

Capstone: American Literature Timeline Exhibit

Name: _____ Date: _____

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will synthesize the quarter's authors and historical periods into a museum-style timeline exhibit demonstrating how history shaped American literature.

MATERIALS NEEDED

- poster board or trifold board
- all previous weeks' notes and worksheets
- markers or colored pencils
- ruler
- glue stick or tape
- index cards

HANDS-ON ACTIVITY

1. Gather your notes from all 8 previous weeks (Bradford, Paine, Douglass, Emerson/Thoreau, Whitman, Civil War letters, Twain, immigrant narratives).
2. Using your ruler, draw a timeline across your poster or trifold board spanning 1620 to 1920.
3. For each of the 8 authors/works studied, create one labeled index card with: author name, work title, year, and a one-sentence description of the historical context it reflects. Place each card at the correct point on your timeline.
4. Choose the two authors or works you found most powerful, and write a short paragraph (6-8 sentences) on your exhibit board explaining how the historical events of their time shaped what they wrote.
5. Present your timeline exhibit aloud to a family member in 2-3 minutes, explaining the overall pattern you noticed in how American history and literature connect.

QUESTIONS

1. **Choose two authors from your timeline and explain how their historical moment shaped their writing.**

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2. **What overall pattern did you notice about how history and literature are connected across this quarter?**
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3. Which piece of literature from this quarter did you find most powerful, and why?

4. If you had to add a ninth author to represent 'today,' what current event or issue might they write about, and why?
