



**CALIFORNIA CONTENT
STANDARD 10.3.7**

Romanticism in Art and Literature

Specific Objective: Describe the emergence of Romanticism in art and literature (e.g., the poetry of William Blake and William Wordsworth), social criticism (e.g., the novels of Charles Dickens), and the move away from Classicism in Europe.

Read the summary to answer the questions on the next page.

Nineteenth-century European art, music, and literature were dominated by two styles: classicism and romanticism.

- **Classicism** sought to imitate the arts of ancient Greece and Rome. Tradition, reason, and symmetry were prized. The forms of plays and musical compositions followed particular rules; painters and architects incorporated subjects and images from the ancient world.
- **Romanticism** emphasized love of nature, emotional expression, individual experience, and the importance of ordinary people and folk traditions. Often, romantics longed for a simpler, gentler past—a time when noble people lived in harmony with unspoiled nature—a past that did not in fact exist. Romanticism developed in the early 1800s and became widely popular. In some ways, Romanticism reflected the spirit and concerns of its time.

While across Europe romanticism celebrated . . .	Example
. . . people demanded more political power from their royal rulers, the value of ordinary people.	William Wordsworth wrote poetry that used the language of ordinary people.
. . . industrialization caused pollution, and people left rural areas for cities, the beauty of nature.	Beethoven's <i>Pastoral</i> symphony expressed his love of nature.

Romanticism's focus on the value of ordinary people and their experiences led to the development of **social criticism**—artistic work that identifies and expresses concern for problems in society. The fiction of Charles Dickens was known for its social criticism. In *A Christmas Carol*, for instance, Dickens vividly describes the sufferings of the poor.



PRACTICE

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Directions: Choose the letter of the *best* answer.

“How glad I am to be able to roam
in wood and thicket, among the trees
and flowers and rocks!”

—Ludwig van Beethoven

1 What Romantic value is expressed in Beethoven’s words about nature?

- A scientific knowledge
- B personal experience
- C the ability to travel
- D the diversity of life

2 Which would have been the *most* likely subject for a classical painter?

- A a farmer milking a cow
- B folk dancing
- C ancient Greek philosophers
- D a sunset over magnificent mountains

3 Nineteenth-century European Romantics tended to view the past as a

- A time of ignorance.
- B time best forgotten.
- C more stimulating time.
- D gentler time.

4 European Romanticism celebrated the beauty of nature at a time when

- A people were traveling to remote areas for the first time.
- B industrialization was polluting the land.
- C agriculture was undergoing a revival.
- D outdoor recreation had gained in popularity.

5 European Romanticism celebrated ordinary people at a time when they

- A lived in democracies.
- B showed little interest in politics.
- C demanded their rights.
- D idealized the nobility.

6 A 19th-century novel that attempted “social criticism” might have shown how a young hero or heroine was affected by

- A a week at the seashore.
- B growing up in a loving family.
- C being educated in the arts.
- D industrial pollution.