. Struggles between the North and South over the issues of ________________________, ________________________, and ________________________, necessitated the compromises of 1820, 1833, and 1850, all of which provided only a temporary solution.  
6. The country finally was torn asunder by a war which resulted in ________________________, and ________________________. Bitterness remained long after the constitutional question of ________________________ and the moral question of ________________________ had been settled by the war.  
7. American writing, which seemed to many Europeans and even to many Americans to be culturally inferior to England’s, was hampered by the absence of an ________________________ and the limited ________________________ and ________________________ of many American readers.
8. One school of thought that developed from America’s literary uncertainty, the idea that the literature had to be distinctively __________________________ led to what Poe criticized as the __________________________. The opposing school of thought was that a writer should strive for __________________________ in both __________________________ and form.

9. Due to the influence of the major __________________________ writers, the second school of thought prevailed. For example, Hawthorne dealt with the universal problem of __________________________ in his novel __________________________; __________________________, in his novel about the whaling industry, __________________________, dealt with the universal problem of evil; and Edgar Allan Poe used __________________________ standards in formulating his literary criticism. By the year __________________________ American literature had come into its own.

**Literary Romanticism**

(pp. 140-43)

1. The term __________________________, in a purely literary sense, refers to the characteristics that dominated American literature during this period. The cornerstones of this literary movement were __________________________, __________________________, __________________________, and the __________________________.

2. Romantic writers, unlike writers of the eighteenth century, considered man as an __________________________ superior to man in the __________________________. Romantic belief in the individual was enhanced by the __________________________ tradition in America, __________________________ democracy, and the __________________________ efforts to rid the country of slavery. Such cults as __________________________ and __________________________, with their emphasis on the teachings of an individual as more authoritative than the __________________________, also emerged during this period.

3. The emphasis on individualism discounted the major Puritan doctrine of __________________________ and led instead to the mistaken idea that man can reach his true __________________________ without experiencing the new birth. In their refusal to accept God’s view of man, the romantics ascribed the ills of the world to society’s corrupt __________________________ and sought to improve man through reforming society.

4. The second cornerstone of the romantic movement was the doctrine of __________________________. Unlike the eighteenth-century writers, who emphasized the role of __________________________ in the creative process and were accustomed to following established forms, the romantic writers emphasized __________________________, and their experimental works differed in both __________________________ and __________________________ from those of the previous age.

5. The romantic writers came to rely on their __________________________ as they began to reject established standards. Their standards for truth became internal and __________________________, and later critics considered their writings to be too optimistic and philosophically shallow.

6. The romantics also believed that God revealed Himself through __________________________ rather than through the __________________________, that Nature was man’s __________________________ teacher, and that through communion with the universal spirit present in Nature, they could understand __________________________ truth and ways. In their worship of Nature as God, some romantic writers were virtually __________________________.

7. The romantic writers used Nature as subject matter in different ways: for example, __________________________ and __________________________ created beautiful landscapes, whereas __________________________ and __________________________ used Nature to symbolize __________________________ forces.

8. The writers’ use of settings which were __________________________ in both __________________________ and __________________________ was the fourth cornerstone of the movement. Often used Europe as a setting; __________________________ often used the South Sea Islands; and Poe used exotic scenes of __________________________ and __________________________, probably the writer most dependent on the past, used the __________________________ past to comment on his own times. __________________________ created the legendary frontiersman, __________________________, using the American frontiersman of the eighteenth century as his model.
9. Both ____________ and ____________ were interested in the distant future rather than the distant past. They believed in man’s perfectibility and reflected the nineteenth-century attraction to ________________, or ________________.
10. The romantic writers made significant contributions to the development of two genres in America: the ________________ and the ________________.
11. In his sketches, Irving employed distinctively American ________________ and ________________.
12. Poe, who contributed much to the development of the short story, emphasized the principle of ________________, by which he meant that a story should be ________________, and the principle of ________________, by which he meant that all the elements of a story must contribute to a unified ________________ effect.
13. ________________, who also contributed significantly to the development of the American ________________, often used ________________ in his psychological and moral analysis.
14. Besides Hawthorne, the writers who contributed most to the development of the American novel during this period were ________________ and ________________.
15. The three major literary groups were the ________________, centered in ________________; the ________________, centered in Boston; and the ________________, who can be classified as ________________ or ________________.
16. The Knickerbockers included ________________, whose fictitious historian of ________________ and ________________, was ________________, after whom the group was named. The other major writers of this group were ________________ and ________________.
17. The New England School, also called the ________________, because they were taught widely in schools until the twentieth century, included ________________, ________________, and ________________. This group popularized ________________ for the public.
18. Transcendentalism, which was responsible for some of the most radical ideas of the nineteenth century, can be defined as “part ________________, part ________________, part ________________, part ________________, part ________________, part ________________.”
19. The transcendental optimists, whose works exemplify the basic doctrines of the movement, include transcendentalism’s major spokesman, ________________, as well as ________________ and ________________.
20. The transcendental pessimists, who attacked the movement’s major doctrines as unsatisfactory in explaining man and his world, included transcendentalism’s chief critic, ________________, along with ________________ and ________________.

Religious Background
(pp. 143-45)

1. Transcendentalism, which emphasized the ________________ and the ________________, came into being largely as a revolt against the ________________ of Unitarianism, which was the religious outgrowth of the eighteenth-century philosophy of ________________. By the early nineteenth century, most of the former churches of the ________________ had become Unitarian.
2. The Unitarians believed in the ______________ of God, the ______________ of man, the leadership of ______________, salvation by ______________, and the inevitable ______________ of mankind. They denied Biblical ______________ and ______________, salvation and ______________, and did not consider ______________ to be an offense against God. They denied Jesus' ______________ but considered him a great ______________.

3. Both transcendentalism and Unitarianism were deceptive because they created ______________ in ______________ image. The transcendental God was the great, pervasive ______________ of the ______________.

4. The orthodox position, which had been strengthened by the ______________ of the eighteenth century and the rise of the ______________, was again strengthened by the second ______________, which occurred between 1800 and 1840. The preaching of ______________ helped bring revival to the large cities of the East before religious fervor declined again.

5. The ______________ of 1857, which was a result of prayer meetings held in large cities such as New York City, deeply affected the North and Midwest and no doubt helped prepare the people involved to face the hardships of the ______________. Revival came a few years later to the ______________ forces also.

6. The crucial turning point in the national spirit came during the period of American ______________, which placed its faith in ______________; like the faith of the title character in "Young Goodman Brown" by ______________, this faith was soon shattered as the fallacy of man's innate goodness became apparent.

7. The event which was most instrumental in bringing about the change in attitude was the publication in ______________ of Charles Darwin's ______________, which led to the assault of ______________ on the Bible and the cynicism of many later American writers.