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This book introduces in a lively and succinct way the major writers, literary movements, styles and genres that, at the beginning of a new century, are seen as constituting the field of 'Australian literature'. The book consciously takes a perspective that sees literary works not as aesthetic objects created in isolation by unique individuals, but as cultural products influenced and constrained by the social, political and economic circumstances of their times, as well as by geographical and environmental factors. It covers indigenous texts, colonial writing and reading, poetry, fiction and theatre throughout two centuries, biography and autobiography, and literary criticism in Australia. Other features of the companion are a chronology listing significant historical and literary events, and suggestions for further reading.

! Edited by one of Australia's most distinguished scholars of Australian literature ! Covers Indigenous literature ! Contains supporting apparatus such as a chronology of historical and literary events, and further reading lists