**Realism** (1865-1914)

**Historical Context: The Civil War (1861-1865)**

* The optimistic Romantics were given a rude awakening with the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
* Every American likely knew someone who died or was injured in the war:
	+ 615,000 Americans killed
	+ 410,000 wounded
	+ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of all Northern males died in the war
	+ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of all Southern males died in the war
* Four years of destruction and bloodshed awakened Americans to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Historical Context: The Fall of Romanticism**

* The Romantic concept of the “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” and the hopeful, endless frontier also ended by the end of the Civil War – all of the U.S. was settled. There was nowhere new to go, and current cities and towns grew more crowded
* **Harsh Realities:**
	+ After the war, many Southern towns and cities experienced \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ difficulties, leading to hunger and disease.
	+ Recently freed slaves and an increasing number of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ from other countries caused an increase in the number of impoverished people
	+ Soldiers on both sides of the war dealt were dealing with injury and emotional trauma. Many couldn’t \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, also leading to increased poverty rates
	+ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_: Thanks to the Industrial Revolution, city populations boomed; people moved into cities to work in the factories
	+ Immigrants also came to America looking for work – they were willing to work for lower wages and tolerated dangerous working conditions
	+ Life was marked by \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, dangerous working conditions, and unsanitary, overcrowded living quarters
	+ These harsh realities \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Romantic thinkers to their bodies (instead of their imagination) and the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of life and death, as well as everyday struggles

**Characteristics of Realism**

* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_- Realist thinkers wanted to portray reality and every day life as honestly as possible. They avoided supernatural and overly dramatic elements, instead preferring to focus on ordinary characters and every day events.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_– Realists were fascinated by the previously unheard voices in America. While fiction had previously often focused on the wealthy or upper-middle class, Realists shined a light on the other voices of America, including the middle- and lower-classes, freed slaves, immigrants, farmers, prostitutes, beggars, factory workers, ect.
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_– Realists found something beautiful and admirable in the struggles and perseverance of those unheard voices. While they were careful not to idealize anyone, Realists celebrated the lower and middle classes – flaws and all
* “\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_” – Realists acknowledged that no one is perfect. Characters in Realist fiction will always make mistakes or be flawed in some way, but oftentimes are depicted in a positive light despite their flaws
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_– In an effort to realistically portray life, Realist literature often attempted to capture the “feel” of the towns and cities it takes place in. They often did this by giving detailed descriptions of town life and including local accents when their characters spoke
* \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_– Because Realists focused on the oppressed or overlooked, their stories often included a subtle plea for social change (end to racism, better working conditions, an end judging the lower-class, ect.)