

# DEGREE FIRST YEAR, SPECIAL ENGLISH

SEMESTER -1, PAPER -1

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**DEGREE I YEAR – ENGLISH, SEMESTER-1**

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## **FOREWORD**

*Since its establishment in 1976, Acharya Nagarjuna University has been forging ahead in the path of progress and dynamism, offering a variety of courses and research contributions. I am extremely happy that by gaining grade from the NAAC in the year 2016, Acharya Nagarjuna University is offering educational opportunities at the UG, PG levels apart from research degrees to students from over 443 affiliated colleges spread over the two districts of Guntur and Prakasam.*

*The University has also started the Centre for Distance Education in 2003-04 with the aim of taking higher education to the door step of all the sectors of the society. The centre will be a great help to those who cannot join in colleges, those who cannot afford the exorbitant fees as regular students, and even to housewives desirous of pursuing higher studies. Acharya Nagarjuna University has started offering B.A., and B.Com courses at the Degree level and M.A., M.Com., M.Sc., M.B.A., and L.L.M., courses at the PG level from the academic year 2003-2004 onwards.*

*To facilitate easier understanding by students studying through the distance mode, these self-instruction materials have been prepared by eminent and experienced teachers. The lessons have been drafted with great care and expertise in the stipulated time by these teachers. Constructive ideas and scholarly suggestions are welcome from students and teachers involved respectively. Such ideas will be incorporated for the greater efficacy of this distance mode of education. For clarification of doubts and feedback, weekly classes and contact classes will be arranged at the UG and PG levels respectively.*

*It is my aim that students getting higher education through the Centre for Distance Education should improve their qualification, have better employment opportunities and in turn be part of country's progress. It is my fond desire that in the years to come, the Centre for Distance Education will go from strength to strength in the form of new courses and by catering to larger number of people. My congratulations to all the Directors, Academic Coordinators, Editors and Lesson- Writers of the Centre who have helped in this endeavour.*

**Prof. P. Raja Sekhar**

**Vice-Chancellor (FAC)**

**Acharya Nagarjuna University**

Acharya Nagarjuna University  
Special English Syllabi  
I Year, Semester 1, Course-1:  
An Introduction to the English Literature (600-1500)

**Course Outcomes:**

After going the course, the learner will

\*Know about the features of Old, Middle English and Renaissance periods

\*Review the aspects of different literary genres, form sand terms

\*Identify the characteristics in Poetry, Drama and Literary Criticism

\*Interpret literature of these periods critically

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S.no	UNIT NUMBER	LESSON TITLE AND NAME	Marks
1	1. Introduction to Literary Genres, Literary Forms.(Background Study)	<b>Major forms of literature , Literary terms, Figures of speech</b> Lesson 1 An Overview of Poetry Lesson 2 Poetic Forms Lesson 3 Kinds of Essay Lesson 4 History of Essay Lesson 5 History of Novel Lesson 6 Understanding Poetry Lesson 7 Understanding Prose	14
2	History of English literature up to 1500.	<b>Anglo –Saxon literature (Old English), Middle English, Renaissance</b> Lesson 8 Anglo –Saxon literature (Old English), Middle English, Renaissance	14
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MODEL QUESTION PAPER  
B.A., DEGREE EXAMINATION, April 2022.  
First Year: First Semester  
Part – II: Special English

Paper-I: AN INTRODUCTION TO ENGLISH LITERATURE (600-1500)  
Time: Three hours  
marks  
Maximum :70

**Section A—( 14 marks)**  
(Short answer Questions)

Q 1. Answer any **FOUR** of the following Questions

- a) Sonnet
- b) Essay
- c) Personification
- d) Ballad
- e) Morality Play
- f) Elements of Poetry
- g) Drama
- h) Lyric

**SECTION B—(4x14=56 marks)**  
Answer ALL of the following Questions

**UNIT 2**

Q2 (a) Write a Note on the features of Middle English.

OR

(b) Give a brief account on the Norman conquest of England.

OR

(c) Write an Essay on Renaissance and its influence on English Literature.

**UNIT 3**

Q3 (a) What is the dramatic significance of good angel and evil angel in Marlow's Doctor Faustus.

OR

(b) Bring out the central themes of Dr. Faustus

**UNIT 4**

Q4 (a) Why does Edmund Spenser say "Our Love Shall live, and later Life renew"?

OR

(b) Summarize the poem "One day I wrote her Name" by Edmund Spenser.

**UNIT 5**

Q5 (a) What influenced Philip Sydney to write "An Apology for Poetry"?

OR

(b) Explain the central concepts of Sidney's "An Apology for Poetry".

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## **UNIT – I Background Study**

### **Lesson 1**

#### **An Over View of Poetry**

##### **Structure of the lesson:**

##### **1.0 Objectives of the lesson**

##### **1.1 Introduction**

##### **1.2 Discussion: Poetic Forms**

**(a) Sonnet**

**(b) Ode**

**(c) Elegy**

**(d) Ballad**

##### **1.3 Conclusion**

##### **1.4 Sample Questions**

##### **1.5 Suggested Reading**

#### **1.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON**

After reading this chapter you will be able to

- (i) know what poetry is
- (ii) know that poetry is a particular kind of art; that it arises only when the poetic qualities of imagination and feeling are embodied in a certain form of expression.
- (iii) see the sensuous beauties and spiritual meanings in the worlds of human experience and of nature to which otherwise we should remain blind.

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

One essential characteristic of any piece of literature is, whatever its theme, it yields aesthetic pleasure by the manner in which such theme is handled. This means that literature is a fine art and like all fine arts, it has its own laws and conditions of workmanship. And these laws and conditions, like the laws and conditions of all arts, may be analysed and formulated.

What is poetry? A few of the innumerable definitions which are offered by critics of poetry and by poets themselves are quoted below.

Dr. Johnson says that poetry is “metrical composition”; it is, “the art of uniting pleasure with truth by calling imagination to the help of reason”; and its “essence” is “invention”. “By poetry”, says Macaulay, “we mean the art of employing words in such a manner as to produce the illusion on the imagination, the art of doing by means of words what the painter does by means of colours”. “Poetry”, says Shelley, “in a general sense may be defined as the expression of the imagination”.

In Coleridge's view, poetry is the anti-thesis of science, having for its immediate object pleasure; not truth". In William Wordsworth's phrase, it "is the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge," and "the impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science." According to Mathew Arnold, it "is simply the most delightful and perfect form of utterance that human words can reach"; it is "nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth"; it is "a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty." According to Edgar Allan Poe, poetry is "the rhythmic creation of beauty."

## 1.2 DISCUSSION

### Poetic Forms

#### (a) Sonnet

The sonnet is of Italian origin. The word "Sonnet" comes from the Latin word "Sonetto" meaning little sound or strain. A sonnet is a lyric, written in a simple stanza, lines linked by an intricate rhyme scheme. There are two types of sonnets based on structural differences. They are Italian and English.

The Italian sonnet is also called the classical sonnet and the Petrarchan sonnet. Petrarch, a thirteenth century Italian poet, made it popular. He used an octave (eight lines) and a sestet (six lines) in his sonnet. The octave has two quatrains (four lines) and ends with a caesura (full stop). Then there is a volte (complete turn in thought). The sestet has two tercets (three lines). Milton imitated this model.

With regard to the English sonnet, the English have used two different structures.

(a) Shakespearean Sonnet: Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey brought the sonnet form into England in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. They used three quatrains and one couplet without any rhyme connection. Shakespeare made this structure very popular. So this is known as the Shakespearean sonnet.

(b) Spenserian sonnet: Spenser made this structure popular. He linked the three quatrains with a definite rhyme scheme. The quatrains of Spenserian sonnet rhyme within each other. The rhyme scheme here is "abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee". It also uses the Petrarchan concept of courtly love and Nature.

William Shakespeare used love and friendship in his sonnets. He addressed them to the 'young man' and to the 'dark lady'. John Donne used religious themes. John Milton used personal feelings and experiences. He made the sonnet a meditative form even. The modern poets like W.H. Auden and Dylan Thomas also used the sonnet form.

#### (b) Ode

The word 'ode' is simply the Greek word for 'song'. It was used by the Greeks for any kind of lyric verse, for any song sung with the lyre. However, as far as English literature is concerned the idea of some musical accompaniment has been given up, and the term is now applied to only one particular kind of lyric verse. An English Ode may be defined as, a "lyric poem of elaborate metrical structure, solemn in tone and usually lacking the form of an address". Edmund Gosse defines the ode as "a strain of enthusiastic and exalted lyric verse, directed to a fixed purpose and dealing progressively with one dignified theme."

The ode is a serious and dignified composition and longer than the lyric. It is exalted in subject matter and elevated in tone and style. The poet is serious both in the choice of the subject and in the manner of his presentation. An Ode is longer than the lyric because it admits a development in emotion which may be deep and sincere as in a lyric. But its expression is expected to be much more elaborate and impressive. It has lyric enthusiasm and emotional intensity. It is a spontaneous over-flow of the poet's emotions. It is in the form of an address, often to some abstraction. It is not written about but written to somebody or something. The development of thought is logical and clear. Its metrical pattern may be regular or irregular, but it is always elaborate and often complex and intricate. Sometimes the ode has for its theme an important public event like a National Jubilee, the death of a distinguished person or the commemoration of the founding of a great university.

The Greek ode has two forms – Dorian and Lesbian ode. The Dorian ode is so called from the district in which it arose. The Dorian ode was choric and was sung to the accompaniment of a dance. Its structure was borrowed from the movements of the dancers. It consists of three parts – Strophe, during the recitation of which the dancers made a turn from the right to left, Anti-strophe, from the left to the right, Epode when the dancers stood still. This cycle should be repeated any number of times. From its brilliant use by the Greek poet Pindar this is known more as the Pindaric ode.

The Lesbian ode was named after the island of Lesbos. It was simpler than the Pindaric ode. It consists of a number of short stanzas of similar length and arrangement. The treatment is direct and dignified. It was popularized in Latin by two great Roman writers Horace and Catullus. The works of Horace served as a model to English imitators of the form. Except for a few attempts in the Pindaric or the Horatian form, the English ode has pursued a course of its own as regards subject matter, style, treatment and outlook not strictly bound by classical traditions.

### (c) Elegy

In ancient Greece where it originated, the term elegy covered songs, love poems, political verses and lamentations for the dead. The Greeks and the Romans used a special elegiac measure to write an elegy. For them, the subject matter was not important, the structure and form were important. The subject matter could be grave or gay. It was composed in the elegiac measure. A couplet is composed of one long syllable and two short, six times in the first line and five times in the second. Any poem written in this metre ranked as an elegy whatever its theme might be. In the 17<sup>th</sup> century England, it was a solemn meditation. But now, the elegy is a lament for the death of a person. So now, subject matter has become more important than form.

There are no limits to form. Simple language is used. Its main aim is dignity and solemnity. There is no artificiality. It is not spontaneous, but deliberate and thoughtful. Grief is dominant, but resignation and reconciliation can be seen at the end. And so, the poem ends on a joyful note. It is also an expression of faith in immortality and reunion.

The elegy lends itself more readily than other forms of poetry to different reflections on the part of the poet. Death is one such subject that leads the poet to regions of thought he might not normally explore. Milton laments the degradation of poetry and religion in "Lycidas", an elegy on the death of a learned friend Edward King. Tennyson philosophises on the puzzles of life and destiny in "In Memoriam", an elegy on the death of his friend Arthur Hallam.

An elegy has some conventions. The elegist invokes the muse in the beginning of the poem. There are references to some figures in the classical mythology. Nature joins the poet in mourning. The elegist charges the guardians of life with negligence. There is a procession of appropriate mourners. The poet questions providence's justice and the corruption of times. There is a description of floral decoration. There is a closing consolation in the end because there is resurrection after death.

During the Renaissance a new kind of elegy was introduced into English poetry. It followed a convention by which the poet represented himself as a shepherd. In Greek, the word 'pastor' implied 'shepherd'. In a pastoral elegy both the mourner and the mourned are represented as shepherds. The images, speech, sentiments and settings are also pastoral. In Greek, Theocritus, in Latin Virgil, and in English, Milton, Shelley and Arnold wrote pastoral elegies.

#### **(d) Ballad**

The ballad has come out of folk literature. It is a song story transmitted orally. It is the oldest form in literature. Etymologically, ballad means a 'dancing song', because, in the olden times, it was accompanied by a crude tribal dance. There were some ballads even before Chaucer. It is one of the oldest forms in English and is of native growth. Originally it was sung from village to village to the accompaniment of a harp or a fiddle by a strolling singer or bands of singers who earned a living this way. The minstrel usually sang on the village green where a group of eager listeners would assemble to be entertained.

In its earliest stages the song must have been accompanied by a crude tribal dance. Later it was handed down by oral tradition making its own alterations to suit contemporary or local conditions. Since it developed at an early stage in man's cultural evolution, its subjects are deeds rather than thoughts – such as a memorable feud, a thrilling adventure, a family disaster, love and war and life. A ballad is full of fierce, tragic and supernatural elements. It is straight forward because there is very little description. It is written in crude language. It is very energetic. It is elemental in nature. It has great dramatic quality. Every ballad has great metrical beauty. It is written in ballad measure. It has a quatrain: the first and the third lines have four-foot iambic, and the second and the fourth three-foot iambic and rhyme. It opens in the middle of the action but is very clear. There is no clear introduction but very good conclusion. It is very impersonal. Stock phrases like 'merry men, milk white hand, yellow hair, blood red wine and pretty babe' and conventional epithets are used. The details of place and time are not given in any ballad.

Ballads are primarily of two kinds the ballad of growth or the authentic ballad of unknown authorship which has been in existence for ages. Many variations of the same ballad exist with changes in text and tune. It starts with the climactic episode. There is more action and dialogue than description in this. The best example for this is Chevy Chase's "Wife of Usher's Well". The second type of ballad is the ballad of Art or literary ballad, which can be described as a literary development of the traditional form. For example we can see Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" and "Hyperion."

Broadside is also another form in ballad. It is written on one side of a single sheet. It is about a current event or issue. It uses a well-known tune. It became very popular in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. People used to sing broadsides in streets and also country fairs. The minor form of the ballad art is the mock ballad in which a comic theme is treated with the seriousness

appropriate to a ballad. In everything except in humorous subject, it follows its model closely. Cowper's "John Gilpin" and Maginni's "The Rime of the Ancient Waggoner" are famous examples for mock ballad. The word 'ballad' is derived from Italian 'ballare' which means 'to dance'. Fundamentally a ballad is a song that tells a story. It was originally a musical accompaniment to dance. Ballads were folk songs, originally recited, in sing song fashion among the common folk of the Middle Ages when there was no printed page. They were strong-songs – songs out of the hearts of the people. They were handed down from one generation to another by word of mouth. They are called ballad literature. The themes of the old ballads were "the essential passions of the heart".

The earliest ballads were composed in couplets. There is refrain and incremental repetition. The story unfolds slowly and gradually leading upto a terrific climax. The later ballads turned to the four-lined stanzas.

Characteristic features of a ballad:

- a) The beginning is often abrupt.
- b) The language is simple.
- c) The story is told through dialogue and action.
- d) The theme is often tragic (though there are a number of comic ballads).
- e) There is often a refrain.
- f) A ballad usually deals with a single episode.
- g) The events leading to the crisis are related swiftly.
- h) There is a strong dramatic element.
- i) The narrator is impersonal.
- j) Stock, well-trying epithets are used in the oral tradition.
- k) There is frequently incremental repetition.
- l) Imagery is simple.

There are two kinds of ballads: (i) the folk or popular ballad, (ii) the literary ballad. The Folk or Popular ballad is anonymous and is transmitted from singer to singer by word of mouth. It thus belongs to the oral tradition. It exists among illiterate or semi-literate people.

The Literary ballad is written down by a poet as he composes it.

Ballads of both traditions have distinct similarities. The ballad poet drew his materials from community life, from local and national history, from legend and folklore. His tales are usually of adventure, war, love, death and supernatural. Some of the greatest literary ballads were composed in the Romantic period. Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and John Keats's "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" are famous literary ballads.

### 1.3 CONCLUSION

Literature is an interpretation of life as life shapes itself in the mind of the interpreter. It is one chief characteristic of poetry that whatever it touches in life, it relates to our feelings and passions, while at the same time by the exercise of imaginative power it both transfigures existing realities and "gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name".

In Bacon's conception, poetry is the idealistic handling of life which lends "some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it." For Bacon poetry becomes a mere 'theatre' of the mind, to which we may repair for relaxation and pleasure, but in which it is "not good to stay too long", because it only "feigneth", while science is concerned with reality and truth.

**1.4 Sample Questions**

1. Write an essay on the different poetic forms.
2. Write an essay on the significance of the Sonnet.
3. Write an essay on the significance of an Ode.
4. Write an essay on the significance of a Ballad.
5. Write an essay on the significance of an Elegy.

**1.5 Suggested Reading**

1. Marjorie Boulton. The Anatomy of Poetry.
2. C.Day Lewis. Poetry for You.
3. John F. Danby. Approach of Poetry.
4. P. Gurrey. The Appreciation of Poetry.

Content prepared by

Prof. M.Suresh Kumar, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Nagarjuna Nagar.

# UNIT – I Background Study

## Lesson 2

### Poetic Forms

#### Structure of the Lesson:

#### 2.1 Objectives of the lesson

#### 2.2 Introduction

#### 2.3 Discussion: Poetic Forms

##### (a) Lyric

##### (b) Dramatic Monologue

#### 2.4 Conclusion

#### 2.5 Sample Questions

#### 2.6 Suggested Reading

#### 2.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON

After reading this chapter you will be able to

- (i) know what poetry is
- (ii) know that poetry is a particular kind of art; that it arises only when the poetic qualities of imagination and feeling are embodied in a certain form of expression.
- (iii) see the sensuous beauties and spiritual meanings in the worlds of human experience and of nature to which otherwise we should remain blind.

#### 2.2 INTRODUCTION

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What is poetry? A few of the innumerable definitions which are offered by critics of poetry and by poets themselves are quoted below.

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utterance that human words can reach”; it is “nothing less than the most perfect speech of man, that in which he comes nearest to being able to utter the truth”; it is “a criticism of life under the conditions fixed for such a criticism by the laws of poetic truth and poetic beauty.” According to Edgar Allan Poe, poetry is “the rhythmic creation of beauty.”

## 2.3 DISCUSSION

### Poetic Forms- II

#### (a) Lyric

The Lyric is of Greek origin. For the Greeks it was a song sung by single voice to the accompaniment of a lyre. Now, the definition has changed. Lyric is a short non-narrative poem, presenting a single speaker who exposes a state of mind and process of thought and feeling. The Greek song was divided into two classes, Lyric and Choric. The lyric song was sung by a single voice to the accompaniment of a lyre. Choric is the second one which was intended for collective singing to the accompaniment of instrumental music and dance. The first of these divisions is responsible for the lyric as we know it in English verse. True to its Greek origin still it has two characteristics – it is an expression of a single emotion and it is a musical composition.

In ancient times though the language of the lyric was not so polished it was made musical by the voice of the singer by keeping in tune with the music of the instrument. The subject matter also was of little importance so long as the singer’s voice could give it the right emotional effect. In later ages music was replaced by rhythm. The lyric produced during the Elizabethan period was invested with the highest musical quality. The vowels and consonants are so artistically arranged as to compose a music of their own, independent of the aid of the musical instrument. This art was closely studied and developed in later times by such poets as Keats, Shelley, Tennyson and Swinburne.

The lyric is a well-knit poem possessing a definite structure. It gives expression to a single emotion or feeling. It appeals more to the heart than to the intellect or it appeals to the intellect through the heart. A Lyrical poem is as a rule quite brief. The poet through the lyric wishes to convey his impressions swiftly, memorably and musically. The Lyric is a subjective poem for it expresses the poet’s emotion. Hence it cannot help being intensely personal. The Greeks defined a lyric as a song to be sung to the accompaniment of a lyre. A lyric is usually short, not longer than fifty or sixty lines. It usually expresses the feelings and thoughts of a single speaker in a personal fashion. Lyric poetry comprises the bulk of all poetry.

An abundance of lyric poetry survives from the later Middle Ages. From the 13th and 14th centuries a large number of religious and devotional lyrics in English survive. Many of them are of great beauty. Chaucer was a great lyricist of this period. The Renaissance period was the great age of the lyric. Sir Thomas Wyatt and the Earl of Surrey made outstanding contributions to lyric. The principal lyric poets in this period were Sidney, Spenser, Shakespeare and Milton. The lyric form was not favoured much by the 18th century poets. Toward the end of the 18th century and during the Romantic period there was a major revival of lyric poetry. Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley and Keats were the most accomplished lyricists of this period. Robert Burns is also considered a talented lyricist. Throughout the 19th century many poets used the lyric form. Tennyson, Browning and Hopkins were great lyricists of this period.

**Structure of the Lyric:** The lyric can be divided into three parts. The first part or the first stanza states the emotion which has set the poet's imagination. The second part, which forms the bulk of the poem consists of the thoughts suggested by the emotion. The expression reaches its high pitch. The third part is almost as short as the first part. It is usually the last stanza. It marks the poet's return to his initial mood.

**The subject-matter of the Lyric:** The Lyric gives expression to a single emotion or feeling. It appeals more to the heart than to the intellect. It is always short and brief. It goes without saying that the lyric is a subjective poem. It expresses the poet's imagination. The favourite subject of lyric poets has always been love.

### **(b) Dramatic Monologue**

The last division of objective poetry is dramatic poetry, which is intended not for the stage, but to be read and is essentially dramatic in principle. In all varieties of narrative poetry the dramatic element commonly appears more or less prominently in the shape of dialogue. Dramatic poetry may be subdivided into several groups. The first is the dramatic lyric, second the dramatic story, including the ballad or short story in verse. The third species of dramatic poetry comprises the dramatic monologue or soliloquy. It is often difficult to distinguish this from the dramatic narrative. Dramatic monologue is vicariously subjective and story frequently enters into its composition.

The Dramatic monologue is a poetic form with dramatic affinities. It is not strictly a dramatic art form because it is not intended for presentation to an audience. It is a speech addressed to a silent listener. It aims at character study and psychoanalysis. The speaker cries for self-justification and self-explanation. Thus the author shows the inner man. It found particular favour with Robert Browning who may be called its chief exponent. Tennyson also used it with masterly skill. The dramatic monologue is part drama, part poetry. It is a speech in the poetic medium with a dominant dramatic note. The very fact of its being a speech with someone to hear it lends it a dramatic colour. But it is dramatic in other ways too. It could be recited on the stage before an audience with or without costume and scenic background. Moreover it is a study in character which is one of the main functions of drama. But it differs from the drama in its complete lack of action and interchange of speech. It is cast in the form of a speech addressed to a silent listener. The person who speaks is made to reveal himself and the motives that impelled him at some crisis in his life or throughout its course. He may speak in self-justification or in a mood and detached self explanation, contented, resigned or remorseful. What the author is intent on showing us is the inner man.

The poetic form that Browning loved best was the dramatic monologue, and he perfected it. The setting of a dramatic monologue is always an intense situation. On the contemporary stage in England the term dramatic monologue is sometimes used to describe the performance of a scene from a famous novel by an actor dressed as one of the characters in the novel. There are also a few gifted actors and actresses who can appear alone and delight a whole audience with a series of impersonation of various characters – an old soldier recalling bygone days, a peasant woman in church and so on. These are too often called dramatic monologues.

The Dramatic Monologue is 'dramatic' because it is the utterance of an imaginary character. The poet does not speak it. In it character is developed not through any description but through conflict between the opposite thoughts and emotions of the character. It is a

‘monologue’ because it is a conversation of a single individual with himself. ‘Mono’ means ‘one’ and ‘logue’ means ‘conversation.’ The form is also referred to as ‘monodrama.’

The dramatic monologue is different from the soliloquy. In the soliloquy we find the character at a critical moment talking to himself and within himself. The dramatic monologue too has a speaker. He talks to a real or imaginary audience. The monologue expresses a conflict of thought, a conflict between a desire and an external situation, or a conflict between man’s view and god’s view. The conflict would be a kind of monodrama. In the dramatic monologue the poet lays bare all the details, the entire mental apparatus, and begins reconstructing a soul before our very eyes. We watch the details and observe the subtle nuances. We are given all the secrets of the soul and there is no obscurity or vagueness. Thus the character is made to explain itself through speech. The dramatic monologue, therefore, is an expression of the thought of a given character. The dramatic monologue is the technique in which Browning found his natural expression and an art that he perfected. His main idea and aim was to throw light upon the realm of consciousness by means of the method of psychological analysis which can finally reveal the individual expression of each individual.

## 2.4 CONCLUSION

Literature is an interpretation of life as life shapes itself in the mind of the interpreter. It is one chief characteristic of poetry that whatever it touches in life, it relates to our feelings and passions, while at the same time by the exercise of imaginative power it both transfigures existing realities and “gives to airy nothing a local habitation and a name”.

In Bacon’s conception, poetry is the idealistic handling of life which lends “some shadow of satisfaction to the mind of man in those points wherein the nature of things doth deny it.” For Bacon poetry becomes a mere ‘theatre’ of the mind, to which we may repair for relaxation and pleasure, but in which it is “not good to stay too long”, because it only “feigneth”, while science is concerned with reality and truth.

## 2.5 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on the different forms of Lyric.
2. Write an essay on the significance of Dramatic Monologue.
3. Write an essay on types of Dramatic Monologue.
4. Write an essay on the features of Lyric.

## 2.6 SUGGESTED READING

1. Marjorie Boulton. The Anatomy of Poetry.
2. C. Day Lewis. Poetry for You.
3. John F. Danby. Approach of Poetry.
4. P. Gurrey. The Appreciation of Poetry.

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# UNIT – I Background Study

## Lesson 3

### Kinds of Essay

#### Structure of the lesson:

- 3.1 Objectives of the lesson
- 3.2 Introduction
- 3.3 Kinds of Essays
- 3.4 Characteristics of an Essay
- 3.5 Form and Structure of the Essay
- 3.6 Sample Questions
- 3.7 Suggested Reading

#### 3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON

After reading the lesson you will be able to.

1. trace the origin and development of the new literary form i.e. the essay.
2. know about different kinds of essays.
3. appreciate know the contribution of great essayists to English literature.
4. note the essayist's role in correcting the evils of the society.

#### 3.2 INTRODUCTION

The Elizabethan Age is the most creative period in English literature. The foreign wars were mostly over, and the Englishmen had for the first time the leisure to devote their energies to other interests than war upon their neighbours. Fortunately, just at this time, the great wave of the Renaissance, the new birth of letters, having spent itself in Italy and crossing over France and Spain, reached the shores of England. There it was eagerly welcomed by men, who if they had not the poise and mental reach of the Italians of the Renaissance, or the gaiety and sense of form of their French contemporaries, had yet more daring and more intellectual curiosity. Most of the new literary forms were first made known to the Elizabethans by translations from Italian and French. It was thus, that the tales of Boccaccio and of Queen Marguerite and the wisdom of Machiavelli were made available to the English readers. Sir Thomas Wyatt and William Panter rendered valuable service to the English poetry and prose. Sir Philip Sidney, an Italianated Englishman of the noblest type, inaugurated English criticism in The Apologie for Poetry.

With Francis Bacon begins philosophical reflections upon life, in the style of Plutarch's Morals and the Essays of Montague. Bacon's mind is catholic in its range like Plutarch's, but the subjects of moral thought that interest him are comparatively few and generalized. His treatment of a moral subject is more scientific also than that of the classical writer. In the Essays, the method of Bacon is to reduce reflection to the lowest terms, to try to discover the fundamental principles of conduct, the influence, the actions of men. Again, Bacon has nothing of the attractive personality of Montaigne, a man of the world who made a point of finding out what the world was like from all sorts and conditions of man, from the king on his throne to the groom on his riding horse. Montaigne writes on every subject in breezy discursiveness, like a man on horseback traversing an interesting country. Bacon's Essays reflect his experience of life, but they tell us little or nothing of his personal likes and dislikes. They are austere, brief to the point of crudeness. The most obvious division of the Essays is that which time has made. Certain essays do "come home to men's business

and bosoms” in a universal way. They appeal to men at all times. Another type of Essay is distinctly limited partly by Bacon’s own character and partly by the social characteristics of his time. Essayists of Bacon’s mental characteristics will still write on love and marriage, but their treatment of these themes must inevitably be broader and deeper because it has been spiritualized. It is just, because it recognizes the mutual obligations of men and women.

The essay fills so large a place in modern literature and is so attractive a form of composition, that attention must necessarily be given to it in any course of literary study. At the same time, its outlines are so uncertain, and it varies so much in matter purpose, and style, that systematic treatment of it is impossible. When we compare a number of representative essays by different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. An essay by Bacon consists of a few pages of concentrated wisdom, with little elaboration of the ideas expressed. An essay by Montaigne is a medley of reflections, quotations and anecdotes; in an essay by Addison the thought is thin and diluted and the tendency is now towards light didacticism and now towards personal gossip. The essays of Macaulay and Herbert Spencer are really small books. From these cases, it is evident that we have to do with totally different conceptions of what the essay is and what it should aim to accomplish. According to Johnson, an essay is “a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular and orderly composition.” Murray’s Dictionary speaks of the essay as “a composition of moderate length on any particular subject or branch of a subject,” and adds “originally implying want of finish, but now said of a composition more or less elaborate in style, though limited in range.”

Commonly accepted canon is that the method of the essay is marked by considerable freedom and informality. In the early stages of its evolution, irregularity and “want of finish” were fundamental for an essay. In fact, the essay arose because men had come to feel the need of a vehicle of expression in which they could enjoy something of the freedom of conversation. Thus Bacon’s essays are, as he himself tells us, “brief notes set down rather significantly than anxiously”, while Montaigne’s discursiveness and habit of going about his subject is a series of “hops, and skips, and jumps,” are notorious. The essay is relatively unmethodical as well as relatively short. The well-marked tendency among modern essayists is towards greater logical consistency and regularity of structure. It is only one among many signs of the transformation of the essay into something different from the original and genuine type. The central fact of the true essay is the direct play of the author’s mind and character upon the matter of his discourse.

In our study of the essay there are several things which have to be kept in view. In the first place we have to consider the writer’s personality and standpoint, his attitude immediately towards his subject and incidentally towards the life at large. While thus disengaging the personal qualities of his work, we have also to follow the evolution of his thought, marking what aspect of his subject he has selected for treatment, how he introduces his ideas, how he handles and enforces them and how he brings them to a conclusion. An historical study of the essay will include a consideration of its growth and transformation, and of the way in which it has influenced and been influenced by other forms of literature.

Essay (French: “attempt”): a short piece of expository prose which “attempts” to shed some light on a restricted subject of discussion. Beyond this brief definition it is impossible to limit or classify essays. A convenient division, however groups essays according to content and mood as “familiar” (also called “informal” or “personal”) and “formal.” The familiar essay was more or less created by Montaigne (who gave the essay its name). It plays

up the personality of the author, draws openly on his prejudices, recognizes that its conclusions are incomplete and tentative, develops the ideas in a loose structure, has a sprightly conversational style which uses description, narration and humor to make its point. It is often, however, highly informative, full of ripe wisdom and insight into universal human ideals and motivations. Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Robert Louis Stevenson, Oliver Wendell and E.B. White are notable for this style.

“Formal” essays were introduced in England by Bacon who adopted Montaigne’s term. Here the style is objective, compressed, aphoristic, and wholly serious. During the 18<sup>th</sup> century in the mild-mannered social criticism of the periodical essays of Addison and Steele, Samuel Johnson and Goldsmith, a compromise was achieved between the whimsical personal essay and the hard, compact formal type. In modern times, the formal essay has become more diversified in subject matter, style and length until it is better known by such names as article, dissertation, or thesis; and factual presentation rather than style or literary effect has become the basic aim.

### 3.3 KINDS OF ESSAYS

On the basis of its chief or dominant characteristics the essay may be of the following kinds.

**(1)The Aphoristic Essay:** Bacon is the chief exponent of this kind of essay. He gave an objective or impersonal term. His writings do not portray personal term, though they sometimes declare his own preferences as in “Of Gardens.”

**(2)The Personal Essay:** In this type of essay, the personal element predominates. Like the lyric, it is mood-dictated. Charles Lamb is the greatest of the personal essayists in the English language.

**(3)The Character Essay:** This type of essay was popular during the first half of the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The essayist sketched some particular human types of men and women – the hypocrite, the milkmaid, the affectate traveller – in each of the essays.

**(4)The Critical Essay:** During the restoration period Dryden introduced a new variety called the critical essay. This kind of essay is an attempt at literary criticism.

**(5)The Social or Periodical essay:** This kind of essay was employed to serve a distinctly social purpose and it was first published in the periodical press. The early part of the 18<sup>th</sup> century was the heyday of this type of essay. Addison and Steele were pioneers in this field.

### 3.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF AN ESSAY

The chief characteristics of the literary essay are:

1.It is a prose composition, short or of moderate length. This brevity or shortness of the essay does not arise from the superficiality or lack of knowledge of its author. Rather it results from the fact that he has full command over his subject and so can express himself in a pithy and condensed language.

2.The essay is incomplete: It is not exhaustive. The essayist does not say all that is to be said on the subject. His aim is simply to convey his views on the subject.

3. It is personal in nature: From the second characteristic of the essay, it follows that the literary essay is more or less a personal affair. It is mood - dictated.

4. It is formal and unsystematic: It lacks finish. It was this characteristic of the essay which Dr. Johnson emphasized when he called it an undigested piece and loose sally of the mind. There is no formal or logical development of thought in an essay. The various points or arguments are not systematically arranged, but follow each other in a haphazard manner.

5. A good essay, as Bacon emphasized must have a grain of salt within it. In other words, it should be attractive and charming, so that it may be easily retained in the mind. It should have a touch of humour.

### 3.5 FORM AND STRUCTURE OF THE ESSAY

An essay must be personal. Any subject is good enough for it. But it must be the expression of the personality of the writer – his way of looking at persons and things, his own reaction to all that he experiences in life. Whatever he writes about, he must convey his personal impression. There will be a lighter note. The essay cannot be anything abstract, erudite, philosophical. It is the writer's free play of intelligence, fancy, humour and it is again pleasure of communicating his own sensations, which make the best charm of an essay. The essay therefore, cannot conform to any rigid type.

Montaigne is rightly called the father of the essay. His essays are varied in form – containing autobiographical, speculative and ethical elements. Some think that Cicero and Plato might have been his models. The real technique of the essay was invented by Montaigne. We must draw a distinction between Plato's dialogues with their dramatic setting and Montaigne's essays. Cicero's De Serectute comes nearer to the essay, because he deals with the ethical content in a lighter vein. Montaigne has always the lighter touch – and the gift of style which makes more than half of the charm of his essays. He has a disarming and refreshing frankness. As the essay has so much to do with the personality of the writer, it has taken varied forms in England. Sir Thomas Browne's essays, Religio Medici and Urn Burial are rich in gorgeous rhetoric, have a dreamy splendour, sometimes of speculative interest. Addison deals with the commonplace problems of life and morality, relieved with genial humour. Charles Lamb is the most exquisite and sometimes fantastic essayist, weaving tender pathos and graceful sentiment into the humdrum realities of life. He is essentially a romantic in the days of the Romantic movement. De Quincey evolved impassioned and condensed prose out of his varied personal experiences. Pater wrote mostly on art subjects and expressed his fine sensibilities in delicately moulded sentences.

The essay has some analogy to the lyric art, differing from it by admitting of humour and by having a larger range. The rigid classification of literary types breaks down when we consider the different shapes that the essay takes. Benson says, "What lies behind all art is the principle of wonder and of arrested attention". This may as well hold good of the essay. It may be a romantic view of literature. And the essay has a romantic core in it. The essayist must be a spectator of life. His experience must be a part of the common experience of mankind. He must make this experience a reality to himself and then he can convey it in fitting words, images and emotions to his readers. He is more concerned with the appearances of things than with the fundamentals. It is his own impressions and sensibilities, his personal reaction that must get into his essays. This will become easy to him if he cultivates largeness of view and tolerance of spirits. Then the essay will be the reflection of a

good humoured, gracious and reasonable personality. Mood and temper are important factors with an essayist.

An essayist should meet his readers half-way, anticipate the very sensations and thoughts of his readers. He can do this by his larger absorption and integration of common human instincts and pleasures. He should possess more of the human elements than those for whom he writes and when he adds to these a sweet reasonableness, he is a good essayist. He himself must have a zest for life and infect his readers with it. An essayist must be said to be a lesser kind of poet, working in simpler and humbler materials. He should be a realist rather than a romancer. He should have always his feet planted on earth. He should always keep his eyes and ears open. An essayist is also a critic and interpreter of life, in a limited sense. He does not sound the depths of life, but he is interested in revealing to us its joy and beauty.

### 3.6 SUMMARY

The essay fills a large place in modern literature. It is an attractive form of composition. It varies in matter, purpose and style. A systematic treatment of an essay is impossible. When we compare essays of different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. The method of the essay is marked by considerable freedom and informality. In its early stages irregularity and want of finish were fundamental for an essay. The essay is relatively unmethodical as well as relatively short. Modern essayists strove towards greater logical consistency and regularity of structure. There is a transformation of the original essay into something different. Writer's personality and standpoint has to be taken into consideration.

It is impossible to limit or classify essays. It is often however highly informative, full of ripe wisdom and insight into universal human ideals and motivations. Formal essays were introduced in English by Bacon. In modern times the formal essay has become more diversified in subject matter, style and length until it is better known by such names as article, dissertation and factual presentation. An essay must be personal. Any subject is good enough for it. Whatever he writes about, he must convey his personal impression. The essay cannot be anything abstract. It cannot conform to any rigid type. The essay has some analogy to the lyric art. It may be a romantic view of literature. It has a romantic core in it. The essayist must be a spectator of life. The development of English prose on the one hand and the growth of the newspaper press on the other, had distinct influence on the essay. In the previous and early essays life was shown as a comedy of manners. Charles Lamb was an expert in handling all the shades of sentiment. The field of essay has seen a number of essayists with different styles and manners.

### 3.7 SAMPLE QUESTIONS

1. Write an essay on the important elements of an essay.
2. Discuss the form and structure of the essay.
3. What are the different kinds of essays? Explain.

### 3.8 SUGGESTED READING

1. I for Evans. *A Short History of English Literature*. Penguin Books, 1940
2. William Henry Hudson. *An Introduction to the Study of Literature*. Kalyani Publishers, 1979.

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# UNIT – I Background Study

## Lesson 4

### History and Development of the Essay

**Structure of the lesson:**

**4.1 Objectives of lesson**

**4.2 Introduction**

**4.3 Definitions of Essays**

**4.4 History and Development of Essay**

**4.5 Sample Questions**

**4.6 Suggested Reading**

#### **4.1 OBJECTIVES OF LESSON**

After reading the lesson you will be able to.

- trace the origin and development of the new literary form i.e. the essay.
- know about different kinds of essays.
- appreciate know the contribution of great essayists to English literature.
- note the essayist's role in correcting the evils of the society.

#### **4.2 INTRODUCTION**

The Elizabethan Age is the most creative period in English literature. The foreign wars were mostly over, and the Englishmen had for the first time the leisure to devote their energies to other interests than war upon their neighbours. Fortunately, just at this time, the great wave of the Renaissance, the new birth of letters, having spent itself in Italy and crossing over France and Spain, reached the shores of England. There it was eagerly welcomed by men, who if they had not the poise and mental reach of the Italians of the Renaissance, or the gaiety and sense of form of their French contemporaries, had yet more daring and more intellectual curiosity. Most of the new literary forms were first made known to the Elizabethans by translations from Italian and French. It was thus, that the tales of Boccaccio and of Queen Marguerite and the wisdom of Machiavelli were made available to the English readers. Sir Thomas Wyatt and William Panter rendered valuable service to the English poetry and prose. Sir Philip Sidney, an Italianated Englishman of the noblest type, inaugurated English criticism in The Apologie for Poetry.

#### **4.3 DEFINITIONS OF ESSAYS**

With Francis Bacon begins philosophical reflections upon life, in the style of Plutarch's Morals and the Essays of Montague. Bacon's mind is catholic in its range like Plutarch's, but the subjects of moral thought that interest him are comparatively few and generalized. His treatment of a moral subject is more scientific also than that of the classical writer. In the Essays, the method of Bacon is to reduce reflection to the lowest terms, to try to discover the fundamental principles of conduct, the influence, the actions of men. Again, Bacon has nothing of the attractive personality of Montaigne, a man of the world who made a point of finding out what the world was like from all sorts and conditions of man, from the king on his throne to the groom on his riding horse. Montaigne writes on every subject in breezy discursiveness, like a man on horseback traversing an interesting country. Bacon's Essays reflect his experience of life, but they tell us little or nothing of his personal likes and

dislikes. They are austere, brief to the point of crudeness. The most obvious division of the Essays is that which time has made. Certain essays do “come home to men’s business and bosoms” in a universal way. They appeal to men at all times. Another type of Essay is distinctly limited partly by Bacon’s own character and partly by the social characteristics of his time. Essayists of Bacon’s mental characteristics will still write on love and marriage, but their treatment of these themes must inevitably be broader and deeper because it has been spiritualized. It is just, because it recognizes the mutual obligations of men and women.

The essay fills so large a place in modern literature and is so attractive a form of composition, that attention must necessarily be given to it in any course of literary study. At the same time, its outlines are so uncertain, and it varies so much in matter purpose, and style, that systematic treatment of it is impossible. When we compare a number of representative essays by different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. An essay by Bacon consists of a few pages of concentrated wisdom, with little elaboration of the ideas expressed. An essay by Montaigne is a medley of reflections, quotations and anecdotes; in an essay by Addison the thought is thin and diluted and the tendency is now towards light didacticism and now towards personal gossip. The essays of Macaulay and Herbert Spencer are really small books. From these cases, it is evident that we have to do with totally different conceptions of what the essay is and what it should aim to accomplish. According to Johnson, an essay is “a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, undigested piece, not a regular and orderly composition.” Murray’s Dictionary speaks of the essay as “a composition of moderate length on any particular subject or branch of a subject,” and adds “originally implying want of finish, but now said of a composition more or less elaborate in style, though limited in range.”

#### 4.4 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE ESSAY

Johnson defines the essay as “A loose sally of the mind: an irregular, indigested piece; not a regular and orderly composition.” Johnson must have in mind the typical eighteenth century essay. But the term, Essay is extended to more ambitious compositions. The term has been applied to an elaborately finished treatise with reference to brief general treatment of any topic to a short, discursive article on a literary, philosophical or social subject when viewed from a personal standpoint. English essayists generally have been more interested in varying phases of contemporary manners and customs and the periodical essay of the eighteenth century seems to concentrate on this subject. An essayist should possess experience of and insight into character, a critical taste free from pedantry and an easy literary style.

The development of the essay of contemporary manners followed immediately upon the artificial comedy of manners. It began when the stage seemed to have come to a sorry pass with the attack made by Jeremy Collier on its immoralities. By the time drama revived with Goldsmith coming into the field, a vast change had taken place in social life, people having become more sober after the orgies of the Restoration. Queen Anne society was certainly very decorous and quite intent on eliminating the license of the Restoration days. The essay came into existence to satisfy the changed tastes and outlook of the new generation. In the Elizabethan age there might have been fore-runners of the essay. Bacon’s essays might have offered suggestion to later writers. As Bacon describes them, they are “but certain brief notes, set down rather significantly than curiously; not vulgar; but of a kind where of men shall find much in experience and little in books.” The Tatler and The Spectator made the real beginnings of the essay and they owe little even to Dryden, Cowley and Temple. Dryden’s Prefaces may be reckoned among essays when we keep in mind that

Addison has some critical papers in the Spectator and it is to be noted that Dryden's simple and colloquial style, intended to appeal not to a small circle of critics but to a wider and more popular audience, brings him closer to Addison. Johnson mentions the works of Casa, Castiglione and La Bruyere as having influenced the development of the essay in England. Casa's Galateo, whose subject is polite behaviour, has its counterpart in Chesterfield's Letters to His Son, but has nothing to do with the origin of the essay in the eighteenth century. The Courtier of Castiglione was a very popular book in its day, but here again the ideal courtier of Urbino has left no trace upon the English essay. The characters of La Bruyere might have some suggestive value to Steele and Addison.

The essays of Montaigne supply the pattern which seems to have been worked upon, varied and developed. Bacon owes nothing to him. Montaigne is certainly the inventor of the essay. His English successors managed to give a certain unity of design to the essay and cut out a little of its irrelevancy and egotism. The development of English prose on the one hand and the growth of the newspaper press on the other, had distinct bearings on the essay. Defoe's Review started in 1704; he lacked the knack of writing a typical essay. He lacked humour and urbanity.

We cannot overlook some important factors that gave a distinct turn to the essay. The clubs and coffee-houses became the centre of social life in the days of Queen Anne. They were "a sort of happy compromise between Restoration profligacy and Puritan domesticity", and the essay too played a part in restoring sanity to society. During the first half of the eighteenth century we see a reformation in morals and manners. The Tatler, started by Steele in 1709, launched the essay on its carrier. Marking as it does the transition from journalism to essay writing, it stands midway between Defoe's Review and Addison's The Spectator. Steele mixed freely in every kind of society, and could sympathize with every side of character. He was the true spectator, and it were his impressions of men and things, which might have been elaborated by Addison. It was Steele who invented the dramatis personae of the essays. Addison was good in his own way, when handling mental abstractions of his own creation and critical and allegorical matter. Addison's cold temperament and dignified aloofness and superior contempt rather disqualified him for a good essayist. Steele writes in The Tatler, "I must confess it has been a most exquisite pleasure to me to frame characters of domestic life." Here was the starting-point for Richardson and Fielding.

Swift was a great writer but lacked the lighter graces that go to the making of an essayist. He was up against cant, humbug and quackery and used his wit not to enliven morality as Addison did but to slash at erring, offending and floundering humanity. He did not have the neutral temperament of an essayist. By the time Defoe had produced Robinson Crusoe (1719), the essay form had been firmly established and its spirit and character changed later. Even the periodical writing of Swift was no small contribution to the development of the essay. Johnson continued the tradition of The Spectator in The Rambler (1750). It represents the second epoch of the essay. The pomposity of his style was little calculated to win much popular favour of his undertaking. Goldsmith was better fitted by virtue of a pure and faultless style to play a very important role, and his admirable gift of essay-writing is displayed in his Chinese Letters later republished as The Citizen of the World. His style and felicity of expression made him a popular essayist. The Tatler, The Rambler and The Citizen of the World mark three different stages in the development of the essay. Then the essay seemed to have been eclipsed for a while by the novel.

In the nineteenth century the Romantic Movement changed the character of the essay. Leigh Hunt resumed the tradition of the periodical essay. But he just followed the lines of Addison and Goldsmith. After Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt and Lamb came to the limelight as essayists and critics. Hazlitt turned the essay to the literary purpose and it exceeded the periodical essay in length. He is distinctly modern. He stands midway between the old essayists and the new. Next comes Lamb, who holds a unique place in the development of the essay. He seemed to be more interested in the past than in the present. He added colour and romantic spirit of the age to everything he wrote. With Hazlitt, Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt, a change came over the spirit of the essay. It added to them, qualities that belong to the newer age, the age of French Revolution in politics and the Romantic Movement in literature. In the previous and early essays life was shown as a comedy of manners. But now it came to be regarded as a romantic drama, consisting of both comedy and tragedy. Lamb fulfilled his literary destiny, as a commentator upon life. His approach to the subject was a personal one. Another new feature in Lamb's essays is his urban spirit. Coupled with this is Lamb's all-embracing sense of humour. His humour is made up of an attentive playfulness of the expert handling of all the shades of sentiment. His art exhausts and reconciles the aromas of very different flowering in literature.

Judging from all these points we come to the conclusion that Lamb was in a way a pioneer in writing the critical essay. In any discussion of English essayists the name of William Hazlitt (1778-1830) is certain to be joined with that of Lamb. Hazlitt's life contained as much poverty, sorrow and tragedy as Lamb's – but instead of accepting quietly he sometimes wrote in a spirit of angry protest. There are many great essayists after Hazlitt. Macaulay (1800-59), Mathew Arnold, Hilaire Belloc (1870-1953), and G.K. Chesterton (1874-1936) contributed a lot to English essay. E.V. Lucas (1868-1938), Max Beerbohm (1872-1956), Robert Lynd (1879-1949) have treated the essay as pure entertainment rather than a form for the expression of serious ideas. G.B. Shaw was also a brilliant essayist. The essays of Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) although less important than her novels have had much influence in shaping English literary taste. Aldous Huxley was another great essayist. His essays show the extraordinary range of Huxley's interests, as well as his deep concern for human values and social justice. George Orwell's essays show his patriotism towards his country. His sympathy and admiration for working people is well seen in 'Down the Mine'. He was a man who had taken an active and practical part in the events of his time. Like this the field of the essay has seen a number of essayists with different styles and manners.

#### **4.5SUMMARY**

The essay fills a large place in modern literature. It is an attractive form of composition. It varies in matter, purpose and style. A systematic treatment of an essay is impossible. When we compare essays of different writers we find nothing in common in respect either of theme or of method. The method of the essay is marked by considerable freedom and informality. In its early stages irregularity and want of finish were fundamental for an essay. The essay is relatively unmethodical as well as relatively short. Modern essayists strove towards greater logical consistency and regularity of structure. There is a transformation of the original essay into something different. Writer's personality and standpoint has to be taken into consideration.

It is impossible to limit or classify essays. It is often however highly informative, full of ripe wisdom and insight into universal human ideals and motivations. Formal essays were introduced in English by Bacon. In modern times the formal essay has become more diversified in subject matter, style and length until it is better known by such names as article,

dissertation and factual presentation. An essay must be personal. Any subject is good enough for it. Whatever he writes about, he must convey his personal impression. The essay cannot be anything abstract. It cannot conform to any rigid type. The essay has some analogy to the lyric art. It may be a romantic view of literature. It has a romantic core in it. The essayist must be a spectator of life. The development of English prose on the one hand and the growth of the newspaper press on the other, had distinct influence on the essay. In the previous and early essays life was shown as a comedy of manners. Charles Lamb was an expert in handling all the shades of sentiment. The field of essay has seen a number of essayists with different styles and manners.

#### **4.6SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

1. Write an essay on the important elements of an essay.
2. Discuss the form and structure of the essay.
3. What are the different kinds of essays? Explain.
- 4.

#### **4.7SUGGESTED READING**

1. *Ifor Evans. A Short History of English Literature.* Penguin Books, 1940
2. William Henry Hudson. *An Introduction to the Study of Literature.* Kalyani Publishers, 1979.

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# UNIT – I Background Study

## Lesson 5

### Origin and Development of the Novel and Short Story

Structure of the lesson:

5.1 Objectives of the lesson

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Kinds of Novels

5.4 Characteristics of a Novel

5.5 Origin and Development of the Novel and Short story.

5.6 Summary

5.7 Short-Story

5.8 Sample Questions

5.9 Reference Books

#### 5.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON

After reading the lesson you will be able to

- trace the origin and development of the novel.
- differentiate between kinds of novels and Short stories.
- realise the contribution of different novelists to English literature.

#### 5.2 INTRODUCTION

A novel is a prose narrative on a large scale. Like the short story the novel defies accurate definition both because of the essential but unfixable element of length and because it includes so many different types and possibilities. In fact, even the insistence on prose is arbitrary: not only is Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (1685) essentially a novel in verse, but a number of works describing themselves as “novels in verse” have been published.

This problem of definition makes it extremely difficult to give any real history of the novel because we cannot be sure just what works are a part of its history. Extended narratives in prose have been known almost since the dawn of literature. The ancient Egyptians had them, though the surviving works would indicate that they did not go much beyond the scope of the novelette. We are on surer ground with the Satyricon of Petronius (A.D. 50) and The Golden Ass of Apuleius (A.D.150), as well as the whole school of Greek romances of about the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. These romances are sometimes discounted on the ground that they are merely strung together series of episodes, for the general theme is that of

the course of true love upset by pirates, shipwreck, kidnappings, etc. But if we exclude them for this reason we shall have to exclude also the novels of Cooper, and many other works which, whatever else we may think of them, are unquestionably novels.

The first full-fledged novel, by modern standards, was written outside the western world and was unknown to it until comparatively recently. Lady Murasaki's Tale of Fenji (1000) is not approached in its type until Madame de Lafayette's La Princesse de Cleves (1678), which is also a novel of sentiment. When Lady Murasaki was writing, Europe was just beginning to exploit the narrative in verse, in the Chansons de geste and the later medieval romance. Prose narrative returned with the Italian collections of tales of which Boccaccio's Decameron (1348-55) is the most famous example. The word novel is derived from the Italian name for such a tale, 'novella' (plural, *novelle*). Most other European languages derive their word for "novel" (French and German roman, for example) from the name of the medieval romance and thus the names of the form recall its two principal forerunners.

One indispensable condition for the flourishing of the novel is the existence of a large public able to read with some fluency. This condition began to be met during the Renaissance when printing brought mass production to books, with a consequent lowering of price and a more uniform product. For the first time, it became both possible and desirable for everyone to learn to read. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the novel began to establish itself as a standard literary type and by the early 18<sup>th</sup> century it was well on its way to triumph as the dominant literary form.

The novel is unquestionably the dominant literary form both in quantity and in quality. In quantity its only rival is the magazine short story. Millions of people who would not think of reading any other form of literature regularly read a considerable quantity of novels and short stories. This demand results in a tremendous amount of commercial writing of no literary interest. But qualitatively too, the novel is in the lead. When one thinks of present-day writers who are likely to be future "classics", it is almost invariably novelists like Mann and Faulkner who come to mind. If the last hundred years had to have a special designation they might well be called the Age of the Novel.

### 5.3 KINDS OF NOVELS

A basic division of novels into love stories, adventure stories and fantastic stories has been suggested. This classification seems particularly valid because these types seldom combine. The woman if any in an adventure story is a stereotyped and colourless figure and the first great novel of adventure, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe (1719), has no female interest whatsoever. Whatever adventure there may be in a love story is not there for its own sake, but usually merely to help characterize the hero. W.H. Hudson's Green Mansions is probably the most successful effort to combine the love and adventure interests. The fantastic story stands apart from both love and adventure in that it is deliberately unreal and uses a fantastic plot and setting as a vehicle for ideas. Gargantua and Pantagruel, Don Quixote, Gulliver's Travels and Candide fall into this category.

Though the basic separation into fantasy, love, and adventure holds up reasonably well, the variety of the modern novel is astonishing. We speak of epistolary, picaresque, Gothic and Utopian novels of Western detective and science-fiction novels – of psychological, stream of consciousness and even psychoanalytical novels – of religious, sociological and escape novels of romantic, sentimental, realistic, naturalistic and surrealistic novels. It is this variety which makes real definition impossible. Some critics say that a novel must describe a course of events, but a minor French novelist boasted that he had written the perfect naturalistic novel in which nothing whatsoever happened. (Henry Ceard, Une belle journee, 1881). Others say that it must have only one real character. The one requirement of which we can be certain is imagination which is clearly required in the composition of even the most documentary or reportorial novel. We can therefore agree on the vague definition that a novel is a book-length piece of imaginative fiction.

Chaucer's Troilus and Criseyde (about 1380) has sometimes been called the first English novel. It is in fact a long story poem of some 8,000 lines. Apart from its verse form it has features of a typical novel: lengthy conversational passages, a fairly complex plot and psychological truth. If Chaucer had not chosen to write in verse he might well be thought of as a great novelist rather than a great poet. Another early book which in many ways resembles a novel is Sir Thomas Malory's Morte d' Arthur, finished about 1470. It gives the impression of being an earlier, medieval work. It is a great collection of stories connected with the half-legendary King Arthur and his knights – stories which have for centuries

fascinated the writers and artists of western Europe. It is certainly one of the most important works of English prose, and it contains themes and material for a hundred novels.

By the time of Elizabeth I (1558-1505) two very different kinds of prose fiction were being written in England. Both kinds took their place in the later history of the novel, though the first of them never became very important. This was the 'romance' – a story like Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia (1590) or John Lyly's Euphues (1578) or Robert Greene's Menaphon (1589). The romance was written in a highly artificial kind of prose, set against a classical or pastoral background and peopled with heroes and heroines bearing Greek or Latin names. Their adventures were very far from real life. Such books are intended for educated readers. They did not ask for realism. Not only the romances but also stories of a very different type became popular at about the same time. They were written in ordinary language for ordinary readers. Thomas Deloney (about 1545-1500) wrote stories with middle class tradesmen, weavers and shoemakers as heroes. Thomas Dekker (1579-1552) wrote stories about London people and their suffering during the plague of 1505. It was their contemporary, Thomas Nashe (1557-1501), who wrote what might fairly be called the first English novel – The Unfortunate Traveller or The Life of Jack Wilton.

The Unfortunate Traveller is one of the best examples in English of the 'picaresque' novel. The history of the picaresque novel extends from the Golden Ass of Apuleius (about A.D. 150) to Kingsley Amis's Lucky Jim 1955. The word 'picaresque' probably comes from the Spanish word pícaro, meaning a thief or a rogue. It was applied to any long story in which a number of separate events, sometimes comic and sometimes violent, were joined together only by the fact that they happened to the chief character. In English the chief character in a book is called a hero but in a picaresque story the hero is generally a rogue, a pícaro. Lately the phrase anti-hero has come into use. In Europe the best known early picaresque tales are Till Eulenspiegel from Germany, Lazarillo de Tormes from Spain and Gil Blas from France. The most famous of all picaresque tales is Cervantes's Don Quixote (1505). Among the great English novelists of the eighteenth century both Fielding (1707-54) and Smollett (1721-71) worked in the picaresque style. The central figures in Fielding's Tom Jones and Smollett's Roderick Random are picaresque anti-heroes like Nashe's Jack Wilton.

The historical novel has been popular in England since the time of Sir Walter Scott (1771-1852). During the twentieth century it has attracted more writers and more readers than ever before. Historical novels range from those like Kathleen Winsor's Forever Amber to careful reconstructions of people and events based on serious research. Some of the best historical novelists, like Mary Renault and Alfred Duggan purposely choose to write about times of which little is known; the former has generally chosen Mediterranean pre-history and the latter British history of the Dark Ages.

Besides being a scholar, a historian and a writer of clear and strong English prose, Robert Graves has the ability to get inside the minds of his central characters. Henry Treece (1911-55) wrote a number of historical novels, serious, thoroughly researched and dealing with several different periods. One of the most important events in the history of the English novel was the appearance of James Joyce's Ulysses in 1922. Nothing like it had been written before, and almost every serious novelist since has been influenced by it.

Another type of novel which has attracted English writers in modern times may be described as 'visionary' 'apocalyptic' 'allegorical' or 'fanciful'. Such books are not intended to reflect life as it actually is, but as it might be. They range from science fiction to moral baffles like Golding's Lord of the Flies. It is interesting to remember that the word 'utopia', which in modern English means an ideal country where all is perfect, was first used by Sir Thomas More (1478-1555) as the title of his book in which such a country is described. In the same tradition are the two utopian romances of William Morris (1854-95), News from Nowhere and The Dream of John Ball.

H.G. Wells (1855-1945) is one of the outstanding figures in modern English literature, not only because of his realistic novels like Mr. Polly and Kipps, but also because he was the first great writer of Science fiction. Stories like The Time Machine, The Invisible Man and The First Men on the Moon are little more than amusing fancies, but in The Sleeper Awakes and A Modern Utopia Wells took a serious look into the future.

These are some of the different varieties of novels, ranging their heroes from rich, cultured men to common and ordinary people.

#### **5.4 CHARACTERISTICS OF A NOVEL**

A novel is more formally defined as a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people. It is the loosest form of literary art. But its very freedom from all limitations allows it to give a fuller representation of real life and character than anything else can provide. It is a very effective medium of portrayal of human thought and action.

A novel like a play has a plot and to a great extent its characters reveal themselves and their intentions in dialogue. The novelist can tell us what is happening, explain it and also give us his own comments on it. The novel need not be symmetrical in exposition, precise in denouement. It may begin with a crisis and the rest of the book may be devoted to depict how that crisis arose or it also may work patiently up to a climax in its very last pages. The novel in fact has no rigid framework and so the English authors have taken full advantage of the freedom this offers them. Yet it lacks one important element – a sense of proportion, for the novelist is eager to represent us in its fullness and his creating urge may overwhelm his sense of artistic unity and balance in narration, description, characterization and dialogue.

The novel deals with events and actions, with things which are suffered and done; and these constitute what we call plot. Such things happen to people and are suffered or done by people and the men and women who thus carry on the action form its *dramatis personae*, or characters. The conversation of these characters introduces a third element, that of dialogue often so closely connected with characterization as to be an integral part of it. The action must take place and the characters must do and suffer, somewhere and at some time and thus we have a scene and a time of action. The element of style is another important thing for a novel. Every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and some of the problems of life. It must exhibit incidents, characters, passions, motives as to reveal more or less distinctly the way in which the author looks out upon the world and his general attitude towards it.

In dealing with plot structure we may distinguish between two kinds of novel – the novel of loose plot and the novel of organic plot. In the former case the story is composed of a number of detached incidents, having little or logical connection among themselves. The plot of a novel may be simple or compound. In the evolution of plot out of character, the motives which prompt the persons of the story to act as they do must impress us as both in keeping with their natures and adequate to the resulting incidents.

Beyond having the organic connection with the action, dialogue should be natural, appropriate and dramatic; it should match with the personality of the speakers, suitable to the situation in which it occurs and easy, fresh vivid and elementary conditions of good dialogue. A novelist should maintain the required dramatic rapidity and power, and leave the reader with a satisfying general sense of naturalness and reality. Every novel is a microcosm of which the author is the creator and the plot the providential scheme. Merely by selection and organization of material, emphasis, presentation of character and development of story, the novelist shows us in a general way what he thinks about life.

In a novel scene and time are important elements. The novel can have its setting or background in any part of the world and at any time, past, present or future. In presenting all these elements together, the novelist displays a particular style. Personality is another element in a novel. The novelist's personality is revealed in the novel he presents. This is also known as the novelist's criticism, interpretation or philosophy of life. Every serious novel is sure to reveal the author's own view of life and its problems, though this may be quite unintentional. Any lesson a novelist wishes to teach us is all the more impressive if it emerges from the story itself and the fortunes of its characters. Of all types of imaginative literature, the novel undoubtedly commands the most powerful and widespread popular influence. It has firmly established itself as the most effective medium for social criticism and diagnosis. It began as an entertainment and grew into a powerful social force.

### **5.5 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE NOVEL**

The word 'novel' is derived from the Italian word 'novelle' which meant 'fresh story'. It has come to be known as a story in prose. F. Morion Crawford called it a 'pocket theatre'. The novel is 'a long narrative in prose detailing the actions of fictitious people'. It is a summary of actual life. Until the seventeenth century the word 'novel' meant a short story of the kind written and collected by Boccaccio (1515-75) in his Decameron. By about 1700 it had got something like its present meaning. In other words a novel, is a story longer, more realistic and more complicated than the Italian *novella* as written by Boccaccio and other writers of his time. The novel is now the most widely read of all kinds of literature. By about 1770 the reading of novels became a fashion, almost a mania, with 'upper class' women. The novel had become what the cinema became in the 1920s and 1950s – a gateway into the world of pleasant dreams. The supply of sentimental and romantic novels grew to meet the demand. A man called Mudie set up a chain of 'circulating libraries'.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries there were many people who felt that the novel was not respectable. Serious literature ought to improve the mind. Plato (427-548 B.C.) believed that almost all imaginative literature is harmful. In his Republic he argued that such literature leads people to believe in lies, shows both men and gods in a bad light and is useless, if not dangerous to the state. Unfortunately Plato has been one of the greatest influences on Western thought. Simply because of its newness the novel was thought of as not quite respectable.

Added to this was the fact that (in England at least) some of the greatest novelists like Richardson and Dickens, were men of poor education, they had not been to universities and they had not been taught Greek or Latin. They were neither scholars nor gentlemen and this made it difficult for society in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to treat them seriously. The novel is branded as a second-class kind of literature. In England alone something like two thousand works of fiction are published every year. Many of them are detective stories, sentimental love stories or tales of the wild West. A growing number are simply sadistic or pornographic. Very few are serious novels and even fewer are 'good' novels. Authors and publishers have to earn money and it can easily be done by producing books which are morally and culturally worthless. Most of the world's great literature deals in one way or another with the love between man and woman. In London in 1950 it was decided, after a much publicized law case, that D.H. Lawrence's novel Lady Chatterley's Lover was not obscene in the eyes of English law.

The early seventeenth century is not without its contribution to the history of fiction. Sentiment, character and theme were elevated and idealized in a prose imitation of the Greek heroic poetry and the Greek romances. The second half of the seventeenth century had more numerous developments. John Bunyan's (1528-88) earliest work is his moving spiritual autobiography Grace Abounding (1555). The first part of The Pilgrim's Progress, was published in 1578 and a second part followed in 1584. He was unique and his work is permanent. A beginning is made with an enthralling and mysterious figure Daniel Defoe (1550-1751), to whom the English public, with all its taste for biography, has never taken kindly. He is remembered for his great work Robinson Crusoe (1719). Next comes Samuel Richardson (1589-1751). He published three long works on which his reputation rests Pamela (1740-1) Clarissa (1747-8) and Sir Charles Grandison (1755-4).

Henry Fielding (1707-54) in 1742 published Joseph Andrews, to ridicule Richardson's Pamela. Tobias Smollett (1721-71) was Fielding's contemporary. Sir Lancelot Greaves (1752) is an eighteenth century English version of Don Quixote by Smollett. In Humphrey Clinker (1771) he modifies Richardson's epistolary manner and writes in a more humorous manner. Of the eighteenth century novelists the strangest and the most variously judged is Laurence Sterne (1715-58). His Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gent (1759-57) is a novel without predecessors, and the product of an original mind and immediately popular.

After the work of these masters, the stream of fiction broadens continually. Samuel Johnson's Rasselas (1759), employs the story only for the philosophical argument. Its contemporary is Candide of Voltaire. Oliver Goldsmith's The Vicar of Wakefield (1755) does not belong to any one school. The next direct English successor to Richardson was Fanny Burney (1752-1840). Evelina was her first and best novel. Her Diary and Letters show her skill in reporting the events. The novel of 'terror' or the 'Gothic' novel, leads into the underworld of fiction in the later eighteenth century. 'Terror' tales attracted strong minds. Horace Walpole (1719-97) originated this type of fiction. The most able and popular writer of terror tales was Mrs. Ann Radcliffe (1754-1825). Her best novels are The Mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and The Italian (1797). Mathew Gregory Lewis (1775-1818) followed the stream of terror. The nineteenth century produced fiction of far greater significance than the 'terror' tales. Jane Austen's (1775-1817) work is transfused with the spirit of Classicism in its highest form. To the 'terror' tale she presented the assault direct in Northanger Abbey and she combined with her satire of the 'Gothic' school a deeply studied picture of imaginary horror working in the human mind. Sir Walter Scott (1772-1852) invented a background for his scene, with landscape and nature descriptions and all the picturesque details of past ages. Ivanhoe (1819) and The Talisman (1825), a history of the crusades, were among the most popular of his novels. Thomas Love Peacock (1785-1855) was a friend of Shelley, but a satirist of romanticism. He invented a novel which could contain irony and conversation and a mockery of romantic excesses. His Headlong Hall (1815), Nightmare Abbey (1818) encouraged writers as different as George Meredith and Aldous Huxley to try new ways in fiction.

In the nineteenth century novel Charles Dickens (1812-70) is pre-eminent. He published the supreme comic novel Pickwick Papers (1835-7). In Oliver Twist pathos is

beginning to intrude on humour and Dickens, appalled by the cruelty of his time, felt that he must convey a message through fiction to his hard-hearted generation. William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-55) and Dickens were near contemporaries. Thackeray's Vanity Fair (1847-8) showed him at his best, in a clear-sighted realism, a deep detestation of insincerity and a broad and powerful development of narrative. Charles Reade (1814-84) continued the social attack through the novel. Emily Bronte (1818-48) in her single novel Wuthering Heights (1847) created somehow out of her own imagination a stark, passionate world, reminiscent at times of the storm scenes in King Lear. The talent of Charlotte Bronte (1815-55) was maintained through a number of novels: Jane Eyre (1847), Shirley (1849), Villette (1855). Her work is grounded in realism. Of all the women novelists of the nineteenth century George Eliot (1809-80) was the most learned and in her creative achievement the most adult. In Middlemarch (1871-2) she coordinated her powers to construct one of the great novels of the century.

If Henry James saw England as a stranger, Thomas Hardy (1840-1928) saw it as an Englishman born in Dorchester. In all his novels Fate functions in men's lives, corrupting their possibilities of happiness and beckoning them towards tragedy. His novels The Return of the Native (1878), The Mayor of Casterbridge (1885) Tess of the D'Urbervilles (1891) have appealed to successive generations of readers. R.L. Stevenson (1850-94) led the novel back towards story telling and to the romance.

Rudyard Kipling (1855-1955) gained great popularity because his art naturally expressed much that a wide audience in England wished to hear. H.G. Wells (1855-1945) in his novel The Time Machine (1895) invented a new form of scientific romance. Apart from the social novelists, fiction in the early twentieth century showed great variety. Joseph Conrad helped to give a cosmopolitan variety to the novel and much of the enterprise in twentieth-century fiction has come from an interest in foreign models. In the modern period fiction is derived from both English and American sources. Ernest Hemingway and William Faulkner are the famous American novelists of this period. From the twenties to the fifties there had been a high level of performance in the novel, yet its importance in society as a whole was declining. It is difficult to summarize the work of these decades when so much fiction was produced. A more original writer to whom popularity did not come easily was E.M. Forster (1879-1970). Forster showed not the romance of the East, but actual people and the difficulty they have in mutual understanding. Among original writers a high place is

given to D.H. Lawrence (1885-1950) whose tormented life is well recorded in his Letters. The boldness of expression which D.H. Lawrence had brought to the novel was found also in his younger contemporary Aldous Huxley (1884-1955). His early novels were comic and satiric. James Joyce (1882-1941) was the most original novelist of the century. He had Dublin and the Catholic church as his back-ground. Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) may be one of the most original women writers of fiction in the twentieth century. Many practiced the novel with intelligence and skill without adding substantially to its form.

Among writers born in the first decade of the twentieth century George Orwell (1905-50) had an impressive and individual talent. Out of the Second World War came a new tradition of realistic fiction attempting to place on the current scene the scientist, the psychologist and the new men of bureaucratic power. A number of younger writers have extended the boundaries of fiction and have departed from the well-trodden path of the social realists. There has been a new form of speculative fiction during the last few decades which might prove a renaissance in the novel as a fictional form. These are some of the phases in the development of the novel. New experiments are being made in form and language in recent times also.

## 5.6 SUMMARY

A novel is a prose narrative on a large scale. It includes so many different types and possibilities. The word is derived from the Italian word 'novella'. During the 17<sup>th</sup> century the novel began to establish itself as a standard literary type and by the 18<sup>th</sup> century it was on its way to triumph as the dominant literary form. It is dominant both in quantity and in quality. In quantity its only rival is the magazine short story. The novel is usually classified into love stories, adventure stories and fantastic stories. This classification seems particularly valid because these types seldom combine. The fantastic story stands apart from both love and adventure stories. It is deliberately unreal and uses a fantastic plot and setting as a vehicle for ideas. Imagination is clearly required in the composition of even the most documentary or reportorial novel. We can therefore agree on the vague definition that a novel is a book length piece of imaginative fiction.

By the time of Elizabeth I (1558-1505) two very different kinds of prose fiction were being written in England. Both kinds took their place in the later history of the novel. 'Romance' the first of the two became very important. The romance was written in a highly artificial prose. The historical novel has been popular in England since the time of Sir Walter

Scott (1771-1852). One of the most important events in the history of the English novel was the appearance of James Joyce's Ulysses in 1922. Nothing like it had been written before. Another type of novel which has attracted English writers in modern times may be described as "visionary" "allegorical" or "fanciful". Such books are not intended to reflect life as it actually is, but as it might be. They range from science fiction to moral fables.

The novel has some special characteristics. A novel like a play has a plot and to a great extent its characters reveal themselves and their intentions in dialogue. The novel need not be symmetrical in exposition, precise in denouement. It may begin with a crisis and the rest of the book may be devoted to depicting how that crisis arose. The novel has no rigid framework. The novel deals with events and actions, with things which are suffered and done and these constitute what we call plot. Such things happen to people and the men and women who thus carry on the action form its *dramatis personae* or characters. The conversation of the characters introduces a third element – that of dialogue. Every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and some of the problems of life.

The plot of the novel may be simple or compound. Every novel is a microcosm of which the author is the creator and the plot the providential scheme. In a novel scene and time are important elements. Of all types of imaginative literature, the novel undoubtedly commands the most powerful and widespread popular influence. It began as an entertainment and grew into a powerful social force. After observing the features of the Novel, let us notice the popular form of Short story and its features.

## 5.7 SHORT STORY

The Short story has firmly established itself as a favorite form in modern literature. One of the reasons for the success of the short story is the rush of modern life, which made men impatient of those "great still books" (as Tennyson called them). The enormous development of the magazine also added to its popularity. We are told that it is the "coming form" of fiction, and that ultimately it will displace the novel entirely. But a short story cannot exhibit life in its variety and complexity. Another limitation of a short story is that in the short story we meet people for a few minutes and see them in a few relationships and circumstances only.

If we want to give a definition to a short story, the definition given by Edgar Allan Poe will do well enough: a short story is a prose narrative “requiring from half-an hour to one or two hours in its perusal”. To put it in another words we may say that a short story is a story that can be easily read at a single sitting. As the story differs from the novel in length, so it must of necessity differ from it in motive, plan, and structure.

The subject of a story must be one that can be effectively developed within the prescribed limits. It should impress us as absolutely clear in outline. The story may not be confined to a single incident or moment. Its success entirely depends upon the skill shown in the telling. Another fundamental principle of composition is that of unity, under which head we include unity of motive, of purpose, of action and unity of impression. The value of a short story as a piece of art rests entirely on the singleness of aim and singleness of effect. Attainment of this unity is one of the principal difficulties of short story writing.

It is obviously impossible to lay down any abstract rules for construction. The method must ultimately depend upon matter and purpose. A story may contain little or no dialogue or it may be nearly all dialogue. If the elementary conditions, which have been emphasized, are fulfilled, a story may deal with any kind of motive and material.

As a work of prose fiction, the types and various narrative techniques of the novel are applicable to the short story as well. The short story also contains a plot and it may be comic, or tragic, or romantic, or satiric. The story is presented to us from one of the many available points of view and it may be written in the mode of fantasy, realism, or naturalism.

Until the Seventeenth century, the novel or short story meant a short narrative in prose. The novel or short story today is defined as a “fictitious prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and actions which are representative of real life are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity”. The chief distinction between the short story and novel is that the former tells a story that is short and can be read in a single sitting.

As a novel or short story deals with a story, it is important how the story is narrated. Novelists use different types of narrative techniques. In some novels or short stories, the novelists or writers explain the progress of the story, taking the role of the omniscient and omnipresent narrator. Sometimes, they narrate a story in the first person through the mouth of the main character. Some novelists write the novels in the form of letters, diaries and

documents. Some novelists employ another narrative technique called “stream of consciousness”.

Setting is another important element in a short story. It means time and place of action. It includes the manners, customs and ways of life of the people dealt with in the novel. It is of two kinds – social and material.

Characterization is another important element in a short story. We derive pleasure from reading a novel when the characters are not only life – like but alive also. Life-like characters are flat and living characters are round. A flat character does not change in the course of a story; a round one develops and alters.

Criticism or philosophy of life is the most important thing in a short story. There are two ways in which the novelist interprets life: one is by representation and the other is by personal commentary and explanation.

### **5.8 SAMPLE QUESTIONS**

- (1) Write an essay on the development of the novel.
- (2) Discuss the important elements of a novel.
- (3) Write an essay on different kinds of novels.
- (4) Write an essay on important Elements of a Short story.

### **5.9 REFERENCE BOOKS**

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## Lesson-6

## UNDERSTANDING POETRY

**Structure**

- 1.6.1 Objectives
- 1.6.2 Introduction
- 1.6.3 Discussion
- 1.6.4 Elements of Poetry
- 1.6.5 Activity
- 1.6.7 To Sum up/ Conclusion.

**1.6.1. Objectives of the Lesson:**

- ▶ This lesson tries
- ▶ to enable the students to understand poetry.
- ▶ to improve their capacity for appreciation of poetry.
- ▶ to enhance the pleasure that readers gain from poetry.
- ▶ to explain how the form and 'style' of a poem contribute to its meaning

**1.6.2. Introduction -- Poetry:**

Language plays a central role in the life of human beings. The use of language is associated with many branches of Science and Arts. The language of science is like the language of Knowledge. It is an attempt to find out what goes on inside the Individual's mind, it is an intellectual property. The 'language of Art' is like the language of experience. It is an attempt to find out what goes on inside the individual's heart. The language of poetry reflects man's aesthetic feelings, emotions, and sensitivities. Poetry is the supreme form of language. It is like a game with two players, viz 'the writer' and 'the reader'. If the reader is reluctant, the game will not be impressive. To understand the importance of poetry, let us go through some characteristics of poetry as observed by some prominent critics and poets.

**Characteristics of Poetry**

Aristotle:- Poetry should represent men, on a grand or heroic scale through action. All kinds of poetry involve imitation, through a medium of representation. The poet does not simply imitate particular events. He handles them in such a way as to bring out their universality and probability.

Sir Philip Sidney: Poetry should teach (content) through delight (form). Delight comes from passionate vitality of expression.

Wordsworth: Poetry is the breath and the finer spirit of knowledge. Poetry is the first and last of all knowledge. It is immortal as the heart of man. The function of poetry is to give pleasure. The pleasure of poetry comes from our psychological structure and interpretation. The poet is "a man speaking to men". Every great poet is a teacher.

Coleridge: A poem is that species of composition which is opposed to works of science by proposing for its immediate objective pleasure, not truth: "A poem is a product of esemplastic imagination which is the unifying power". "The poet brings the whole soul of man into activity, he diffuses a spirit of unity that blends and fuses by the power of imagination".

P.B. Shelley:- A poem is the very image of-life expressed in eternal truth. Poetry is the record of the best and the happiest moments of the happiest and the best minds. Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world.

John Keats:- Poetry should surprise us by a fine excess and not by singularity. It should strike the reader as a wording of his own highest thoughts. It should come out as natural as the leaves to a tree.

Mathew Arnold:- "Poetry is the impassioned expression which is the countenance of all science".

According to Wordsworth, Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. It is also emotion recollected in tranquillity. So while pleading for spontaneity, Wordsworth does not forget the need of workmanship. The aim of poetry is self-expression. Poetry concerns the relation of man to man and Nature. The poet touches human nature and makes men wiser, better and happier. Each poem should have organic unity. Poetry helps us to interpret life. How does poem differ from other ways of handling language? A poem also contains the same elements as we find in prose writings. Both use the same medium i.e., words, but the difference lies in the combination of words. Poetry has some special peculiar features which can not be found in prose writings.

The most obvious external peculiarity of poetry, in the broad sense of the term, is its *metre-the* marked, regular rhythm of its words. The musical element in poetry is represented by the rhythm. Poetry is an art, and is concerned with human experience. The experience should arise out of emotions, and should rouse emotions, and these must be enriched by imagination.

Almost the whole range of human emotions sorrow, joy, love, anger, regret, worship and what not every emotion can be expressed in poetry. Emotion is the very source of poetry. Without emotion, no poetry can be born. But emotion is not poetry, but the cause of poetry. Emotional expression is poetry when it takes a beautiful form: Closely connected with this emotional element is the imaginative element, Imagination treats facts, the data of experience, in a way totally different from reason. On the wings of imagination, the poet can lead us to places hitherto unknown, and reveal to us forms we have not seen.

The word 'image' originally meant a 'visual picture'. But, in the language of literary criticism, its meaning has been extended. It is extended so that it is not only confined to the visual effect, but also includes the sensations made on any of the five senses hearing ,taste, touch, smell, as well as sight.

After studying the definitions and characteristic features of poetry, we can understand poetry and its importance. But, many students at different levels feel that the understanding of poetry is more difficult than understanding a short story or a drama. The reasons are many but the fact is that we enjoy poetry more than any other literary genre if we have the ability to appreciate poetry.

### 1.6.3. Discussion:

How can we get the ability to appreciate poetry? Here we can examine some methods. One can learn it through an able teacher, if he/she uses simple methods in teaching poetry. Here the formula of A, B, C, O, E will be useful in teaching poetry. Let us see the details:

A – indicates Author	Who is the author /speaker of the text ?
To whom is it addressed -Audience /Reader	
B- Indicates Background of the poem	What is the time of the poem? What is the setting of the poem? (a) outdoor, (b) indoor
C-Indicates	Central theme of the poem and its context
D-Indicates Diction	Poetic diction is special. Students should learn to understand the subtleties involved in the diction and composition of poem
E-Indicates Experience	Experience the extraordinary beauties of a poem i.e., Music, the use of figures of speech, rhyme, rhythm and other features which make poetry different from other genres

Let us see how this framework can be used in the appreciation of specific poems. "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening" - Robert Fro

Whose woods these are I think I know, His house is in the village though, He will not see me stopping here, To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer, To stop without a farmhouse near, Between the woods and frozen lake, The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake, To ask if there is some mistake. The only other sound's the sweep, of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep, But I have promises to keep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep, And miles to go before I sleep.

This profound poem is about our lost connection with the natural world. We have time to do many things, but we do not have time to stand and stare and have a close look at Nature. No time to appreciate the natural world. We have many promises to keep. Now let us examine the formula of A.B.C.D.E. of teaching poetry with reference to this poem.

A – Author - Who is the author/speaker of the poem?

(a) The Poet?

(b) The man in the house?

B- Background - Winter season

- Time - Evening time/Dusk

- Setting - Outdoor- The dark deep woods, Falling snow and Frozen pond

C-Central theme - The conflict between the sense of duty and the sense of joy

D - Diction - Change the poetic lines into prose order

- Paraphrase the poem

This poem, however, is simple in form so there is no need to change poetic lines into prose lines.

E– Experience and enjoy the - (a) Music note

(b) Rhyme scheme

(c) The use of Figures of speech and the underlying meaning of the last lines.

(a) Music Note: Music is one of the essential features of a poem. Rhetorical stress operates in poetry. Poetical stress is a regular system of accents which establishes the basic rhythm of a poem. There are only two fundamental systems of poetic stress in English verse. Most frequently, English verse simply alternates light and heavy accents, giving every other syllable the same stress. The symbol for light accent is "u" and that for heavy accent is "–".

Let us see the accent pattern in one stanza:

–	u	–	u	–	u	–	u
Whos	wood	these	ar	I	think	I	kno
–	His	–	u	–	villag	u	w,
	house	is	in	the		though	
–	u	–	u	–	–	u	
He		not	see	me	stoppin	here,	
–	To	–	u	–	fill	–	U with
	watc	his	wood		up		snow

(b) Rhyme scheme: Observe the end rhyming words like:

I Stanza	{ know though snow	II Stanza	{ Queer near tear
III Stanza	{ shake mistake flake	IV Stanza	● deep keep sleep

(c) The use of figures of speech : We can observe the employment of the figure of speech

"personification" in the third stanza. wherein "the horse" is described as a "human being":

"He gives his harness bells a shake  
To ask if there is some mistake."

Further we can observe the figure of speech "alliteration" in the last two lines, of the poem with the repetition of the same lines.

And miles (miles) to go before I sleep (sleep). And miles (goals) to go before I sleep (death).

Let us interpret the symbolic use of these lines; in the first line the poet says that he has to travel many miles through the words to reach his home and to get sleep. In the second line, it is employed in a broader sense. The poet feels that he has to achieve many milestones before he loses his last breath (death).

(Note: Our former Prime Minister and prolific writer, Jawaharlal Nehru, has kept these two lines on his office table, to remind him of the targets and goals in his life].

### 1.6.3. Elements of Poetry:

The rules of poetry are never static like the rules of language. The rules of poetry have never really been written down. Although critics have frequently tried to produce a "poetics", a code of rules of poetry, they have failed because poetry is always changing. The rules which are applied to Elizabethans cannot be applied to the modern poets. In fact poetry rules are not really rules but conventions which change perpetually as per the needs of the time. So, there is no formula in writing poetry. Every poet learns from his predecessors, but never imitates any poet. Every poet has his unique 'style', 'idiom', a special voice for his own poetry. So a tactful reader should pay attention to the 'idiom' or style of a particular poet and appreciate or understand his poetry. Though every poet has his own style, each poet has to follow some common poetic conventions and some basic elements of poetry. Let us learn them with examples.

Basically, poetry may be divided into two kinds:

- Subjective /Personal Poetry:** It deals with the self expression of the poet. In this poetry, the poet goes down into himself and explains his own experiences, thoughts and feelings. In this subjective poetry, some important poetic forms are (i) the Lyric (ii) the Elegy (iii) the Sonnet (iv) the Ode etc.
- Objective/impersonal Poetry:** In this type of poetry the poet deals with the outside world with little reference to his own personal thoughts and emotions. Some important objective type of poetic forms are (i) the Ballad (ii) the Epic (iii) the Idyll (iv) the Dramatic Monologue etc.

The use of figures of speech, the use of metaphorical language, imagery, metre, rhyme and the use of stanza form are some important elements / convention of poetry. Let us briefly examine them for a better appreciation of poetry.

**Figures of Speech:** Many critics think that the use of figures of speech is for decorative purpose only. But in reality they are essential to the emotional and imaginative appeal of poetry. In moments of intense emotional excitement, man intends to use figurative language. A figure of speech is a poetic device which consists in the use of words and phrases in such a manner as to make the meaning more pointed and clear and the language more graphic or vivid. Some important and frequently used figures of speeches are -Simile, Metaphor, Personification, Hyperbole, Metonymy, Synecdoche, Oxymoron, Antithesis and Alliteration etc.

**(1) Simile:** 'Simile' comes from the Latin word "similis" which means "likeness". A simile is an expression of likeness between two different objects of events. Both the images or objects are linked by the word as or like or a similar word. (i) He is as good as gold; (ii) He is as ferocious as a lion etc. Similes are often quite simple to perceive and understand in poetry.

Example:

(i) O my love's like a red, red rose.

In this poetic line Robert Burns, the poet, compares his beloved to a rose and not a white or yellow rose, but a "red, red" rose.

(ii) O my love's like the melodie

That's sweetly played in tune.

In these two lines, the poet compares his beloved to a sweet melodie. Through these two similes, the poet is making a simple statement that his beloved is a pleasing one to behold. The poet's choice of images tells us something about the qualities of his beloved; the first image the red rose, which indicates natural spontaneous freshness and the second image a deliberate tuneful order. So the poet finds these two qualities in her.

**(2) Metaphor:** Metaphor is used to indicate all kinds of poetic linking of images and ideas and particularly when the comparison between two objects / images is implied, though not clearly stated. In metaphor, we do not find linking words like "as" "like" "So – as" ... etc. It is also called an implied simile.

Example: (i) He is a lion. (ii) It is the death bed to him. (iii) The camel is the ship of the desert.

Let us examine the use of metaphor in a poem:

"That time of year thou may'st in me behold  
When yellow leaves, or none, or few do hang  
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold  
Bare ruined choirs where late the sweet birds song."

In this sonnet 73, Shakespeare, the poet, compares himself to the season of autumn and the bare trees. These four lines suggest an analogy between an aging person and the trees whose leaves have fallen. The bare trees suggest, by a further reach of metaphor a ruined and desolate church. This metaphor generates sympathy for the speaker. We can infer from this employment of metaphor that the speaker is older than the listener.

**(3). Personification:** It is a figure of speech in which inanimate objects and abstract ideas or qualities are spoken of as if they were persons or human beings. Some examples are:  
a) "Death lays his icy hands on kings."

b) "Peace hath her victories No less renowned than war"

c) "Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close bosom-friend of the maturing son;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless with fruit the vines that round the thatch-eaves run."

**(4) Hyperbole:** This figure of speech is used for exaggeration. Through the employment of this figure of speech, the poet exaggerates /highlights an ordinary object/image to an extraordinary level to give a striking effect.

Example: (a) "Here is the smell of blood still;  
All perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."

(b) "Is this the face that hath launched ten thousand ships and burnt the  
topless towers of Ilium."

(c) "Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.  
Heaven is in thy lips  
And all is dross that is not Helen."

**5). Metonymy:** It means literally 'substitution of name' 'Meta' after, "onoma" a name; for example, "Grey Hair" may be used for old age, "throne" for monarchy etc. Another example is - "The pen (writer) is mightier than the sword (the soldier)."

**(6). Synecdoche:** It is also called a special form of metonymy. In it "the part" is substituted for "the whole" or an "abstract noun" for a "concrete noun".

Example: (a) Twenty hands are working in the field (Ten farmers are working in field).

(b) Dr. Krishna Sastri is the Shelley of Andhra.

(c) A few coppers cannot make you a rich man.

**(7). Oxymoron:** An oxymoron is a figure of speech, in which two opposite words/phrases are brought together and employed.

Examples: (a) He is the wisest fool in the class.

(b) And we in use finde "the Eagle and the Dove".

**(8). Antithesis:** In this figure of speech, we can find two ideas or words set against each other with the object of heightening the effect.

Examples: (a) Heard melodies are sweet but unheard melodies are sweeter.

(b) Man proposes, God disposes.

(c) United we stand, divided we fall.

**(9). Alliteration:** It gives musical quality to a poem. It means the repetition of the letters or syllables or words in two or more lines.

Examples: (a) "How high his Honour holds his haughty head."

(b) "And miles to go before I sleep. And miles to go before I sleep."

**(10). Metre:** It is one of the fundamental elements of poetry like imagery and emotion. It may be defined as an ordered rhythm, which results from a regular alternation of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poem. Its musical quality is important for poetry. The Iambic, the Trochaic, The Anapaestic, the Dactylic, The Amphibrach are some important metres used by English poets.

**(11). Rhyme:** Rhyme is the similarity in sound between words or syllables. Words or syllables at the end of two lines may have similar sounds and then we can say that two lines rhyme together.

Example: "Whose woods these are I think I know, His house is in the village though.

In the above lines know and though *are* rhyming words. Many poets and critics have an opinion that Rhyme is not essential to poetry. Some **poets have** composed poetry without Rhyme and it can also -be called Blank Verse. It is blank because It is devoid of rhyme. It was popularized by John Milton, Shakespeare and Marlowe.

(12). The Use of Stanza forms: A stanza may be defined as a group of lines of poetry forming a unit in themselves. Thus the Stanza is the unit of organization in poetry like a paragraph in prose. The stanza forms of English **poetry are so numerous and varied.** Among them the prominent are:

- |     |                       |                         |
|-----|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| (a) | The Chaucerian stanza | Seven iambic pentametre |
| (b) | The Spenserian Stanza | Eight iambic pentametre |
| (c) | The Terza Rima        | Three iambic pentametre |
| (d) | The Quatrain          | Four iambic pentametre  |
| (e) | The Heroic Couplet    | Two iambic pentametre   |

(13). **Poetic Diction:** The language and vocabulary of poetry is different from the language of prose.

Poetic diction means the choice and arrangement of words in a line of poem. Some concessions were taken by the poets in the use of words and in the matter of following syntax. For example, words like thy (your) thou, thee, (you) art (are) can only be used in poetry.

#### 1.6.5. Activities:

a) Let us attempt an appreciation of the poem "The Echoing Green" in the light of the above discussion.

*The Echoing Green: William Blake (1757-1827)*

The sun does arise  
 And make happy the skies;  
 The merry bells ring  
 To welcome the Spring  
 The skylark and thrush,  
 The birds of the bush,  
 Sing louder around  
 To the bells' cheerful sound,  
 While our sport shall be seen  
 On the echoing Green.

Old John, with white hair,  
 Does laugh away care,  
 Sitting under the oak,  
 Among the old folk,  
 They laugh at our play,  
 And soon they shall say:  
 "Such, such were the joys  
 When we all, girls and boys,  
 In our youth time were seen  
 On the echoing Green."

Till the little ones, weary,  
 No more can be merry;  
 The sun does descend,  
 And our sports have an  
 end. Round the laps of  
 their mothers  
 Many sisters and brothers,  
 Like birds in their nest,  
 Are ready for rest,  
 And sport no more seen  
 On the darkening Green.

1. Who is the author of the poem?
2. What is the background of the poem?
3. What is the central theme of the poem?
4. What are the peculiar features of the diction?
5. What are the added features of the poem for enjoyment?

The first stanza presents a bright spring morning as a setting for the sports of the young on the Echoing Green. The second presents the healthy and contented old people benevolently watching the girls and boys and remembering how, when young, they too played on the same spot. In the third, evening comes, "sports have an end," and sleepy and contented, the children gather around their mothers "Like birds in their nest." The little narrative, so unpretending and simple, is written in language equally simple and unpretentious making no attempt at sophisticated poetic effects. Thus the poem suggests how man can be happy in the acceptance of his lot in nature and time, of life and a self-fulfilling natural process with a sense of community and warmth in it.

### Questions

- (1) What do you make of the phrase "Echoing Green," which appears in the title and provides a refrain for the first two stanzas a refrain which is altered in the last line?
- (2) What is "echoing" (what, that is, repeats what) in the poem? Why is this idea central to the poem?
- (3) Why is the word *echoing* changed in the last line?
- (4) Is the basic notion of the poem altered by this, or merely reiterated in another way?

(b) Here is another poem for appreciation.

Because I Could Not Stop for Death Emily Dickinson (1839-1886)

Because I could not stop for Death- He kindly stopped for me  
 The Carriage held but just Ourselves And Immortality.

We slowly drove -- He knew no haste  
 And I had put away  
 My labor and my leisure too,  
 For His Civility

We passed the School, where Children strove  
 At Recess -- in the Ring-  
 We passed the Fields of Grazing Grain-  
 We passed the Setting Sun- Or rather-He passed Us-  
 The Dews drew quivering and chill- For only Gossamer, my Gown-

My tippet-only Tulle-

We paused before a House that seemed  
A swelling of the Ground-

The Roof was scarcely visible- The Cornice -- in the Ground--

Since then --'tis Centuries -- and yet  
Feels shorter than the Day  
I first surmised the Horses' Heads  
Were toward Eternity-

### Questions:

1. Look at the word *stop* in line 1. Does it mean the same thing here as in line 2? How does the word in line 1 relate to the meaning of line 2?
2. What is the tone of stanza 1? Why didn't the lady refuse Death's invitation? Particularly in view of the fact that she was not really expecting Death to call for her and did not look forward to taking a ride with him? Is it because a well-bred lady must not be rude when she is given the very special attention that she has been given in not being summoned but marked out for special favor? Or any other reason?
3. Though the lady sits in the carriage of Death (stanza 3), the activity of the world goes on. Does the lady seem surprised? What is implied about her attitude?
4. Consider carefully the last stanza. Does the lady speak from Heaven? Or from the grave? Is she alive but thoroughly conscious of the fact that she, being human, is going to die? What can she mean by saying that the centuries that have passed seem shorter than "the Day" on which she first surmised that she was leaving the world of time?
5. What would you say is the poet's concept of "Immortality" (line 4)? Christian? Non-Christian? Or what? What do the concreted images that she uses imply with reference to her attitude?

(c) Let us read another poem for comprehension

*The Eagle: Alfred, Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)*

He clasps the crag with crooked hands;  
Close to the sun in lonely lands,  
Ringed with the azure world he stands.  
The wrinkled sea beneath him crawls;  
He watches from his mountain walls,  
And like a thunderbolt he falls.

### Questions

1. What does the poet accomplish by describing the eagle with 'crooked hands' (line 1)? What does he simply by referring to the eagle's "mountain walls" (line 5) rather than, perhaps, "mountain peaks"?
2. What are the implications of "Close to the sun" (line 2) and "Ringed with the azure world" (line 3)? Why "azure"? If the poet had simply written "quite high up on the crags", what would be lost?
3. Can it be said that the poet gives us an eagle's eye view of the world in lines 3 and 4? Why does he call the sea "wrinkled"? What is suggested by saying that the sea "crawls"?

4. Does the last line provide a kind of climax to the poem? How does it do so?
5. What are the figures of speech employed by the poet in this poem?

#### **1.6.6. To Sum up/ Conclusion:**

In this unit, an attempt has been made to define poetry, the different elements of poetry, and the devices to appreciate poetry. Poetry is a kind of multidimensional language with various dimensions like, intellectual, sensuous, emotional and imaginative dimensions.

Some suggestions for a better understanding of a poem are:

- (i) Read a poem more than once - Read again and again.
- (ii) A poem is supposed to be read aloud unlike silent reading of a newspaper. When you read aloud, you can understand rhyme, metre and musical quality of the poem. A poem expresses itself if it is read naturally and sensibly.
- (iii) Always pay careful attention to what the poem is saying by putting heart and mind in it.
- (iv) Finally observe the literary features/ conventions of the poem.

#### **1.6.7. Sample Questions:**

1. Write an essay on the different elements of poetry.
2. Write a note on the use of figurative language in poetry.

#### **1.6.8. Suggested Reading:**

1. Cleanth Brooks, Understanding Poetry.
2. Robert Scholes, Elements of Poetry. New York: OUP.

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## Lesson- 7

**UNDERSTANDING PROSE**

## Structure

- 1.7.1 Objectives
- 1.7.2. Introduction
- 1.7.3 . Discussion of Prose
- 1.7.4. Activities-Passages for comprehension
- 1.7.5. Conclusion / Sum up
- 1.7.6. Key to Exercises
- 1.7.7. Suggested Reading

**1.7.1. Objectives:**

After you have done this unit you should be able

- to discriminate the basic difference between Prose writings and Poetry. to understand
- to understand different forms of prose writings
- to comprehend the prose passages.
- to locate the central idea of a passage.
- to infer conclusions from the given passage.
- to improve your sense of language.

**1.7.2. Introduction:**

We have examined in the previous lesson the definition of poetry and the practices to be followed to understand Poetry. In this unit, we learn about the nature of Prose style and its principal characteristics. There are different forms of prose writings like short story, novel, novelette, biography, autobiography, essay, memoirs, anecdotes etc. Let us examine them in brief.

Short story is a kind of prose fiction. It has grown up along with the form of the novel. It may be defined as a prose narrative, which requires from half an hour to one hour for its perusal. In other words 'brevity' is the key note of a short story. It is a popular form of prose in the modern period. The modern short story writer is an artist, who is a close observer of life and a master of prose style. Regarding the subject matter of the short story, anything between the heaven and the earth is fit for the short story. The primary aim of a short story is to entertain and enlighten the reader.

Novel:- It is primarily a tale or a long story in prose, meant primarily for entertainment and presenting a realistic picture of life. Its treatment of life and its problems are realistic. It exhibits the author's views of life. In simple, we can describe it as a "criticism of life." There are different types of novels like the picaresque novel, the panoramic novel, the historical novel, the social novel, the regional novel, the psychological novel, the stream of consciousness novel etc. The short-story cannot exhibit life in all its variety and complexity like the novel, because it has a limited space. But the novel is regarded as the supreme form of prose writing because of its large space and scope to interpret life of human beings.

**Novelette:** It is a short form of novel. It has all the features of a novel. It is a development of the modern times.

**Biography:** It is a modern art form of prose. It is defined as 'the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature' (The Oxford Dictionary). History deals with the life of nations while biography deals with the life of an individual. It deals with the internal as well as external life of an individual.

**Autobiography:** It is a biography written by the concerned individual. Here the author explores his own thoughts and life and presents it in a prose form of art.

**Essay:** Various efforts have been made to define the essay from Francis Bacon to A.G. Gardiner. But none of them give a complete and comprehensive picture of an Essay because of its large scope. The Oxford Dictionary defines it as "a prose composition of moderate length on any particular subject, originally implying want of finish, but now said of a composition more or less elaborate in style, though limited in range".

The essay is intensely subjective, an expression of different moods, likes and dislikes of its author. That is why it is called a prose-lyric. Based on its features, we can divide the essay into the following categories:

- (a) The Aphoristic Essay (Bacon's Essays)
- (b) The Personal Essay (Lamb's Essays)
- (c) The Periodical Essay (Addison's and Steele's Essays)
- (d) The Critical Essay (Dryden's and T.S. Eliot's Essays)

### **1.7.3. Discussion:**

After examining some important forms of prose, let us examine the important features of good prose. Prose is an instrument of discussion, argumentation, reasoning and instruction. It is the proper vehicle for conveying facts and ideas and feelings. Walter Pater, the well known critic, points out some important features of prose in his critical essay "On Style". Let us examine them:

(a) **Choice of words:** According to Pater, the writer should select words carefully. Words are like bricks in a construction. Variety in the use of words adds sweetness to the language.

(b) **Construction of Sentences:** Pater refers to it as the 'mind' in the style. Sentences should follow each other logically and naturally. The structure should have logical coherence.

(c) **Personality of the Writer:** Pater interprets that each piece of prose writing has a tone, a color, an atmosphere and certain subtle graces. It can be referred to as the Soul in Style. The soul is the element of personality in style. It is the peculiar spirit of which the artist is made of. It is from this quality that we can know a writer from his works. It is because of this soul in style that religious writers and preachers are able to persuade and convert.

A good prose-style is both a matter of choice of words and their arrangement to form a complete meaningful sentence. A good prose writer should not only convey his ideas but should also move his readers. For this purpose, he should follow some principles of prose writings. Those are: (a) Clarity of thought and expression; (b) Simplicity; (c) Euphony.

a) Clarity of thought and expression: Clarity is the first quality of good prose. The author should be able to make his ideas very clear to his readers. If he is obscure or confused, he will also confuse the reader. So, he should call a spade, a spade, and express his ideas in the most direct and straight -forward manner. Circumlocution is to be avoided in good prose. The writer should exercise economy of expression and use familiar and simple vocabulary.

b) Simplicity: It is another hall- mark of good prose. There is a misconception that the use of pompous and rhetorical words is necessary to make one's writings great. And so many writers try to adorn and decorate their writings with pompous words. Voltaire, the great French prose writer says, "good prose, like the clothes of a well-dressed man, should be simple, but not showy."

Let us take a sentence for our analysis:

The abode in which you spent the delightful days of your boyhood is on Conflagration Pompous style

The house in which you lived in your boyhood is burning – Simple style.

Which one do you think is intelligible and simple? Definitely one can agree it is the second one. It does not mean that the use of figurative language is completely banned in prose. We can use it judiciously. The use of figures of speech should be functional and not merely decorative. They should help the writer to convey his meaning more forcefully, clearly and lucidly.

Euphony: It refers to the musical quality and "sound" of the word. It is not an essential but a desirable characteristic of good prose. It is essential in poetry but not in prose. The primary purpose of a prose writer is to convey his 'ideas' rather than providing 'delight'. So he should give importance to "sense" than to "sound". But one has to remember that the sweet sound of prose writing definitely enhances its quality. The real end of prose writing is the harmonious blend of "Sound and Sense".

A really beautiful prose style requires labour on the part of the writer and close attention and observation on the part of the reader. Till now we have discussed various forms of prose writings and principal characteristics of prose. Now we shall examine how we can comprehend / understand good prose writings.

#### 1.7.4. Activities -- Passages for Comprehension:

The word 'comprehend' means "to understand". You are required to go through a prose passage, grasp its gist, and then answer the question based on it. It involves the use of your vocabulary, the sense of language, the ability to locate meanings and understand the real spirit of the passage. Through regular practice, one can attain the skill of comprehension of passage. Let us practice with some prose passages of different types.

##### PROSE PASSAGE (1)

Joti, a gardener's son, was once invited to attend the marriage ceremony of a Brahmin friend. As he loved his friend dearly, he attended the function. The bridegroom was being in a procession to the bride's house. This procession consisted of men, women, and children mostly Brahmin. Joti was also walking along with the procession

One orthodox Brahmin recognized him and was annoyed at the sight of a low caste boy walking with the Brahmins in the marriage procession. Unable to contain himself, he shouted, "How dare you walk along with us? You are not our equal. Get behind! Otherwise go away." Joti felt insulted. He left the procession and returned home.

He narrated the whole incident to his father with anger in his eyes. However, his father advised him to observe old customs. That night Joti could not sleep. What could he do for the equality of human beings? Caste system was deep-rooted. As the lower caste people were not educated, they had accepted this mental slavery for ages. Joti therefore resolved to revolt against this mental slavery and educate the lower caste people. He became the first Indian to start a school for the untouchables as well as a girls' school in Maharashtra. We recognize him today as Mahatma Phule.

1. According to the passage, what has made low caste people accept mental slavery?
2. What kind of a man was Joti's father?
3. What did Joti do after his insult?
4. Why did Joti attend the marriage?
5. Why could Joti not sleep that night?
6. According to the passage, why did Joti quit the marriage procession?
7. What does the author highlight in this passage?

#### PASSAGE 2

The greatest enemy of mankind, as people have discovered, is not science, but war. Science merely reflects the prevailing social forces. It is found that, when there is peace, science is constructive; when there is war, science is perverted to destructive ends. The weapons which science gives us do not necessarily cause war; they make war increasingly terrible. Till now, it has brought us to the doorstep of doom. Our main problem, therefore, is not to curb science, but to stop war – to substitute law for force, and international government for anarchy in the relations of one nation with another. That is a job in which everybody must participate, including the scientists. But the bombing of Hiroshima suddenly woke us up to the fact that we have very little time. The hour is late and our work has scarcely begun. Now we are face to face with an urgent question -- "Can education and tolerance, understanding and creative intelligence run fast enough to keep us abreast with our own mounting capacity to destroy?" That is the question which we shall have to answer one way or the other in this generation. Science must help us in arriving at the answer, but the main decision lies within ourselves.

1. According to the writer, the real enemy of mankind is not science but war, because
  - (A) Science merely invents the weapons with which war is fought
  - (B) Science during wars becomes destructive
  - (C) The weapons that science invents necessarily lead to war
  - (D) The weapons invented by science do not cause war, though these make it more destructive
2. War can be stopped if
  - (A) Science is not allowed to lead us to utter destruction
  - (B) We replace force and lawlessness by law and international government
  - (C) Science is restricted to be utilized only during war time
  - (D) Weapons invented by science are not used to launch a war

3. According to the writer, the main problem we are faced with is to
- (A) Stop science from reflecting social forces
  - (B) Stop scientific activities everywhere
  - (C) Abolish war
  - (O) Prevent scientists from participating in destructive activities
4. Our mounting sagacity to destroy can be **kept** under control by
- (A) Encouraging social forces
  - (8) Education and broad-mindedness
  - (C) Insight and constructive thinking
  - (D) Both Band C (as above) together
5. The expression 'bring to the doorstep of doom' means
- (A) Carry close to death and destruction
  - (8) Lead to the threshold of a new destiny
  - (C) Indulge in a ruinous activity
  - (D) Introduced to an unpredictable destiny
6. Which one of the following statement is 'not implied' in the passage? (A) People needlessly blame science for war
- (B) Science is misused for destructive purposes
  - (C) Neither science not the weapons it invents add to the horrors of war
  - (O) The role of science in ensuring world peace is subsidiary to that of man
7. Which of the following is 'OPPOSITE' in meaning to the word 'anarchy' in the middle of the passage?
- (A) Law and order
  - (B) Political dominance
  - (C) Economic prosperity
  - (D) Communal harmony
8. The phrase 'our work has scarcely begun' implies that our work
- (A) Has not yet begun
  - (B) Has only just begun
  - (C) Has been half-way through
  - (O) Has begun, but not yet completed
9. The expression 'keep us abreast' in the passage means
- (A) Keep at a distance
  - (B) keep side by side
  - (C) Hold out a challenge
  - (O) Prevent from escaping
10. Which of the following would be the most suitable title for the passage?
- (A) Science and social forces
  - (8) Science and the horrors of war
  - (C) Science and world peace
  - (O) Science and the new generation

## PASSAGE [3]

It would be wrong historically to consider that the great part that the women of India played in the non-cooperation movement and the position they have achieved for themselves in modern Indian life was the result of a sudden transformation.

Undoubtedly women in ancient India enjoyed a much higher status than their descendants in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. From the earliest days there had been many notable women in India - poets, scholars, capable administrators and leaders of religious movements. Even the eighteenth century produced women of the type of Ahalyabai Holkar whose administration of Indore State was considered a model for all India. But there is no doubt that, speaking generally, the condition of Indian womanhood had sunk low. Kept vigorously secluded behind the purdah in many parts of India, denied facilities of education and compelled under a system of child marriage, at least among some of the higher classes, to maternity when their sisters in other countries were in schools, and kept under subjection during marriage and forced, among the Brahmins and upper castes, to live a life of misery during widowhood, Indian women in the beginning of the nineteenth century were probably 'among the most backward of their sex all over the world. The Brahmo Samaj led the movement for emancipation. The ancient rules of purdah were broken and Brahma women moved freely in the society. But as even the educated classes generally showed a disinclination towards the emancipation of their womenfolk, the movement for their uplift was slow in taking shape. By the beginning of the twentieth century the position had begun to show some change. The education of women had gradually become popular, and some of those who had tasted the fruits of modern education had taken seriously to the work of women's uplift. It was however only with Gandhiji's Non-Co-operation movement that women were encouraged to come forward and participate in the life of the nation.

From the first days of his movement Gandhiji realized that there was a source of immense untapped power in the womanhood of India which could most advantageously be turned to the work he had nearest to his heart - rehabilitation of the village. His appeal was addressed directly to women, Originally he seems to have been uncertain of the response, or at least of the kind of work that women could do in the national movement, for though he was a passionate believer in the equality of women, he seems to have been doubtful whether the women of India who had for so long a time been shut up in the seclusion could shoulder the active leadership of a movement which called for so much physical suffering.

But when the movement was actually started, women were everywhere at the forefront. In picketing liquor shops, in enforcing the boycott of foreign cloth, and in undertaking civil disobedience they shamed men in such a way that Gandhiji continually spoke of them as the main support of his movement.

The legislative reform establishing the equality of women has been one of the most significant political achievements. Their right to independent property, to freedom of marriage, to education and employment has been recognized by law. Many important pieces of legislation, especially the raising of the age of consent of

marriage and the prevention of the dedication of women to temple services, have helped to the awakening among the women themselves.

Answer the following questions:

1. Quote details from the passage to justify the statement, "Women's position to-day is not the result of a sudden transformation."
2. Give examples from the passage which show that women in ancient India enjoyed a much higher status than those in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
3. Mention the factors which were responsible for the deterioration in the condition of Indian womanhood in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
4. What impact did the Brahmo Samaj movement have on the condition of Indian womanhood?
5. Why was the movement for the uplift of women slow in taking shape?
6. What was the motivating factor which encouraged women to come forward and participate in the life of the nation?
7. Why did Gandhiji give a direct call to the woman "to come forward"?
8. Quote facts from the passage which indicate a remarkable improvement in the condition of womanhood in the twentieth century.
9. Mention some of the legislative reforms which helped to change the status of women in India.
10. Write 2-3 sentences under each one of the following sub-titles.
  - (a) Women in Ancient India
  - (b) Women in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries
  - (c) The Brahma Samaj women
  - (d) Women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century

Here is another passage, this time an advertisement from the Director of Tourism, Government of Pondicherry. The questions following the passage will help you to understand and analyse the text.

#### **PASSAGE -4**

##### **PONDICHERRY – The Tourists Paradise**

Pondicherry, an amazing pot-pourri of Indian and French cultures. The home of poets, patriots and philosophers. The harbour where Indian history was often shaped -- that is Pondicherry -- an exotic blend of traditional Tamil hospitality and tender French Courtesy.

Welcome to Pondicherry – where pleasure is free.

The Directorate of Tourism is eager to introduce the exotic charms of this eternal young city to you from Chola temples to French churches, from Dupleix's ville and Raj Nivas to Sri

Aurobindo Ashram and Auroville, from the Romain Rolland Library to the Franco-Indian Museum. There are lots of lovely places to visit.

From the sun-kissed sands of Pondicherry beach to the dew-kissed flora of its Botanical Garden, from the boat house at Chunnambar and the nearby serene beach to the artisans' hamlet of Villanur. There are numerous locales to go romping around it.

Pondicherry cannot really be described or explained.

It can only be experienced -- So pack up your bags and have a holiday this year ..in sweet Pondicherry.

You may arrive as a casual visitor. But you will leave as a bosom friend of this bounteous city

After reading the above advertisement answer the following:

- 1) What factual information regarding the place do you get from the paragraph?
- 2) Now let us have look at the tone and style of the whole passage. Here are a few pairs of words to describe the passage, which word out of each pair would you use to describe its tone and style? (tick mark)

- |                                     |     |  |      |
|-------------------------------------|-----|--|------|
| i) factual                          | (x) | <i>I</i><br>impressionistic            | (✓)  |
| ii) gives all important information | (x) | gives selected information             | (✓)  |
| iii) projects only positive aspect  | (✓) | gives both positive and negative facts | (X)  |
| vi) Verbose / Euphemistic style     | (✓) | Objective style                        | ( X) |

- 3) There are quite a few exaggerated expressions used in the passage. Find out such expressions.

- 4) After going through the advertisement, what was your reaction?

- a) I wanted to visit the place immediately.
- b) I knew it was an exaggerated description, but I would like to visit it.
- c) I suspect the advertisement, because "too rosy a picture" was given?

### 1.7.5. Conclusion / Sum up

In this unit, we have examined the different forms of prose writings like novel, novelette, biography, autobiography, short-story, personal essay etc. We have also examined the salient features of prose writings and important principles governing the prose style with different types of prose-passage examples. A student of literature should develop a sense of appreciation of good prose style. He should be able to comprehend the subtleties of the language. For this purpose, four different types of passages are given for exercise and practice. The first passage is an example for a personal passage / literary passage, in which the experiences of the author are described.

The second passage is an example of an informative passage; "Information of facts" is important in this type of passage. In this passage, objective type questions are included. The third passage, which is a lengthy one, is helpful for the student to enhance his comprehension skills of understanding prose passages. The fourth passage is an example for Rhetorical style, which is popular in advertisements. In a nutshell, this unit helps the student in understanding different types of prose passages and analysing them.

### 1.7.6. Key to Exercises:

#### Passage –(1)

1. Since they were not educated, they had accepted this mental slavery.
2. One who follows the old customs without questioning them.
3. He started a school for the untouchables and girls.
4. The bridegroom is his friend, and he loves him dearly.
5. Joti could not sleep, because of insult at the marriage procession.
6. An orthodox Brahmin questioned him and ordered him not to walk along with them in the marriage procession.
7. Need of equality, and the necessity of education and awareness to all.

#### Passage –(2)

1-D, 2-8, 3- C, 4-D, 5-A, 6-C, 7-B, 8-B, 9-8, 10-C. Passage – (3)

1. It would be wrong historically to consider that the great part that the women of India played in the non-cooperation movement and the position they have achieved for themselves in modern Indian life was the result of a sudden transformation.
2. From the earliest days there had been many notable women in India – poets, scholars, capable administrators and leaders of religious movements. Even the eighteenth century produced women of the type of Ahalyabai Holkar whose administration of Indore State was considered a model for all India.
3. Women were kept vigorously secluded behind the purdah in many parts of India, denied facilities of education and compelled to the system of child marriage. These are the causes  
for the deterioration India womanhood in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.
4. The Brahmo Samaj led the movement for emancipation. The ancient rules of purdah were broken and Brahma women moved freely in the society.
5. The educated classes generally showed disinclination towards the emancipation of their womenfolk, the movement for their uplift was slow in taking shape.
6. The education of women had gradually become popular, and some of those who had tasted the fruits of modern education had taken seriously to the work of women's uplift it was however only with Gandhiji's Non-Co-operation movement that women were encouraged to come forward and participate in the life of the nation.
7. Gandhiji realized that there was a source of immense untapped power in the womanhood of India which could most advantageously be turned to the work he had nearest to his heart rehabilitation of the village.

8. They realized the importance of education, and educated women took active role in the upliftment of women's position in the society. Later they participated in the Non-Co-operation movement actively and played an active role in the life of the nation.

9. Their right to independent property, to freedom of marriage, to education and employment has been recognized by law.

10. (a) Women in ancient India enjoyed a much higher status than 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century women. There were many women poets, scholars and administrators.

(b) In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, women's position in India deteriorated. They were denied of education and were kept in the purdah system.

(c) Brahmo Samaj women violated the rules of purdah, and enjoyed freedom and moved freely in the society and helped for the upliftment of the other women folk through education.

(d) Women in the 20<sup>th</sup> century have tasted so many changes. Legislative reforms gave a chance for assurance of equality. They have the right to property employment and education

Passage –(4)

1. Pondicherry is a place of interest for tourists. It has a unique feature of the synthesis of Tamil culture and French culture. It is located in a picturesque atmosphere of beaches and gardens.

2. The style and tone of the passage reveals the following features:

(i) It does not simply project the factual information about Pondicherry. Impressionistic style is used to attract the tourists.

(ii) It has projected only selective information about Pondicherry.

(iii) It has projected only positive aspects of Pondicherry.

(iv) Objective style is not used. Euphemistic/ Verbose style is used.

3. The sun-kissed sands of Pondicherry beach. The dew-kissed flora of its Botanical garden.

Pondicherry cannot really be described. It can only be experienced.. etc.

7.7. Suggested Reading:

1. Prasad, A Background to the History of English Literature, Sterling: Mumbai.

2. Hari Mohan Prasad: Objective English, Tata McGraw-Hill Pub: New Delhi, 1995.

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**UNIT –II History of English Literature: Anglo-Saxon  
(Old English), Middle English, Renaissance Literature**

**Lesson 8**

**Anglo-Saxon (Old English), Middle English, Renaissance Literature**

**Structure of the lesson:**

**8.1 Objectives of the lesson**

**8.1.1 Anglo-Saxon period**

**8.1.2 Characteristics of Anglo-Saxon Literature**

**8.1.3 Anglo-Saxon Poetry**

**8.1.4 Anglo-Saxon Prose**

**8.2. Middle English (1066-1500)**

**8.2.1 Features of the Period**

**8.2.2 Major Writers and Their Works**

**8.2.3 Division of Middle English Period**

**8.2.4 Barren Age**

**8.3 Renaissance English**

**8.3.1 Introduction**

**8.3.2 The Renaissance has Two Impulses**

**8.3.3 The English Renaissance Literature Marked by Four Periods**

**8.4. Questions**

**8.5 References**

**8.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON**

The Unit is intended to equip the student with a basic knowledge of Anglo- Saxon or Old English, Middle English and Renaissance literature and its broader ramification. To this end, the unit will:

1. Help the student distinguish between the different features of the three literatures.
2. Acquaint the student with the main features and figures of this phenomenon.

3. Familiarize the student with some of the significant social and cultural moments that shaped the literature.

### **8.1.1 ANGLO- SAXON LITERATURE (OLD ENGLISH)**

#### **Introduction:**

The old English period extends from about 600 to 1100 A.D. The Angles and Saxons invaded Britain established their power. It was called Anglo-Saxon or old English. It is also called the period of inflexions. It is the foundation of English language and literature. The history of English literature begins with the Anglo Saxon. There are differences between old English and modern English with regard to pronunciation, spelling, vocabulary and grammar.

It is impossible to give any complete rules for old English pronunciation. Old English had no silent syllables and its spelling is phonetic. The sound of “k” was represented by “c” as in “cynn(Kin) or “naced”(naked). The vocabulary of old English is purely Teutonic. By means of prefixes and suffixes a single root was made to yield a large number of derivatives. Anglo-Saxon had a very complicated grammar. It was a highly inflected language. The Norman Conquest in 1066 gradually changed the character of the language.

### **8.1.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF ANGLO- SAXON LITERATURE**

Anglo Saxon or old English Literature is a verse literature in oral form. It passes from generation to generation by word of mouth. The creator of orature is unknown. Later it is attained written form. Anglo Saxon poetry is of two groups: pagan poetry represented by Beowulf, religious poetry represented by the works of Caedmon and Cynewulf. Anglo Saxon prose appeared in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. Venerable Bede and Alfred the great are famous in form.

### **8.1.3 ANGLO- SAXON POETRY**

#### **a. Beowulf**

Beowulf is the oldest poem in Anglo Saxon literature. It is an epic consisting of more than 3000 lines. Initially is available in oral form. It is written in early 10<sup>th</sup> century. It deals with folk legends of primitive northern tribes. It is a pagan poem. It presents the tribal society. The social conditions and customs can be seen in the poem. It helps us to study the primitive society of Europe.

#### **b. Religious poetry**

Caedmon: Caedmon (610-680) is the first religious poet of England. He is the father of English songs. His life story is described in Bede’s “Historia Ecclesiastica”. He sang a song named “The Hymn of Praise” which is very popular. Later he composed many songs which are Biblical.

#### **c. Cynewulf and His poems**

Cynewulf is the greatest Anglo-Saxon poet in the early 9<sup>th</sup> century. He is ecclesiastic poet. All his poems are about Christ and Virgin Mary. His poems are Christ, Juliana, The Fates of the Apostles, etc.

### **8.1.4 Anglo Saxon Prose**

Prose literature came into existence in 8<sup>th</sup> century. The following are the popular prose writers: Venerable Bede, Alfred the Great and Aelfric.

**a. Venerable Bede: (673-735)**

Venerable Bede is the father of Anglo- Saxon literature. His writings are concerned the human knowledge of his day in more than 40 in number. “The ecclesiastical History of the English people” tells how religion was introduced and spread in England. It tells us historical events and mythological legends. Bede described Caedmon’s legendary life story in the work.

**b. Alfred the Great: (848-901)**

Alfred the Great, the king of Wessex kingdom, is the prose writer in Anglo-Saxon Literature. He is the founder of the colleges during his period/rule. He selects the teachers from Europe. He himself translated some works Latin into English. His book” The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle” is the magnum opus of Anglo Saxon literature.

**c. Aelfric (955-1010)**

Aelfric, a clergyman, authored books in Greek- Latin. He gave a musical touch to the Anglo-Saxon literature.

## **8.2. MIDDLE ENGLISH (1066-1500)**

### **Introduction**

Middle English period commences with the Norman Conquest in 1066 and ended in the 15<sup>th</sup> century. There are two ages in the period. The span from 1066 to 1340 is known as Anglo-Norman period. They use French dialect for speaking and for writing Anglo- Norman by the new ruling class of England. The period 1340to 1400 is called the Age of Chaucer. Chaucer is dominant writer in the period. The remarkable events of the period are:

\*The English parliament was established in 1295.

\*The religious battle took place from 11<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century between Muslims and Christians.

\*English was declared as the official language in 1362.

\*William Caxton invented printing press in 1476.

\*Renaissance began with the fall of Constantinople in 1453.

### **8.2.1 Features of the period**

The English language becomes standard in the period. Prose had a strong foundation whereas poetry served as the main genre. Drama began in the form of mystery play and morality play. Love, chivalry and religion are the three main ideals which pervade in every writing of the time.

### **8.2.2 Major writers and Their Works**

John Wycliffe (1324-84) is the father of English prose. The Bible is translated in the period. Geoffrey Chaucer (1340-1400) wrote Troilus and Criseyde (1387), and Canterbury Tales (1385-1400). William Langland wrote Piers Plowman (1392). Sir Thomas Malory wrote Morte D’ Arthur (1485).

### 8.2.3 Divisions of Middle English period

It is consisted of three divisions. They are-

1. Anglo- Norman period.
2. The age of Chaucer.
3. Barren Age.

#### 1. Anglo- Norman period (1066-1350)

There are metrical verse romances of French and Celtic and English heroes like Roland, Arthur and Tristram and Bevis of Hampton. There are stories of Alexander and a collection of Oriental tales called "The Seven Wise Masters". We simply note that it is medieval in spirit and French in style and expression.

#### 2. The Age of Chaucer (1350-1400):

Chaucer is the father of English poetry. His works are broadly divided into three periods.

##### 1. French Period (1359-1372)

##### 2. Italian period (1373-1356)

##### 3. English period (1386-1400)

His works are –

##### 1. The Canterbury Tales

##### 2. The House of Fame

##### 3. The Parliament of fowls

##### 4. The Legend of Good Woman.

##### 5. The Books of the Duchess

William Langland and John Wycliffe were Chaucer's contemporaries. William Langland wrote "Piers plowman" and "Richard the Redeless". John Wycliffe translated the Bible into English in the 14<sup>th</sup> century. He is known as "Father of English Prose". William Caxton is the first printer and establishes press in 1476.

### 8.2.4 Barren Age (1400-1485)

After the death of Chaucer, barren age started in 1400. No significant work is produced. The age ended in 1485. After Barren age, the real rebirth of English literature began at the time of 'The Renaissance'.

## 8.3 THE RENAISSANCE (1500-1600)

### 8.3.1 Introduction

The Renaissance began in Italy in the late 14<sup>th</sup> century and continued in Western Europe from 15<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> century. In this period the arts of painting, sculpture, architecture and literature reached its heights. The development came to England in 16<sup>th</sup> century. It did not flourish until the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods. In fact, Milton is the last renaissance poet. The word "Renaissance" derived from French means rebirth, revival or

reawakening". The Renaissance was both a revival of ancient classical mythology, literature, culture and awakening of human kind. It was a revival of cult of beauty- the beauty of woman, the beauty of nature, and the beauty of art and literature.

### **8.3.2 The Renaissance has Two Impulses**

1. The inspiration derived from the rebirth of classical learning.
2. The stirring of men's imagination by the great voyages of discovery.

These two ran through all Renaissance literature.

#### **a. The New Learning**

The Renaissance scholars are known as humanists. They revived the knowledge of Greek language. In the mid-fifteenth century, the invention of printing press expanded the literate audience. The spread of ideas and types of literature in Renaissance were possible by technological development. The translation of books developed renaissance people as universal men. They showed platonic love towards women.

#### **b. The religion**

The reformation began in the times of Henry VIII reached its culmination during the Elizabethan age. There was a tutelage of Roman authority. Spenser presented the best trends of Reformation in the Faerie Queen.

#### **c. The new world.**

The discovery of America by Columbus brought about a widening of horizon. New knowledge began to pour in from the East and new worlds were opening in the west. The magic world of Shakespeare's "The Tempest" is based on a contemporary account of a ship wreck on Bermuda and other writings about voyages to the new world.

#### **d. The new cosmos**

The Copernican theory proposed a system in which the centre is the Sun. All the planets revolve around the Sun. heaven was thought to be situated above the spheres. Hell was to be situated either at the centre of the earth as in Dante's "Inferno" or else below the system of spheres as in John Milton's "Paradise lost".

### **8.3.3 The English Renaissance Literature is Marked by Four Periods**

Historians called the Renaissance as early modern period

1. The Elizabethan age (1558-1603).
2. The Jacobean period (1603-1625)- it was the middle age of English Renaissance.
3. The Caroline period (1625-1649)
4. The Commonwealth period or Puritan period. (1649-1660)

#### **1. The Elizabethan Age. (1558-1603)**

The rule of Elizabeth I is known as Elizabethan Age. This was a time of rapid development in English commerce, Maritime power and nationalist feeling. It was a great age of English

literature. It is great in drama. there are extraordinary writers of prose,drama, lyric, narrative poetry- Sidney, Marlowe, Spenser, Shakespeare, Sir Walter Raleigh, Francis bacon, BenJonson, etc. there are extraordinary writers of prose,drama, lyric and narrative poetry.

### **2.The Jacobean period (1603-1625)**

this was the period in prose writings of Bacon, John Donne's Sermons Robert Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, and the king James translation of the Bible. It was the time of Shakespeare's greatest tragedies, and tragic comedies. Another popular poets and playwrights include Donne, Ben Jonson, John Webster, etc.

### **3.The Caroline period (1625-1649)**

The reign of Charles is known as Caroline Age. It was the time of the English civil war fought between the supporters of the king and the supporters of parliament. John Milton started his writing during the period. There are religious poets and prose writers. The cavalier poets, the writers of witty and polished lyrics of courtship and gallantry, include Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, and Thomas Carew. Son of Ben, the follower of BenJonson, wrote lyrics of love and gallant compliment.

### **4. The Commonwealth period or Puritan period. (1649-1660)**

It is also known as puritan Interregnum. The age extends from 1649-1660. In this period, England was ruled by the parliament under the puritan leader Oliver Cromwell. He died in 1658 which was marked the dissolution of the commonwealth. In 1642, the drama disappeared in the theatres.Miltonwrote political pamphlets. Thomas Hobbes'work "leviathan" is a very influential work in the age. To conclude this lesson gives an idea on old English, Middle English and Renaissance period and their features.

## **8.4QUESTIONS**

1. Write a note on the features of Anglo-Saxon literature.
2. what are the salient features of Middle English?
3. Give an account of Old English poetry.
4. How did the Norman conquest affect the growth of English poetry?
5. Give a general survey of the Anglo-Saxon prose.
6. Write an essay on writers and their contributions in Middle English.
7. How did the Renaissance affect English literature in 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century?
8. What are the salient features of Renaissance literature?
9. Discuss the development of Anglo- Saxon Prose.

## **8.5 REFERENCES**

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Suggested Readings:

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2. History of English Literature Book- (Alpha Edition)
3. A History of English Literature Book- (Notion Press)
4. A Guide to English Literature Book- (Atlantic Publisher)
5. Anthology of English Literature Book- (W.W Norton)
6. History of English Literature Book- (The Teaching.Co)
7. History of English Literature Book- (Edward Albert)
8. A Critical History of English Literature Book (David Daiches)
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## Unit – III Poetry

### Lesson 9

#### Prologue from The Canterbury Tales

##### Structure of the Lesson:

##### 9.0 Object of the Lesson

##### 9.1 Text of Prologue (lines 1-42)

##### 9.2 Introduction

##### 9.3. Critical Summary of the Prologue

###### 9.3.1 Season of Pilgrimage

###### 9.3.2 The Fellowship

###### 9.3.3 The Pilgrims

###### 9.3.4 Social Picture of 14<sup>th</sup> Century England

##### 9.4 Glossary

##### 9.5 Questions

##### 9.6 References

#### 9.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE LESSON

The objective of the lesson is to help the learner to understand

- The early form of English poetry
- 14<sup>th</sup> Century English conditions
- History of English Language

#### 9.1TEXT - PROLOGUE (LINES 1-42)

Whan that Aprill with his shouressoote

The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,

And bathed every veyne in swichlicour

Of which vertu engendred is the flour;

Whan Zepirus eek with his sweetebreeth

Inspired hath in every holt and heeth

The tendrecoppes, and the yongesonne

Hath in the Ram his half coursyrone,

And smalefowelesmakenmelodye,

That slepen al the nyght with open ye  
(So priketh hem Nature in hircorages),  
Thannelongen folk to goon on pilgrimages,  
And palmeres for to sekenstraungestrondes,  
To fernehalwes, kowthe in sondrylondes;  
And specially from every shiresende  
Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,  
The hoolyblisfulmartir for to seke,  
That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.  
Bifil that in that seson on a day,  
In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay  
Redy to wenden on my pilgrymage  
To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,  
At nyght was come into that hostelrye  
Welnyne and twenty in a compaignye  
Of sondry folk, by aventurefalle  
In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,  
That toward Caunterburywoldenryde.  
The chambres and the stables werenwyde,  
And wel we werenesedattebeste.  
And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,  
So hadde I spoken with hem everichon  
That I was of hirlaweshipe anon,  
And made forward erly for to ryse,  
To take oureweyther as I yow devyse.  
But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,  
Er that I ferther in this tale pace,  
Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun  
To telle yow al the condicioun

Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,  
And whiche they weren, and of what degree,  
And eek in what array that they were inne;  
And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.

## 9.2 INTRODUCTION

Geoffery Chaucer (1340- 25 October 1400) is the “Father of English Literature.” He was an English poet, astronomer, philosopher, bureaucrat, courtier, diplomat, and author. He is also called Father of English Poetry. He was the first poet to be buried in Poet’s Corner in Westminster Abbey. Some of his famous works are *The Book of Duchess*, *The House of Fame*, *The Legend of Good Women*, and *Troilus and Criseyde*. But his Magnum Opus book is *The Canterbury Tales*.

Chaucer composed *The Canterbury Tales* between 1387 and 1400. It is a collection of 24 stories in 17000 lines. Chaucer used Middle English to compose the poem. The poem is mostly composed in iambic couplet form; two ten syllable line rhyme together. *General Prologue to Canterbury Tales* introduces the context of the tales. 30 pilgrims were going to Canterbury so that to pay visit to the shrine of St. Thomas Becket. During 14<sup>th</sup> century, story-telling was the popular form of entertainment to the public. So, thirty pilgrims make a fellowship and agreed to tell tales during the to and fro journey. The frame poem is in 855 lines.

## 9.3 CRITICAL SUMMARY OF THE PROLOGUE

### 9.3.1 Season of Pilgrimage

Chaucer gives a scenic description of the season in which he along with other pilgrims started for pilgrimage. He describes the month of April is the best month of the year for English people to visit holy places. The sweet shower of April washes away the dryness of March. The earth wears colourful flowers and greenery under the warmth of young sun. The happy birds sing all through the days and nights with amorous hearts. And in this pleasant season, English people usually feel to travel to their favourite martyr St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury. So does the author.

### 9.3.2 The Fellowship

The poet meets other pilgrims to Canterbury at Tabard Inn. Twenty - nine pilgrims have come to the Tabard Inn to eat and rest for the night. Chaucer introduces himself to all other pilgrims, speaks with them and forms a fellowship. The poet convinces all to wake up early next morning.

### 9.3.3 The Pilgrims

Chaucer wishes to inform the readers about 29 pilgrims. He says he will tell their appearance, their professions and backgrounds, their ranks, their dresses. He begins with the description of the knight.

### 9.3.4 Social Picture of 14<sup>th</sup> Century England

The Prologue is a social picture of 14<sup>th</sup> century England. The poem parades the characters who are representative of individual traits and the English lineage. The universal human spirit to seek solace is showcased in the pilgrimage. Therefore, the pilgrims are Particular to 14<sup>th</sup> century England and also the Universal idea of pilgrimage.

**9.4 GLOSSORY**

1. Shoures – Showers
2. Soote – Sweet – Smelling
3. Perced – Pierced
4. Veyne– Vein
5. Swich – Such
6. Licour – Liquid
7. Vertu – Power
8. Flour – Flower
9. Zephirus – West Wind
10. Eek – Also
11. Holt and Heeth – Wood and Field
12. Croppes – New Leaves
13. Sonne – Sun
14. Ram – Run
15. Yronne – Aries
16. Ye – Eye
17. Thanne – Then
18. Palmeres – Professional Pilgrims
19. Straunge – Foreign
20. Strondes – Shores
21. Ferne Halwes – Distant Shrines
22. SondryLondes – Various Lands
23. Blisful – Blessed
24. Seeke – Sick
25. Aventurey – Chance
26. Wolden – Intended
27. Everichon – Everyone
28. Anon – Straightway
29. Forward – Agreement
30. Devyse – Tell
31. Space – Opportunity
32. Ferther – Proceed
33. Condioun – Circumstances
34. Array – Clothing
35. Inne – In

**9.5 QUESTIONS**

1. Describe the ambience of England as depicted in the General Prologue to Canterbury Tales.
2. General Prologue is a canvas of 14<sup>th</sup> century England. Defend the statement with critical arguments.
3. Attempt a critical essay on the General Prologue of The Canterbury Tales.

## 9.6 REFERENCES

Chaucer, Geoffrey. *The General Prologue To The Canterbury Tales (Worldview Critical Editions)*. Editor, Harriet Raghunathan. Worldview Publications, 2014.

Cookson, Linda, and Bryan Loughrey, Editors. “*Canterbury Tales General Prologue,*” *Geoffrey Chaucer (Critical Essays S.)*. Longman, 1989.

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## Unit-III Poetry

### Lesson 10

#### One Day I Wrote Her Name

##### Structure of the Lesson

##### 10.0 Objectives of the Lesson

##### 10.1 Text – One Day I Wrote Her Name

##### 10.2 Elizabethan Poetry

##### 10.3 Introduction about the Poet and Poem

##### 10.4 Critical Summary of the Poem

##### 10.5 Glossary

##### 10.6 Comprehension Passages

##### 10.7 Questions

##### 10.8 References

##### 10.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON

The objective of the lesson is to help the learner to understand the concepts and after the study of the lesson the student will have an idea about

- Spenser, the poet
- the poet's attempt to immortalize his beloved's name in the world
- Spensorian Sonnet
- Shakespearean Sonnet and Spensorian Stanza

##### 10.1 TEXT – ONE DAY I WROTE HER NAME

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,

But came the waves and washed it away:

Again I wrote it with a second hand,

But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.

"Vain man," said she, "that dost in vain assay,

A mortal thing so to immortalize;

For I myself shall like to this decay,

And eke my name be wiped out likewise."

"Not so," (quod I) "let baser things devise

To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:

My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,

And in the heavens write your glorious name:

Where when as death shall all the world subdue,

Our love shall live, and later life renew."

## 10.2 Elizabethan Poetry

Elizabethan Age (1558-1603) was the Age of peace. Hence men of the age dedicated themselves to learning and innovation. The feelings of patriotism and nationalism stimulated the progress of the nation. Queen Elizabeth was herself the poster girl of advanced England. Elizabethan Age was the golden age of English literature. As a literary period Elizabethan Age has two halves. From 1558 to 1579 the age is called Age of Spenser. The Second half from 1579 to 1603 is called Age of Shakespeare. Both the ages received their fodder from Renaissance Movement. English Renaissance was the discovery of classical knowledge from vast study and travel. Elizabethan poetry was evolved by experimentation with the classical rules. Hence English literature acquired unique features with the innovation of the writers of Elizabethan Age.

Poetry is the second dominant literary form of Elizabethan Age after Drama. Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard or Earl of Surrey are the poets who paved way for English Sonnet. Thomas Wyatt introduced Sonnet into English. He adopted the form from Italy. Sonnet is poem of fourteen line of Italian origin. The term 'Sonnet' is derived from Italian word 'Sonetto.' First to use this form in Italy was Dante. Italian Sonnet was perfected and popularized by Petrarch. Petrarchan Sonnet is divided into two parts. First eight lines are called 'Octave'. Next six lines are called Sestet. Octave has two rhymes a&b. The rhyme scheme of Octave is **abba, abba**. Sestet has three rhymes c,d,&e. The rhyme scheme of Sestet is **cde, cde** or **cdc, cdc**. In a Petrarchan Sonnet, Octave is separated from Sestet with a Pause or Casura which is thepunctuation.

Wyatt and Surrey modified Petrarchan Sonnet to suit to English poetic needs. They divided the poem into three quatrains and a Couplet. The alternate lines in the three quatrains rhyme together. The couple stands alone with its own rhyme. The rhyme scheme of this sonnet is **abab, cdcd, efef, gg**. This form of Wyatt and Surrey's Sonnet is called the English Sonnet.

Spenser has further modified English Sonnet. His sonnetinter-mixes rhyme schemes. The rhyme scheme links the three quatrains. The couplet stands aloof. So, the rhyme scheme of a Spenserian Sonnet is **abab, bcbc, cdcd, ee**. William Shakespeare improvised on Spenserian Sonnet. He removed the interlinking rhyme scheme feature of Spenserian sonnet and added the feature of independent rhyme schemes for the quatrains. So, the rhyme scheme

of Shakespearean stanza is **abab, cdcd, efef, gg**. The present poem is written in Spenserian Sonnet form.

### 10.3 INTRODUCTION ABOUT THE POET AND POEM

Edmund Spenser was born in London in 1552. He was educated at the Merchant Taylor's School and at Cambridge. There he read the classics and Italian literature. He came under the influence of the Protestant spirit. He became an intimate friend to Sir Philip Sidney. In 1580 he went to Ireland as secretary to Lord Grey de Wilton. He spent the rest of his life in Ireland. He was disappointed in his efforts to secure a place in the court and returned to England. In October 1598, rebellion broke out in Tyrone, where he was living then. His castle was plundered and set afire. He and his wife escaped with their lives. His health failed. He reached England at the end of 1598. On 16<sup>th</sup> January, 1599 he died in an inn at Westminster.

Spenser's fame as a poet rests mainly on the 'FairieQueene.' 'FairieQueene' is Spenser's masterpiece. The poem combines features of both of a romance and an epic. 'The FairieQueene' consists of the traditional materials of chivalry: giants, dragons, dwarfs, wizards, knights of superhuman power and courage and women of marvellous beauty. But 'The FairieQueene' is not simply a romance. It is a didactic romance, where the poet throughout used his stories as vehicles of the lessons he wished to convey. Its hero is Prince Arthur. He has national importance and his exploits and adventures are heroic. Yet it is not the tale of a single hero but of a number of separate heroes. Each of the book has its own hero and deals with his individual adventures. There is a fusion of both Renaissance and Reformation in 'The Fairy Queen'.

Spenser's minor poetry is also voluminous and would have brought him a permanent place as a great poet in English literature. His 'Shepherd's Calendar' is a pastoral poem. It is modelled on the Greek, French and Italian poets of the Renaissance period. It is divided into twelve parts, one for each month of the year. By using the conventional pastoral imagery, Spenser writes of his unfortunate love for a certain mysterious Rosalind. He also deals with some moral questions and discusses the religious issues of the day from the stand point of strong Protestantism. His 'Amoretti' is a series of 88 sonnets. They describe his love for Elizabeth Boyle, whom he married in 1594. In these sonnets Spenser expresses his genuine feeling without using allegory. His 'Epithalamium' which is inspired by his own marriage, is the finest of all his minor poems.

Edmund Spenser peerless poetic craft refined the artistic grandeur of English poetry. 'The Prince of English Essayists,' Charles Lamb called him Poet's Poet. The stalwarts of English literature like John Milton, William Blake, William Wordsworth, Lord Byron, John Keats, Alfred Tennyson etc., admired and imitated his craft. Some of his famous works are *The Shepherdes Calender, The Faerie Queene, Amoretti and Epithalamion, Astrophel* etc.

Spenser composed *Amoretti*, a sonnet cycle, written in 1595. It was part of the volume - *Amoretti and Epithalamion. Written not long since by Edmund Spenser*. The volume has 89 sonnets and the short poems Anacreontic and Epithalamion. The cycle

celebrates Spenser's courtship and eventual marriage to Elizabeth Boyle. "One Day I Wrote her Name" is the seventy fifth sonnet in *Amoretti*.

#### 10.4 CRITICAL SUMMARY

Spenser eternalizes the name of her beloved Elizabeth Boyle through this poem. On a romantic date, Poet tries to immortalize his beloved's name by writing her name on the shore. But waves come and washes clean the name. He writes again to be wasted by the tide. His beloved reminds the mortal reality of their lives. She tries to comfort her dejected poet lover. So, she tries to stop him by expressing her wish to "decay" or die one day.

The poet refuses to accept the mortal impermanence of his beloved. He tells her that it is for baser things to die and become dust. A woman of her virtue must have eternity. So, he promises to eternalize her name in his poem. His poem will raise to the heaven, the abode of eternity and live on. Also, they can renew their love in the coming ages. This poem is the best means of the poet to make his lady love and love imperishable.

Style: The poem is a Spenserian sonnet in Spenserian stanza form. The sonnet form and stanza form are specializations of Spenser. Spenserian sonnet has three interlaced quatrains and a couplet. Its rhyme scheme is abab, bcbc, ee. A stanza with eight iambic pentameter lines plus a last line in iambic Alexandria is called Spenserian stanza.

Conclusion: The poem "One Day I Wrote Her Name" is a testament of Spenser's poetic class. The poem is a classic in the English literary annals.

#### 10.5 GLOSSARY

1. Strand – Sea Shore
2. Second Hand – Second Time
3. Prey – hunted food
4. Dost - Does
5. Vain 1 – Self-admiring
6. Assay – Attempt
7. Decay - Die
8. Vain 2 – Useless
9. Eke – Also
10. Vertues - virtue
11. Subdue – Vanish

#### 10.6 STANZASFOR COMPREHENSION

##### Stanza One:

"One day I wrote her name upon the sand

but came the waves and washed it away

Agayne, I wrote it with a second hand  
but came the tide, and made my paynes his prey”.

Questions:

- a) Who does ‘I’ refer to?
- b) Who does ‘her’ refer to?
- c) Where did he write her name?
- d) What did the waves do?
- e) What is meant by ‘second hand’?

**Stanza Two:**

“Wayne man, said she, that dost in vain assay  
A mortall thing so to immortalize,  
For I my selve shall lyke to this decay  
And eke my name be wiped out lykewise”

Question:

- a) Who does ‘she’ refer to?
- b) How was his attempt described?
- c) What was he doing?
- d) What will become to her?
- e) What will happen to her name?

**Stanza Three:**

“My verse your vertues rare shall eternize,  
And in the heavens wryte your glorious name.  
Where, whenas death shall all the world subdew,  
Our love shall live, and later life renew.”

Question:

- a) Who does ‘your’ refer to?
- b) What will eternize her virtues?
- c) Where will be her name written?
- d) What will subdue all the world?
- e) What will be renewed in the later life?

**10.7 QUESTIONS**

1. Critically defend Spenser's title as Poet's Poet by referring the poem in your syllabus.
2. Does the poet succeed in eternalizing the virtues of his beloved in the poem "One Day I wrote Her Name?"

**10.8 REFERENCES**

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Spenser, Edmund. *Amoretti*. Crescent Moon Publishing, 2008.

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## **UNIT – IV Drama**

### **Lesson 11**

#### **Doctor Faustus**

##### **Structure of the Lesson:**

##### **11.0 Objectives of the Lesson**

##### **11.1 Introduction**

###### **11.1.1 Christopher Marlowe**

###### **11.1.2 Doctor Faustus**

##### **11.2 Summary of Doctor Faustus**

###### **11.2.1 The Prologue**

###### **11.2.2 Summary of the play**

###### **11.2.3 The Epilogue**

##### **11.3 Structure and Style of the Play**

##### **11.4 The Autobiographical Note in the play**

##### **11.5 The Renaissance Note or The Blend of Renaissance and Reformation**

##### **11.6 Character of Doctor Faustus as a Tragic Hero**

##### **11.7 Allegory and Symbolism in the Play**

###### **11.7.1 Definition of Allegory and Symbolism**

###### **11.7.2 Doctor Faustus is an Allegory**

###### **11.7.3 The Symbols in the Play**

##### **11.8 The Role of Chorus in the play**

##### **11.9 Questions**

##### **11.10 References**

##### **11.0 OBJECTIVES OF THE LESSON**

The objective of this lesson is to help the learner to understand

- Elizabethan age Renaissance spirit
- Evolution of Elizabethan Tragic drama
- Christopher Marlowe's contribution to English drama

- Dramatic Art
- Thematic concerns of the play Doctor Faustus

## 11.1 INTRODUCTION

### 11.1.1. Christopher Marlowe

Christopher Marlowe also known as Kit Marlowe was born on 26<sup>th</sup> February 1564 and died on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1593. He was a poet, playwright and translator of Elizabethan era. He was the first to achieve critical appreciation as blank verse dramatist in the Elizabethan Age. His famous plays are Dido, Queen of Carthage, Tamburlaine I&II, The Jew of Malta, Doctor Faustus, Edward II, and Massacre at Paris. His literary works depict anti-intellectualism. In his works are humanistic with realistic emotions. His works have a rare combination of humanistic and realistic emotions.

### 11.1.2. Doctor Faustus

The full title of the play is *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus*. It is popularly believed that Marlowe took his inspiration to write the play from the book, *The English Faust Book*, an English translation of German book titled *Historia Von D.JohannFausten*. The play might have been written between 1589 and 1592. The Admiral's Men enacted the play twenty-four times between 1594 and 1597.

## 11.2 SUMMARY OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS

### 11.2.1. The Prologue

The chorus speaks in the prologue about the early life of Faustus. The protagonist was born in Rhodes in Germany to humble parents. He attended Wertenberg and studied Theology. His stupendous knowledge as a student and a scholar soon brought him Doctorate. Soon he grew self-centered and inordinately ambitious. He tried to quench his boundless greed for knowledge by studying magic. The Prologue ends forecasting the downfall of Doctor Faustus.

### 11.2.2. Summary of the Play

Doctor Faustus is discontent with the knowledges he conquered. Philosophy, Logic, Theology, Law, and Medicine have not satisfied him. He now wants "power, honour, and Omnipotence" (Act I Scene I). Magic, he found to be the right knowledge to fulfil his wish. Because, "A sound magician is a mighty God." (Act I Scene I). Immediately, he sends his servant Wagner to bring his friends Valdes and Cornelius. They are experts in magic. Good and Evil angle appear before him. Good Angel warns him to put away damned books and save himself from God's wrath. Evil angel tempts him to learn black magic to acquire power and become God. Eventually, Faustus turns into a conjurer and summons the best devil, Mephistopheles. After long discussion with Mephistopheles, Faustus agrees to sing his immortal soul to Lucifer in return for twenty-four years of power, with Mephistopheles as his servant. Faustus puts off his second thoughts and sings the deal with blood. Mephistopheles entertains him with a dance of devils and gives him a book filled with knowledge.

Faustus soon repents and curses Mephistopheles for persuading him to lose any prospects of heaven. Beelzebub and Mephistopheles intimidate Doctor Faustus and the later agrees to never think of God again or “name God or to pray to him.” He has burnt God’s scriptures, kill His ministers, and pull down His Churches. Lucifer is impressed and amuses Faustus with the seven deadly sins. Faustus is delighted. Lucifer promises him to show Hell that very night. Meanwhile, Robin, the clown steals one of Faustus’s magic books.

Faustus Rids on the Dragon chariot and explores the heavens and earths. He reaches Rome to attend the St.Peter’s feast along with the Pope. He conjures to insult a Cardinal and troubles the Pope and other guests with mischief. The Pope’s prayers are also beaten by Faustus and Mephistopheles. Faustus returns home where his ill-gotten knowledge and abilities gain him renown. Meanwhile, Robin the Clown has learned some magic of his own. At the court of Charles V, Faustus delights the emperor with illusions and humiliates a knight, whose attempts to get even result in more humiliation for him.

Faustus fame reaches to all corners. The emperor invites him to Innsbruck. Faustus impresses the Majesty by fulfilling his wishes. Alexander the Great and Queen are brought to the royal court as requested by the emperor. One of the knights in the court humiliate the power of Faustus. The knight is punished by the doctor and gets horns. However, on the request of the emperor the horns removed.

His time is coming to end. Tired from the world tour Faustus expresses his desire to walk to the pleasant green. While Faustus is rejoicing a dull-witted horse dealer, Wagner comes there and informs him that Duke of Vanholt. In the Duke’s court, Faustus pleases the Duke, the Duchess and the courtiers with his magical feats. The Duchess asks for grapes. Faustus arranges them with the help of Mephistopheles.

Finally, the time has come to surrender his soul to Devil and eternal torment. A soliloquy anticipates his death. He writes his will and transfers his properties to his servant Wagner. He spends his last hours with his friends and scholars. Feasting and drinking, the guests ask him to show Helen of Troy. Faustus asks Mephistopheles to bring a spirit in the form of Helen along with the real Helen for him to have comfort in the last hour. Even so, there is no repentance evident as Faustus feasts and drinks the time away with other scholars. He summons a spirit to take the appearance of Helen of Troy and asks Mephistopheles to bring Helen to him so she can give him comfort and love during his remaining time.

Good Angel tries to save the sorrowful Faustus. The good angle appears as an old man who asks Faustus to return to the faith in the Christ, The Saviour. Mephistopheles interrupts and threatens that he will tear the doctor’s body into pieces. Being threatened, Faustus renews his contract in blood and asks to torture old man. Lucifer says that old man cannot be touched as his faith is soulful. Faustus is enraptured by Helen’s beauty as plotted by Mephistopheles. The old man attempts to interfere but the devils arrive to torture. He escapes them to the shelter of the God.

The death time has come for Faustus. He reveals his friends about his demonic deal with the Devil. They advise him to pray to God. But he could not pray nor weep. His friends go to the next room to pray for him. In the last hour his soul wishes in agony to stop the natural course of time. He suffers unbearable spiritual agony in the last half an hour. As clock ticks twelve the

Devils come in thunder and lightning. Wretched Faustus has no escape. The Devils strangle him with adders and serpents and tear his body into pieces. The tragic career of the Doctor Faustus ends as his soul is carried away to Hell.

### 11.2.3. The Epilogue

In the epilogue, the Chorus reveals that Faustus is gone, and all his great potential has been wasted. We are warned to remember his fall.

## 11.3 STRUCTURE AND STYLE OF THE PLAY

The structure of the play Doctor Faustus has come under great criticism. Critics call it a loose and episodic plot with no logical connection between one event and the other. The fourteen scenes in the novel can be changed in order without damaging the story line. The structure of the play is like the below-

- a) **The Prologue:** The chorus sings to the audience the early life and abnormal ambition of Doctor Faustus.
- b) **Three plots:** The play has one main plot and two sub plots. They are
  1. The Tragic Main Plot: The ambition and ideals of Faustus is the tragic main plot.
  2. Comic Sub-Plot: The anti-climax which shows the ideals of the Faustus in comic manner is the comic sub-plot.
  3. The Philosophical Sub-Plot: Besides the main plot and comic sub-plot there is a philosophical sub-plot. The conflict between good and evil in the play and the soul of Faustus constitutes the third part of the plot.
- c) **The Epilogue:** The death of Faustus is conveyed as well as cautioning the audience to not to repeat the mistake of the protagonist in their lives.
- d) **Poetic Elements in the Play:** Marlowe poetized the British drama. The play reads like poem. Imagination and passion are central machinery of the play. The dramatist's effortless skill in blank verse adds to the poetic charm of the play.

O, I'll leap up to my God. Who pulls me down?

See-see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament,

One drop would save my soul, half a drop, ah, my Christ!

Ah, rend not my heart for naming of my Christ. (Act V Scene III)

## 11.4 THE AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTE IN THE PLAY

The outline of the character Doctor Faustus is derived from an external source but the spirit and ambition of the character is a reflection of its creator, Christopher Marlowe. We can find the autobiographical elements in the following sub-headings:

- a) **The Subjective Characterization:** Drama is the most objective literary genre. But Marlowe who is more a poet than a dramatist turns it into a subjective play. The play is composed of Marlowe's mind and heart.
- b) **The Humble beginnings:** Doctor Faustus like Marlowe hails from a humble background and achieves world acclaim.
- c) **Unwarranted Ambition:** The thirst for knowledge in Faustus again points to Marlowe's boundless intellectual and literary energies which many times defied the traditional norms.
- d) **Knowledge, Power, and Sensuality:** These qualities define Faustus and also Marlowe.
- e) **Atheism:** The skepticism about God is evident in the play. Faustus questions and mocks the divine many times during the course of the play. He gains this atheism from his master Marlowe.
- f) **Spiritual Anguish:** Along with atheism Faustus suffers spiritual agony. Once again this feature comes from Marlowe's knowledge that evil worship does not have impunity. One day heresy shall be punished by God.

## 11.5 THE RENAISSANCE NOTE OR THE BLEND OF RENAISSANCE AND REFORMATION

Marlowe's Doctor Faustus illustrates the happy union of Renaissance and Reformation influence on the play and the playwright.

### 11.5.1. The Renaissance Features

The following qualities indicate the Renaissance note of the play.

1. **Love of Knowledge:** Renaissance is shaped by re-awakening of learning and knowledge. The temper for new knowledge gaining is irresistible. Doctor Faustus embodies this temper of Renaissance. He is unhappy with the knowledge he gained in four popular areas of knowledge Theology, Philosophy, Logic, Law and Medicine. So, desires to learn magic. This is the predominant Renaissance feature of the play.
2. **Love of Power:** Wielding unchallenged power is the ultimate object of Faustus's life. He foolishly bartered his soul to eternal damnation for the momentary power.
3. **Insatiable Curiosity:** Faustus's curiosity is ever growing until the end. He asks Mephistopheles about the remotest secrets of skies, heaven, and Hell. Mephistopheles tempts Faustus to sign the deal with the Devil by playing with the curiosity of Faustus.

4. **Sensuous Faustus:** Faustus is not a saintly scholar but a sensuous Renaissance person. He desires exotic travel, luxuries and earthly pleasures. He wanted to enjoy Helen in the last hour of deepest spiritual agony.

#### 11.5.2. Reformation Note

The play balances human spirituality on par with the Renaissance adventures. This can be observed-

1. **The Good and Evil Angels:** The timely interruption of Good Angel against the temptation of the Evil Angels shows the spiritual burn in Doctor Faustus.
2. **The Old Man:** In the last death scene in Act five, the good angel appears in the guise of an Old Man and assures Faustus and the audience that God can save even the damned soul if that soul repents and asks for his mercy.

### 11.6 CHARACTER OF DOCTOR FAUSTUS AS A TRAGIC HERO

Doctor Faustus is a memorable character in the entire English literature. The whole play revolves around his personality. His distinguishing characteristics and flaws can be seen in the following sub-headings.

1. **Towering Personality:** All plays of Marlowe have one central dominating character. And in this play, Doctor Faustus is the eponym character.
2. **A Genius:** Faustus is a genius without doubt. He excelled in all fields of knowledge at a young age. He is an inspiration to his students and scholars. Even Lucifer and Mephistopheles are impressed with his command on magic.
3. **His Tragic flaw:** Faustus' unquenchable yearning for power and knowledge is his flaw. His arrogant scholarship blinds him from the path of good and God and delivers him into the hands of the Devil himself.
4. **Spiritual Conflict:** The spiritual side of Doctor Faustus pricks him now at every step of his radical life. The spiritual faith is evident in the appearances of Good Angel and Old man. However, his megalomaniac greed overpowers them. Every conflict between his desire for supreme knowledge and power and his conscience, his desire came out triumphant and led to his eternal doom.
5. **Great Tragic Hero:** Doctor Faustus is a great tragic hero. He is a genius scholar and brave. In spite of his love of black magic, his capacity for spirituality is unquestionable. All these qualities make him great. It is unfortunate that he could not repent his unbounded ambition in time so that he can be saved by God.

### 11.7 ALLEGORY AND SYMBOLISM IN THE PLAY

**11.7.1. Definitions of Allegory and Symbolism:** An allegory is a fictional narrative that has double meaning. Along with explicit meaning a moral implicit is conveyed through an allegory. On the other hand, Symbolism is a literary device which refers to abstract and universal meanings through particular and finite persons, places, emotions, objects etc.

**11.7.2. Doctor Faustus is an Allegory:** Apparently, the play appears is about the tragic fall of a medieval magician. But the story underlines the universal moral that man shall fall and be punished if he or she does not align by law or divine law.

**11.7.3. The Symbols in the Play: The popular symbols of the play are-**

1. The Good Angel and Evil Angel – Symbols of spiritual conflict in Doctor Faustus and eternal tussle between God and Devil.
2. Old Man - Undeniable faith in God and morality
3. Helen - The symbol of pagan charm.
4. Mephistopheles - Symbol of power without Conscience and dramatic irony.
5. Seven Deadly Sins - Symbolizes the spiritual death of Faustus.

### 11.7 THE ROLE OF CHORUS IN THE PLAY

Chorus is a dramatic device of Greek origin. The classic role of chorus in a tragedy is to sing. It either participates in the action of the play or just summarizes or comments on the action or the character of the play. A chorus has maximum 24 singers. Following the classic tradition of a tragedy, Marlowe exploited the best out of this dramatic device, chorus.

1. **The Prologue and Chorus:** The prologue of the play is sung by Chorus. Therefore, chorus opens the play and provides the details of Faustus' parents, childhood, education and his tragic flaw, the inordinate ambition.
2. **The Second Appearance of Chorus:** Between Act II and III, the chorus makes second appearance.  

He views the clouds, the planets, and the stars,  
 The Tropic, zones, and quarters of the sky,  
 From the heights of the horned moon  
 Even to the heights of Primum Mobile;
3. **The Third Appearance of Chorus:** Between Act III and IV once again chorus comes to inform the world fame achieved by Faustus.
4. **The Epilogue and the Chorus:** Finally, the chorus arrives to declare the condemnation and death of Faustus. They conclude the play cautioning the audience to beware of inordinate ambition.

**Conclusion:** Christopher Marlowe's fame continues to shine to the present day due to his brilliant imagination and dramatic bent in his master piece Doctor Faustus.

### 11.9 QUESTIONS

1. Describe Doctor Faustus as a tragic hero

2. What is the plot of Marlowe's play Doctor Faustus?
3. Critically comment on the Structure and diction of the play Doctor Faustus.
4. Doctor Faustus is literary embodiment of Christopher Marlowe. Critically defend the statement.
5. What is the influence of Renaissance on Doctor Faustus?

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## **UNIT - V Literary Criticism**

### **Lesson 12**

#### **An Apology for Poetry**

**Structure of the lesson:**

**12.0 Objectives of the Lesson**

**12.1 Introduction**

**12.2 Importance of literature**

**12.2.1 Praise of One's Profession Justified**

**12.2.2 Antiquity and Universality of Poetry**

**12.2.3 Poets are the Honoured, the Prophets and the Makers**

**12.3 Definition and Classification of Poetry**

**12.3.1 The Definition of Poetry**

**12.3.2 Three Broad Divisions of Poetry**

**12.3.3 Rhyming and Versing – Not Essential for Poetry**

**12.4 Superiority of Poetry over other Branches of Learning**

**12.4.1 Poetry and Philosophy**

**12.4.2 Poetry and History**

**12.5 Kinds of Poetry**

**12.6 Sidney's Defense to specific charges against Poetry**

**12.7 Sidney's Review on the contemporary poetry and Drama**

**12.7.1 The Decay of Poetry in Contemporary England**

**12.7.2 Advocates Three Unities**

**12.7.3 Condemnation of Tragi-Comedy**

**12.7.4 Delight – Laughter**

**12.7.5 Poetic Diction**

**12.7.6 Versification**

**12.8 Conclusion**

**12.9 Questions**

**12.10 References**

## 12.0 OBJECTIVE OF THE LESSON

The objective of the lesson is to help the learner to understand

- Elizabethan literary trends
- Puritan attack on literature
- Definition of poetry
- Significance of literature
- Classifications in English poetry and drama
- Necessity of versification in poetry

## 12.1. INTRODUCTION

Sir Philip Sidney (30 November 1554 – 17 October 1586) was an English poet, courtier, scholar and soldier. He was a distinguished poet and critic of the Elizabethan age. Some of his prominent works are *Astrophel and Stella*, *The Defence of Poesy* or *The Defence of Poetry* or *An Apology for Poetry* and *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. Sir Philip Sidney was provoked to write *An Apology for Poetry*. He retorted Stephen Gosson's pamphlet "The School of Abuse" (1579). Gosson dedicated the pamphlet to Sidney naming "To the right noble." The pamphlet is heedless attack on poetry. Sidney brought out *The Defence of Poetry* in 1585 (?) to save poetry from the insensitive criticism. It was later published in 1595.

## 12.2 IMPORTANCE OF LITERATURE

### 12.2.1 Praise of One's Profession Justified

Sidney and Gosson were together at the court of the Emperor in Vienna. They were co-students of horsemanship in the royal stable. Sidney opens his essay by emulating his horsemanship master John Pietro's conviction to praise one's own vocation.

### 12.2.2 Antiquity and Universality of Poetry

Sidney replies to the puritan attack on poetry by reminding the antiquity and universality of poetry. Poetry is the oldest and earliest form of composition in all nations and languages. It is the first nurse to give milk to her children to enable them to feed or learn the afterwards tougher knowledge and thought. The famous poets in Greece are Musacus, Homer, and Hesoid; in Roman are Lirius Andronicus, and Ennius; in Italian language are Dante, Boccaccio, and Petrarch; and in English are Gower and Chaucer.

Examples: Amphion moved stones with his poetry to build Thebes. Orpheus was listened to even by beasts and stony-hearted people.

- a. Poetry is the earliest of all branches of learning. The early philosophers or historians appeared under the mask of poetry. Examples—Thales wrote his natural philosophy in verse, Pythagoras gave their moral counsels in verse and Solon was a poet seen in the fact that he wrote his story of the Atlantic Island in verse. Plato wrote his *Republic* in poetic form.
- b. Poetry is the earliest form of writing. Even the early writers of history used the fashion and manner of poets. Herodotus, the great historian entitled his history after the name of the Nine Muses. He emphasized passions to describe history.

### 12.2.3 Poets are the Honoured, the Prophets and the Makers

Sidney reminds that poetry is loved and poets are honoured in the most barbarous and uncivilized countries like Turkey and Ireland and races like the Red Indians etc. He calls to the memory, the ancient Britons praised their poets as Bards. The Romans hailed their poets as ‘Vates’ – the diviner, a foreseer or a prophet. The Greeks honoured poets as ‘Poiein’ – a maker.

### 12.3 DEFINITION AND CLASSIFICATION OF POETRY

#### 12.3.1. The Definition of Poetry

Sidney defines poetry that “poesy therefore is an art of imitation.” Sidney upholds the classical definition of poetry as an imitation of nature. Poetic function is to teach and delight.

#### 12.3.2. Three Broad Divisions of Poetry

Sidney makes three broad divisions of poetry. They are

1. Religious Poetry: The poets imitate the matchless virtues of God.

**Examples:** David’s Psalms, Solomon’s Song of Songs and Proverbs, the hymns of Moses and Deborah etc.

2. Philosophical Poetry or Moral Poetry: This kind of poetry imparts knowledge. It might deal with matters of historical or philosophical or natural or moral or astronomical.

Examples:

Historical Poet - Lucan

Philosophical Poets- Virgil and Lucretius

Moral Poets – Tyrtaeus, Phocylides and Cato

Astronomical Poets – Manilus and Pontanes

3. Poetry in the real  
sense: The real poetry is an imaginative imitation of life. The difference between the other kinds of poetry and real poetry is like the difference between the meaner painter and good painter. The right kind of poetry uses full freedom of invention. The good poets move the people to transform them into good people.

#### 12.3.3. Rhyming and Versing – Not Essential to Poetry

Most of the poets have chosen to write in verse. But Sidney asserts that verse is not necessary to poetry. According him Verse is an ornament of poetry but not an essential part of it. Examples: Xenophon and Heliodorus wrote perfect poems in prose.

### 12.4 POETRY SUPERIOR TO OTHER BRANCHES OF LEARNING

Poetry enriches the knowledge and memory. It ennobles our judgment. It enlarges our conceit. It purifies our wit and raises our souls to loftier heights. Astronomy studies the stars; philosophy studies the origin of natural and supernatural things; Music delights; and Mathematics demonstrates. The lawyers endeavor to correct others. But none of them can drive us towards virtuous actions. Yet poetry delights us to affect virtue in us. Hence poetry is supreme branch of learning. The history and philosophy are the main challengers to the supremacy of poetry.

### 12.4.1. Poetry and Philosophy

The philosopher teaches by precept and the historian by example. Both are incomplete. But poetry teaches by precept and example. The poet combines general principle with particular examples. The wordish description of mind sounds abstract to the reader. On the other hand, Poetry draws a word image of mind.

No.	The Philosophy/Philosopher	The Poet/Poetry
1.	The philosopher appeal to the intellect.	The poet appeal to the heart and soul.
2.	He defines the virtue, vice, matters of public policy or private government. The public could not really understand them to practice them.	The poet illuminates the said definition which enables the public to practice the virtue. Example: The Patriotism can be better understood by Anchises and Ulysses as presented by Homer.
3.	He teaches obscurely.	He teaches delightfully.

### 12.4.2. Poetry and History

No.	History	Poetry
1.	History deals with the particular.	Poetry is superior because it deals with universal considerations.
2.	The historian presents the facts as they are.	The poet presents the facts as they ought to be.
3.	The historian rigid.	The poet is liberal
4.	The historian gives example of truth	The poet is an affective teacher of truth
5.	Historian is praised for presenting the vice being punished.	Poetry presents virtue in the best colour.

### 12.5 KINDS OF POETRY

Sidney is against intermingling two or more kinds of poetry. For example, Sannazzaro and Boethius have combined prose and verse. So Sidney demarks the kinds of poetry by classifying and defining them as follows-

1. **The Pastoral:** The pastoral shows the misery of the people oppressed by hard lords and greedy soldiers. Sometimes the tales of wolves and sheep deal with the questions of right and wrong. It also hints at how the rich can help the poor and needy.
2. **The Elegiac:** The Elegy evokes the pity of people by sympathizing the just causes of suffering. It bewails the weakness of mankind and the wretchedness of the world.

3. **The Iambic:** Iambic openly attacks the wickedness and shames the trumpet of villainy.
4. **The Satiric Poetry:** The satire ridicules the folly so that the folly can be cured.
5. **The Comic:** Sidney notes the fact that wicked playwrights have misused the comic poetry. But he explains the real motive of comedy. The comedy imitates the common errors of life in a scornful way. So, the audience and readers hesitates to commit the errors. He compares the comedy to Geometry and Arithmetic.
6. **Tragedy:** Sidney believes that tragedy opens the greatest wounds and shows forth the ulcers that are covered with tissue. It makes tyrants fear the downfall. Hence, the noble lessons of Tragedy will cure the worst tyrants too.
7. **The Lyric:** The Lyric with the support of well tune lyre and accorded voice praises virtuous acts. Sidney confesses that he loves the old songs of Percy and Douglas like the ballad, *Chevy and Chase*.
8. **The Heroic and Epic:** It portrays the life and actions of heroes like Achilles, Cyrus, Aeneas, etc. It presents virtue in her most beautiful and most noble form.

## 12.6 SIDNEY'S DEFENSE TO SPECIFIC CHARGES AGAINST POETRY

The essay progresses giving replies to specific charges against poetry. They are,

- A. **Poetry not a Waste of Time:** The first objection against poetry is, it is waste of time. The critics of poetry or puritans like Stephen Gosson, feel that the time is better spent in reading other fields of knowledge.  
Sidney replies that poetry teaches us and moves us to virtue more than any other art or science can. This Renaissance poet asserts that poetry is the most fruitful branch of knowledge.
- B. **Poetry Never Lies:** The critics of poetry call poetry as mother of lies. Sidney counters that the poet is the least liar. A poet shall not lie even if he or she wants to lie. The astronomers, geometricians, physicians, medicine, historian and lawyers might be false when they affirm. But a poet never affirms. The poet writes things allegorically and figuratively and not affirmatively.  
**Example:** A child would not believe Aesop's *Fables* to be true.
- C. **Poetry – Not the Nurse of Abuse:** The third puritanic allegation against poetry is that poetry corrupts men. It makes them lustful. Sidney agrees to the fact that love and passions are aggregated by poetry. Later, he states that if it is fault to love beauty then the fault is with practitioners not with the poets.
- D. **Does not Make Men Effeminate:** Sidney argues that poetry does not make men Effeminate and passive. He supplements his argument by referring to Alexander's love of Homer's Works. Aristotle was the master of Alexander the great. But he left his master at Greece and always carried with him Homer's epics. Alexander was greatly inspired by Achilles in Homer's *Iliad*.
- E. **Plato disallowed the Abuse of Poetry:** The final accusation is that Plato had banned poetry from his common wealth. Sidney clarifies the confusion in such allegation. Plato banned the abuse of poetry not altogether poetry itself.

## 12.7 SIDNEY'S REVIEW ON THE CONTEMPORARY POETRY AND DRAMA

### 12.7.1. The Decay of Poetry in Contemporary England

Sidney strongly express his dissatisfaction towards the contemporary English poetry. Poesy is loved in all the ages. It flourished even during war times of England. Sidney finds the lack of inspiration in the writers is generating substandard poetry. The present poets neither have poetic skill nor hard work. According to Sidney two qualities are essential for poetry. They are poetic matter and poetic word. He feels the contemporary poets lack both the qualities.

### 12.7.2. Advocates Three Unities

Sidney dislikes the violation of three unities in Gorboduc and other English plays. The unity of place and Time are grossly violated. Sidney advocates that dramatist should adhere to the law of poesy not to History.

### 12.7.3. Condemnation of Tragi-Comedy

Sidney is definitely not a fan of Tragi-comedies. He disapproves all the plays that are neither proper tragedies nor proper comedies. As ancients have not mixed the kings with clowns, the moderns should not do it too, in Sidney's view.

### 12.7.4. Delight – Laughter

Delight is differentiated from laughter in the essay. Delight is a laughter which is in harmony with human nature. Whereas,laughter is in disharmony with human nature.

### 12.7.5. Poetic Diction

Sidney condemns the far reached employment of diction. He advises the poets to avoid superfluity and maintain organic unity between matter and diction, the counter parts of the poetry.

### 12.7.6. Versification

Verse is of two types. Firstly, the ancient type which marks the quantity of each syllable. Secondly, the modern type which observes only number. Sidney regards the ancient type the best model for his contemporaries to imitate.

## 12.8 CONCLUSION

The literary criticism of Philip Sidney in An Apology for Poetry is combination of classical and Renaissance spirit of literature. By upholding Aristotle's definition of poetry and advocating classical standards of drama he becomes a classical critic. On the other hand, by advocating liberation of English poetry from versification, he proves his Renaissance spirit. The contribution of Sidney to English literary criticism is invaluable.

## 12.9 QUESTIONS

1. What are the chief tenants of Sidney's theory of poetry and drama

2. An Apology for poetry is an admixture of classical and Renaissance spirit of criticism. Defend the statement
3. Critically discuss the superiority of poetry over History and Philosophy.
4. Explain Sidney's views on Poetry.
5. What are the reasons for Sidney to complaint against his contemporary poets and dramatists?

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