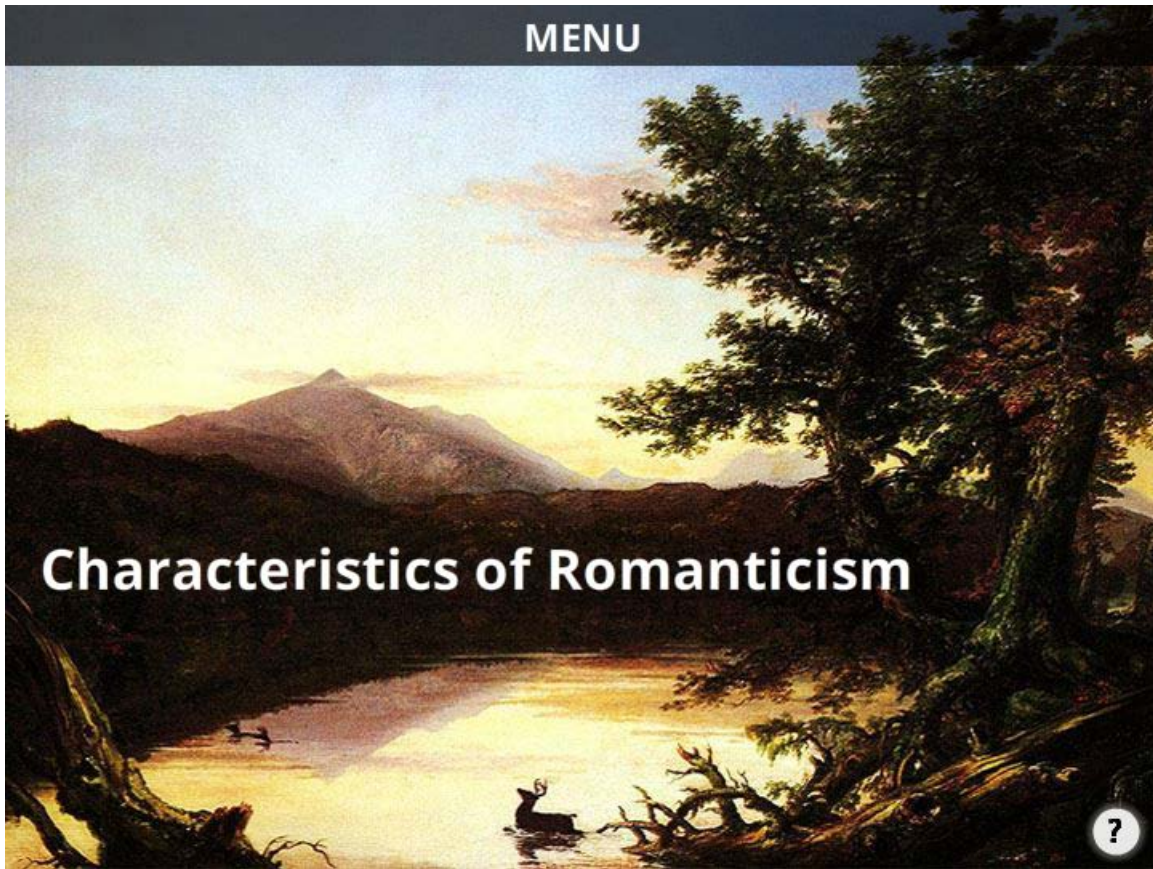


Module 6: Examining the World to Discover Truth Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

Introduction



Hover your cursor over the menu bar at the top, and then select an image thumbnail to explore a characteristic of Romanticism in further detail.

Module 6: Examining the World to Discover Truth

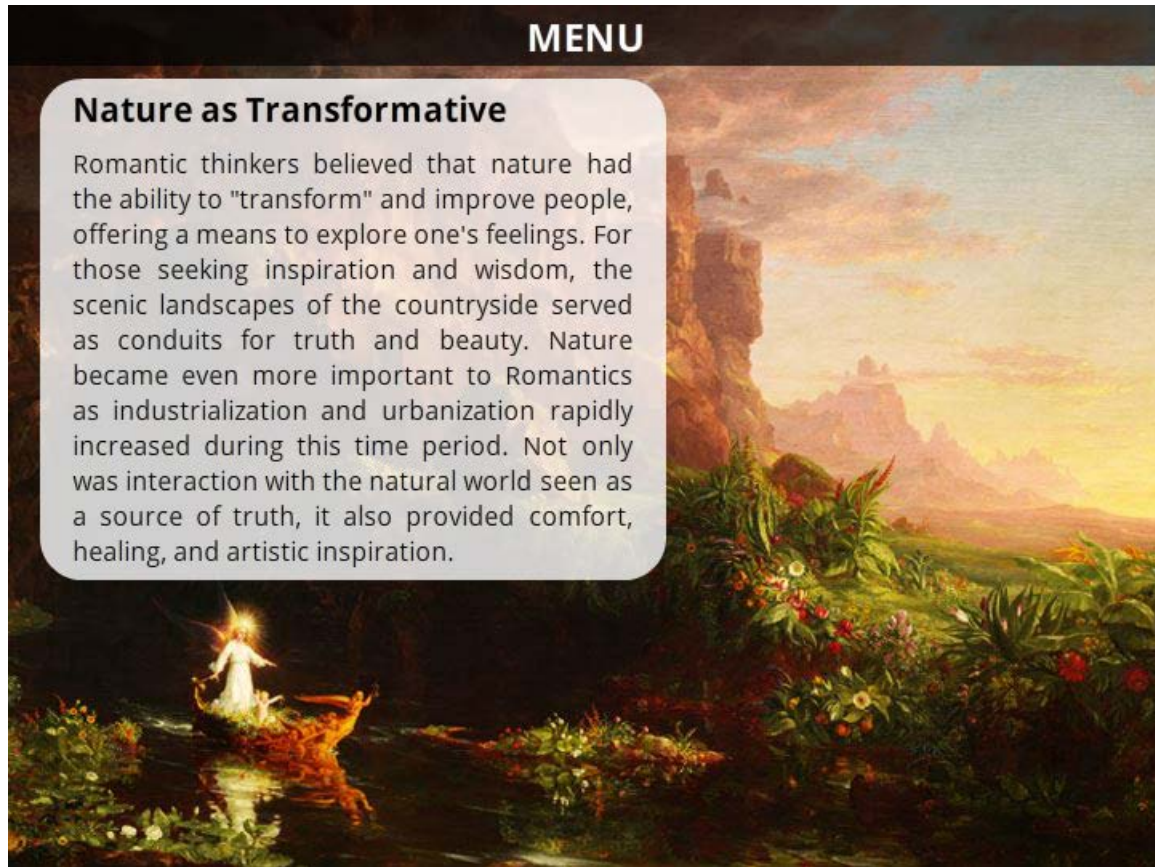
Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

Nature as Transformative

MENU

Nature as Transformative

Romantic thinkers believed that nature had the ability to "transform" and improve people, offering a means to explore one's feelings. For those seeking inspiration and wisdom, the scenic landscapes of the countryside served as conduits for truth and beauty. Nature became even more important to Romantics as industrialization and urbanization rapidly increased during this time period. Not only was interaction with the natural world seen as a source of truth, it also provided comfort, healing, and artistic inspiration.

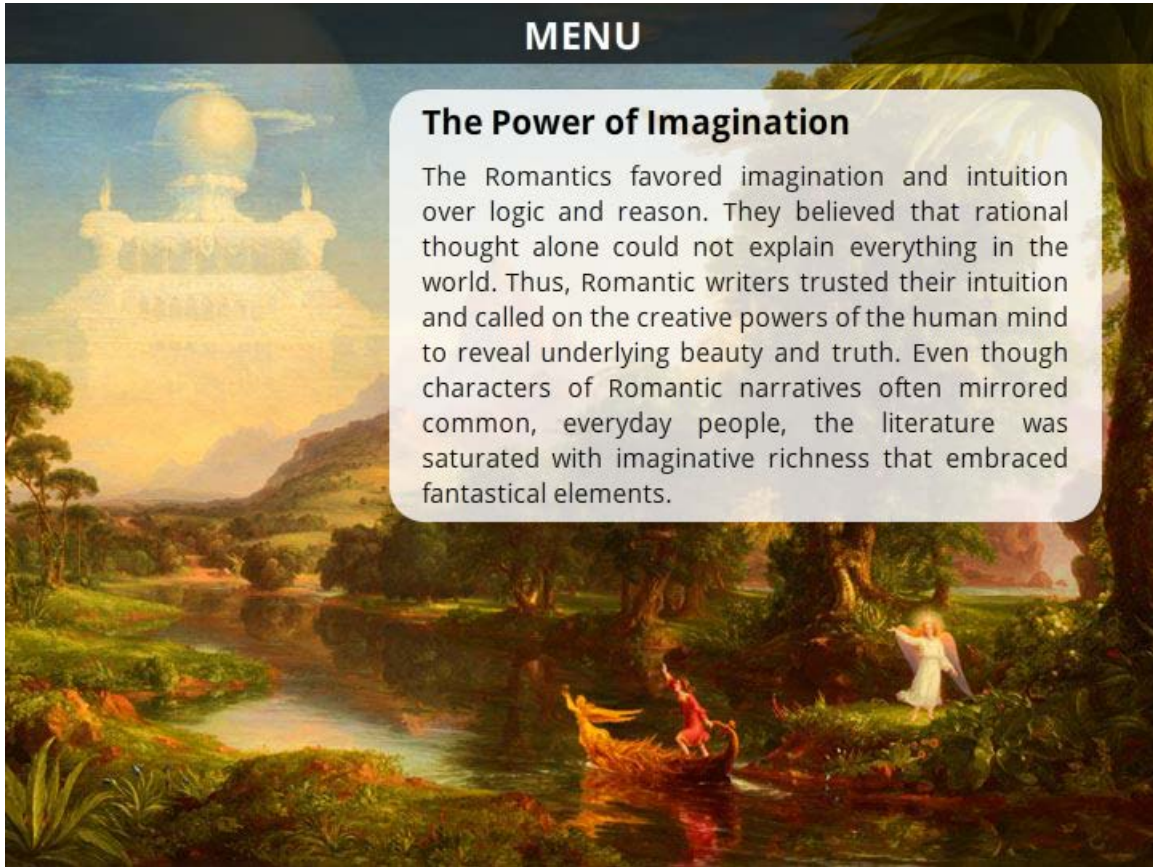
A Romantic-style landscape painting. In the foreground, a small stream flows through a lush, green forest. A glowing, ethereal figure with wings, possibly an angel or a spirit of nature, stands in the water, surrounded by a soft, golden light. The background shows a vast, hazy landscape with rolling hills and a warm, golden sky, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The overall mood is serene and inspirational.

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Module 6: Examining the World to Discover Truth

Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

The Power of Imagination



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The Power of Imagination

The Romantics favored imagination and intuition over logic and reason. They believed that rational thought alone could not explain everything in the world. Thus, Romantic writers trusted their intuition and called on the creative powers of the human mind to reveal underlying beauty and truth. Even though characters of Romantic narratives often mirrored common, everyday people, the literature was saturated with imaginative richness that embraced fantastical elements.

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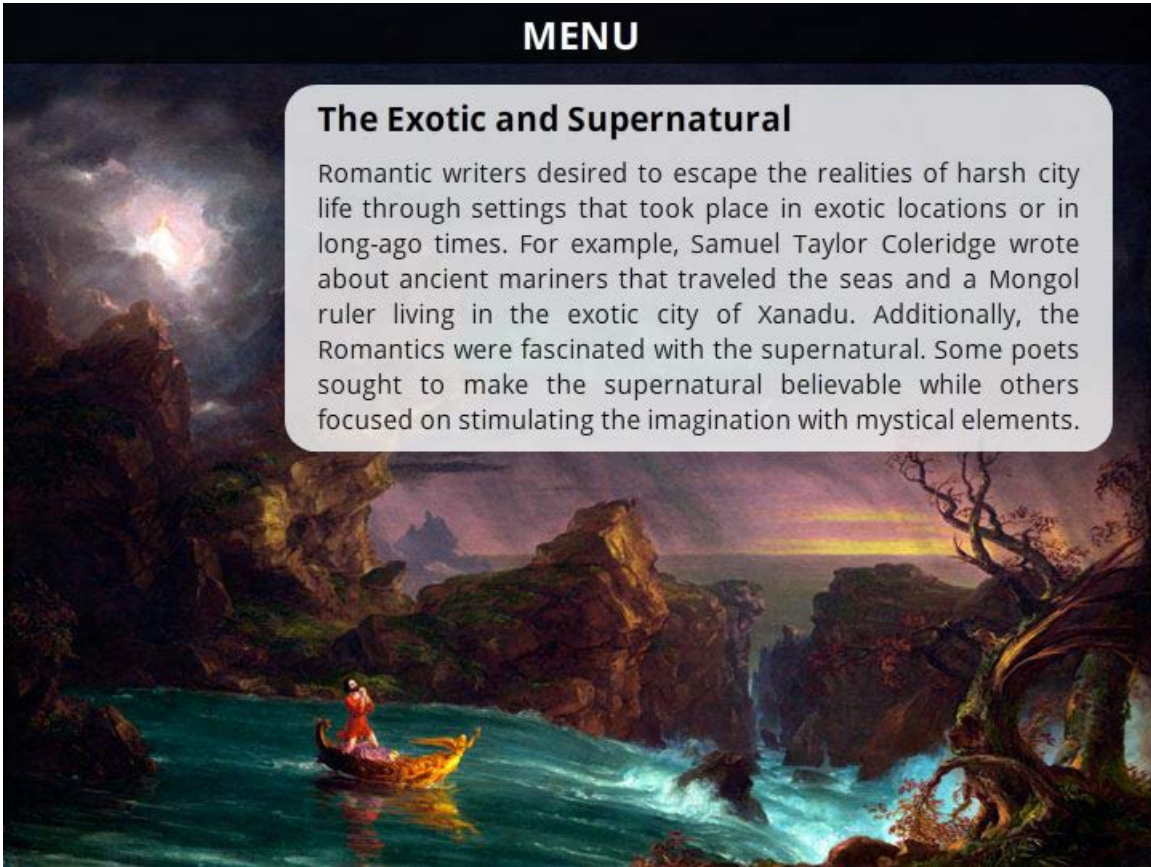
Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

The Exotic and Supernatural

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The Exotic and Supernatural

Romantic writers desired to escape the realities of harsh city life through settings that took place in exotic locations or in long-ago times. For example, Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote about ancient mariners that traveled the seas and a Mongol ruler living in the exotic city of Xanadu. Additionally, the Romantics were fascinated with the supernatural. Some poets sought to make the supernatural believable while others focused on stimulating the imagination with mystical elements.



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Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

Emotion and Spontaneity

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Emotion and Spontaneity

Writers of the Romantic era rejected artificiality and believed that experiencing strong, natural emotions was essential to artistic creation. In the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, author William Wordsworth proclaimed that "all good poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings." Emotions and sentiments were seen as the essence of human experience, and the personal feelings of "the common man" were just as valuable as those of the intellectual elite.

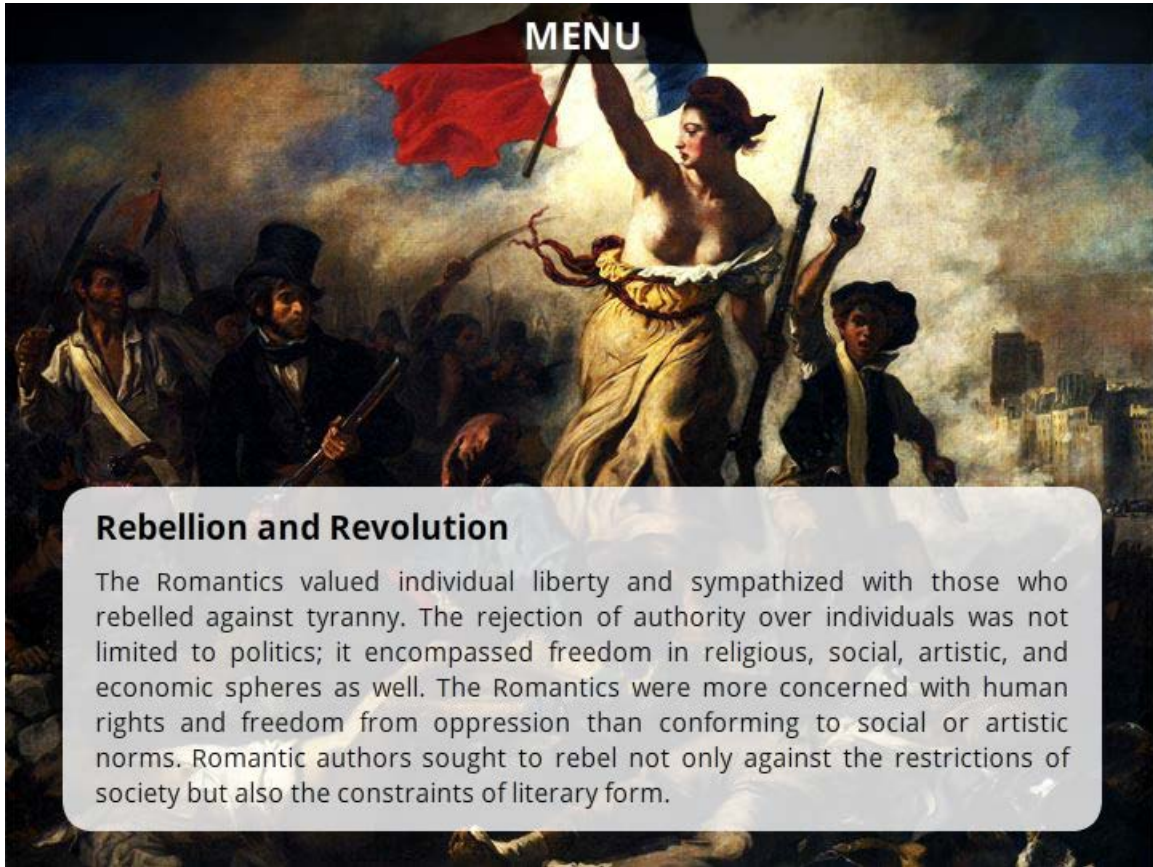
A Romantic-style painting depicting a dramatic seascape. In the foreground, a small boat with several figures is navigating through turbulent, dark waves. The sky is filled with swirling, dramatic clouds, and a brilliant sunburst or light source breaks through the clouds in the upper center, casting a golden glow over the scene. The overall mood is one of intense natural power and emotional awe.

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Topic 2 Content: Characteristics of Romanticism

Rebellion and Revolution



The Romantics valued individual liberty and sympathized with those who rebelled against tyranny. The rejection of authority over individuals was not limited to politics; it encompassed freedom in religious, social, artistic, and economic spheres as well. The Romantics were more concerned with human rights and freedom from oppression than conforming to social or artistic norms. Romantic authors sought to rebel not only against the restrictions of society but also the constraints of literary form.