

British Romanticism



The Death of Chatterton
Henry Wallis (1830–1916)

1798 ~ 1832

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

- Ended the Restoration/Neoclassical Period, began the Romantic Period
- Devastated the “true believers” in Europe
- Put all of England’s class system on edge
- “The Terrors” showcased the guillotine
- Napoleon Bonaparte became a dictator



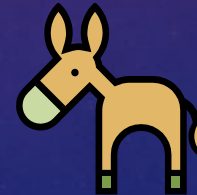
NAPOLEON DID A BAD, BAD THING.

- He declared war on England.
- England beat his tail.
- The cultural climate in England was on lockdown.
 - Freedoms, civil liberties, etc? No way.



INDUSTRIAL FALL OUT




- Meanwhile the Industrial Revolution made cities disgusting.
 - Large numbers of homeless, jobless, landless people flooded the cities.
- “*Laissez faire*” economic policy kept this going.
 - The rich exploited the poor and used children like donkeys.



ROMANTIC WRITERS STRIKE BACK

- Romantic poets and novelists during this period focused on their **imagination**s.
 - This was their response and escape from their totally messed-up reality.
 - They sought “truth and beauty.”
- “Romantic” does not mean kissy-kissy Valentine’s Day stinkeroni.

CHARACTERISTICS OF ROMANTIC WRITERS

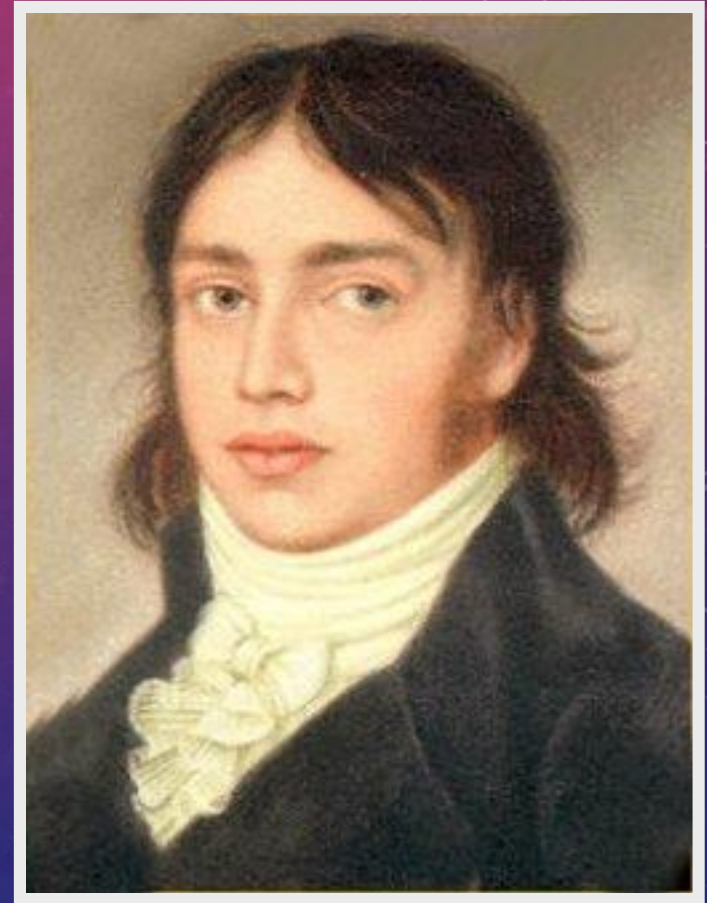
	NATURE	A Child's Sense of Wonder: obsession with freshness, innocence
	HIPPIE IDEALISM	Social Idealism: Question authority, find better way to live
	CHANGE	Progressivism: Accept change rather than rigidly reject it

THE ROMANTIC POET

- Wordsworth described them as special, “endowed with more lively sensibility, more enthusiasm and tenderness...a greater knowledge of human nature, and a more comprehensive soul, than are supposed to be common among mankind.”
- Basically they thought poets were *very important*.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE

- Absolutely a genius, a poet and philosopher.
- Had a tragic life, a sad story
 - Had a depressive, lonely personality
 - Became addicted to opium, which was prescribed for his arthritis



COLERIDGE, CONTINUED

- Became addicted to laudanum, which was prescribed to get him off of opium, which was worse.
- Negatively affected his work and marriage
- Yet was a great man, well-loved, devoted to the good of his fellow human beings
- Most famous works were “Kubla Khan” and “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner.”