



Marilynne Robinson

Author known for thoughtful and reflective prose.

Rank #12

#	Word	Definition / Example
1	calvinist	a person who follows the religious teachings of John Calvin, focusing on God's grace and the authority of the Bible "Her Calvinist sensibility finds in ordinary light and water the traces of a grace too vast for doctrinal formulation to contain."
2	theological	adj. of; having to do with; based on; or offering instruction in; theology or a theology also "Theological reflection in her fiction is not ornamental piety but the primary mode through which her characters encounter reality."
3	sacramental	adj. of or relating to a sacrament being or resembling a sacrament "A sacramental awareness transforms her descriptive prose — the physical world rendered as continuous silent testimony to something beyond itself."
4	meditative	adj. persistently or morbidly thoughtful "Her meditative pace asks the reader to slow entirely, matching the reflective rhythm of consciousness attending to what ordinarily passes unnoticed."
5	transcendental	adj. transcendent sense supernatural abstract; metaphysical of or having to do with transcendentalism in Kantian philosophy "Transcendental currents from Emerson and Edwards flow through her prose, enriched by her own particular experience of prairie light."
6	luminosity	n. the quality of emitting or reflecting light "Luminosity — of landscape, of memory, of moral attention — is the quality her prose most consistently and lovingly pursues."
7	congregationalist	a member of a Christian church that governs itself independently "Congregationalist tradition in her Iowa setting carries genuine theological weight rather than serving as mere regional atmospheric detail."
8	providential	adj. of; by; or as if decreed by divine providence "Providential attention to individual lives — each one infinitely precious and unrepeatable — animates the moral vision underlying all her fiction."
9	epistemological	relating to the study of knowledge and how we know what we know "Epistemological humility before the mystery of other minds is for her not philosophical position but fundamental spiritual obligation."
10	interiority	the quality of having a rich inner life or deep thoughts "The interiority she grants her characters is so capacious that their inner lives feel inexhaustible — never fully mapped or finally known."
11	eschatological	relating to the end of the world or the final events in history "Eschatological awareness — the sense that each moment is simultaneously temporal and eternal — suffuses her most characteristic prose passages."
12	restorative	adj. able to make something strong and healthy again "Her restorative vision of human dignity insists that no life, however diminished by circumstance, falls beneath the threshold of significance."

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13	Puritan	<p>n. a member of a 16th and 17th century Protestant group in England and New England opposing many customs of the Church of England</p> <p>“Puritan intellectual seriousness — the conviction that ideas matter eternally — is rehabilitated in her essays as a resource rather than a reproach.”</p>
14	grandiosity	<p>n. the quality of being impressive or grand; pompousness</p> <p>“She finds grandiosity not in the monumental but in the quotidian — a child's hand, an afternoon's light, a letter never sent.”</p>
15	covenantal	<p>an agreement or promise that involves responsibilities</p> <p>“Covenantal obligations between generations — what the living owe the dead and the unborn — underlie the ethical architecture of her fiction.”</p>