Essays Penguin Modern Classics

A survey of British prose presents notable essays by Bacon, Addison, Lamb, Stevenson, Priestley, Huxley, Pritchett, and others

These essays, reviews and articles illuminate the life and work of one of the most individual writers of this century - a man who created a unique literary manner from the process of thinking aloud and who elevated political writing to an art.

'Masterly, hilarious, truly insightful' - Philip Hensher, The Spectator A Times Literary Supplement Book of the Year 2019 The last major collection of Nabokov's published material, Think, Write, Speak brings together a treasure trove of previously uncollected texts from across the author's extraordinary career. Each phase of his wandering life is included, from a precocious essay written while still at Cambridge in 1921, through his fame in the aftermath of the publication of Lolita to the final, fascinating interviews given shortly before his death in 1977. Introduced and edited by his biographer Brian Boyd, this is an essential work for anyone who has been drawn into Nabokov's literary orbit. Here he is at his most inspirational, curious, playful, misleading and caustic. The seriousness of his aesthetic credo, his passion for great writing and his mix of delight and dismay at his own, sudden global fame in the 1950s are all brilliantly delineated.

This selection not only shows the wide-ranging nature of Lawrence's short stories, but also traces his development as a writer. His early stories often draw on personal experience, as in 'The Spades of Spring', a recreation of Lawrence's long love affair with Jessie Chambers. Above all, these stories illustrate Lawrence's passionate belief about the destructive forces in modern society and their effect on love between men and women.

This novel is an extraordinarily poignant evocation of a lost happiness that lives on in the memory. For years now the Ramsays have spent every summer in their holiday home in Scotland, and they expect these summers will go on forever. In this, her most autobiographical novel, Virginia Woolf captures the intensity of childhood longing and delight, and the shifting complexity of adult relationships. From an acute awareness of transcience, she creates an enduring work of art.

A Room of One's Own, based on a lecture given at Girton College, Cambridge, is one of the great feminist polemics, ranging in its themes from Jane Austen and Carlotte Brontë to the silent fate of Shakespeare's gifted (imaginary) sister and the effects of poverty and sexual constraint on female creativity. Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is regarded as a major 20th century author and essayist, a key figure in literary history as a feminist and modernist, and the centre of 'The Bloomsbury Group'. This informal collective of artists and writers which included Lytton Strachey and Roger Fry, exerted a powerful influence over early twentieth-century British culture. Between 1925 and 1931 Virginia Woolf produced what are now regarded as her finest masterpieces, from Mrs Dalloway (1925) to the poetic and highly experimental novel The Waves (1931). She also maintained an astonishing output of literary criticism, short fiction, journalism and biography, including the playfully subversive Orlando (1928) and A Room of One's Own (1929) a passionate feminist essay. If you enjoyed A Room of One's Own, you might like Woolf's Orlando, also available in Penguin Modern Classics. 'Probably the most influential piece of non-fictional writing by a woman in this century' Hermione Lee, Financial Times

Susan Sontag's On Photography is a seminal and groundbreaking work on the

subject. Susan Sontag's groundbreaking critique of photography asks forceful questions about the moral and aesthetic issues surrounding this art form. Photographs are everywhere, and the 'insatiability of the photographing eye' has profoundly altered our relationship with the world. Photographs have the power to shock, idealize or seduce, they create a sense of nostalgia and act as a memorial, and they can be used as evidence against us or to identify us. In these six incisive essays, Sontag examines the ways in which we use these omnipresent images to manufacture a sense of reality and authority in our lives. Sontag offers enough food for thought to satisfy the most intellectual of appetites'The Times'A brilliant analysis of the profound changes photographic images have made in our way of looking at the world, and at ourselves'Washington Post'The most original and illuminating study of the subject'New YorkerOne of America's best-known and most admired writers, Susan Sontag was also a leading commentator on contemporary culture until her death in December 2004. Her books include four novels and numerous works of non-fiction, among them Regarding the Pain of Others, On Photography, Illness as Metaphor, At the Same Time, Against Interpretation and Other Essays and Reborn: Early Diaries 1947-1963, all of which are published by Penguin. A further eight books, including the collections of essays Under the Sign of Saturn and Where the Stress Falls, and the novels The Volcano Lover and The Benefactor, are available from Penguin Modern Classics.

Orlando has always been an outsider . . . His longing for passion, adventure and fulfilment takes him out of his own time. Chasing a dream through the centuries, he bounds from Elizabethan England and imperial Turkey to the modern world. Will he find happiness with the exotic Russian Princess Sasha? Or is the dashing explorer Shelmerdine the ideal man? And what form will Orlando take on the journey - a nobleman, traveller, writer? Man or . . . woman? Arguing that 'a good piece of lettering is as beautiful a thing to see as any sculpture or painted picture', Eric Gill's opinionated manifesto on typography's place in culture is also a moral treatise celebrating the role of craftsmanship in an industrial age. Gill, a sculptor, engraver, printmaker and creator of many classic typefaces that can be seen around us today, fused art, history and polemic in this visionary work which has been hugely influential on modern graphic design. How do we see the world around us? This is one of a number of pivotal works by creative thinkers whose writings on art, design and the media have changed our vision for ever. 'His lettering was clear, confident and hugely influential on the development of modern type design. The world has now caught up with Gill.' Guardian

The Gift is the last of the novels Nabokov wrote in his native Russian and the crowning achievement of that period in his literary career. It is also his ode to Russian literature, evoking the works of Pushkin, Gogol, and others in the course of its narrative: the story of Fyodor Godunov-Cherdyntsev, an impoverished émigré poet living in Berlin, who dreams of the book he will someday write--a

book very much like The Gift itself.

Outwardly a novel about life in a country-house in whose grounds there is to be a pageant, Between the Acts is also a striking evocation of English experience in the months leading up to the Second World War. Through dialogue, humour and the passionate musings of the characters, Virginia Woolf explores how a community is formed (and scattered) over time. The pageant, a series of scenes from English history, and the private dramas that go on between the acts, are closely interlinked. Through the figure of Miss La Trobe, and author of the pageant, Virginia Woolf questions imperialist assumptions and, at the same time, re-creates the elusive role of the artist.

This collection of essays contains some of the most important pieces of criticism of the twentieth century, including the classics 'The Aesthetics of Silence', a brilliant account of language, thought and consciousness, and 'Trip to Hanoi', written during the Vietnam War. Here too is an excoriating account of America's identity and future, a robust and surprising discussion of pornography and other richly rewarding writings on art, film, literature and politics.

Susan Sontag's third essay collection brings together her most important critical writing from 1972 to 1980. In these provocative and hugely influential works she explores some of the most controversial artists and thinkers of our time, including her now-famous polemic against Hitler's favourite film-maker, Leni Riefenstahl, and the cult of fascist art, as well as a dazzling analysis of Hans-Jürgen Syberberg's Hitler, a Film from Germany. There are also highly personal and powerful explorations of death, art, language, history, the imagination and writing itself.

Tracing the lives of a group of friends, this novel follows their development from childhood to middle age. Social events, individual achievements and disappointments form the outer structure of the book, but the focus is the inner life of the characters which is conveyed in rich poetic language.

Throughout history, some books have changed the world. They have transformed the way we see ourselves - and each other. They have inspired debate, dissent, war and revolution. They have enlightened, outraged, provoked and comforted. They have enriched lives - and destroyed them. Now Penguin brings you the works of the great thinkers, pioneers, radicals and visionaries whose ideas shook civilization and helped make us who we are. Inspired by the myth of a man condemned to ceaselessly push a rock up a mountain and watch it roll back to the valley below, The Myth of Sisyphus transformed twentieth-century philosophy with its impassioned argument for the value of life in a world without religious meaning.

A series of provocative discussions on everything from individual authors to contemporary religious thinking, Against Interpretation and Other Essays is the definitive collection of Susan Sontag's best known and important works published in Penguin Modern Classics. Against Interpretation was Susan Sontag's first collection of essays and made her name as one of the most incisive thinkers of our time. Sontag was among the first critics to write about the intersection between 'high' and 'low' art forms, and to give them equal value as valid topics, shown here in her epoch-making

pieces 'Notes on Camp' and 'Against Interpretation'. Here too are impassioned discussions of Sartre, Camus, Simone Weil, Godard, Beckett, Lévi-Strauss, sciencefiction movies, psychoanalysis and contemporary religious thought. Originally published in 1966, this collection has never gone out of print and has been a major influence on generations of readers, and the field of cultural criticism, ever since. Susan Sontag (1933-2004) was born in Manhattan and studied at the universities of Chicago, Harvard and Oxford. She is the author of four novels - The Benefactor, Death Kit, The Volcano Lover and In America, which won the 2000 US National Book Award for fiction - a collection of stories, several plays, and six books of essays, among them Illness as Metaphor and AIDS and Its Metaphors. Her books are translated into thirty-two languages. In 2001 she was awarded the Jerusalem Prize for the body of her work, and in 2003 she received the Prince of Asturias Prize for Literature and the Peace Prize of the German Book Trade. If you enjoyed Against Interpretation and Other Essays, you might like Sontag's On Photography, also available in Penguin Modern Classics. 'A dazzling intellectual performance' Vogue 'Sontag offers enough food for thought to satisfy the most intellectual of appetites' The Times

In this collection of essays, first published in France in 1957, Bataille explores the value of evil as expressed in literature. He studies the work of Emily Brontë, Baudelaire, Blake, Michelet, Kafka, Proust, Genet? and de Sade.

The definitive Norman Mailer collection, as he writes on Marilyn Monroe, culture, ideology, boxing, Hemingway, politics, sex, celebrity and - of course - Norman MailerFrom his early 'A Credo for the Living', published in 1948, when the author was twenty-five, to his final writings in the year before his death, Mailer wrestled with the big themes of his times. He was one of the most astute cultural commentators of the postwar era, a swashbuckling intellectual provocateur who never pulled a punch and was rarely anything less than interesting. Mind of an Outlaw spans the full arc of Mailer's evolution as a writer, including such essential pieces as his acclaimed 1957 meditation on hipsters, 'The White Negro'; multiple selections from his

wonderful Advertisements for Myself; and a never-before-published essay on Freud. The book is introduced by Jonathan Lethem.

The story of the Pargiter family - their intimacies and estrangements, anxieties and triumphs - mapped out amongst the bustling rhythms of London's streets during the first decade of the 20th century. The Pargiter children must learn to find their footing in a world of rapidly changing rules.

Once described as the 'longest and most charming love-letter in literature', the Virginia Woolf's Orlando is edited by Brenda Lyons with an introduction and notes by Sandra M. Gilbert in Penguin Classics. Written for Virginia Woolf's intimate friend, the charismatic writer Vita Sackville-West, Orlando is a playful mock 'biography' of a chameleonic historical figure, immortal and ageless, who changes sex and identity on a whim. First masculine, then feminine, Orlando begins life as a young sixteenth-century nobleman, then gallops through three centuries to end up as a woman writer in Virginia Woolf's own time. A wry commentary on gender roles and modes of history, Orlando is also, in Woolf's own words, a light-hearted 'writer's holiday' which delights in ambiguity and capriciousness.

With encyclopedic knowledge, this title writes about such diverse subjects as the imaginative pleasures of maps, bizarre exhibitions and the earliest forms of written language. It provides a glimpse into the mind of a master of the magination.

In 1572 Montaigne retired to his estates in order to devote himself to leisure, reading and reflection. There he wrote his constantly expanding 'essays', inspired by the ideas he found in books from his library and his own experience. He discusses subjects as diverse as war-horses and cannibals, poetry and politics, sex and religion, love and friendship, ecstasy and experience. Above all, Montaigne studied himself to find his own inner nature and that of humanity. The Essays are among the most idiosyncratic and personal works in all literature. An insight into a wise Renaissance mind, they continue to engage, enlighten and

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entertain modern readers.

Shooting an Elephant George Orwell 'Shooting an Elephant' is Orwell's searing and painfully honest account of his experience as a police officer in imperial Burma; killing an escaped elephant in front of a crowd 'solely to avoid looking a fool'. The other masterly essays in this collection include classics such as 'My Country Right or Left', 'How the Poor Die' and 'Such, Such were the Joys', his memoir of the horrors of public school, as well as discussions of Shakespeare, sleeping rough, boys' weeklies and a spirited defence of English cooking. Opinionated, uncompromising, provocative and hugely entertaining, all show Orwell's unique ability to get to the heart of any subject. A collection of witty and incisive non-fiction, George Orwell's Shooting an Elephant includes an introduction by Jeremy Paxman in Penguin Modern Classics. We are delighted to publish this classic book as part of our extensive Classic Library collection. Many of the books in our collection have been out of print for decades, and therefore have not been accessible to the general public. The aim of our publishing program is to facilitate rapid access to this vast reservoir of literature, and our view is that this is a significant literary work, which deserves to be brought back into print after many decades. The contents of the vast majority of titles in the Classic Library have been scanned from the original works. To ensure a high quality product, each title has been meticulously hand curated by our staff. Our philosophy has been guided by a desire to provide the reader with a book that is as close as possible to ownership of the original work. We hope that you will enjoy this wonderful classic work, and that for you it becomes an enriching experience.

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