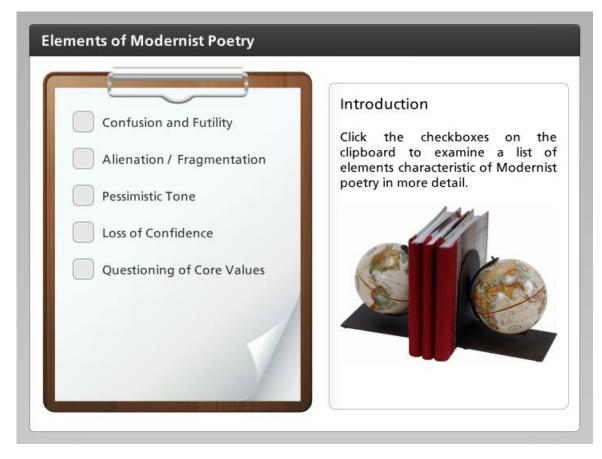
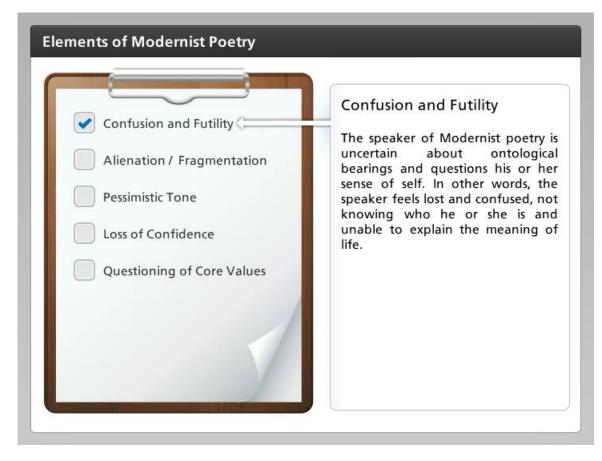
Introduction



Click the checkboxes on the clipboard to examine a list of elements characteristic of Modernist poetry in more detail.



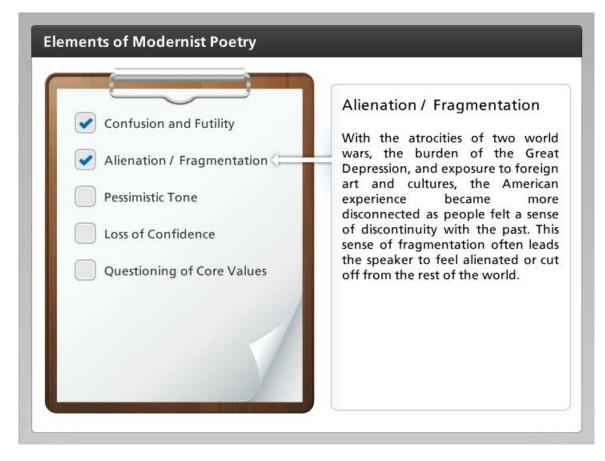
Confusion and Futility



The speaker of Modernist poetry is uncertain about ontological bearings and questions his or her sense of self. In other words, the speaker feels lost and confused, not knowing who he or she is and unable to unable to explain the meaning of life.



Alienation / Fragmentation



With the atrocities of two world wars, the burden of the Great Depression, and exposure to foreign art and cultures, the American experience became more disconnected as people felt a sense of discontinuity with the past. This sense of fragmentation often leads the speaker to feel alienated or cut off from the rest of the world.



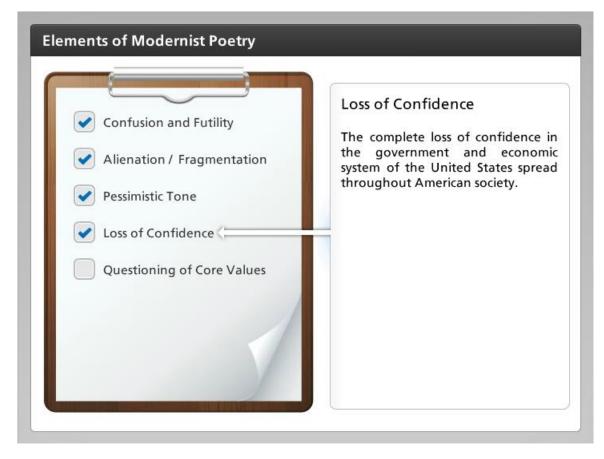
Pessimistic Tone



In much of the poetry of the era, the poet's feelings and the overall tone of the poem is very pessimistic and bleak.



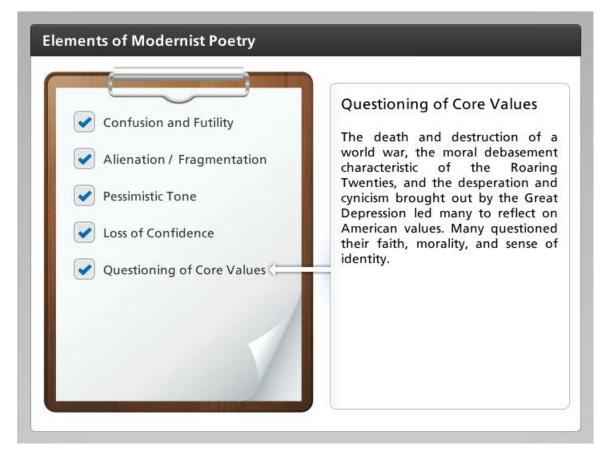
Loss of Confidence



The complete loss of confidence in the government and economic system of the United States spread throughout American society.



Questioning of Core Values



The death and destruction of a world war, the moral debasement characteristic of the Roaring Twenties, and the desperation and cynicism brought out by the Great Depression led many to reflect on American values. Many questioned their faith, morality, and sense of identity.

