THE TRADITIONALLY DESCRIBED SHIFT FROM
ENLIGHTENMENT TO ROMANTICISM

The 18th Century:

1. Mechanized view of universe (Newton)
2. All divinely ordered, static (Great Chain of Being), principle of plenitude (Pope's "Everything that IS is right")
3. Reason exalted
4. Universality of Truth assumed
5. Compact, stable society
6. Love of the general
7. Adherence to agreed-upon standards, the rules
8. Philosophy: empiricism
9. Newtonian world of science (all mathematically explainable)
10. Deism: "clock theory" of the universe/God
11. Uniformity of behavior
12. Emphasis on the civilized, the modern
13. Urban life, salons, coffee houses
14. Human nature= predictable, uniform; External nature= mere background
15. Species
16. Traditional creeds
17. Order
18. Distrust of originality
19. Appreciation of the usual, the "natural" (i.e., the "normal")
20. Appreciation of the Classical authors
21. Appreciation of the simple, direct
22. Poetry an acquired art, only for those with "taste"
23. Poetry finely crafted, labored over, a finished artifact; objective
24. Poetry of prose statement (Dryden, Pope, Swift)
25. Satire
26. Augustan heroic couplet; hierarchy of genres
27. Poetic diction (Pope's "finny prey" for fish); language of poetry employs a different vocabulary
28. Largely indifferent toward social problems & injustice
29. Position of women in society not yet much considered
30. Emphasis on the external
31. Linear view of time

Romanticism:

1. Organic view of the universe (rise of geology)
2. Universe developing--emphasis on potential; man likewise developing: philosophy of Helvetius, d'Holbach, Condorcet, Godwin, Paine, Hartley--progress, perfectibility
3. Passion, sensibility, imagination exalted
4. Diversity, relativity of truth ("We hold these truths to be self-evident. . .")
5. Unstable, revolutionary society
6. Love of the minute, the particular
7. Breaking of conventions, extolling of experimentation (in science and in art)
8. Philosophical idealism
9. Supernatural world of myth & mysticism, the unseen, the intuited
10. Optimistic theism, methodism, evangelicalism (feeling, inner experience)
11. Differentness of men and opinions
12. Emphasis on the simple, the rustic; primitivism, the noble savage, the exotic; the child
13. Country life, natural scenery, solitude
14. Human nature= depends on environment, circumstance (behaviorist model); External nature= spiritual and aesthetic value, pantheism, animism, moral guide; the sublime (grand in scale, awe-inspiring) and the beautiful (smaller, more delicate, comforting)
15. Individual
16. Individual speculation, iconoclasm
17. Expansiveness, disorder
18. Faith in the validity of novelty
19. Appreciation of the eccentric, the abnormal
20. Appreciation of the native tradition, esp. the medieval (castles, knights, ladies, details of medieval tapestries, etc.)
21. Love of the complex and fanciful
22. Poetry a gift of nature, of divine inspiration; poetry for all--the democratization of poetry
23. Poetry "spontaneous," "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," a momentary frenzy, the creative imagination, sincerity, the fragment as form; subjective
24. Poetry of image and symbol, the evoked rather than the stated
25. Lyric, confession, the modern epic
26. Earlier verse patterns, new variations: sonnet, ode, blank verse, Spenserian stanza, ottava rima
27. Common language, natural metaphors and figures of speech--"no essential difference between poetry and prose"
28. Humanitarianism, democracy, value of the common man, compassion, beginning of parliamentary reform
29. Beginning of movement to secure women's rights: Wollstonecraft's VINDICATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMAN (1792)
30. Emphasis on the internal, the landscape of the mind, self-consciousness, the "dark" side, the world of dreams/nightmares, interest in psychology
31. New understanding of the relationship between memory and time--non-linear, fluid
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<td>1660 - 1789</td>
<td>Neo-Classical Period (the 18th Century, the Enlightenment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1789 - 1832 (or 1837)</td>
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