**Introducing American Literature Through American History**

**Objectives:** My main objective here is to introduce American Literature by creating an awareness of the history surrounding the literature. This is designed to be a “scratch the surface” lesson that will give students a context for the literature that is to come throughout the rest of the year. This relates to GPS **ELAALRL3** – The student deepens understanding of literary works by relating them to their contemporary context or historical background, as well as to works from other time periods. This lesson focuses specifically on the first part of the standard.

**Materials:** There are very few materials for this lesson. You’ll need PowerPoint to show the presentation, copies of the quiz for all students, and the students will need writing utensils. (Optional) You can also make a handout from the PowerPoint presentation to give to students to take notes on.

**Procedures:** First, show the PowerPoint presentation (linked below) about major historical events, and allow the items in the presentation to lead a discussion of each of the topics presented – do not simply read the bullet points! The bullet points in red are events that students will not easily connect to American Literature or American History. Guide them to an understanding of how these events did indeed influence America. Then, show the PowerPoint presentation about major American literary movements (linked below). Also, use this as a discussion opportunity. After a few days (so that the students can study), give the quiz (also linked below). Lastly, don’t forget about this lesson after the lesson is over – you can refer to it all year as you teach!

**Assessment:** I have provided a quiz over the information in the PowerPoint presentations. Since I am teaching this lesson at the beginning of the year, I have also included my syllabus quiz questions in this document. Feel free to delete and add items to the quiz as you see fit!

**Follow Up:** I would continue to have questions from this PowerPoint show up on quizzes and tests throughout the school year. Also, have students add information to the PowerPoint (perhaps load it onto Google Docs, so they can make changes) as you study different eras and gain a more in-depth understanding.



