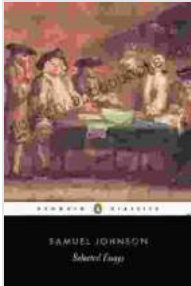


# Samuel Johnson's Essays: A Masterpiece of Literary Criticism



## Selected Essays (Penguin Classics) by Samuel Johnson

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English  
File size : 2350 KB  
Text-to-Speech : Enabled  
Screen Reader : Supported  
Enhanced typesetting : Enabled  
Word Wise : Enabled  
Print length : 629 pages



Samuel Johnson is one of the most important figures in English literature. He was a poet, playwright, essayist, biographer, and lexicographer. His work is known for its wit, erudition, and insights into the human condition.

Johnson's essays are no exception. They are a collection of some of his best writing on a variety of topics, including literature, morality, and politics. Johnson's essays are full of insights into the human condition, and they are still relevant today.

One of the most famous of Johnson's essays is "The Vanity of Human Wishes." In this essay, Johnson argues that human beings are often driven by vanity and ambition, and that these desires can lead to disappointment and unhappiness. Johnson writes:



***“Let observation with extensive view, Survey mankind, from  
China to Peru; Remark each anxious toil, each eager strife,  
And watch the busy scenes of crowded life;***

***Then say how hope and fear, desire and hate, O'erspread with  
snares the clouded maze of fate, Where wavering man,  
betrayed by venturous pride, To tread the dreary paths of  
death is guide.”***

Johnson's essays are full of such insights into the human condition. They are a must-read for anyone interested in literature, morality, or politics.

### **Selected Essays Penguin Classics Samuel Johnson**

The Penguin Classics edition of Samuel Johnson's Selected Essays is the perfect way to experience Johnson's work. This edition includes a selection of Johnson's best essays, as well as an by noted Johnson scholar Patricia Meyer Spacks.

The Penguin Classics edition of Samuel Johnson's Selected Essays is available now at all major bookstores.

### **About the Author**

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) was born in Lichfield, Staffordshire, England. He was the son of a bookseller and a devout Anglican. Johnson received a classical education at Pembroke College, Oxford, but he was forced to leave the university without a degree due to financial difficulties.

After leaving Oxford, Johnson worked as a teacher and a hack writer in London. In 1738, he published his poem "London," which was a critical and

commercial success. Johnson went on to write a number of other works, including the novel "Rasselas" (1759), the play "Irene" (1749), and the biography "The Lives of the English Poets" (1779-1781).

Johnson is best known for his work as a literary critic. His essays on Shakespeare, Milton, and other major writers are still considered some of the best examples of literary criticism ever written.

Johnson was a complex and contradictory figure. He was a brilliant writer and a devout Christian, but he was also a heavy drinker and a misanthrope. Despite his flaws, Johnson is one of the most important figures in English literature.



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