

WHAT DOES “ROMANTIC” MEAN?

The words “**romance**” and “**romantic**”
are words that have definitions
that are seldom fully understood.

In contemporary American English,
the word “**romance**” is almost always used
in connection with the word “**love.**”

In this most common use of the word,
“romance” is used to refer to a love affair.

**But that is only one definition
of the word – and not the original one.**

In fact, that usage of the word “**romance**”
is listed as the **7th definition**
in many dictionaries.

Here are the other definitions of the word
“**romance,**” which are less commonly
used today.

ROMANCE

1. A novel or other prose story

depicting heroic or marvelous deeds,
pageantry, romantic exploits, etc.,
usually in a historical or imaginary setting

**(The French word for “novel”
is “roman.”)**

ROMANCE

**2. The colorful conditions, life,
or world depicted in such tales**

ROMANCE

3. A Medieval narrative,
originally one in verse
and in some **Romance language,**
treating a heroic, fantastic,
or supernatural series of events,
often **in the form of an allegory.**

ROMANCE

- 4. A baseless, made-up story,**
usually full of exaggeration
or fanciful invention
- 5. A romantic spirit, sentiment,**
emotion, or desire
- 6. a romantic character or quality**

ROMANCE

**7. a romantic affair or experience;
a love affair**

ROMANCE

8. a group of Indo-European languages
descended since 800 A.D. **from Latin,**
including **French, Spanish, Italian,**
Portuguese, Romanian,
Provençal and Catalan.

ROMANCE

9. to invent or relate romances;
to indulge in fanciful or extravagant stories
or daydreams.

In the context or definition we are using in this course, the word **“Romantic”** is used in connection with the word **“Romanticism,”** a **movement in art, literature, music and intellectual thought** that originated in the **second half of the 18th century** in Europe and spread to the Americas and other places around the world.

So the word **“Romantic”** as applied to art,
literature and music history
has little or nothing to do
with the usual contemporary usage
of the word.