

## Literary Romanticism

- \* Literary movement in Western Europe between the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century
- \* Romanticism arose in reaction against the neoclassical ideals of the Enlightenment period that stressed reason, order, form, and rationality
- \* Romantic principles were also influenced by the libertarian and egalitarian ideals of the French Revolution, beliefs formed during a time of great social and political change
- \* In England, Romanticism appears in the works of Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Keats, and also includes the works Percy Shelley, Lord Byron and Mary Shelley

### Basic Principles:

- Emotion over reason; Valued imagination over rationality, trusted the senses over intellect, emphasis on the subjective, the irrational, the imaginative
- Return to nature; Nature as a source of inspiration, a site of profound emotional experience, interest in the sublime
- Emphasis on the individual; Turning in upon the self, examination of humanity through deep introspection, valuing of individual thought and creativity

### References

"Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley," in *Dictionary of Literary Biography, Volume 110: British Romantic Prose Writers, 1789-1832, Second Series*. A Brucoli Clark Layman Book. Edited by John R. Greenfield, McKendree College. The Gale Group, 1991, pp. 209-220.

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