English
G.C.E. A/L

Grade 12

Teacher's Instructional Manual

Department of English
Faculty of Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences
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Syllabus Review Committee

Advisors-	-	Prof. Lal Perera Director General National Institute of Education Maharagama.
	-	Wimal Siyambalagoda Assistant Director General Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences National Institute of Education Maharagama
	-	Chandra Amarasekara
Direction	-	Sunil Atugoda Director, Department of English
Coordination	-	Champa Perera Chief Project Officer, Department of English
Writers	-	Chandra Amarasekara Kamala Wijeratna Chandrani Ramanayake Dinali Fernando Tharanga Weerasooriya Hiranya Fernando Sajeevani Bandara Vinodh Senadeera Vaidehi Perera
Editorial Board	-	Dinali Fernando Tharanga Weerasooriya Vinodh Senadeera
Type Setting of final Draft		Tilaka Ruhunuarachchi Dakshini Perera
Project Assistance		Vajira Perera
Office Assistance		V.V. Buddadasa

Foreword

Curriculum developers of the NIE were able to introduce Competency Based Learning and Teaching curricula for grades 6 and 10 in 2007 and were also able to extend it to grades 7, 8 and 11 progressively every year and to G.C.E. (A/L) classes in 2009. In the same manner as for Grades 6 – 11, syllabi and Teacher's Instructional Manuals for Grades 12 and 13 for different subjects with competencies and competency levels that should be developed in students are presented descriptively. Information given on each subject will immensely help the teachers to prepare for the Learning – Teaching situations.

I would like to mention that curriculum developers have followed a different approach when preparing Teacher's Instructional Manuals for Advanced Level subjects when compared to the approaches they followed in preparing Junior Secondary and Senior Secondary curricula. (Grades 6 - 11)

In Grades 6,7,8, 9, 10 and 11, teachers were oriented to a given format as to how they should handle the subject matter in the Learning – Teaching process, but in designing A/L syllabi and Teacher's Instructional Manuals, freedom is given to the teachers to work as they wish.

At this level we expect teachers to use a suitable learning method from the suggested learning methods given in the Teacher's Instructional Manuals to develop competencies and competency levels relevant to each lesson or lesson unit.

Whatever the learning approach the teacher uses, it should be done effectively and satisfactorily to realize the expected competencies and competency levels.

I would like to note that the decision to give this freedom is taken, considering the importance of GCE (A/L) examinations and due to the sensitivity of other stakeholders who are in the education system to the Advanced Level examination. I hope that this Teacher's Instructional Manual would be of great help to teachers.

I hope the information, methods and instructions given in this Teacher's Instructional Manual will provide proper guidance to teachers to awaken the minds of our students.

Professor Lal Perera
Director General
National Institute of Education
Maharagama

Preface

This Teacher's Instructional Manual will be useful for teachers who organize the learning teaching process for Grade 12 from 2009.

The Teacher's Instructional Manual is different to the Teacher's Guides we had earlier. Teachers who try to understand the change will notice that this is based on the competency based syllabus. Therefore, it is not expected to reach a given competency within the same grade. It might take longer period of time but the learning out-comes given under competency levels under each competency should be acquired within the same grade. Thus, learning out-comes and competency levels would be immensely useful for you to plan your lessons relevant to the grade. Moreover, we would like to draw your attention that the learning out-comes can be used as a criteria in preparing objectives for the learning–teaching process and preparing evaluation tools to assess the work done. This Teacher's Instructional Manual will be useful to teachers to make the students aware about the reference materials such as extra books and useful web addresses.

Consider that the suggested activities in this book are presented in such away expecting you to act as a creative teacher. A change towards the student-centred education from teacher- centred education is specially expected. Therefore, the teacher should always create learning situations to explore referring different books and internet. When teaching, instead of dictating notes as in the past , new knowledge and principles should be presented in a fascinating manner. For this to happen, communication methods using technology should be used creatively.

Introduce the syllabus to your students who start to learn this subject in grade 12. Students can be motivated by giving the work plan you intend to use for the whole year. This will attract the students to come to school to learn the whole syllabus.

I request you to enliven your creative abilities leading to significant change in your learning-teaching process in the class room which would be a felt experience to the whole country.

I take this opportunity to thank all the resource persons, teachers and the officials of the NIE for their contribution in preparing this Teacher's Instructional Manual. Moreover, my special thanks go to the Director General of NIE Prof Lal Perera and the Commissioner General of Education Publication and his staff for undertaking to print and distribute the materials to schools. I would be grateful if constructive suggestions are provided.

Wimal Siyambalagoda
Assistant Director General
Languages, Humanities and Social Sciences
National Institute of Education,
Maharagama

Introduction - School Based Assessment

Learning Teaching and Evaluation are the three major components of the process of Education. It is a fact that teachers should know that evaluation is used to assess the progress of the learning –teaching process. Moreover, teachers should know that these components influence mutually and develop each other. According to Formative Assessment (Continuous Assessment) fundamentals, assessment should take place during the process of teaching. Formative Assessment can be done at the beginning, in the middle, at the end and at any instance of the learning teaching process.

Teachers who expect to assess the progress of learning of the students should use an organized plan. School Based Assessment (SBA) process is not a mere examination method or a testing method. This programme is known as an intervention to develop learning of students and teaching of teachers. Furthermore, this process can be used to maximize the students' capacities by identifying their strengths and weaknesses closely.

When implementing SBA programmes, students are directed to exploratory processes through Learning Teaching activities and it is expected that teachers should be with the students facilitating, directing and observing the task they are engaged in.

At this juncture, students should be assessed continuously and the teacher should confirm whether the skills of the students get developed up to expected levels by assessing continuously. The learning-teaching process should not only provide proper experiences to the students but also check whether the students have acquired them properly. For this to happen, proper guidance should be given.

Teachers who are engaged in evaluation (assessment) would be able to supply guidance in two ways. They are commonly known as feedback and feed-forward. Teacher's role should be providing feedback to avoid learning difficulties when the students' weaknesses and inabilities are revealed and provide feed-forward when the abilities and the strengths are identified, to develop such strong skills of the students.

For the success in the teaching process, students need to identify which objectives of the course of study could be achieved and to what extent. Teachers are expected to judge the competency levels students have reached through evaluation and they should communicate information about student progress to parents and other relevant parties. The best method that can be used to assess is the SBA that provides the opportunity to assess students continuously.

Teachers who have got the above objectives in mind will use effective learning, teaching, and evaluation methods to make the teaching process and learning process effective. Following are the types of evaluation tools students and teachers can use. These types were introduced to teachers by the Department of Examination and National Institute of Education with the new reforms. Therefore, we expect that the teachers in the system would be well aware of them.

Types of assessment tools:

1. Assignments
2. Projects
3. Survey
4. Exploration
5. Observation
6. Exhibitions
7. Field trips
8. Short written reports
9. Structured essays
10. Open book test
11. Creative activities
12. Listening Tests
13. Practical work
14. Speech
15. Self-creation
16 Group work
17. Concept maps
18. Double entry journal
19. Wall papers
20. Quizzes
21. Question and answer book
22. Debates
23. Panel discussions
24. Seminars
25. Impromptus speeches
26. Role-plays

Teachers are not expected to use the above-mentioned activities for all the units and for all the subjects. Teachers should be able to pick and choose the suitable type for the relevant units and for the relevant subjects to assess the progress of the students appropriately. The types of assessment tools are mentioned in the Teacher's Instructional Manual.

If the teachers try to avoid administering the relevant assessment tools in their classes, there will be lapses in exhibiting the growth of academic capacities, affective factors and psycho-motor skills in the students

CONTENT

1. Drama

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Nature and Origins of Drama

It's the natural instinct where men and women imitate life, situations and emotions. **Drama** is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance. The term comes from a Greek word meaning "action" (Classical Greek: δράμα, *dráma*), which is derived from "to do" (Classical Greek: δράω, *dráō*).

1.1.2 Classical Theatre

The dramatic performances had their beginnings in religious ritual and remain part of a religious festival. The two principal dramatic forms, tragedy and comedy, evolved separately, with little or no interaction, comedy rather later than tragedy. The earliest complete surviving play is probably Aeschyulus' tragedy "The Suppliant Women". This shows the tragic form, where the play was for one actor and only a Chorus. Aeschylus' drama is still concerned with general moral judgments, the relations of mankind to the Gods, and the universe. He was followed by Sophocles, who followed his dramatic tradition, and the innovator, Euripedes. He generally takes as his subjects individual dramas of personal emotions rather than cosmic drama of principle. He has been called the first of the realists. His plays are always in danger of breaking out of the fairly rigid mould of Greek tragedy. Aeschylus and Sophocles had reverently modified religious legend, adapting it to their own ideals, interpreting it so as to satisfy their own moral standard. Euripedes, takes the myth just as he finds them, and contrives his dramas so as to bring the absurdities into relief.

1.1.3 Chorus

This is a group of actors in Greek drama. They were at first the main performers, tragedy consisting initially of a serious of choric odes with interludes in which a single actor conversed with the chorus. Gradually, they came to occupy the role of commentators on the dramatic action. In Elizabethan drama, the chorus sometimes occurs in the person of an individual actor, speaking a prologue, and occasional explanatory linking passages. (In Henry V, and Pericles). In modern theatre there have been sporadic returns to the idea of a chorus (usually now a single actor) as a commentator on the action, stepping in and out of it at will.

(In various plays by or influenced by Brecht: the Caucasian Chalk Circle, A Man for all Seasons, The Entertainer, Murder in the Cathedral)

1.1.4 Miracle Plays

By the end of the 13th century there was a flourishing tradition of religious drama allied with the Church all over Europe. Although these plays contributed largely to religious church service little by little, the drama began to be moved from church to churchyard and from churchyard to market place, and there the more secular influences were able to creep in, even though the themes remained essentially religious. The most common form at first was the mystery or miracle plays- a series of dramatized scenes or subjects from the Bible.

1.1.5 Morality Plays

Towards the latter part of the 15th century, the Miracle plays began to be supplanted in popularity by a new form, the Morality plays. This was an allegorical piece in which personified virtues and vices grappled for the soul of man; where a lot of grotesquerie and broad humour was carried over from the mystery. From the Morality play evolved in Tudor times the moral interlude where abstractions were partially replaced by individual human characters, and from that developed the fully fledged comedy and drama of Elizabethans.

The morality play, a third type of religious drama, appeared early in the 15th century. Morality plays were religious allegories, the most famous being Everyman. Another type of drama popular in medieval times was the interlude, which can be generally defined as a dramatic work with characteristics of the morality play that is primarily intended for entertainmet

1.1.6 Renaissance Drama

England

The English drama of the 16th century. showed from the beginning that it would not be bound by classical rules. Elements of farce, morality, and a disregard for the unities of time, place, and action.

Shakespeare, of course, stands as the supreme dramatist of the Renaissance period, equally adept at writing tragedies, comedies, or chronicle plays. His great achievements include the

perfection of a verse form and language that capture the spirit of ordinary speech and yet stand above it to give a special dignity to his characters and situations; an unrivalled subtlety of characterization; and a marvelous ability to unify plot, character, imagery, and verse movement.

With the reign of James I the English drama began to decline until the closing of the theaters by the Puritans in 1642. This period is marked by sensationalism and rhetoric in tragedy, as in the works of John Webster and Thomas Middleton, spectacle in the form of the masque, and a gradual turn to polished wit in comedy, begun by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher and furthered by James Shirley. The best plays of the Jacobean period are the comedies of Ben Jonson, in which he satirized contemporary life by means of his own invention, the comedy of humours.

1.1.7 Drama from 1750 to 1800

The second half of the 17th cent. was distinguished by the achievements of the French neoclassicists and the Restoration playwrights in England. Jean Racine brought clarity of perception and simplicity of language to his love tragedies, which emphasize women characters and psychological motivation. Moliere produced brilliant social comedies that are neoclassical in their ridicule of any sort of excess.

In England, Restoration tragedy degenerated into bombastic heroic dramas by such authors as John Dryden and Thomas Otway. Often written in rhymed heroic couplets, these plays are replete with sensational incidents and epic personages. But Restoration comedy, particularly the brilliant comedies of manners by George Etherege and William Congreve, achieved a perfection of style and cynical upper-class wit that is still appreciated.

1.1.8 Eighteenth-Century Drama

The influence of Restoration comedy can be seen in the 18th cent. in the plays of Oliver Goldsmith and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. This century also ushered in the middle-class or domestic drama, which treated the problems of ordinary people. George Lillo's *London Merchant; or, The History of George Barnwell* (1731), is an important example of this type of play because it brought the bourgeois tragic hero to the English stage.

Such playwrights are Sir Richard Steele and political satirist, Henry Fielding.

1.1.9 Nineteenth-Century Drama

The romantic movement did not blossom in French drama until the 1820s, and then primarily in the work of Victor Hugo and Alexandre Dumas père, while in England the great Romantic poets did not produce important drama, although both Lord Byron and Percy Bysshe Shelley were practitioners of the closet drama. Burlesque and mediocre melodrama reigned supreme on the English stage.

Although melodrama was aimed solely at producing superficial excitement, its development, coupled with the emergence of realism in the 19th cent., resulted in more serious drama. Initially, the melodrama dealt with such superficially exciting materials as the gothic castle with its mysterious lord for a villain, but gradually the characters and settings moved closer to the realities of contemporary life.

The concern for generating excitement led to a more careful consideration of plot construction, reflected in the smoothly contrived climaxes of the "well-made" plays of Eugène Scribe and Victorien Sardou of France and Arthur Wing Pinero of England. Realism had perhaps its most profound expression in the works of the great 19th-century Russian dramatists: Nikolai Gogol, A. N. Ostrovsky, Ivan Turgenev, Leo Tolstoy, Anton Chekhov, and Maxim Gorky. Many of the Russian dramatists emphasized character and satire rather than plot in their works.

Related to realism is naturalism, which can be defined as a selective realism emphasizing the more sordid and pessimistic aspects of life. An early forerunner of this style in the drama is Georg Büchner's powerful tragedy *Danton's Death* (1835), and an even earlier suggestion may be seen in the pessimistic romantic tragedies of Heinrich von Kleist. Friedrich Hebbel wrote grimly naturalistic drama in the middle of the 19th cent., but the naturalistic movement is most commonly identified with the "slice-of-life" theory of Émile Zola, which had a profound effect on 20th-century playwrights.

Henrik Ibsen of Norway brought to a climax the realistic movement of the 19th cent. and also served as a bridge to 20th-century symbolism. His realistic dramas of ideas surpass other such works because they blend a complex plot, a detailed setting, and middle-class yet extraordinary characters in an organic whole. Ibsen's later plays, such as *The Master Builder* (1892), are symbolic, marking a trend away from realism that was continued by August Strindberg's dream plays, with their emphasis on the spiritual.

While these antirealistic developments took place on the Continent, two playwrights were making unique contributions to English theater. Oscar Wilde produced comedies of manners that compare favorably with the works of Congreve, and George Bernard Shaw brought the play of ideas to fruition with penetrating intelligence and singular wit.

1.1.10 Twentieth-Century Drama

During the 20th century, especially after World War I, Western drama became more internationally unified and less the product of separate national literary traditions. Throughout the century realism, naturalism, and symbolism (and various combinations of these) continued to inform important plays. The late 19th century movement in the theatre aimed at banishing artifice and making the theatre mirror life with the utmost directness and even crudity. Among the many 20th-century playwrights who have written what can be broadly termed naturalist dramas are Gerhart Hauptmann (German), John Galsworthy (English), John Millington Synge and Sean O'Casey (Irish), and Eugene O'Neill, Clifford Odets, and Lillian Hellman (American).

An important movement in early 20th-century drama was expressionism. Expressionist playwrights tried to convey the dehumanizing aspects of 20th-century technological society through such devices as minimal scenery, telegraphic dialogue, talking machines, and characters portrayed as types rather than individuals. Notable playwrights who wrote expressionist dramas include Ernst Toller and Georg Kaiser (German), Karel Capek (Czech), and Elmer Rice and Eugene O'Neill (American). The 20th cent. also saw the attempted revival of drama in verse, but although such writers as William Butler Yeats, W. H. Auden, T. S. Eliot, Christopher Fry, and Maxwell Anderson produced effective results, verse drama was no longer an important form in English. In Spanish, however, the poetic dramas of Federico García Lorca are placed among the great works of Spanish literature.

Three vital figures of 20th-century drama are the American Eugene O'Neill, the German Bertolt Brecht, and the Italian Luigi Pirandello. O'Neill's body of plays in many forms—naturalistic, expressionist, symbolic, psychological—won him the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1936 and indicated the coming-of-age of American drama. Brecht wrote dramas of ideas, usually promulgating socialist or Marxist theory. In order to make his audience more intellectually receptive to his theses, he endeavored—by using expressionist techniques—to

make them continually aware that they were watching a play, not vicariously experiencing reality. For Pirandello, too, it was paramount to fix an awareness of his plays as theater; indeed, the major philosophical concern of his dramas is the difficulty of differentiating between illusion and reality.

World War II and its attendant horrors produced a widespread sense of the utter meaninglessness of human existence. This sense is brilliantly expressed in the body of plays that have come to be known collectively as the theater of the absurd. By abandoning traditional devices of the drama, including logical plot development, meaningful dialogue, and intelligible characters, absurdist playwrights sought to convey

modern humanity's feelings of bewilderment, alienation, and despair—the sense that reality is itself unreal. In their plays human beings are often portrayed as dupes, clowns who, although not without dignity, are at the mercy of forces that are inscrutable.

Probably the most famous plays of the theater of the absurd are Eugene Ionesco's *Bald Soprano* (1950) and Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1953). The sources of the theater of the absurd are diverse; they can be found in the tenets of surrealism, Dadaism (see Dada), and existentialism; in the traditions of the music hall, vaudeville, and burlesque; and in the films of Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton. Playwrights whose works can be roughly classed as belonging to the theater of the absurd are Jean Genet (French), Max Frisch and Friedrich Dürrenmatt (Swiss), Fernando Arrabal (Spanish), and the early plays of Edward Albee (American). The pessimism and despair of the 20th cent. also found expression in the existentialist dramas of Jean-Paul Sartre, in the realistic and symbolic dramas of Arthur Miller, Tennessee Williams, and Jean Anouilh, and in the surrealist plays of Jean Cocteau.

Somewhat similar to the theater of the absurd is the so-called theater of cruelty, derived from the ideas of Antonin Artaud, who, writing in the 1930s, foresaw a drama that would assault its audience with movement and sound, producing a visceral rather than an intellectual reaction. After the violence of World War II and the subsequent threat of the atomic bomb, his approach seemed particularly appropriate to many playwrights. Elements of the theater of cruelty can be found in the brilliantly abusive language of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* (1956) and Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962), in the ritualistic aspects of some of Genet's plays, in the masked utterances and enigmatic silences of Harold Pinter's "comedies of menace," and in the orgiastic abandon of Julian Beck's *Paradise Now!*

(1968); it was fully expressed in Peter Brooks's production of Peter Weiss's *Marat/Sade* (1964).

During the last third of the 20th cent. a few continental European dramatists, such as Dario Fo in Italy and Heiner Müller in Germany, stand out in the theater world. However, for the most part, the countries of the continent saw an emphasis on creative trends in directing rather than a flowering of new plays. In the United States and England, however, many dramatists old and new continued to flourish, with numerous plays of the later decades of the 20th cent. (and the early 21st cent.) echoing the trends of the years preceding them.

Realism in a number of guises—psychological, social, and political—continued to be a force in such British works as David Storey's *Home* (1971), Sir Alan Ayckbourn's *Norman Conquests* trilogy (1974), and David Hare's *Amy's View* (1998); in such Irish dramas as Brian Friel's *Dancing at Lughnasa* (1990) and Martin McDonagh's 1990s Leenane trilogy; and in such American plays as Jason Miller's *That Championship Season* (1972), Lanford Wilson's *Talley's Folly* (1979), and John Guare's *Six Degrees of Separation* (1990). In keeping with the tenor of the times, many of these and other works of the period were marked by elements of wit, irony, and satire.

A witty surrealism also characterized some of the late 20th cent.'s theater, particularly the brilliant wordplay and startling juxtapositions of the many plays of England's Tom Stoppard. In addition, two of late-20th-century America's most important dramatists, Sam Shepard and David Mamet (as well as their followers and imitators), explored American culture with a kind of hyper-realism mingled with echoes of the theater of cruelty in the former's *Buried Child* (1978), the latter's *Glengarry Glen Ross* (1983), and other works. While each exhibited his own very distinctive voice and vision, both playwrights achieved many of their effects through stark settings, austere language in spare dialogue, meaningful silences, the projection of a powerful streak of menace, and outbursts of real or implied violence.

The late decades of the 20th century were also a time of considerable experiment and iconoclasm. Experimental dramas of the 1960s and 70s by such groups as Beck's Living Theater and Jerzy Grotowski's Polish Laboratory Theatre were followed by a mixing and merging of various kinds of media with aspects of postmodernism, improvisational techniques, performance art, and other kinds of avant-garde theater. Some of the era's more innovative efforts included productions by theater groups such as New York's La MaMa (1961–) and Mabou Mines (1970–) and Chicago's Steppenwolf Theatre Co. (1976–); the

Canadian writer-director Robert Lepage's intricate, sometimes multilingual works, e.g. *Tectonic Plates* (1988); the inventive one-man shows of such monologuists as Eric Bogosian, Spalding Gray, and John Leguizamo; the transgressive drag dramas of Charles Ludlam's Ridiculous Theater, e.g., *The Mystery of Irma Vep* (1984); and the operatic multimedia extravaganzas of Robert Wilson, e.g. *White Raven* (1999).

1.1.11 Elements of Drama

1. **Character** :(Person/persons who appear in the play, Dramatists personae, major characters/minor characters, hero/heroines/villains, protagonists/antagonists (principle rival of the protagonist), stereotype or stock character (a character who appears in various forms in many plays)
2. **Plot**: The plot is usually structured with acts and scenes. (open conflict plays – *rely on the suspense of a struggle in which the hero, through perhaps fight against all odds, is not doomed*, co-incidence, dramatic irony*)*
3. **Theme**: The plot has been called the body of a play, and the theme has been called it's soul.
4. **Dialogue**: Dialogue provides the substance of a play; each word uttered by the character furthers the business of the play, contributes to its effect as a whole.
5. **Conventions**: (techniques such as the chorus in the Greek theatre, soliloquy, asides- *remarks made to the audience, but not heard by those on stage*, flashbacks)
6. **Genre**
7. **Audience**
8. **Stagecraft**: (Theatre space, the proscenium theatre, the thrust stage- *sometimes known as* the three quarter round, is a platform surrounded on 3 sides by the audience. This form was used in ancient Greek, Elizabethan, Classical, Spanish, Restoration, Japanese and Chinese theatre.)
9. **Lighting**: To illuminate the stage, and the performers, and to create mood and control the focus of the spectators. Stage lighting may be from a direct source such as the sun or a lamp, or it may be indirect, employing reflected light, or general illumination

1.1.12 What is blank verse and how does Shakespeare use it?

Shakespeare's use of **blank verse**, or unrhymed iambic pentameter, is an important element of his plays. In rhymed verse, the words that fall at the end of lines sound very similar, like "love" and "dove," or "moon" and "June." Shakespeare sometimes uses rhyming couplets in his plays, which are two consecutive lines of rhyming verse. An example would be "Indeed this counselor / Is now most still, most secret, and most grave, / Who was in life a foolish prating knave" (*Hamlet* Act III, Scene 4).

Blank verse, on the other hand, has no rhyme, but is does have a definite rhythm created by the careful structuring of *iambic feet* - patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables. One poetic foot is a single unit that is repeated in a steady rhythm to a line of verse. The iambic foot (or iamb) consists of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, like "inSIST" or "reSIST."

The *pentameter* portion of iambic pentameter refers to the number of feet (iambs) that are repeated in each line of verse, in this case five. So, remember that a line of blank verse in iambic pentameter does not rhyme, but it will always follow this rhythm:

weak STRONG weak STRONG weak STRONG weak STRONG weak STRONG

Here's an example of blank verse from *Hamlet*. As you read it, listen for the iambic pentameter rhythm:

But, woe is me, you are so sick of late,
So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must.

Incidentally, once you get into the groove of iambic pentameter, you might find that reading Shakespeare becomes a little easier. At least now you know part of why the phrasing of his language can seem so odd. He's making a deliberate effort to work out the syllables in a very specific way.

1.2 Othello: Analysis of play

Act I, Scene I

Othello, like Hamlet, devotes the whole of the first act to exposition, that is to the necessary foundation of character and situation on which the action is built. Its three scenes take place in Venice, and introduce all the main characters, except Cassio and Emilia. Though the act is expository, it is full of excitement, with its torch-lit street scenes, the brutal awakening of Brabantio with 'dire yell', and the charge before the senate.

Alike the opening book of paradise lost, the first scene begins with the villain, and with the heavy threat to the hero's happiness that his character and philosophy imply. It is live with malice and grudge; and Iago's language is enough to persuade that we must not expect objective accounts of men and matters from him, and prejudice us in favour of the absent Othello. Roderigo is the only person in whose presence he does not wear a moral disguise (though, of course, Roderigo is far from knowing all that there is to be known) ; and Iago's remarks to him present as much of his public face as he is ever prepared to show, and , from this point of view, are almost as important as his soliloquies. The fooling of Roderigo is apprentice work for Iago; he is too easy. Besides, he gulls him for money, and this is probably the least egocentric of his motives.

The masterly plunge into the action – 'Tush! Never tell me' – is a mark of maturity. What 'this' in 1. 3 is does not become specific until 11. 116-17, while Iago gives reasons for his hate of Othello and his lieutenant. All is dramatic, and nothing narrative. The whole of Act I takes place at night. So does much of Act II, and the great Act V is a night act. Thus the time of much of the action fits the undercover activities of Iago, and suits also the violence of the play.

8 ff. Iago tells the story of his rebuff by Othello in order to convince Roderigo that he has no reasonto love the Moor. One reason for his hatred of Othello and Cassio, the hurt to his professional pride, is thus introduced quit naturally. We also see, the more certainly because Iago unconsciously betrays it, that Othello is a person of some importance in Venice.

Act I, Scene II

The first appearance of Othello is impressive. He is dignified and sure of himself. We learn that he is of royal descent,and, according to himself(and we have no reason throughout the play to doubt it), held in high esteem by the government of Venice, His speech is full and rounded, yet of a moving simplicity. His command of himself and of the situation is beautifully seen in 'Keep up your bright swords, for the dew will rust them' – a line which Bradley called 'one of shakespeare's miracles'. Anyone less like a probable victim for Iago could scarcely be imagined. This is Othello as he was before Iago played upon him.

Iago has now assumed his moral disguise of bluff, honest, uncomplicated loyalty. After his self-revelations in the first scene, this is nauseating, though his chameleon coloration gives great scope to any actor, who must show at the first two scenes of the play Iago as he is to Roderigo, and Iago as he is to Othello and the world. As Iago to Roderigo is almost the real Iago, but not quit, a nice shade of discrimination has to be made, and something held in reserve. The full depths of Iago are not plumbed in the first scene.

Act I, Scene III

This scene completes the exposition with which the first Act is taken up. It gives the romantic, and, at the same time, charmingly domestic background of Othello's marriage, and brings out his and Desdemona's characters, as they are before they are played upon by Iago; it provides the ominous shadows cast by Brabantio, which Iago is to make use of later, though without him, they would disappear; it reveals the Signiory's complete confidence in Othello; and it concludes with the first sinister sketch of Iago's plot, more deadly in its private nature than any of his public professions of hatred to Roderigo.

The preoccupation of the signiory with state affairs is such that Brabantio's personal grief, when brought to their notice is, if not pushed aside, at least given second place.

We may note the flatness of the verse dealing with state affairs. Its business-like quality is in sharp contrast with that of the Brabantio-Desdemona-Othello matters. Similarly, the Duke's consolatory lines to Brabantio have an air of superficiality, which Brabantio bitterly resents.

Act II, Scene I

This scene brings us to Cyprus, where the tragedy is to be enacted. It begins, appropriately enough, with a storm, which Shakespeare did not find in his source. Whether this is symbolic of the later course of events on the island, as those who regard all storms in Shakespeare as symbolic, or whether it has a narrower dramatic purpose is for individual choice.It certainly provides a succession of arrivals, mounting in suspense: first, Cassio, who has lost his general 'on a dangerous sea' ; then Desdemona and Iago; then, finally, the hero himself, and the splendid reunion of lovers. It is the last moment where they know 'content so absolute', and is vital for an understanding of what might have been their lot before Iago. The time of waiting for Othello is beguilded by Iago's of one of Iago's public faces. The 'touch of roughness' in his public appearances is ofcourse designed by him to show that he is too blunt to be subtle; but below this is a real 'innate brutality' ; and perhaps the 'sex-jokes are a symptom of pathological obsession'. Anyway, the interchange between him and Desdemona and other characters is intended to be a display of 'honesty' : to present the cynical but limited and honest Iago. It is very important that the social side of Iago should be seen : the audience might otherwise wonder why this coarse fellow is so universally liked.

In sharp contrast to his assumed character is the soliloquy which ends the scene. Here Iago invents or discovers a motive or two more for his villainy.

The scene gives a chance for a Cassio-Desdemona relationship to be shown, which, while it does not, *could* support Iago's plot. Cassio is inordinately courtly, but this very openness shows his feeling as innocent and idealistic.

Act II, Scene II

This short scene is merely an indication that time will pass before the next scene. The proclamation is made at five of the afternoon. The next scene opens just before 10 p.m. It is one of the most careful indications of 'short' time in the play.

Act II, Scene III

This is a scene in which Iago's plat first comes into action. It is consummately managed and brilliantly acted. It is impossible to find fault with Iago in any of his roles, from that of the boon companion singing tavern songs to the grieved friend, reluctantly reporting the events of the night to Othello, or acting as the counsellor to the disgraced Cassio, and the consoler to Roderigo. A peculiar beauty of the plot is Iago's apparent honesty of speech and action,

and the extreme economy he employs in serving several purposes. The scene ends with soliloquy expounding 'the divinity of hell' , and showing him that the plot and some of its means are now clear to him.

Act III, Scene I

Half this short scene is taken up by the poor bawdy and other puns of the clown; but it is important as beginning Cassio's importuning of Desdemona for his pardon and the second stage of Iago's plot. We gather from it that not only Desdemons and Emilia, but Othello himself, are desirous of rehabilitating Cassio at the first opportunity.

Inept as the clown is, he helps to make up a feeling of ordinariness, or the usual, in the life of Othello and Desdemona, lacking until now.

Act III, Scene II

This is probably the shortest scene in Shakespeare. It serves the purpose of indicating a passage of time, and of showing Othello in his job. It also draws Othello away, so that Cassio has a chance to intercede with Desdemona, and be found sneaking away in so guilty a fashion in the next scene. It seems from 1. 36 of the previous scene that Iago might have arranged this; but it is more probably one of those likely chances on which he relies, since there is no indication in the scene itself that he has done anything.

Act III, Scene III

This very long scene, of nearly 500 lines, is the most important in the from the point of view of plot. It is mainly a long study in temptation and damnation; but it covers perhaps the widest range of feeling in Shakespeare, from happiness, innocence, and trust to torment and revenge. It begins with Desdemona's well-meaning assurances to Cassio, and ends with Othello's determination

To furnish me with some swift means of death for the fair devil.

This shocking transformation could not be tolerated by either audience or reader without the most careful plan of progression, that is, mainly, the subtle movements of Iago from suggestion to statement.

It has been mainly pointed out by Herford that there are six sub-scenes within the scene.

(i) The first is that between Desdemona and Cassio, the openness and innocence of whom are, ironically enough, the opportunity for Iago. Desdemona's frankness and Cassio's natural diffidence are psychologically sound to the audience in the know; but they can be interpreted by

a malicious mind. Iago strikes the first blow – or, rather, begins on the marest tap – with his ‘Ha! I like not that’, though Othello scarcely notices it at the time.

(ii) The second sub-scene is Desdemona’s guileness, and, thoough frank and war-hearted, tactless pleading with Othello for Cassio. Othello dismisses her courteously but with some impatience. His mind is apparently full of military matters, as the previous scene indicates, but he forgets both these and Iago, in rapt meditation on his love (‘Excellent wretch!’).

(iii) Iago, therefore, having miscalculated on the movements of love, has to start again at 1.92, when he breaks in on Othello’s reverie with ‘My noble lord’. It begins with insinuation so smoothe that it is scarcely perceptible, and words so harmless and hesitant that Iago could withdraw at any sign of danger. By 1. 167, he has managed to introduce the infuriating word ‘cuckold’, but still only as a part of the generalization, so that its application at this point is to be made by Othello, not himself. During this episode, every circumstance capable of a malicious interpretation is used to shake Othello : the fading away of Cassio at their approach; his part in Othello’s wooing; and, after some generalizing remarks (in which Iago specializes, and to which Othello, by virtue of character, is particularly susceptible) on ‘good name’, ‘jealousy’, and the sophistication of veteran women (of whom Othello knows less than the average man of Chinese), he makes specific links with Othello’s own situation, by reference to Desdemona’s deception of her own father, and the sinister nature of her choice of a black man. The real devilry of the episode is Iago’s first-class simulation of the honest friend and the reluctant witness.

(iv) The sight of Desdemona revives, but in a modified form, his faith in her. It is at this point, through a kindly wifelt act, and the handkerchief is lost.

(v) In the fifth episode, Iago takes the handkerchief from Emilia, who, at this point, seems to be completely dominated by him. It seems that Iago had foreseen the possible use it could be put to, for he had wooed his wife ‘a hundred times’ to steal it. It is to be noted that Emilia neither knows nor cares why.

(vi) In the last and sixth episode Othello returns out of control. This means that Iago can be bold. His language is now brutal, and he brings in two pictures, one of Cassio’s dream, the other of Cassio’s ‘wiping his beard’ with the handkerchief. These seem conclusive with Othello and he ends with the command to kill Cassio and the intention to kill Desdemona.

Theatrically speaking, the seduction of Othello takes much time. Coghill compares it with the forty-eight lines it takes King John to persuade Hubert to murder Arthur (*King John*,III. iii. 19-

66), and the ninety lines in which Antonio persuades Sebastian to murder Alonzo in *The Tempest* (II. i. 195-286)

Act III, Scene IV

Desdemona, as yet unaware of the changed Othello, is still busy with her innocent plans for restoring Cassio. The handkerchief now becomes magical, sewn in 'Prophetic fury' from silk of hallowed worms, and linked with lost or preserved love. It is thus a powerful symbol for Othello and a frightening loss for Desdemona. Her brave white lie (I. 85), joined by her persistence for Cassio, makes the scene so dangerous and maddening for Othello – the one ignorant, the other corrupted - that the passage between them (II. 36-96) reaches great heights of dramatic intensity, where only the audience knows all and aches at the incomprehensions and risk. Emilia must not be blamed too hardly for denying knowledge of the handkerchief, she is not yet aware of the issues involved, and, in a sense, *expects* Othello's behavior from her worldly knowledge of men –

'They eat us hungerly, and when they are full they belch us' (103-4)

Act IV, Scene I

Othello is now Iago's creature and can be handled with increasing boldness. His sufferings can be measured in intensity by his falling in a fit, and his fury by his striking Desdemona in public. It is now safe for Iago to produce a fake confession of Cassio's. As usual his luck holds with the arrival of Bianca and the handkerchief, which provides the 'ocular proof' Othello had demande in III. Iii. 361. The opening of the scene shows Iago in a role most likely to bemuse and infuriate Othello, namely that of the man who knows the venetian sophisticated world, to which Othello believes Desdemona belongs, and accepts its sexual pranks with cynical matter-of-factness. Othello's 'unbookish jealousy' – the thought of this repulsive unknown world he has married into – infuriates him.

The most impudent performance conducted by Iago is the overseen (*not* over-heard) interview with Cassio. The most painful moment (perhaps in the whole of Shakespeare) is the striking of Desdemona. A report of a performance in Stratford says : 'Five seconds of horror-struck silence followed the blow, and then Desdemona's control cracked suddenly in outraged sobbing… ; and her agony was unbearably prolonged by allowing her to climb to the top of the staircase, before Othello, maliciously interpreting the Ambassador's words, calls her back for further humiliation.'

Lodivico, a kinsman of Brabantio and therefore of Desdemona, brings back for a moment the pre-Cyprus world, the Venetian world of Othello's honour and Desdemona's girlhood. 'This Lodivico is a proper man', says Desdemona later; not because she regrets her choice but because of the happy past and revival of courteous conduct. He gives occasion for the blow because of the mandate he brings, which, while it elevates Cassio, also allows Desdemona's innocent pleasure, which Othello misconstrues.

Act IV, Scene II

The brothel scene (as this is called), like the striking of Desdemona in the previous scene, is brutal, but more extended in brutality. The brutality is less direct in not being physical but psychological; but its pain lies in the incomprehension of Desdemona as to what it is about, her near-ignorance of the very terms in which Othello accuses her. Othello is never less sympathetic to us; yet he weeps – and the world of disorder in which he now lives is movingly portrayed (1. 42). Bewilderment is the key of this scene: two sensitive people in love, but at odds, neither giving the other the information on which information could be made. Othello is so poisoned that he can scarcely attend to what she says; she is so bewildered that she can only say something as weak as 'I hope my noble lord esteems me honest'. But she is still spirited, and rejects as much as she understands of his charge.

Emilia now begins to emerge as a sympathetic character. She lays many shrewd blows against the unknown villain, enough to provoke Iago. Some stage representations give him a moment of remorse in his gestures at 1. 148, but this is unwarranted by the text. The moment therefore is ironic; Desdemona's appeal is made to egoistic flint.

The final passage of this scene belongs only outwardly to it. Roderigo is now dangerous , and Iago lays plans to dispose of him and (or) Cassio at once. The height of action for Iago is now reached, and all depends on how it goes.

Act IV, Scene III

This is a static scene, almost a pause in the action, whose main business is to show Desdemona's innocence and sorrow. GB calls it 'A scene of ordered calm' of action of every sort, and of violence and distress of speech, we have had plenty. This prepares us, in its stillness, and in the gentle melancholy of the song, for the worse violence and horror to come, and is a setting against which no shade of Desdemona's quiet beauty can be lost'.

The song that her unhappiness recalls to her comes from her childhood; it is an old pathetic ballad of a deserted girl. It ends with a cynical jeer from the betrayer that women are as loose as men. This is outside Desdemona's experience; hence her ensuing dialogue with Emilia, who confirms in worldly experience the last stanza of the ballad. Emilia sees the marriage bond as a contract, whose breaking by the husband (which she seems to take for granted) justifies similar action by the wife. We see Emilia as a worldly person here for the last time: her purpose as foil to Desdemona is finished, and she joins her kindred spirit in the last act.

Bradley has pointed out Shakespeare's fondness for introducing a new emotion, usually of pathos, at this stage of a tragedy: it is a constant constructional device with him. *Lear* IV. vii, and *Hamlet* IV. v, are famous examples , and *Macbeth* IV. ii a miniature instance of this. Bradley thought that the pathos of a beautiful and moving kind reached its height during this scene, ans was only surpassed by the greatness of the moment when Lear wakes up to find Cordelia bending over him.

Act V, Scene I

This scene plunges straight into action: 'Wear thy good rapier bare, and put it home' is the second line. Iago's plot reaches its climax. His 'puppets are turning dangerous'. He hopes that one victim, Roderigo, will kill the other, Cassio, or, at the best, that they will kill each other; But he resolves to finish off either survivor. It does not seem to occur to him that both might live. But it is a very dark night and the plan goes wrong: Cassio is not even injured, and Roderigo only wounded. At this point he is swif in action; he improvises brilliantly, gains further credit for honesty and valour, wounds Cassio, 'kills' Roderigo, and smears Bianca, both because he is vicious, and because she may later serve his purpose.

Whether because of haste or because his nerve is shaken by the plot going awry, he makes a bad job of both his attempted assassinations. Roderigo revives for a moment (V. ii. 326-8) to throw

light on the conspiracy (though the papers in his pocket do this almost sufficiently), and Cassio is borne in to testify both his love for Othello and his innocence ('Dear General, I never gave you cause'). But all this fails to halt the smooth progress of his main plot. Othello, deceived as ever, hurries away to execute his own justice; and all that this scene may be said to do, apart from its intrinsic excitement, is to provide sad material in the last scene for the revelation of Iago's villainy and Othello's blindness.

Act V, Scene II

This great scene, intolerably moving, and exciting in so many ways, is also a marvel of stage-craft. Only a few minutes before (V. i. 33-6) Othello had hurried away with strange words ('Minion', 'strumpet') to murder Desdemona. He speaks very differently, though not les inexorably, when he next enters. The scene, as GB points out, falls into three parts: the first, that of Desdemona's murder, pathetic and terrible; the gallant disclaim of Iago's villainy by Emilia, and her death; The third, Othello's despairing agony and his determination on suicide. The handkerchief comes in again twice, once as clinching evidence for Othello of Desdemona's guilt and of her lies, which turn his heart to stone; and then immediately afterwards the simple truth about the magic handkerchief is revealed by Emilia. Desdemona, frightened but courageous, must both feel momentary relief and think she is dealing with a madman when she finds that the handkerchief is the 'matter' she asks him about (47). The reader or spectator must ask himself at this poignant moment why her simple solution – 'Send for the man and ask him' – is not followed; but we are in the tragic world where the obvious is not perceived, and a fatal course must be followed.

The death-bed dominates the scene, although in the background of the stage, until Lodovico commands it to be hidden: 'the object poisons sight'. GB comments on the more or less passive role taken by Othello after the murder: 'It eddies about him; but he has lost all purpose, and even the attack on Iago is half-hearted. . . . So the bulk of the scene is given to a survey of the spiritual devastation that has been wrought in him.' But not a pang of this is withheld; and a vindictive but truly tragic satisfaction is given by Emilia's exposure of his horrible mistake and Iago's guilt. She speaks too late; but she speaks splendidly. Structurally, the scene ends, in a sense, where it began. Othello's first 'justice' is on Desdemona; his last, on himself, so that false and true justice respectively begin and end this scene. Each justice is accompanied by a kiss of love, the first reluctant, the second penitent, as if the scene were an expanded ballad, or, at least, of poetic construction.

1.3. A Midsummer Night's Dream

1.3.1 Shakespeare: Biographical information

- Born: 1564.
- very little known of his early life
- Even his actual birthday is unknown, though it is celebrated on 23rd April.
- Many of his siblings died young in the plague
- Went to school until he was about 13, learnt English and Latin (the medium of instruction), and studied Latin texts of Seneca, Cicero, Ovid, Virgil and Horace. So had a sound background in Latin though he left school young
- There is no records of what he did until he emerged as a young actor in the late 1580s
- Married Ann Hathaway in 1582
- Became a respected actor (player) with influential sponsors – Pembroke's Men sponsored by the Earl of Pembroke, later by the Earl of Southampton, and then the Lord Chamberlain in 1594, performing before Elizabeth 1 several times.
- The Globe was bought in 1599. Also performed in the Queen's court. (Mabillard 2000)
- All his plays during this time were sponsored by the nobility
- Shakespeare also directed some of his plays, in addition to writing and acting in them

1.3.2 Genre

The play has some features of Romantic Comedy,

It is also referred to as a festive comedy, performed for a marriage of important people, usually nobility

Characteristics of a Shakespearean romantic comedy:

- Theme of love, but treated more lightly
- There is humour, irony, satire and wordplay
- Often complicated multiple plots, which can confuse the reader
- disguises, mistaken identities, separations followed by reunions
- Happy endings with all conflicts resolved

- music, songs, dances
- heroes may also be flawed, though not tragically (it doesn't necessarily cause their downfall like in the tragedies, but creates conflicts)
-

1.3.3Theatre Conventions

Little is known about how MND was first produced. It is believed that it was in a Royal Court and not in a playhouse (theatre).

Shakespearean theatre used elaborate costumes

Props were sometimes elaborate, sometimes simple.

There were no backdrops

Sounds were created offstage such as battles, thunder

All actors were men and young boys, no women took part in plays

The structure of the Globe theatre

1.3.4 Costumes

Shakespeare's costumes reflected the society he lived in. The social structure and the laws of Elizabethan England did not allow people to wear what they liked. Fabrics, colours had symbolic and social significance. "Sumptuary laws" forbade lower social groups wearing anything they liked. Colours, fabrics, styles were associated with particular classes. For example, only nobility were allowed to wear clothes of gold, deep black, crimson (a deep rich red) indigo or royal blue. Working class people had to wear light blue, brown and green etc.

As a result, theatre groups (players) therefore had to get licenses from the monarch to wear costumes of the nobility. Costumes gave extra information to the Elizabethan audiences: you could identify menials from the colours they wore as they walked on stage, likewise the nobility, before they even spoke. Also fashionable clothes were only worn by the nobility. The poor people saw them only at a distance, if at all. So going to the theatre was also like going to a fashion show to admire sumptuous costumes at close quarters (groundlings sat closest to the stage. Nobles sometimes didn't even look at what was happening on the stage – they went to "hear a play").

Very little is known of what the original MND costumes looked like in the first productions. It could be assumed that the Athenians dressed like 16th century Englishmen, and Puck's comment about the mechanicals, "what hempen homespuns have we … here?" suggests that they were dressed in homemade clothes of rough fabric.

Costumes of MND changed through times. In the late 19th century they were pre-Raphaelite, with lots of detail and colour particularly those of the fairies. Contemporary productions are very imaginative. Fairies are hardly ever depicted as beautiful creatures with wings. Oberon and Titania have been based on South American princes and princesses. Often the lovers dressed similarly, which heightened the confusion of identities. The mechanicals dressed as contemporary working class people. Now many productions have contemporary interpretations and as a result, modern costumes.

1.3.5 Background to the play

- Written in the mid 1590s, performed in the late 1590s
- first published 1600 from a manuscript written by Shakespeare.
- Performed when Shakespeare was successful, perhaps for the Queen or at an aristocratic wedding
- Shakespeare usually borrowed story lines from other sources, but this play is one of the few original plots by Shakespeare
- some characters borrowed from Classical literature
- All the actors were men and young boys during his time
- The 'menials' presenting a play – Shakespeare was parodying his own theatre efforts.

1.3.6 Themes

The theme of Love is the most significant one in the play:

- love affects almost all the important characters except the 'mechanicals'
- parental love and parental disapproval of young love
- the play also highlights the negative, harmful, irrational aspects of love –

- unrequited love, jealousy, pettiness, rage and vindictiveness brought on by love, even the brutality of love – Hippolyta and Theseus were first enemy warriors, suffering for the sake of love (Helena)
- fragility of love – Lysander's words
- passion and desire – Jan Kott thinks this is an honest representation of sex
- conflict between passion and reason (passion – how passion affects human rationality)
- The blindness of love – "the dislocation between the eye and the mind"
- The sexual connotations of Bottom with an asses head – for the Elizabethans the ass represented sexual prowess
- Two different kinds of relationships – one "constant, static, ardent, full of common sense and maturity" (Theseus and Hippolyta), the other – the young lovers, "an adolescent whirl, unstable" says Stanley Wells
- Feminist theme: love compromises individuality – the need to give up identity, selfishness, Helena challenges the image of the passive female lover – she aggressively seeks to convince Demetrius of her love for him. She is also his equal in wit and wordplay (act 2 scene 1 their exchange in the woods). This is s

The conflict between illusion and reality:

- Reality is often clouded by illusion, but a totally non-illusory reality is nonexistent (Stanley Wells). A lot of discussion among the characters about this, as well as all the "happenings" of the midsummer night.
- Puck's prank of putting the juice – the resulting confusion among the lovers is comic, but the confusion between reality and illusion is caused by the "failure of their emotions to keep up with reason" SW
- Bottom and his friends also illustrate the need to distinguish between illusion and reality – therefore the interruptions in the play to explain things to the audience
- illusion in love – bottom's song is a donkey braying, but it sounds like sweet music to Titania

Contrasts, or in Stanley Well's words, the "concord in the discord":

- the juxtaposition of contrasting elements bring about unity in disunity – the real in the unreal, the shocking in the comic:

Classical Athens vs16th century Warwickshire

Theseus and Hippolyta's dignity vs youthful silliness

Verse vs comic prose

delicate fantasy vs earthy robustness

Working men enacting a tragic Greek love story

Ethereal Titania in love with an ass braying songs.

Feminist interpretation of the play

Are the males and females equal in the play? There is evidence to say yes *and* no. For example:

Yes: Helena, unlike a silent, submissive lover, takes control of her own feelings, expresses her love to Demetrius, pursues him.

No: Hippolyta, after falling in love, is submissive and quiet, even though she led an army of female warriors, the Amazons: in the complaint of Egeus about his daughter's refusal to marry the man he chooses, she remains silent.

Also, Oberon and Puck's attitude to women, how women are treated by the mechanicals in the play, how the lovers talk about/talk to the two girls can be examined to find further proof.

The play also offers a glimpse of Elizabethan society:

- the noblemen and women and the working class people, shows the nature of a feudal society, with very little intermingling of the nobles and the menials
- their celebrations of marriage, some of their beliefs and attitudes as well as Shakespeare's portrayal of amateur actors of the time in Peter Quince etc.
- The supernatural and the superstitions in Shakespeare's times presented through the magic in the play (good and the bad) very real to Elizabethans, hooniyam, gurukam, etc. Jan Kott believes the names of the fairies make up an Elizabethan aphrodisiac potion.

1.3.7 Plot

- has parallel plots – the young star-crossed lovers, the lovers' fight between Oberon and Titania, and Bottom and his friends' preparation of the masque.
- an intricate plot that has a web of events – coincidences, accidents, mistaken identities, characters are separated and reunited (typical in Shakespeare)
- a long "story," though it takes place within a short time

- The three plot lines converge as the story progresses
- in the end all the conflicts are resolved and order restored.

1.3.8 Characters

There isn't deep character analysis, no rise and fall of a tragic hero: "the lovers are interchangeable" (Jan Kott)

There are four levels of characters – human and non-human. The human characters are based on the social order of the time.

1) Theseus, Hippolyta – King of Athens and the Queen of the Amazonsabout to marry, happy and in love after a time of turmoil. They embody all that is regal, dignified and exemplary. Significant that they were enemies fighting a war before they fell in love.
2) Lysander, Demetrius, Hermia and Helena – young, in love, realistic in their friendships and associations, passionate, impetuous, also very honest and brave, believe in the power of love, impatient and rebellious before authority (parental and royal)
3) Oberon and Titania – King and Queen of the Fairies, and their servants like Puck. – also regal, but also exotic, beautiful, and in this situation, angry and vindictive. Puck – a mischievous fairy, plays tricks on humans, sometimes humourous, sometimes evil. The other fairies – Peaseblossom, Cobweb, Mustardseed etc used to be played by young boys.
4) The ordinary (human) folk – the "rustics" or the "mechanicals":
    - working-class people, each identified by his trade: Nick Bottom, the weaver, Peter Quince, a carpenter, Francis Flute, a bellows mender, Tom Snout, a tinker, Robin Starveling, a tailor, Snug, a joiner.
    - Comic figures,
    - but realistic in their placement in the social structure.
    - They represent a theatre company of amateur actors.
    - They are seemingly low in intelligence and learning, one dimensional characters.
    - Shakespeare satirises himself as well as his audience through them: the comical improvisations, warning the ladies about the frightening parts of the play.
    - They are also full of camaraderie and fun, contrasting with the anger and the vindictiveness seen in the other noble characters

1.3.9 Significance of Language

- Written in blank verse, iambic pentameters
- poetry in the mouths of the noble characters, both fairies and human
- earthy, colloquial prose of the menials
- Poetry of Titania contrasts with the down-to-earth prose of Bottom when she falls in love with him. Here too, the theme of illusion is presented, this time through language: Titania's beautiful poetry is the words of a deluded person, while Bottom speaks the truth in his earthy prose
- Comic effect of the menials who try to mimic the poetry of the nobles in their play

1.3.10 Activities

1) Select a scene in the forest in which emotional exchanges between the lovers take place (for example, Act II Sc. 1 with Demetrius and Helena). Rewrite this dialogue in contemporary Sri Lankan English. If possible, act it out in class.

2) Discuss and design costumes for the four groups of people in the play, iif possible using local materials and local themes. Give reasons as to why you chose these materials and themes.

3) Discuss the events of the first scene from your own point of view. Which characters do you support? Which characters do you think are wrong? Give reasons for your answer.

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1.4. The Seagull – Anton Chekhov

1.4.1 About the Dramatist

- Chekhov was born in 1860 in the small provincial town of Taganrog. His father who was the son of a former serf and owned a grocery store, was harsh and physically abusive towards his family.
- When Chekhov was only 16, his parents fled from their debts to Moscow leaving Anton behind to attend to the sale of their house and finish his schooling thus he became independent very fast and wrote brief sketches on Russian life for the local papers.
- Studied medicine at the University of Moscow. He continued to practice medicine treating many poor people for free. When he bought the small estate in Melikhovo, he traveled the countryside treating the sick. Though took him away from his writing, it brought him into contact with a wide cross section of Russian society. He said, 'Medicine is my lawful wife and literature my mistress. When I get tired of one I spend the night with the other'.
- Was a prolific writer of short stories. He use the income to help support his family. He also wrote one act farces that were very popular
- His first long play was Ivanov which was an immediate success
- Wrote Seagull I 1896. It was under rehearsed and performed badly in a very melodramatic way. The audience hated it and he was booed off stage
- He was introduced to Constantin Stanislavsky by theatre director, Nemirovichdanchenko. Together they decided to produce The Seagull again as part of the opening season of the newly formed Moscow Arts Theatre
- In Stanislavskey, Chekhov was lucky to find a director who wanted to produce play in the realistic mode.
- Stanislavsky insisted on realism of stage sets. The actors were encouraged to lose themselves in the part and not vice versa. He did away with the star system. Actors were encouraged to speak in their natural voices, avoid theatrical gestures and interact with their fellow actors. This was the kind of acting that Chekhov himself envisioned for his plays
- This second production of the Seagull in 1898 was arunaway success.

- Unfortunately Chekhov contracted TB and died soon after the performance of his last play The Cherry Orchard in 1904.
- Chekhov is important in the development of theatre because he along with Ibsen and Strindberg are seen as the founders of Realistic thertre.
- Realistic theatre developed in the latter part of the 19th century as a reaction to the drama of that time-spectacle, melodrama, the well-made play, farce and vaudeville. It was an attempt to portray on stage, life as it really is. It is characterized by believable storylines involving real social or personal issues; character development and psychological analysis and realistic stage settings.

1.4.2 Genre

- Chekhov saw his work as comedy though there is much in this play that disturbs and saddens; Nina is ruined, Trepliov kills himself. But tragedy requires more than an unhappy ending and Trepliov is not a tragic hero.
- Chekhov maintains an aesthetic distance right throughout the play and does not invite us to identify with any of the characters in the play. Instead the audience feels a wise pity for these characters.

1.4.3 Themes

Art: the role of an artist in love and life

-Trepliov is tired of art as he finds it. He fids Russian theatre trite, meaningless and repetitive. Through his play he tries to do something new and different, perhaps like Chekhov himself

-For Arkadina her art is just a means of staying in the limelight, She needs the fame and praise.

-Trigorin observes people, collects details of their lives and stores them for future use in his novels.

-For Nina the stage is glamourous and an escape from an unhappy home. She also has an idealized view of her art but becomes disillusioned later by the reality

Love :

- Many complicated love relationships in this play. The unrequited love of Trepliov for Nina, and Masha for Trepliv, the clandestine love of Polena for Dorn, the star struck infatuation of Nina for Trigorin, the comfortable arrangement between Arkadina and the much younger Trigorin
- Sometimes these relationships echo each other. Masha's love for Trepliov and her ` marriage to Medvedenko, mirror her mother's secret love for Dorn while being married to Shamrayev.
-

The meaninglessness of life

- Sorin struggles to find meaning in a life where he has not fulfilled any goals he has set for himself. Masha says she is in mourning for her life. Trigorin seems to live only to write, but what he does produce is mediocre.

1.4.4 Characters

The artist must not be the judge of his characters and of their conversations, but merely an impartial witness'

Anton Chekhov

The Seagull does not have one central character. There is instead a multiple focus and many conflicts.

Arkadina

- Belongs to the aristocratic class and married beneath her. She considers herself superior to her son who she calls, ' a little upstart from Kiev'. She also belongs to the intellectual and artistic elite of Russia.
- Her relationship with her son is a very troubled one. She is selfish and cruel and behaves abominably during his play. It is significant that she quotes Gertrude from Shakespeare's ' Hamlet' and her son responds with Hamlet's lines. There is an obvious parallel between the Gertrude – Hamlet- Claudius relationship and the

relationship between Arkadina, her son and her lover. Later when he becomes a published writer she confesses that she never reads her son's work.

- She is self obsessed and vain. She constantly seeks confirmation of her talent and good looks. "Fit to take the part of a fifteen year old girl' she says of herself. She place poor unattractive Masha beside her to boost her own ego. Prides herself on the care she takes of her looks. She refuses to share the limelight with anyone else and needs to be the centre of attention all the time.
- She dominates and manipulates Trigorin. When he asks her to release him because he is attracted to Nina she uses a clever mixture of pleading and flattery to draw him back to her.
- She is also miserly though she says she is only thinking of her future. It is significant that both her son and brother ask her for money for each other. They clearly have caring relationship that she is incapable of.
- But she is clearly a very charming woman who Chekhov does not intend us to hate. She is capable of small acts of kindness. She bandages her son's head and encourages Nina in her theatrical ambitions. She also seems to be genuinely fond of her brother Sorin.

Trepliov

- Is desperate for his mother's approval and love.
- He is progressive in his views on theatre. Sees the plays his mother acts in as melodramatic morality tales. He wants to create something different and comes up with a totally abstract work. His failure is partly due to his mother's scorn and disinterest.
- He is also self obsessed to a certain degree. He does not pay much attention to the complimentary things said by Dorn.and Sorin about his play and is quite cruel to Masha who is hopelessly in love with him.
- His uncle Sorin who probably understands him best sums him up as 'a young man, intelligent, living in the country, in the wilds. .. with no money, no position, no future'
- In spite of his later success he continues to be unhappy and kills himself when he realizes that Nina still loves Trigori

Nina

- Has been cheated of her inheritance and is clearly unhappy at home. She has to sneak away to perform in Trepliov's play.
- Her extreme youth is stressed by Chekhov. She is dazzled by Arkadina and Trigorin and shifts her affections easily from Trepliov to the older, more successful man.
- After her disastrous affair with Trigorin she seems confused in her mind. She refers to herself as the seagull.
- But unlike Trepliov she can continue living through her pain and disappointment. She comes to an understanding that to endure gives her dignity and purpose.

1.4.5 Symbols

The Seagull

- Chekhov's symbol of the seagull changes meaning in the course of the play. At the beginning of the play Nina says she is drawn to the lake like a seagull. To her it represents freedom and security.
- In Act 2 Trepliov shoots the seagull and lays it at Nina's feet and Nina says she cannot understand this act or what it symbolizes. "And now this seagull here is apparently another symbol, but - you must forgive me- I don't understand it... ' Later in the same act Trigorin has an idea for a story based on Nina. A story about a young girl who lives by a lake as happy as a seagull, but a man destroys her merely because he has nothing better to do. Ironically Nina misunderstands the. symbolism again - this time to her own ruin. She is thrilled at being the subject of a short story and does not see what it actually foretells.
- After her affair with Trigorin ends she writes letters to Trepliov signed 'the Seagull'. When she meets him in the final act she seems confused referring to herself as the seagull before correcting herself.
- The seagull then goes from a symbol of freedom to denoting callous ruin at the hands of a lover.

The Lake

- Chekhov sets the play around the lake. It is a place of relaxation, respite andescape. In Act 1 Trepliov uses the lake as a natural setting for his play. Trigorin goes there to fish and relax. Trepliov goes there to sulk. Nina says she is drawn to it. Trepliov says losing Nina's love makes him feel as if the lake has sunk in to the ground. This' potent image shows what he feels about his life after she leaves him

1.4.6 Points to ponder

- Many of the main events happen offstage: Nina and Trigorin's affair, the shooting of the seagull, Masha's wedding, Trepliov's suicide
- There are class differences at work in the play. Arkadina marries beneath her. Medvedenko for instance is constantly worrying about making ends meet and all his questions and responses have to do with money. Trepliov though of a higher class does nothing, and has to rely on his uncle for a roof over his head. He has not had a new jacket in three years and does not possess an overcoat.
- Dorn is one of the few doctor characters created by Chekhov, and it is tempting to identify him with the playwright. He remains removed from the action and largely neutral. But he is not Chekhov's mouthpiece because he does not fully understand the actions and feelings of the other characters. He does not realize the depth of Polena's feelings for him or Sorin's despair that he has never lived.
- Chekhov is very skillful at showing the passage of time. Act 3 begins with Trigorin having breakfast surrounded by packed trunks and other pieces of luggage. Act 2 ends with Arkadina deciding to stay on, so the pile of luggage indicates to the audience that some time had passed and she has changed her mind. There is a two year gap between Act 3 and Act 4. We realize that Masha is married and that Trepliov is now a published author. Arkadina and Trigorin arrive from the station. These little touches show us that time has passed between the two acts.
- Chekhov's style is best expressed in the following quotes:

'Chekhov often expressed his thoughts not in speeches, but in pauses or between the lines or in replies consisting of a single word... the characters often feel and think things not expressed in the lines they speak' –(Stanislavski)

'It was Chekhov who first deliberately wrote dialogue in which the mainstream of emotional action ran underneath the surface. It was he who articulated the notion that human beings hardly ever speak in explicit terms among each other about their deepest emotions, that the great tragic climactic moments are often happening beneath outwardly trivial conversation- (Martin Esslin)

1.4.7Activities

1) Recreate the scene settings for each of the four acts using boxes with one side cut out. Pay careful attention to exactly where Chekhov places things on the stage.
2) Go to You Tube and download a few scenes from the play. Compare them in terms of setting, style of playing, costumes etc. Which ones do you think remain closest to the spirit of the original?
3) Research the work of Stanislavsky and Nemirovich-Danchenko. What innovations did they bring to the theatre in Russia?

Questions

1) What major events occur offstage in the play? Why do you think Chekhov chose to present them in this way?
2) Is Arkadina a sympathetically drawn character or not? Give reasons for your answer.
3) What function does Masha serve in the play?
4) Discuss whether the theme of Art overshadows the theme of love.
5) Is Trigorin a villain?
6) Compare and contrast the following pairs of characters: a) Arkadina and Nina b) Trigorin and Trepliov c) Sorin and Arkadina
7) What types of relationships are repeated in the play? What effect does this parallel depiction create?

2.The Novel

2.1 Introduction to Novel

2.1.1 Development of the novel

The **novel** is a long fictional prose narrative and is distinguished from the **novella**. The terms **novel** and **novella** are both derived from the Italian word **'novella'**, which is derived from the Latin **'novella narratiō'**, meaning "new kind of story". Novella refers specifically to Italian and French tales written between the 14th and 15th centuries. Works such as the short tales of Decameron (1348 – 53) by Boccacio and Heptameron(1548) by Marguerite de Navarre are examples. Their length ranged from approximately 300 words to 50 pages.

Traditional novellas encompass a **frame story**, which illustrates how the various "interior" stories are narrated. They had a strong influence on narrative poetry, on drama (the plot of Shakespeare's "All's well that ends well") and on the development of the novel. The aspect of the traditional novella that most significantly influenced the development of the novel was the frame story. The frame story showed [a] how different but related stories could be made into one larger but nonetheless coherent structure. [b] that narrators can be characters and vice versa. The former[a] demonstration of the frame story influenced the 18th century **Picaresque novel**. The latter[b] contributed in developing many features of the modern novel.

In a more general sense, novella could refer to later works written in other languages, to those that reflected features found in early French and Italian works. The modern novel was also influenced by the **memoir novel** which was largely or wholly fictitious, appearing to be true autobiographical history, often including diaries and journals.

One of the first books really to be like a novel, a long story completely made up by the author and not borrowed from history or older tales, was Don Quixote, by the Spaniard Cervantes. This was written at the beginning of the 17th century.

Although works like Don Quixote lack the sustained focus on characterization found in later novels, their role in the development of the novel is undeniable, especially, the way it examines a specific theme or problem systematically and how it rejects the idealized forms of romance.

The long prose fiction of the 18th century was the precursors of the modern novel. Daniel Defoe is the first English novelist who mastered the memoir novel form with his Robinson Crusoe (1719) and Moll Flanders (1722). These two works are largely episodic in structure, but their characters and the circumstances in which those characters find themselves are convincingly solid.

Another influence on the modern novel is the **Epistolary Novel**, a story written in the form of letters, or letters with journals, and usually presented by an anonymous author masquerading as "editor". "Letters of a Portuguese Nun" (1678) written entirely in epistolary form is a translation from French. "Pamela" (1741) by Richardson, who mastered the form, focused on motivation and character development rather than the plot which is significant in later novels. Henry Fielding's Joseph Andrews (1742) and Tom Jones (1749) were non-epistolary in which he blended the best features of the novels of Richardson and Defoe. They were tales of adventure and the characters were developed sensitively and sympathetically. Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett and Sterne, the chief novelists of the 18th century, established the novel definitively as a genre.

The period between 1750 and 1900 is noted for the vast growth in literacy and the increase in publication of novels. Innovative styles and structures were employed by new generations of novelists dealing with new subjects. Their works were published in new media and were made available for a wider reading public. Another significant feature of this period was the emergence of women novelists. The literary profession had been almost exclusively male dominated. Some famous women novelists feared that their work would not be taken seriously and hence even assumed masculine pen-names.

The Picaresque novel is another novel form that emerged during the period 1750 -1800. It deals realistically with the adventures of a 'rogue' who always escapes from precarious situations. Tobias Smollett's Peregrine Pickle (1751) was instrumental in developing this novel form.

Some of the novelists of the 19th century are among the most famous in English literature. Jane Austen is one of them. She wrote at the beginning of the century. Her tales of holidays at Bath, of parties and balls, of family gossip and scheming are full of wit and interesting characters. Quite different was Sir Walter Scott, whose exciting and romantic books like Ivanhoe (1819) and Red Gauntlet (1824), were the first historical novels.

Bildungsroman is another type of novel that relates the psychological and sometimes spiritual development of an individual from childhood to maturity. Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship (1796) is an example. The **sentimental novel** and the **Gothic novel** are two forms that developed during the latter half of the 18th century. Laurence Sterne's work exemplifies the former and Horace Walpole's the latter.

The late 18th and 19th century writers highlighted imagination and feeling over logical thought. Mary Shelly developed the Gothic novel further in her work Frankenstein (1818). Jane Austen in Northanger Abbey (1818) subtly parodies the Gothic. Emily Bronte in Wuthering Heights employs gothic features (1847).

The 19th century is considered the age of the **realistic novel**. The realistic novelist aimed at creating believable, plausible stories. They depict ordinary characters, situations and settings. Features of realism are exhibited in the works of writers such as Ottonore de Balzac, Anthony Trollope, George Eliot, Gustave Flaubert, Fydor Dostoyevsky, Henry James. The 19th century also produced some works of fiction classified as **romance novels**. Their main focus was adventure, involving heroes and villains in situations improbable but imaginative. Francois-Rene de Chateaubriand, Sir Walter Scott, Alexander Dumas, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville are examples.

Some novelists of the 19th century such as the Bronte sisters and Charles Dickens blended romantic and realistic elements in their works.

Naturalism was a literary movement of the late 19th century and early 20th century, the writers depicted pathetic protagonists with little, if any, control over their destinies. Thomas Hardy, Emile Zola, Stephen Crane and Frank Norris are some of them.

With the dawn of 20th century the **modernism** came into the fore. Modernists tried to break away from traditions and conventions by experimenting with new literary forms, devices and styles. Some of these novelists are E.M. Forster, D.H. Lawrence, Ernest Hemmingway, James Joyce and William Faulkner.

Post-modernist fiction writers were more radical in experimenting with the traditional literary forms and styles. Post-modernists include Thomas Pynchon who wrote Gravity's Rainbow (1973), William Burroughs, Donald Barthelme, John Barthe.

In common with all other literary genres, the modern novel also deals with a variety of subject matter. With the shock of war, advancement in technology and greater social freedom, the writers feel they could and should write about anything that arrests their interest.

2.1.2 The elements of the novel

The elements that make up a novel are the same as those that make up a short story. The greater length of a novel allows an author to develop one or more characters in plausible settings and to construct complicated plots. A novel usually has several sub-plots in addition to its central plot. The event/s in a novel can take place in a number of locations and over a long period of time. This variety of setting, character and plots make it possible to have more than one theme.

2.1.3 Specific characteristics of a novel

Length

The length of a novel does not give a novelist unlimited freedom to make the text long. Efficiency is reached by giving the text the appropriate length. This depends exclusively on the style.

Style

It is a writer's characteristic way of writing determined by his diction, imagery, tone and choice of literary devices.

Unlike verse, a novel is meant to be read silently and a writer's style is critical in enabling his message to be conveyed to a reader effectively. A novelist uses narrative, descriptive and expository language along with dialogue. When he uses more dialogues and less description he gets closer to drama. Novelists are aware of how much of each category is to be used in his work.

2.1.4 Jane Austen and her life (16 Dec. 1775 – 18 Jul. 1817)

Jane Austen was born at Steventon, Hampshire in a family of six brothers and one sister. It was a closely-knit family belonging to the lesser English gentry. In 1783, she was sent to Oxford with her sister Cassandra. But ill-health brought them home. Jane was educated by her father, Rector Stevenson, and her elder brothers James and Henry. She gained more knowledge through reading which her father's vast library made possible. She started writing at the age of ten and her family supported her to be a professional writer.

In 1795 Jane Austen wrote 'Elinor and Marianne', the first version of Sense and Sensibility in the form of letters of which the original draft was lost. In 1797, she started revising it with the title Sense and Sensibility abandoning the epistolary format in favour

of third person narrative. It was published in 1811. The other major novels that followed are Pride and Prejudice (1813), Mansfield Park (1814) and Emma (1816). She wrote two other novels Northanger Abbey and Persuasion, both published posthumously in 1818. Her last novel was titled Sanditon which could not be completed. Her life was spent in a narrow world at Steventon, Bath, Chawton and Winchester. She died in Winchester in 1817 and was buried in Winchester Cathedral.

2.1.5 Jane Austen and Her time

Jane Austen who wrote in the Romantic Period (1798 – 1837) is one of the most popular and respected novelists in English Literature. During this period in much of Europe including England and eventually in America there was a great upheaval in political, economic, social and philosophical systems. The French Revolution which began in 1789 had an impact on England's foreign policy. Furthermore in 1793 revolutionary France declared war on England. Until 1815 England and France were engaged in the Napoleonic wars. The Industrial Revolution had begun in the 1760s and by the end of the Romantic Period its effects had resulted in drastic social and economic changes.

The novel form in the Romantic Period was in a process of slow development and the gothic novel was becoming increasingly popular. Mrs. Ann Radcliffe (1764 -1823) was such a novelist whose work was satirized by Jane Austen in Northanger Abbey. Another popular Gothic novel of the time was Mary Shelly's Frankenstein (1817). Of far greater significance than those 'terror' tales were the realistic works of Jane Austen. They are fictional narratives that present a plausible world.

2.1.6 Jane Austen and her novels

Even though Jane Austen wrote during the height of the Romantic Period, she remained remarkably unaffected by Romantic literary influences. Sentimentalism too found her equally unmoved. Neither did her works possess the moral outlook of Richardson (1689 – 1761). She seemed to represent the neo-classical tradition of the 18th century literature with her work appealing to the intellect rather than to emotion.

Jane Austen limited the settings of her novels to a very narrow world. She said, it would be unwise for her to leave 'her little bit (two inches wide) of ivory'. She limits her stories strictly to the world she knew. They all take place in England, all in her own period, all in her own class. She portrays fully only characters of women of her age. Lengthy conversations always include a woman. Her subject was human nature, approached from a satiric angle. She was not curious of the past and the French and Industrial Revolutions were never portrayed in her novels. Deaths, sublime speculations, mysteries, adventures and crimes did not find a place in her novels.

Jane Austen's tales deal with holidays, parties and balls, family gossip and scheming that highlight her wit and portrayal of character. A characteristic feature of her work is the wit, with which she presents ordinary events and incidents with much humour and wisdom.

Much of the plot unfolds through brilliant conversations. Marriage is a common theme she deals with.

2.2 Sense and Sensibility by Jane Austen

2.2.1 Genre

Narration	– Third person
Structure	– Descriptive and Narrative
	- Dialogues reveal character and direct the plot in sequential order
	- Presented as 50 chapters
Setting	- The story is set in England and moves from Sussex to Devonshire, from Devonshire to London and Somerset. The time is Jane Austen's contemporary England.

2.2.2 Plot

Elinor and Marianne Dashwood are two sisters charming, intelligent and virtuous. Their difference is that Elinor's behaviour is governed by sense, reason and experience whereas Marianne is guided by sensibility or passion. Both fall in love and both are deceived in their love. Yet Elinor's habit of self-control enables her to overcome her disappointment while Marianne wallows in her grief and becomes physically and emotionally weak. In the end Elinor's lover Edward Ferrars proved to be guiltless which leads to their marriage. Marrianne, after reassessing her values and philosophy, unites with Colonel Brandon, an old admirer of whom she once spoke derisively. But reason tells her that he will turn out to be an excellent husband. The plot deals with many other characters that have their share in making Sense and Sensibility an interesting novel.

2.2.3 Themes

Sense

Elinor, the heroine of the novel, stands for the sense suggested in the title. When deceived by Edward, she does not give in to her emotions and never lets her own disappointments affect her behaviour towards others. She keeps her wounded feelings to herself for the sake of social propriety and for the sake of her mother and sisters. Furthermore, Elinor keeps Lucy's secret of her engagement to Edward to herself in spite of her own feelings towards him. The real worth of sense is portrayed through Elinor by her sensitive approach to social interactions without selfishly indulging in emotions.

Sensibility

The sensibility referred to in the title suggests Marianne's emotional and romantic nature. hrough Marianne's recovery over her grief caused by Willoughby Jane Austen portrays that the sensibility of Marianne is selfish. By controlling her emotions she adopts an outlook closer to that of Elinor's. Sense and sensibility in the novel seem to be not antagonistic but interdependent. Jane Austen has made sense and sensibility into siblings by embodying them in Elinor and Marianne. Marianne sheds her more naïve romantic philosophies and her marriage to Colonel Brandon is based not on passion but on sense.

Jane Austen seems to say that emotion uncontrolled by reason leads you into ludicrous mistakes, involves you in trouble that results in misery both to yourself and to those around you and in the end, it does not last.

Marriage

The novel mainly deals with the courtship and marriage of Elinor and Marianne by their suitors. To what extent Sense and Sensibility contributes to successful courtship and marriage is argued in the encounters of the partners concerned. Romantic, passionate love presented through Marianne is contrasted with Elinor's more sensible rational attitude to marriage.

Wealth

The novel emphasizes the importance of wealth in marriage. Mrs.Ferrars disinherits Edward for choosing Lucy as her spouse. Willoughby's rejection of Marianne and acceptance of Sophia Grey are also based on wealth. But Willoughby's confession to Elinor about marrying for money portrays Jane Austen's view on this issue.

John Dashwood is governed by his wife's obsession with money which makes him go against his father's wishes in taking care of his half-sisters.

Inheritance of wealth is of major concern for many characters.

Fate of women

The upper class English women in the late 18th century and early 19th century had to depend on the wealth of their husbands if they did not inherit a family fortune. Earning a living was also beyond social acceptance.

The Dashwood sisters are in a pitiable state when they are deprived of any wealth by their half-brother.

Lucy Steele, the ambitious female, chooses Robert Ferrars, who suddenly inherits family wealth, jilting her longtime fiancé Edward Ferrars. In contrast, Jane Austen portrays Elinor and Marianne as two women who choose their husbands not for wealth but for

their compatibility in nature. But they seem to be quite aware of the fact that sound marriage demands enough means to support a family.

Ideal Love

Jane Austen criticizes the fact that passionate love is not the ideal through the behaviour and views of Marianne. Her recovery from the deep disappointment over Willoughby and being able to find a better strong emotional attachment to Colonel Brandon proves it. "Instead of falling a sacrifice to an irresistible passion … she found herself at nineteen, submitting to new attachments, entering on new duties, placed in a new home, a wife, the mistress of a family, and the patroness of a village".

Social Classes and Inheritance of Wealth

Jane Austen portrays two social classes in the 18th and 19th century England- the lesser English gentry, to which she belongs and the landed gentry like the Ferrars family. Upward social mobility is effected by the women in the lesser English gentry marrying men from the landed gentry. This happens to Marianne by marrying Colonel Brandon. A man getting married to a woman socially inferior was not accepted.

Wealth is passed down through inheritance and the concept of primogeniture, where the eldest son becomes the legal heir of his parent's estate. Hence the Dashwood estate is inherited by John Dashwood.

2.2.4 Features specific to the novel

Humour

Jane Austen's use of subtle humour cannot be missed in many of the situations created in the story.

E.g. i. John Dashwood's words about complying with his father's last request concerning his half sisters, "My father couldn't mean nothing more …. May be acceptable then" (chapter 2)

ii. Mrs, Jennings tiptoeing away from the scene of Marianne's disappointed love, "… as if her young friend's affection could be increased by noise"

iii. Miss. Ann Steele disclosing to Elinor about the discussion between Edward and Lucy Steele.

"No, No; they were shut up in the drawing room… listening at the door" (chapter 38)

Irony

Austenian irony, exquisite, good tempered and ruthless, pervades the whole novel

i. The ironical account of the Dashwood's first visit to the Middletons,' "on every formal visit … astonished at the opinion of the others" (Chapter 6)

ii. Anne Steele overhears a conversation between Elinor and Lucy "by a sudden pause in Mariannes music'. Ms. Jennings' comment on "their favourite beaux" is " for he is one of the … no finding out who she likes." Both Ms. Jennings and Ann refer to Edward.

Portrayal of social life

Jane Austen defines and distinguishes the individual characters and atmosphere of the 3 main family circles of people in the novel, the circles of the Dashwoods, the Ferrars and the Middletons.

She presents the encounters within and among the different circles exhibiting her thorough knowledge of the English family life and its intricacies. E.g. "In the meantime sitting room." (chapter 6)

Depicting two heroines in keeping with the dual concepts of the title Sense and Sensibility.

The novel reveals that sense and sensibility are interchangeable and perhaps even indistinguishable. It exposes the complicated relations of the sisters and also reveals that the better part of Elinor's sense is a courageous and generous sensibility and the better part of Marianne's sensibility is a prudent, even rigorous good sense. Elinor and Marianne outgrow the categories inside which they begin that at the end the exchange places. The cautious and sensible Elinor falls in love, with a seemingly hopeless passion but is rewarded at the end, and the ecstatic Marianne condescends to a sensible connection with a man whom, 2 years before, she considered too old to be married.

2.2.5 Study of youthful passion

Marianne is used by Jane Austen to portray intense feeling. She does not analyse feelings or ideas for their own sake but to illuminate character. Marianne is a fine example of a woman in love. Her speech and behaviour shows how love dominates her every thought, colours her every mood, makes her different from the rest around her, which results in a resignation to sense.

Importantly Jane Austen never loses her ironical attitude towards undisciplined passion. She has no sympathy for Marianne's feelings. She seems to present undisciplined passion as dangerous, misleading and ephemeral.

In the end Marianne is quite content to marry 37 year old Colonel Brandon.

2.2.6 Characters

Central	Major	Minor
Elinor Dashwood Marianne Dashwood John Willoughby Colonel Brandon	Edward Ferrars John Dashwood Fanny Dashwood Mrs. Ferrars Mrs. Jennings Sir John Middleton Lucy Steele Mrs. Henry Dashwood	Robert Ferrars Margaret Dashwood Lady Middleton Ann Steele Eliza Williams Sophia Grey Miss Morton Charlotte Palmer Thomas Palmer Mrs. Smith Lord Morton Mr.Pratt

The characters of Elinor and Marianne are the most central to the novel. There are two parallel plots revealing the development of these two central characters.

A comparative study of their characters is suggested.

Elinor	Marianne
- personifies the sense suggested in the title	- personifies the sensibility suggested in the title
- values coolness of judgment more highly than rash surrender to emotional whims and actions are generated by a sense of prudence	- has no moderation in her sorrows and joys
- has artistic talent	- plays the piano exhibiting passion and romantic notions
- gives priority to the concerns of others and often counsels her mother and sisters	- makes a poor impression on others by being self-absorbed. Elinor smoothes over her behaviour
- forgives and places confidence in ideal love	- does not approve of second attachments
- during the brief lapse in the relationship with Edward, grieves privately	- undergoes a long period of despondency being jilted by Willoughby causing great concern to Elinor and Mrs.Dashwood
- at the end discovers a capacity for solitary introversion, for facing challenges, for sympathetic identification with suffering of others which makes her a character of intense and courageous sensibility.	- shows recovery from her original stance, by becoming rational she has become languid and has acknowledged that her nature is sedate, domestic, tame, not eruptive and inspirational

Each is the converse of the other and not the opposite of the other. Marriage does not give them separate existence but creates a dependence on each other as two halves of the same paradoxical character.

Of the male characters those of John Willoughby and Colonel Brandon would be the most central as Jane Austen reveals much of these two characters in the story.

John Willoughby	Colonel Brandon
- romantic - his first appearance created a secret admiration in Elinor and her mother - leaves in the midst of a heavy rain making both entrance and exit stunning.	- unromantic - was "silent and grave", appearance was "not unpleasing"
- frank and graceful in his manner of address	- gentleman like address
- uncommonly handsome and is a mixture of youth , beauty and elegance	- though "his face was not handsome his countenance was sensible"
- passionately fond of dancing and music which conforms with the tastes of Marianne - talent for music was considerable - taste on books was "strikingly alike" to that of Marianne	- his pleasure in music was not rapturous but estimable
- Marianne felt he has all the "distinguishing tenderness" which a lover's heart could give	- Marianne thinks of him as "if he were ever animated enough to be in love, must have long outlived every sensation of the kind, thirty five has nothing to do with matrimony"
- was hasty in giving opinions on other people, - said too much of what he thought without attention to persons or circumstances	- his manners though serious, were mild. - according to Elinor, "he is a sensible man, well-bred, well-informed, of gentle address" and possesses an amiable heart - according to Marianne, "he has neither genius, taste, nor spirit. That his understanding has no brilliancy, his feelings no ardour, and his voice no expression."
- displayed a want of caution which Elinor could not approve	- Elinor regarded him with respect and compassion
- seduces and abandons Eliza Williams.	- he helps out those in distress e.g. to Eliza William and to Edward Ferrars
- confesses to Elinor about his disloyalty to Maianne - his criticism of Sophia Grey, his wife, suggests he will not enjoy his married life - realizes he could have had both love and money if he had behaved honourably to Marianne	- In the end his mind is restored to animation by Marianne's regard and her society

Edward Ferrars

Although Edward Ferrars marries one of the heroines in the novel, he remains in the background for most part of it. Hence his character is discussed not as central but as the most important in the list of major characters.

Jane Austen introduces him thus, “He was not handsome … given it solid improvement” (chapter.3)
“All his wishes centered in domestic comfort and the quiet of private life.” (chapter.3)

At the beginning of the novel Marianne feels, “he is very amiable… music seems scarcely to attract him. He admires Elinor’s drawings as a lover, not as a connoisseur.”

Edward confesses to Elinor that his secret engagement to Lucy was “the consequence of ignorance of the world and want of employment.”

His practical nature and moderate character are similar to Elinor’s. They prove to be a perfect match.

The following characters are considered major for their role in highlighting different themes in their share in unraveling the plot.

2.2.7 Highlight the theme of wealth and inheritance.

John Dashwood

- half brother of Elinor and Marianne
- cold-hearted, selfish
- is avaricious
- falls prey to his wife’s cunning

Fanny Dashwood:

- wife of John Dashwood
- manipulative
- concerned with family wealth and social standing
- shrewd and selfish

Mrs. Ferrars:

- mother of Fanny Dashwood, Edward and Robert
- meddlesome, vindictive
- tries to control her sons by holding their inheritance as ransom
- tries to influence Edward to marry the rich and socially connected Miss Morton

2.2.8 Highlight the themes of marriage and social class.

Mrs. Jennings:

- mother to Lady Middleton and Charlotte Palmer
- a widow whose children are respectably married and "she had now therefore nothing to do but to marry all the rest of the world"
- "was anxious to get a good husband for every pretty girl"
- Good-humoured and rather vulgar
- Out-spoken

Sir John Middleton:

- a 40 year old distant relative of Mrs. Dashwood who offers Mrs. Dashwood and her three daughters a cottage on his property in Devonshire
- good humoured and solicitous
- fond of company
- often throws parties, picnics and other social gatherings for young people. "He was a blessing to all the juvenile part of the neighbourhood"
- welcomed the Dashwoods to Barton Park with "unaffected sincerity" making him a contrast to John Dashwood

Lucy Steele:

- a distant relation of Ms. Jennings
- low socially and financially and even morally
- not well-educated but attractive, manipulative and scheming
- has been secretly engaged to Edward Ferrars
- when Edward is disinherited, feels no remorse in switching her interest to Robert Ferrars

2.2.9 Highlight the themes of sense and sensibility.

Mrs. Henry Dashwood:

- the mother of Elinor, Marianne and Margaret
- her temperament is closer to the sensibility or passionate nature of Marianne than the sense or sensible nature of Elinor.
- depends on Elinor's prudence for making decisions

It is suggested that students are guided to analyse the minor characters in the novel.

2.2.10 Quotations

Highlighting Themes

Chapter 2 "I believe you are right … my promise to my father.."

Chapter 16 "It's not everyone, who has your passion for dead leaves"

Chapter 23 "From their counsel, … it was possible for them to be .."

Chapter 33 "She seems a most valuable woman … a great deal to leave"

Chapter 34 "The cold insolence of Mrs. Ferrars' general behaviour … make you unhappy"

Chapter 50 "With apprehensive caution …….. to the marriage of Edward and Elinor;"

Highlighting Plot

Chapter 8 "Colonel Brandon is certainly younger than … if age and infirmity will not protect him."

Chapter 9 "The gentleman offered his services … carried her down the hill"

Chapter 11 "I believe she does … by anybody but herself"

Chapter 23 "What had he to look forward to? … illiterate, artful and selfish?"

Chapter 29 "This lock of hair … Can I ever forget his distress?"

Chapter 48 "She almost ran out of the room … would never cease."

Highlighting character

Chapter 1 "She had an excellent heart … never to be taught "

Chapter 3 " It was contrary … disposition "

Chapter 5 "Oh! Happy house … who will remain to enjoy you? "

Chapter 7 " Sir John was loud in his admiration … want of taste "

Chapter 16 " The evening passed off … had been used to read together "

Chapter 23 " And so well was she … in every carriage which drove near their house "

Chapter 41 " My dear fellow… absolutely starved "

2.2.11 Teaching the Novel

1. Creating awareness of the following areas are suggested.
    a. Knowledge of the author
    b. Period in which the novel was written
    c. Genre
    d. Familiarity with the text
    e. Skills of reading
    f. Evaluation of the text by other writers
2. Teaching methods are expected to develop the competencies required to respond to literary texts.
    a. Activities to identify the plot.

        e.g. Arranging a list of jumbled events, summarizing a chapter

    b. Activities to identify theme/s

        e.g. Select from a given list of themes,

Eliciting personal responses to issues suggested in the novel.

Debates

Dramatizatio

3. Activities to identify literary devices and their effects
   e.g. Analyzing pieces of texts for literary devices

4. Activities to improve the use of accurate language to express the learner's views.
   e.g. Writing appreciations, speaking on given issues related to the novel

5. Activities to identify character traits
   e.g. Analyzing pieces of texts that highlight character

2.2.12 Guidelines

Activities / Questions

1. Analyze the minor characters to identify their role in
   a. Bringing out the themes
   b. Unraveling the plot

   What effective literary techniques has the writer used?

2. Trace the development of the following relationships.
   a. Elinor and Edward Ferrars
   b. Marianne and Willoughby
   c. Marianne and Colonel Brandon
3. What role does Elinor play in bringing about the union of Marianne and Colonel Brandon?
4. Identify situations which suggest 'sense' and 'sensibility' in Elinor, Marianne, Margaret, Mrs. Henry Dashwood and Colonel Brandon.
5. Identify the situations where the writer has used a. irony b. humour
6. What role does Lucy Steele play in the story?
7. Are there any characters that do not develop in the course of the novel?
8. Let the students write the script for the conversation between John Dashwood and Fanny Dashwood which decides their share in supporting Mrs. Henry Dashwood and her three daughters. Guide the students to act it out.
9. Make a comparative analysis of the wealth and inheritance of the important characters

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2.3 Great Expectations – Charles Dickens

2.3.1 Author and His Life

Charles Dickens was born at Portsmouth, Hampshire in 1812 and was the second child of John Dickens, a clerk in the Naval Pay Office. It was the time of the New Industrial Age which gave birth to massive political, social upheavals in the society. Dickens's family later moved to London in 1814 and then to Chatham where Charles started school and received his basic education. Dickens expereniced hardships in life as a young boy as his father was crushed by debts and financial difficulties. Due to increasing economic hardships in 1824 at the age of 12, he was sent to work in a Blacking factory at Hungerford Market, London. His father was imprisoned in Marshalsea foe debts. Most of Charles Dickens's works reflect this deep rooted disturbed childhood, and makes him attack vigorously the social evils, injustice and hypocricy that he experienced at first hand.

In 1827, at the age of 15 Dickens had completed his studies at Wellington House Academy London. Then he learnt shorthand and took to journalism. He started as a freelance reporter; this experience enabled him to grow as a writer.

His career as a writer of fiction started in 1833, when his short stories and essays were published for public reading. He started his long writing career with 'Pickwick Papers' in 1837. By 1847 Charles Dickens wrote four successful novels, including Oliver Twist, Nicholas Nickleby, The Old Curiosity Shop and Barnaby Rudge. After completing Dombey and Son, he turned to his own childhood in search of plot lines. David Copperfield, Bleak House, Hard Times and Little Dorrit are drawn from his own experience and reflections approach to issues like social injustice, administrative inefficiency and violence in society.

Dickens's last three novels, A Tale of Two Cities, Great Expectations and Our Mutual Friend are mature novels with great depth of vision and evocative Language.

2.3.2 Dickens and his Time

A better understanding of a writer is always achieved through a knowledge of the relevant time. Dickens was highly influenced by his personal experiences; his works reflect the ways in which his private crisis sharpened by his sensitivity this work also reflects his role as a social novelist- the moral values , of the society and the challenges in a changing society.

England was the first industrialised country in the world and the first nation to have more industrial workers than in agriculture. Victorian England with its empire took a different shape in every aspect. From the later part of the 18th C to the end of 19th C, England was subjected to massive social, economic and political changes due to the effects of the industrial revolution. With the rise of capitalism, many enterprising individuals rose from humble origins to positions of wealth and influence. Exploitation of man, labour and oppression became the key evils. People from the working class, from the rural areas were forced to come to overcrowded cities. Slums were born the dominant economic doctrine of the time was Free Trade and laissez faire. A few rich and wealthy industrialists had the monopoly and they ruled by forcing the government to be inactive by intervening the natural process of commerce and industry. This massive industrial prosperity had know eyes for the poverty and injustice faced by the working class. Trade unions began as a reaction. The works of Charles Dickens awakened the sleeping public conscience to respond to these evils. His sense of eagerness to see a better England made him a social reformer. As he was a spokesman for his own time he yearned for a change in the Victorian attitudes and institutions. He sought more humane attitudes that would create better human conditions and living environment for the people, he represented.

Genre

- **Stylistic Construction.**

Great Expectations is autobiographical in style, although the voice of the author can be heard well it is the story of Pip, writing his life from his early days of childhood until adulthood and aspiring to be a gentleman along the way.

- **Point of View**

  Voice- First Person Narration.
- **Structure**

  Style- Descriptive and Narrative Approach.
  Sequential

  Setting –between city, town and country life.

2.3.3 The Setting of Great Expectations

The action of the main story line takes place from Christmas Eve 1812, when the protagonist s about 07 years old to the winter of 1840. The story is placed in Kent. Pip's Village is situated roughly on the flat land between the Thames Estuary and the mouth of the river Medway. This was the time when prisoners were taken to Australia. The Hulks were old ships which were used as temporary prison cells for criminals who awaited their exile to Australia. This practice was abolished in 1852.

Great Expectations was written by Charles Dickens to overcome financial difficulties. He was at the time serializing the works of other writers. The periodical "All the year Round" was falling in popularity. He decided to serialise his own work instead of the works of the other writers, and stated 'Great Expectations' which appeared in weekly installments on the front page of "All the Year Round" from December 1860 to June 1861.

Dickens revised the original ending he gave to Great Expectations. In his original script he made Pip and Estella meet by chance in a London Street where they greet each other and go their separate ways.

Later this pessimistic end was changed and the reader was allowed to go for an optimistic ending.

2.3.4 Plot

Can be divided into 3 phases.

- Pip's childhood in Kent

  Pip's dissatisfaction with his own upbringing, background and social status and his sense of loneliness.

His first encounter or the first contact with the “socially superior” world and with the underworld, the world of criminals. Foundation for reflection which is morally superior / inferior.

- **Pip’s life in London**

  His attempts at climbing the social ladder, desire to be a gentleman.

  Completely rejects himself from his humble origins.

  Responds to class distinction and gives it excessive significance.

  Struggles with the memories of the past and associations with the criminals

- **Pip’s attempts to save Magwitch and to win the love of Estella.**

  The two opposing worlds are brought together- the social status/ class distinction and the criminal underworld.

  All three phases respond to the moral education of Pip. A sense of value forgiveness and humanity are awakened in Pip.

  Charles Dickens’s tight plot line exploits a realistic world where social classes are intertwined in a web of dramatic coincidences.

  Plot consists of mystery and an inverted fairytale.

  Every episode carries a sense of mystery and grate expectation

2.3.5Themes

6.1 The concept of becoming a ‘gentleman’- a Victorian Concern

What is a ‘gentleman’? This can be analyzed in many ways; high social status, involving wealth, education, sophisticated manners and high moral qualities.

Great Expectations differentiates the difference between social prestige and moral worth as Pip’s social rise is accompanied by his moral decline and once his ‘great expectations’ collapse he is able to regain his moral righteousness to become a ‘gentleman’. Pip’s understanding of ‘becoming a gentleman’ takes various shapes, Pip confesses to Biddy saying that he wants to become a gentleman for ‘Estella’s sake’ as it was a romantic escape from his humble routine and background. For Jaggers being a gentlemen means

having wealth. Pip even adopts snobbish habits as character traits of high social status and gentlemanliness. Ironically his arrival in London, a place where he will be made a gentleman creates a conflict, a mismatch between his expectations and events. Estella plays an important part in Pip's aspirations towards being a gentleman the romantic dreamer in Pip responds to love in a selfless manner which helps him to overcome his personal ambitions. Magwitch with his 'ungentle man like history' brings Pip to his proper senses to see the world in a better perspective.

- Justice- apparent law vs law in practice.
- Class distinction
- Guilt and innocence sacrifice/ indulgence / love/ selfishness
- Alienation and loneliness
- Victim and victimization
- Identity-search for self
- Violent Criminal World
- Poverty, wealth inheritance
- Hypocrisy and snobbery
- social mobility

2.3.6 Importance of Language

- **Poetic language** and his strong command of evacuative of language
- L**engthy descriptions/ speeches/ reflections** are examples of his descriptive language and visual details.
- M**echanical identification of individuals and objects** reflects mechanical society where men and women were dehumanized – symbolic.
- Dickens focuses on **varieties of language** spoken by people in different social classes and based on geographical location. Examples- Joe's confused syntax / Miss Havisham's melodramatic rhetoric / Biddy's plain speaking.
- **Language used by the lower class** and the attempts by the upper class to show a different in maintaining eloquence of language.

- **First person narration**.
- **Dialogues**

Humour

- Great Expectations is not a comic novel but the novelist creates subtle humour through language, characters and scenes.
- The use of sense of humour is realistic as the narrator maintains a sober, saddened and ironic tone.
- Pumblechook is one of the main comic characters.
- Verbal humour can be seen too.
- Caricature

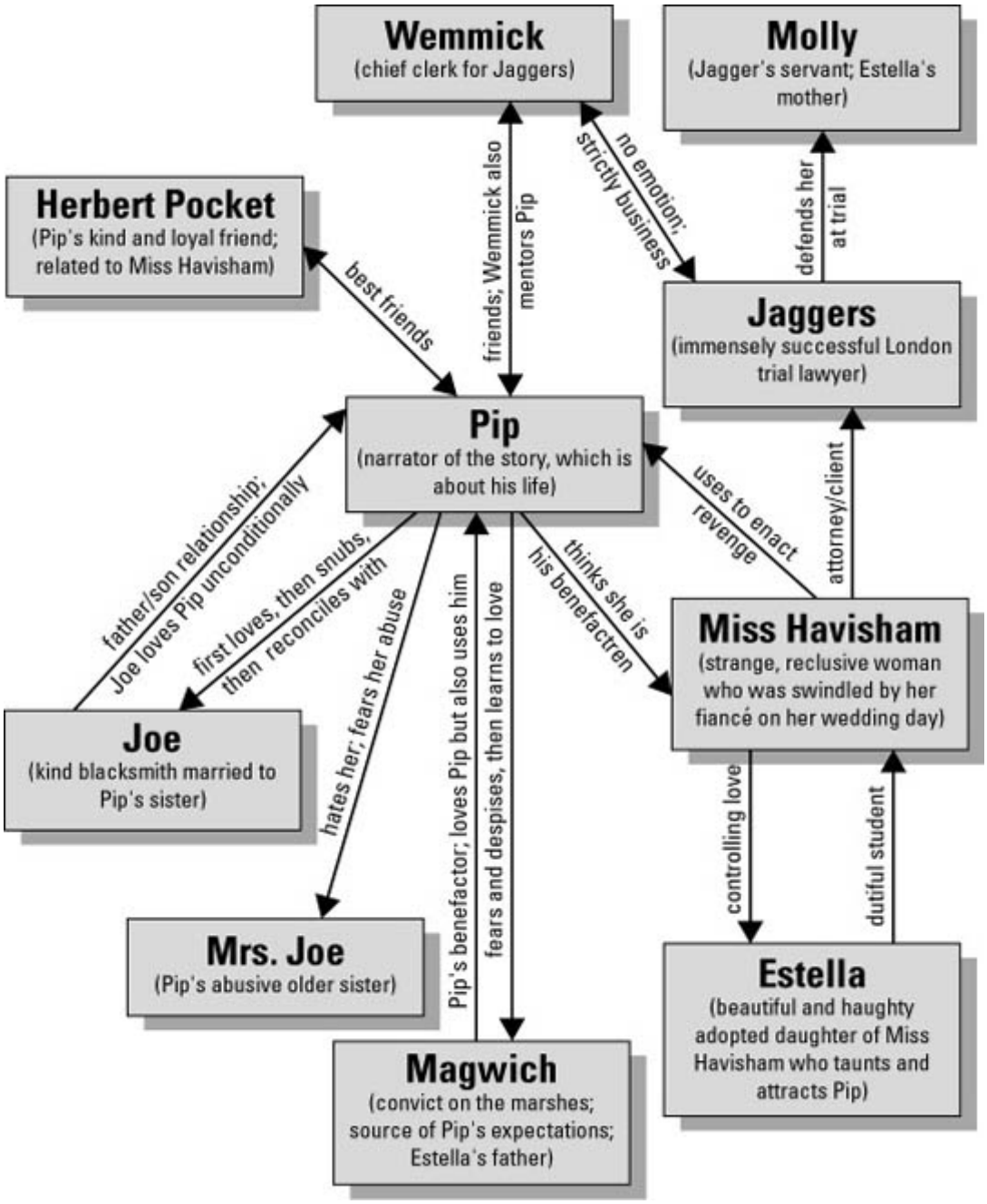
Symbolism

- Certain characters and events represent permanent forces and patterns in human life.

  Example- Joe and Orlick, both uneducated men, embody the extremes of love and hate
- Jaggers stands for civil law as well as for universal law.
- River Thames (structural symbol) -a threatening and promising element to Pip.
- Wedding Cake (illustrative symbol)/ spiders- the corruption, betrayal and the mental condition Miss. Havisham spreads to those around her.(refer activities)

Dramatic reversal of characters and events.
Irony- coincidence
Use of imagery and visuals

2.3.7 Characters



2.3.8 Activities

Pre reading activates for students

- What are the main events that are associated with English Society during the period (1820- 1840)? List them
- What system of crime and punishment existed?
- What was the usual punishment, for instance for stealing?

Who says these words to whom and what are they talking about?

- ".I supposed that both Joe Gargery and I were brought up by hand."
- “A true gentleman in manner’must be ‘a true gentleman at heart’
- Its other name was Satis, which is Greek or Latin for enough.’’
- "Yes, Pip, dear boy, I've made a gentleman on you!"

Short Questions on sections

- What sort of work does Pip do for Ms.Havisham?
- What makes Pip ashamedof being trained to work as a blacksmith?
- How did Ms.Havisham find out that she has a half brother?
- Why was he poor?
- Why didn’t the man she loved marry her?
- How was the man connected to her half brother?

Symbols in the description of Miss. Havisham’s room

Students can list them out and find the symbolic significance

ex.- Spiders- the corruption, betrayal and the mental condition Miss. Havisham spreads to those around her.

Critical thinking questions

- Are there any characters without expectations? What do you feel about them?
- What were Pip's great expectations?
- What effect did they have on his life?
- Was it good or bad? What do you think is Dickens's point of view the moral message in this story?

Questions

1. Why does Joe put up with Mrs. Joe's abuse? Do you agree with his choice, and did he do enough to protect Pip?

2. Do you think Miss Havisham was really rewarding Pip with the apprenticeship? Was it actually more revenge on men by chaining him to the forge when he preferred to be with Estella?

3. Why does Pip refuse to take any more of Magwitch's money? Was this the correct choice? Why or why not?

4. Which of the two endings do you prefer? If neither, how would you end the novel?

5. Does Estella's change at the end of the novel seem real?

6. Discuss Pip as both a narrator and a character. How are different aspects of his personality revealed by his telling of his story and by his participation in the story itself?

7. What role does social class play in *Great Expectations*? What lessons does Pip learn from his experience as a wealthy gentleman? How is the theme of social class central to the novel?

8. What significance does the novel's title, *Great Expectations,* have for the story? In what ways does Pip have "great expectations"?

9.Discuss the character of Miss Havisham. What themes does she embody? What experiences have made her as she is? Is she a believable character? How does she relate to Pip and Estella?

Quotations

"My father's family name being Pirrip, and my christian name Phillip, my infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip. So, I called myself Pip, and came to be called Pip."

(Pg. 3)

".I supposed that both Joe Gargery and I were brought up by hand." (Pg. 8)

"A true gentleman in manner'must be 'a true gentleman at heart'-(ch 22)

".for he gave me a look that I did not understand, and it all passed in a moment. But if he had looked at me for an hour, or a day, I could not have remembered his face ever afterwards, as having been more attentive." (Pg. 37)

"Well, I thought I overheard Miss Havisham answer- only it seemed so unlikely- 'Well, you can break his heart.'" (Pg. 59)

'I want to be a gentleman on her account' (ch. 17)

"They may not be worth much, but after all, they're property and portable. It doesn't signify to you, with your brilliant lookout, but as to myself, my guiding star always is, Get hold of portable property." (Pg.199)

"Pip, dear old chap, life is made of ever so many partings welded together, and as I may say, one man's a blacksmith, one's a whitesmith and one's a goldsmith, and one's a coppersmith. Diwisioins among such must come, and must be met as they come.'" (Pg. 222)

"'You must know,' said Estella, condescending to me as a beautiful woman might, 'that I have no heart- if that has anything to do with my memory.'" (Pg. 235)

" 'for I have seen you give him looks and smiles this very night, such as you never give to- me.' 'Do you want me then,' said Estella, turning suddenly with a fixed and serious, if not angry, look, 'to deceive and entrap you?' 'Do you deceive and entrap him Estella?' 'Yes and many others-all of them but you'." (Pg. 307)

"Yes, Pip, dear boy, I've made a gentleman on you!" (Pg. 315)

"I took her hand in mine and we went out of the ruined place; and, as the morning mists had risen long ago when I first left the forge, so the evening mists were rising now, and in

all the broad expanse of tranquil light they showed to me, I saw the shadow of no parting from her." (Pg. 479)

Comments from Critics,

"it is a remarkable achievement to have kept the reader's sympathy throughout a snob's progress"- Humphry House 'The Dickens World'-Oxford University Press 1961 page 155

"Dickens's people are nearly all flat"- E.M. Forster 'Aspects of the novel', Edward Arnold, London 1927

Glossary

Real places referred to

The hill, wetlands on the banks of the River Thames estuary in Kent near to Pip's boyhood home.

The Hulks, prison ships anchored off the marshes holding prisoners who are to be transported to Australia as punishment.

Little Britain, old London neighbourhood of narrow streets and location of Mr. Jaggers's offices.

Barnard's Inn: one of the Inns of Chancery, referred to in the text as "the dingiest collection of shabby buildings ever squeezed together in a rank corner as a club for tom cats", attached to Gray's Inn where Dickens had worked as a clerk.

Newgate Prison, ancient prison near Mr. Jaggers's office, where criminals are imprisoned and executed. Also a location where debtors, such as Dickens' father, were imprisoned, though Dickens' father himself was imprisoned in the Marshalsea.

The Temple, location of houses where Pip and Herbert live after they leave Barnard's Inn, andwhere Pip meets his benefactor. According to the text, "Our chambers were in Garden-court, down by the river." Garden Court still exists, nearby Temple tube station.

St. James church in the opening scenes, on the **Isle of Grain**, to the north of **Rochester**.

Fictional places in Kent

The Forge, the workplace and home of Pip and his family, in Grain, to the North of Rochester. In the forge itself his substitute father Joe Gargery works as a master blacksmith. Pip later works there as his apprentice.

Satis House, as in Latin *satis* meaning "enough". Also known as **Manor House**, Miss Havisham's ruined mansion where she lives with her adopted daughter Estella, and where Pip serves for months as her periodic companion. The house is based on a real manor house off Rochester High Street, later owned by Rod Hull.

The Three Jolly Bargemen, the public house and general meeting place of Pip's home town.

The Blue Boar, inn/hotel in Kent, Pip stays here rather than staying with Joe and Biddy when he visits his home town. The descriptions match the Bull Inn on Rochester High St. There is also a Blue Boar Lane in the area.

Finches of the Groves, the expensive club where Pip and Herbert senselessly spent their money. People have conversations there with overly expensive meals.

Fictional places

The Castle, Wemmick's fanciful home, where he lives with his father and receives Pip, located in Walworth

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3. The Short Story

3.1 Introduction to the Short Story

3.1.1 Development

The term short story usually refers to the modern short story, which evolved out of earlier types of fiction in prose and verse. It is a genre of literature developed as a literary form of fiction in the West in the 19th and 20th centuries. The earliest ancestors of short stories are ancient tales, simple stories that date back to Egyptian writings that are 6,000 years old. However, there are clear distinctions that can be made between short tales and the modern short story, though some of the elements of short stories can still be found in the older forms of story telling such as anecdotes, parables, fables, ballads, sketches, and tales that can be found in any part of the world. In Sri Lanka, Jathaka Tales, Andare's stories, anecdotes and fables share many common characteristics with the modern short story.

It was, however, in America that the short story truly came into its own. Edgar Allan Poe is known as the "father" of the short story because he is credited with setting up the first guidelines for the short story. "Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849), American writer, known as a poet and critic but most famous as the first master of the short-story form, especially tales of the mysterious and macabre" (Madden, 2007).

According to Poe, the short story must have the following characteristics:

- It must produce a certain unique effect.
- It must have brevity (a reader should be able to read it in "one sitting").
- It must have unity.
- It must have intensity.
- It must begin with the first sentence (i.e., not spend too long on background, setting, introduction of characters, etc.)

When the short story emerged as a genre in the 19th century, it was seen as something totally new and modern. Popular and literary magazines began increasingly to publish short stories that often reflected the dominant literary trends of the day. Up to that point, the primary focus of most stories had been on the plot. Beginning with Nathaniel Hawthorne, one of the most important early writers in the shaping of the modern short story, the short story developed as a unique form of fiction in the hands of the writers such as Anton Chekov, Henry James, Guy de

Maupassant, O' Henry, James Joyce, Katherine Mansfield, Saki etc. By the end of the 20th century the short story had matured as a form.

Definition

Many have attempted to define the short story, but its many characteristics elude one simple and single definition.

> "A brief fictional prose narrative designed to create a unified impression quickly and forcefully. Eg: Edgar Allen Poe's ***The Tell-Tale Heart*** or Guy de Maupassant's ***The Necklace***"(Reading /Writing Frameworks, 1999)
>
> "A fictional narrative generally centering on one climatic event and usually developing only a single character in depth; its scope is narrower than that of a novel" (Bernandez, 2003)
>
> "Short Story is a fictional work depicting one character's inner conflict or conflict with others, usually having one thematic focus" (Madden, 2007).

3.1.2 Common Features

The features of short stories are generally analyzed in contrast to the features of novels. Short stories generally produce a single, focused emotional and intellectual response in the reader. Novels, by contrast, usually depict conflicts among many characters developed through a variety of episodes, stimulating a complexity of responses in the reader. The short story form ranges from "short shorts," which run in length from a sentence to four pages, to novellas that can easily be 100 pages long and exhibit characteristics of both the short story and the novel. There are three basic characteristics that all short stories share in common.

Brevity

As the name, short story itself implies the most obvious characteristic of the genre is its shortness. A short story can usually be read in one sitting.

Conciseness

Here, unlike in a novel, the story does not diverge from the main plot. A short story usually has a single plot, a single setting, a limited number of characters. It focuses on only one incident (one moment in life/a slice of life). The story does not usually diverge from the main plot. It presents information which is only relevant to the tale being told. It usually covers a short period of time in the story.

One Impression

A short story usually leaves behind a single impression or effect. It usually deals with one issue or theme.

3.1.3 Elements of the Short Story

The basic components of the short story include setting, structure, character, and theme.

Setting

Setting refers to the background against which the incidents of the story take place. It includes the place (where), the time (when), social conditions (background). Setting is essential to the story; the relevance of the story is normally lost in another setting.

Plot

The term plot refers to the action that takes place in the story. It is a series of connected happenings/events and their result in the story. Conflict is an indispensable part of the plot of the short story.

Stages of a Plot

- Introduction of characters and setting: Introduces the main character and other characters. Introduce the setting: the time, place, and relationships of the main character's life.

- The situation: Initial conflict - introduces and develops the problem the main character is facing.

- Rising action – develops the plot and problem toward a climax: e.g. a decision, action, conversation, or confrontation, or confrontation that shows the problem at its height. This heightenes anticipation for the reader.

- Climax – This is the highest point of anticipation for the reader and provides "make or break" situation for the main character.

- Falling action - develops a change in the main character: e.g. an acknowledgement of understanding of something, a decision, a course of action, regret.

- The resolution – These two are also spoken of under the term, denouement. It develops a resolution: how the main character comes to terms – or not – with his or her problem?

3.1.4 Characters

There must be living beings in the story that think or act in order to keep the story going. They must seem like living and feeling individuals in order for readers to feel strongly about them. Characters can also be termed as tools in the hands of the writer to help him get his message across to the reader.

Four Methods of Presenting a Character:

- Actions or thoughts of the character.
- Conversations the character engages in.
- Conversations of other characters about a third character.
- Author's own opinion. This might be overt, or may be implied.

3.1.5 Theme

Theme refers to the total meaning of the story, without which it lacks meaning or purpose. It can be either stated or implied. The theme may be a direct expression or refutation of a traditional

theme. The subject of a short story is often mistaken for its theme. Common subjects for modern short fiction include race, ethnic status, gender, class, and social issues such as poverty, drugs, violence, and divorce. These subjects allow the writer to comment upon the larger theme that is the heart of the fictional work. Some of the major themes of 20th-century short stories, as well as longer forms of fiction, are human isolation, alienation, and personal trauma, such as anxiety; love and hate; male-female relationships; family and the conflict of generations; initiation from innocence to experience; friendship and brotherhood; illusion and reality; self-delusion and self-discovery; the individual in conflict with society's institutions; mortality; spiritual struggles; and even the relationship between life and art. These themes can be found in novels as well.

3.1.6 Devices Used in Narration

The art of the short story employs the techniques of point of view, style, plot and structure, and a wide range of devices that stimulate emotional, imaginative, and intellectual responses in the reader. The writer's choice and control of these techniques determines the reader's overall experience.

3.1.7 Point of View

The term point of view refers to the presentation of the story. The three basic point-of-view techniques are:

First person (the author lets one of his characters narrate)

Third person- Author Omniscient (the all-knowing author narrates)

Third person (author as an observer)

3.1.8 Style

Style is the author's careful choice of words and arrangement of words, sentences, and paragraphs to produce a specific effect on the reader. An author's style evolves out of the chosen point-of-view technique. The omniscient point of view produces a relatively complex style; the first-person point of view results in a simple style if it is recorded as "spoken," more complex if it is written. Some of the terms used to describe the style are: Expository/dramatic, Interspersed with dialogue /monologue

3.1.9 Plot and Structure

There is a wide range of plot forms and structures found in the short story. A traditional plot as it was discussed above has a beginning (introduction of the problem), middle (development of the problem), and an end (resolution of the problem). Some short stories have the structure of their plots with the use of flashbacks and flash-forwards. Among other devices that enhance plot structure are foreshadowing, reversals of fortune, digressions, abrupt transitions, and juxtapositions of contrasting characters or settings.

3.1.10 Techniques

Writers employ a wide range of rhetorical devices for contrast and emphasis. They include symbolism, metaphor, simile, paradox, patterns of imagery, repeated motifs, irony, stream of consciousness, cinematic technique etc.

3.1.11 Language

Language refers to the choice of diction and its style by the writer. Language used in a short story can be analyzed with the following terms

Lucid/abstruse/archaic/ultra modern

Formal/informal

Standard English/dialectal/regional

Symbolic/plain

Casual/poetic

3.1.12 Teaching the Short Story

When teaching short stories teachers can draw the attention of the students to the following:

What is the setting of the short story? (How does he establish social and cultural background?)

How does the plot develop? (How does he organize and relate incidents?)

What is the problem/conflict which is developed as the story (plot) progresses?

What is the climax of that problem/conflict?

What happens after the climax? (Resolution/Conclusion)

How are the characters developed?

What does the story tell us about what the characters are wearing; their outward appearance?

What does the story tell us through what the characters are wearing; their outward appearance?

What qualities do the characters represent?

How do the characters contribute to the development of the plot?

How do the characters contribute to communicate the theme of the story?

What kind of language has he used?

What kind of style has he used?

What kind of techniques has the writer used to narrate incidents and depict character?

3.2 The Open Window

By Saki (Hector Hugh Munro, 1870 – 1916)

Saki - Biographical Details

- Hector Hugh Munro (1870 – 1916) – born in Aykab, Burma (modern Myanmar) to British parents.
- Brought up in England, along with his brother and sister, by his grandmother and two maiden aunts.
- A very strict and straight-laced upbringing, which had an indelible impact on his character and his short stories, which often featured young children pulling pranks on older, unsuspecting adults.
- He followed his father into the service of the British Empire and was posted in Burma as part of the Indian Imperial Police.
- Failing health forced him to retire to England, where he began a career as a journalist and a writer of satirical fiction.
- He took his pseudonym (Saki) from a reference in Omar Khayyam's "Rubaiyat", which captivated Edwardian England, and then made fun of that same part of society through his stories.
- He enlisted at the outbreak of World War I and was killed in battle.

3.2.1 Plot

Framton Nuttel comes to a country village for some peace and rest. He calls upon a lady his sister used to know; for a few minutes he is left alone with her niece, who has quite an active imagination. She tells Framton a story about the tragedy of the lady's husband and two younger brothers, who had gone hunting one day three years earlier and never returned. The bodies were never found, and because of this the window from which they left is always kept open. When indeed they do return that very night, Framton, who has suffered from nerves in the past, runs out of the house, and the niece explains his sudden departure to her relatives with an equally imaginative fiction.

3.2.2 Themes

i. Appearance and Reality – This theme works on a number of different levels in the story, chiefly brought on by Vera's impeccable story-telling skills. She makes her Aunt appear to have gone mad with grief in Mr. Nuttle's eyes, makes Mr. Nuttle appear to be a cowardly hypochondriac with a terror of dogs and makes her uncles appear to be ghosts.

ii. Treatment of the outsider - Victorians did not receive outsiders kindly, and Munro, as an outsider himself -- a sickly boy born of Scottish parents in Burma, raised by maiden aunts, shuttled off to boarding school at the age of twelve when he'd never been away from home before -- undoubtedly felt the brunt of the Victorian's hatred of the outsider most keenly. That sense of "otherness" is wonderfully conveyed in this quirky but dark tale.

iii. Satire of Edwardian Society – Saki satirizes Edwardian society, which prided itself on its manners and outward 'polish", pointing out the strong streak of cruelty that simmers beneath the exterior gentility and veneer.

3.2.3 Characters

i. Vera

- "A self-possessed young lady of fifteen"
- Confident and sure enough of herself to begin a conversation with a perfect stranger and keep him entertained until the arrival of her aunt.
- Intelligent, alert – notices that Nuttle is the kind of man who could be easily made to believe the fantastic story she tells, and then capitalizes on that fact.
- Shrewd, cunning – the searching questions she asks quite casually to ensure that Nuttle knows nothing about her family or neighbourhood.
- Creative, imaginative – makes up two highly imaginative stories on very short notice.
- Observant of her environment – notices details of the routine that is followed when her uncles go out snipe-shooting and then uses those details in her story.
- A good actress

ii. Framton Nuttle

- Weak willed and neurotic – is undergoing a "nerve-cure" and has to come to the country on the instigation of his sister.
- Boring and self-absorbed – "laboured under the tolerably wide-spread delusion that total strangers and chance acquaintances are hungry for the least detail of one's ailments and infirmities."
- Not alert/observant – notices that something in the room seems to "suggest masculine habitation" but doesn't think of that when Vera tells him the story.
- Gullible and foolish – believes Vera's story completely and bemoans "unfortunate coincidence that he should have paid his visit on this tragic anniversary,", even though Mrs. Sappleton shows no real signs of being mad.
- Uncertain/lacks confidence - "endeavoured to say the correct something", tries to change to change the topic to something "less ghastly".

3.2.4 Narrative Techniques

i. Frame Narrative - the story that Vera tells Nuttle is framed within the larger narrative of the story Saki is telling us, which allows us to understand that Vera's story is a mere fanciful tale

ii. Symbol – the "open window" is the centre of the story and becomes a symbol for Mrs. Sappleton's anguished grief.

iii. Irony – "Romance at short notice was her specialty"

iv. Satire

v. Contrast – between Vera and Nuttle, appearance and reality etc.

vi. Foreshadowing – Vera artfully tells her story using true details that foreshadow the sequence of events that take place when her uncles return from snipe-shooting.

vii. Practical Joke – This is a common technique in Saki's short stories (where a young child generally plays a "cruel" practical joke on unsuspecting adults) and forms the central element of the plot. Critics agree that the practical joke seems to echo Saki's own "lost childhood".

3.3 The Boarding House

By James Joyce (1882-1941)

3.3.1 James Joyce

James Augustine Aloysius Joyce was born in a Dublin suburb. He was educated at Roman Catholic lower schools and at home. He, at the age of 18, in 1900, published a review of Ibsen's *When We Dead Awaken* in the London *Fortnightly Review*, which led to correspondence with Ibsen. In 1904 he and his companion, Nora Barnacle, left Ireland. They lived in Trieste, Italy; Paris, France; and Zürich, Switzerland. They had two children but did not marry until 1931 for religious reasons. To support the family, Joyce worked as a language instructor and received writing grants from patrons, but the family was never comfortable financially. He published his first book, *Chamber Music*, a collection of 36 poems in 1907. After about eight years of battling with censorious publishers *Dubliners* was published in 1914**.** *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, a semiautobiographical work, which makes use of the stream-of-consciousness narrative style, was published in 1916. *Ulysses*, published in 1922, a novel whose story of a day in the life of Leopold Bloom elevated Joyce to international renown. In 1939 He Published his last novel, *Finnegan's Wake*, a novel whose lackluster reception in the literary world left Joyce deeply disappointed. In 1940 Moved from Paris to Zurich, where he spent the remainder of his life.
During much of his adult life Joyce suffered from a series of severe eye troubles that eventually led to near blindness. He is known for pioneering new narrative techniques, especially stream-of-consciousness, and experimenting with the uses of language. He died in 1941.

3.3.2 The Boarding House, The seventh short story in *Dubliners*

Joyce's first prose work, *Dubliners* (1914), is a book of 15 short stories and sketches that revolve around the sad spirit of the ancient city of Dublin, and crucial episodes in the lives of its inhabitants.

Although the stories were powerful, revolutionary work, *Dubliners* could not be published until 1914. The delay was due to concern about the frank sexual content (which, by today's standards, is quite mild) and some of the charged political and social issues addressed in the collection.

When writing *Dubliners*, Joyce's initial intention, as he explained in a letter to the publisher Grant Richards, was to hold a mirror up to Dublin, to present as realistic a portrait of the city as possible by depicting Dubliners of various ages and from various walks of life.

The title, *Dubliners*, immediately draws our attention to the importance of the setting—both place and time unites these diverse stories. Joyce creates a panorama of Dublin by presenting a series of portraits of Dubliners in the grip of a moral paralysis he believed to be the city's overwhelming attribute. As he indicates in a 1906 letter to the publisher Grant Richards, "My intention was to write a chapter of the moral history of my country and I chose Dublin for the scene because that city seemed to me the centre of paralysis...I have written it for the most part in a style of scrupulous meanness and with the conviction that he is a very bold man who dares to alter in the presentment, still more to deform whatever he has seen and heard." In his projection of Dubliners, Joyce never romanticizes poverty, and explores how need and social entrapment adversely affect character. He sees his hometown as a city divided, often against itself, and the aura of defeat and decline pervades every tale. He is often deeply critical of Irish provinciality, the Catholic Church, and the Irish political climate of the time. The real power of *Dubliners* is Joyce's depiction of the strong characters that live and work in this distinctive and bleak city. *The Boarding House* in *Dubliners* has a lot of characteristics found in the other short stories in the collection.

3.3.3 Plot Summary of the Boarding House

- After separating from her irresponsible and drunken husband, Mrs. Mooney opens a boarding house to provide for the family.
- Her son, Jack, and daughter, Polly, live with her in the house.
- The boarding house is occupied by clerks from the city, as well as occasional tourists and musicians.
- Mrs. Mooney is very strict in dealing with the boarders and is known as the Madam.
- Polly, who used to work in an office, now stays at home at her mother's request, to amuse the lodgers and help with the cleaning.
- Polly develops a relationship with one of the boarders, Mr. Doran.
- Mrs. Mooney knows about the relationship, but instead of sending Polly back to work in the city, she monitors its developments.

- Polly becomes increasingly uncomfortable with her mother's lack of intervention, but Mrs. Mooney waits until “the right moment” to intercede.
- First she speaks awkwardly with Polly, and then arranges to speak with Mr. Doran on a Sunday morning.
- Mrs. Mooney looks forward to her confrontation, which she intends to “win” by defending her daughter's honor and convincing Mr. Doran to offer his hand in marriage.
- Waiting for the time to pass, Mrs. Mooney figures the odds are in her favor, considering that Mr. Doran, who has worked for a wine merchant for thirteen years and garnered much respect, will choose the option that least harms his career.
- Meanwhile, Mr. Doran anguishes over the impending meeting with Mrs. Mooney.
- He knows he can either marry Polly or run away, the latter an option that would ruin his sound reputation.
- Convincing himself that he has been duped, Mr. Doran bemoans Polly's unimpressive family, her ill manners, and her poor grammar, and wonders how he can remain free and unmarried.
- In this vexed moment Polly enters the room and threatens to end her life out of unhappiness.
- In her presence, Mr. Doran begins to remember how he was bewitched by Polly's beauty and kindness, but he still wavers about his decision.
- Uneasy, Mr. Doran comforts Polly and departs for the meeting, leaving her to wait in the room. She rests on the bed crying for a while, neatens her appearance, and then nestles back in the bed, dreaming of her possible future with Mr. Doran.
- Finally, Mrs. Mooney interrupts the reverie by calling to her daughter. Mr. Doran, according to Mrs. Mooney, wants to speak with Polly.

3.3.4 Themes/Issues

- Marrying more for obligations than love.
  The short story projects marriage as a social convention and a trap. Mrs. Mooney's and Mr. Doran's propositions and hesitations suggest that marriage is more about social standards, public perception, and formal sanctions than about mere feelings. To one

party, marriage offers promise and profit and to the other entrapment and loss. What begins as a simple affair becomes a tactical game of obligation and reparation.

- A single mother’s challenges.

  The character of Mrs. Mooney illustrates the challenges that a single mother of a daughter faces, but her scheme to marry Polly into a higher class mitigates any sympathetic response from the reader.

- Moral Paralysis

  Doran’s character is representative of the moral paralysis that Joyce attempted to project in Dubliners. Mr. Doran agonizes about the limitations and loss of respect that marrying beneath him will bring, but he ultimately relents out of fear of social critique from his priest, his employer, Mrs. Mooney, and Polly's violent brother. When Polly visits him in distress he feels as helpless as she does, even though he tells her not to worry. He goes through the motions of what society expects of him, not according to what he intuitively feels. When he descends the stairs to meet with Mrs. Mooney, he yearns to escape but knows no one is on his side. The “force” that pushes him down the stairs is a force of anxiety about what others will think of him. While Mr. Doran's victimization by Mrs. Mooney evokes pity, his self-concern and harsh complaints about Polly's unpolished background and manner of speaking make him an equal counterpart to Mrs. Mooney. He worries little about Polly's integrity or feelings, and instead considers his years of hard work and good reputation now verging on destruction.

- A microcosm of Dublin city and life.

  The boarding house offers a panorama of Dublin city and life. As a place where “everyone knows everyone else's business,” the boarding house serves as a microcosm of Dublin. Various classes mix under its roof, but relationships are gauged and watched, class lines are constantly negotiated, and social standing must override emotions like love. The inhabitants are not free to do what they choose because unstated rules of decorum govern life in the house, just as they do in the city. Such rules maintain order, but they also ensnare people in awkward situations when they have competing and secret

interests. Even the seemingly innocent Polly ultimately appears complicit in Mrs. Mooney's plot. After threatening to kill herself in despair, she suddenly appears happy and unbothered about the dilemma when she is left alone, and she knows Mr. Doran will comply with Mrs. Mooney's wishes. In “The Boarding House,” marriage serves as a fixture of life that Dubliners cannot avoid, and the story shows that strategy and acceptance are the only means of survival.

3.3.5 Characterization

- **Mrs. Mooney**
  The mistress of the boarding house. Mrs. Mooney may have endured a difficult marriage and separation, but she now carries the dubious title of “The Madam,” a term suggestive of her scrupulous managing of the house. She sets a trap for Mr. Doran, so as to secure her daughter's future. She is strong-willed and manipulative.

- **Mr. Doran**
  A man in his thirties with a position in a successful wine seller's company. His good job contributes to his fear of scandal, which makes it easy to manipulate him into marrying Polly. His character is representative of “the moral paralysis”. He knows that he is trapped, but he does not have enough moral courage to do anything against the trap.

- **Jack Mooney**
  Polly's tough brother, fond of drink and fighting. He is a bully and acts as Polly’s guardian. A typical character of a drunkard in Dublin.

- **Polly Mooney**
  A pretty young girl who helps around her mother's boarding house. She seems to have no will or desires of her own, beyond fulfilling those of her mother. She also seems to an opportunist like her mother.

3.3.6 Narrative Techniques

Stream of consciousness; it reveals the character's feelings, thoughts, and actions, often following an associative rather than a logical sequence, without commentary by the author. For example, “She was a little vulgar; some times she said "I seen" and "If I had've known." But what would grammar matter if he really loved her?”

Symbolism; references to music, mist ("his glasses become so dimmed with moisture") have symbolic associations.

Irony; Mrs. Mooney’s character.

3.3.7 Questions

What is the setting of the short story? (How does Joyce establish social and cultural background?)

How does the plot develop? (How does he organize and relate incidents?)

What is the problem/conflict which is developed as the story (plot) progresses?

What is the climax of that problem/conflict?

What happens after the climax? (Resolution/Conclusion)

How are the characters developed?

What does the story tell us about what the characters are wearing; their outward appearance?

What does the story tell us through what the characters are wearing; their outward appearance?

What qualities do the characters represent?

How do the characters contribute to the development of the plot?

What is the theme(s), issue(s) dealt with in the short story.

How do the characters contribute to communicate the theme of the story?

What is special about the use of language to narrate the story?

What kind of style has he used?

What kind of techniques/literary features has the writer used to narrate incidents and depict characters?

3.4 Professional Mourners

By Alagu Subramaniam (1915-1971)

3.4.1 Author

Alagu Subramaniam belongs to the older generation of Tamils (Gunatillake, 1998). He was born in 1915 and died in 1971. He was the author of a novel; 'Mr. Moon – and two collections of stories', 'Time and other stories' (1971) and 'The Big Girl' (1964). Professional Mourners appeared in the last collection. He had lived in England for 15 years and returned to Sri Lanka in 1948. His experience in England seems to have matured him, making him 'critical of his community yet sympathetic to it' (Gunatillake, 2005). In Professional Mourners 'he is at his best' (Gunatillake, 2005). In this short story, he exposes the inhumanity of the caste system.

3.4.2 Plot

- The speaker's grand mother dies late at night on a Saturday.
- A big crowd of relations and villagers gathered in front of the house.
- The speaker's uncle- a teacher in a village school, took over the management of affairs. He became the self styled Master of Ceremonies.
- He was furious that the Professional Mourners had not come.
- He rushed out to seek the Professional Mourners.
- He and the speaker crossed an uninhabited scrubland and came to the sea-shore.
- The uncle upbraided the fishermen who were getting ready to go to sea, for not coming to pay their respects to the dead.
- He strode on to a poorer area where the Professional Mourners lived.
- He was not happy with the two who were ready to come. The other two were not able to come as their mother had died.
- The uncle ignored this information and sought them out.
- The two women pleaded with 'uncle' to be released from mourning.
- He was intractable and insisted that they 'perform' their duties.
- The uncle thought only of the 'status' of the family, which according to him would be reflected by the number of Professional Mourners.

- Heartlessly he dragged the Mourners to the funeral house.
- On reaching the grandmother's house the Professional Mourners 'performed' as they were expected to.
- They repeated the words and phrases uttered by grieving relations and made a big outcry.
- The uncle boasted of his prowess of forcing the 'mourners'. The relations were appaled and forced him to apologize to them.
- The speaker's father paid the two women whose mother had died.
- But the women stayed back and offered their services.
- The 'uncle' who had worked himself to a pitch of passion collapsed.
- The Professional Mourners worked in unison.
- They went on crying repeating the words of various mourners.

3.4.3 Characters

- The 'uncle' (Master of Ceremonies) plays the key role.
- He brings the action/ plot to a crisis.
- He is domineering and without pity.
- He prevents two Professional Mourners from genuinely mourning their mother's death.
- He is a 'caricatured' mouthpiece of his caste and class.
- He cuts a figure- Draws attention to himself.
- He ends up as a ludicrous figure- His self-importance is exposed and brought to nothing.
- The Professional Mourners represent a social stereotype- a down-trodden and deprived caste, utterly unprivileged.
- They do not have even the right to private grief.
- They are so conditioned to their 'caste' norms that they go on 'mourning' even after, being released from their 'duty'.
- Their mourning without grief becomes so funny to the extent that it becomes ludicrous. It reaches a satirical level. The educated members of the family are more considerate and compassionate. They dissociate themselves from the rigid

conventions of the ‘caste system’. They sympathize with the Professional Mourners and pay them to stop their conventional role and go away.

- Caste is rigidly practiced by those who live in the village and have no education or limited education.

3.4.4 Themes/ Issues

- Caste as a rigid, inhuman social system.
- Suppression conditions the human psychology. The suppressor has a superiority complex. The suppressed develop an ‘inferiority’ or ‘servile’ mentality.
- ‘Low’ caste is associated with poverty, illiteracy and servility.
- Social attitudes can be fought with education.
- Sub-cultures exist in different regions.

3.4.5 Questions

a. Does the short story have a climax? Would you say it is rather an anti-climax?
b. List the places where irony is created.
c. What is the effect of the story? How is this effected?
d. Who and what is represented by the Master of Ceremonies?
e. The Professional Mourners are presented as pathetic figures. How is this representation important to the working out of the theme of the short story?

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4. Poetry

4.1 Introduction to poetry

4.1.2 What is poetry?

- The poem is a capsule where we wrap up our punishable secrets (William Carlos Williams)
- A poem is a well –wrought urn (Cleanth Brooks)
- A verbal icon (W.K.Wimsatt)
- A poem is a walk (A.R. Ammons)
- A poem is a meteor (Wallace Stevens)
- A poem might be called a pseudo person.
- Like a person it is unique and addresses the reader personally (W.H. Auden)
- A poem is a hand, a hook, a prayer. It is a soul in action (Edward Hirsch)

The various statements given above by poets and poetry critics suggest the difficulty one faces in defining poetry. As Murfin and Ray (1997) argue, 'there are as many ways to characterize poetry as there are people. The word poetry originates from the Greek word 'poiesis', which means 'making' and as the ancient Greeks recognized, the poet is first and foremost a 'maker'. It suggests that there is no contradiction between the truth that poetry is somehow or other inspired and, simultaneously, an art (techne), a craft requiring a blend of talent, training, and long practice. But the 'made thing' has magical potency. What Picasso said about painting being more than an aesthetic operation is equally true of poetry. According to him, 'art is a form of magic designed as a mediator between this strange, hostile world and us, a way of seizing the power by giving form to our terrors as well as our desires'.

4.1.3 History of poetry

Poetry has a long and illustrious history. Many of the earliest literary and often religious works are poems. At the beginning poetry was a collective construction as is witnessed by the folk ballad and religious hymns – it played a major role in religious and other ceremonial functions. It also helped to preserve history and traditions. This information was often passed orally from generation to generation. This situation changed over time. Poetry became the vehicle for drama and then for individual expression. Today poetry is seen as a highly

individualistic endeavour. Actually no other form of expression is as intensely personal and unique as poetry.

4.1.4 Poetry and Prose

Poetry is often distinguished from prose. There is an obvious difference in form. A deeper difference is that the meaning of a prose passage can be easily restated while the meaning of a poem cannot be so easily paraphrased. 'While poetry can be approached intellectually, it is equally an emotional experience (Murfin and Ray, 1997) Unlike prose which is meant to be read, poetry is meant to be experienced. Poetry is not exact; neither is it factual. It is rich with a suggestiveness born from the interplay of words and sounds. The suggestive essence of poetry means that poets commonly make use of figurative language and symbolism. Poetry uses tropes as well as figures of speech that enhances both the imagery and the sensory impact of the poem. The connotations of words and the relationships among words, phrases, and ideas all add to the purely denotative meanings of the poet's language. Furthermore, auditory elements –the sound and rhythms of letters words, phrases and lines – are key aspects of the poem and play a large role in how the poem is read and understood.

The language of poetry also distinguishes it from prose. Prose is often discursive. Poetry uses language economically. The brevity of poetic expression in contrast to prose affords it a particular intensity.

Poetry and verse

As poetry is different from prose, it is also different to verse – any rhythmical or metrical composition. Poetry is distinguished from verse by virtue of its imaginative quality, intricate structure, serious or lofty subject matter or noble purpose.

Poetic 'Genres'

With its long history originating in religious ritual and tribal narrative, poetry has taken many forms and acquired many features. To put poetry into a historical perspective, it seems to be rational to begin with the ballad.

Ballad

"A poem that recounts a story -- generally some dramatic episode – and that has been composed to be sung". The traditional ballad is also known as the popular or folk ballad. Ballads may address noble subjects such as tragic love. They were sung by common people and hence employ simple language. The tradition ballads most frequently sung were found in the sixteenth and seventeenth century Britain.

Popular ballads were passed down orally from one generation to the next. This oral transmission results in ongoing and continuous modification so that many variations occur in the ballad over time and across geographical space. The tradition of oral transmission from generation to generation has made the folk ballad the common property of the community.

The traditional or folk ballad exhibits the following features:

(i) **Simple stanzas** (ballad stanzas)

(ii) **Abrupt transitions between stanzas** due to weak verses that have been dropped.

(iii) **Refrains which often include a nonsense line** that perhaps occurred during oral transmission

(iv) **Stock descriptive phrases** to facilitate memorisation

(v) **Incremental repetition**: a restatement of a phrase or line with a variation that adds additional information or meaning

(vi) **Dialogue** used to create character and advance the story line.

(vii) **Impersonal language** that keeps out the singer's personal feelings /judgments about the ballad's content.

Beside the traditional ballad, there are also broadside ballads and literary ballads.

Sonnet

"Is a lyric poem that almost always consists of fourteen lines? The word had originated from the Italian word *sonnetto,* meaning "little song". It follows one of several conventional rhyme schemes. A sonnet may address a range of issues or themes but love is the most prevalent. Two major types of sonnets exist: the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet and the Shakespearean or English

sonnet. The Italian sonnet has fourteen lines and consists of two parts, an octave (eight lines) with a rhyme scheme of abbaabba and a sestet or six lines usually rhyming cdecdc or cdcdcd.

The Shakespearean sonnet also has fourteen lines, with three quatrains followed by a couplet, with a rhyme scheme of ababcdcdefefgg. The Spenserian is a variation of the Shakespearean sonnet.

The sonnet was introduced to English Poetry in the sixteenth century by Thomas Wyatt and Earl of Surrey.

Ode

A long, serious, and usually meditative lyric poem that treats a noble or elevated subject in a dignified manner. There were two types of odes:

(i) Pindaric odes were heroic and exalted the subject with extreme praise
(ii) Horatian odes were more detached, and balanced with criticism

The origin of the ode can be traced to Pindar. It was a Choral poem intended to be sung at a public event. Originally, odes had a three stanzaic form:

(a) strophe
(b) anti-strophe
(c) epode

The strophe is the first part of a choral ode in which the Chorus chanted while moving from one part of the stage to another, usually from the right to the left. The Antistrophe was the reverse movement when the Chorus walked from the left to the right. This was followed by the Epode which was chanted while standing still. The strophe and anti- strophe exhibited the same meter which was different from that of epode.

In the classical ode, the antistrophe offered an alternative comment to the subject presented in the strophe. The epode usually offered a concluding comment.

Lyric

A *Song* in Greek. "The lyric is one of the oldest, most popular and enduring forms of literary expression in the English language." It is the lyric that later diversified into ballad, sonnet and ode. Even in the diversification, the lyric has retained its original characteristics:

(a) subjective expression of thought and emotion
(b) the individualistic and imaginative focus
(c) melodic tone

The term *lyric* derives from the Greek word for lyre and refers to any poem composed to be sung while accompanied by a lyre.

Today a lyric is a brief melodic and imaginative poem, characterized by a fervent but structured expression of private thoughts and emotions by a single speaker who speaks in the first person.

4.1.5 Language in poetry

According to Coleridge, poetry is the arrangement of the best words in the best order. Widdowson (1983) puts it much more elaborately when he says

> "When word is worked into the language patterns of poems it takes on meaning as a feature of their design. Just as familiar and commonplace objects become a part of the configuration of colour and form in a painting and so acquire a particular significance, the word takes on a different value in the unique frame of reference created by the internal patterns of language within the poem."

More detailed comments on language can be found in the guides to individual poems in this text.

4.2 **Sonnets by William Shakespeare**

Genre:Sonnet

The Shakespearean sonnet

- Shakespeare used the 14 line sonnet form developed by the Italian Petrarch and imported to England by Wyatt and Surrey, but moved away from the conventional structure of the octave (8 lines) and the sestet (6 lines), using instead a structure of three quatrains (i.e. a unit of 4 lines) and a concluding couplet.
- In Shakespeare's sonnets three different ideas are expressed in the three quatrains, each growing out of the one preceding it, and the argument is tied up in the couplet.
- Shakespeare also modified the rhyme scheme that was conventionally used, by utilizing independent rhyming patterns for each of the quatrains and as well as the couplet. Thus the rhyme scheme of the Shakespearean sonnet was abab, cdcd, efef, gg
- He also employed the metrical structure of **iambic pentametre** in all his sonnets.
    - An Iambic Pentametre is a line of five iambic feet, each **iamb** consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, thus making a ten-syllable line.

Background

- Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets which were published by Thomas Thorpe in a collection entitled "Shakespeare's Sonnets" in 1609.
- The collection was rather cryptically dedicated to a "Mr. W.H." whose identity has become one of the lasting enigmas surrounding Shakespeare's work. The opinion of scholars is sharply divided, with some suggesting that it is a reference to William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke, while others believe it to refer to Henry Wriothesley, third Earl of Southampton. There is credibility in both possibilities as both were men of means and of literary interest enough to be patrons of Shakespeare; and also since Shakespeare had previously dedicated other works to each: the First Folio to Herbert and *Venus and Adonis* to Wriothesley.
- Though Shakespeare adopted the form hitherto used for sonnets and popularized by Petrarch, Wyatt and Surrey, he was not content to imitate their conventions of

sonneteering. Thus he modified the structure of the sonnet and departed widely from conventional subject mater, disregarding many of the exaggerated and untenable praises found in country love poetry. Hence he left an indelible mark on his sonnet sequence, by even dealing with such themes as Mortality, Time, Deception and the Eternalizing power of the written word.

- Three main figures recur in the sonnets – a Fair Youth (addressed in sonnets 1 – 126), a Dark Lady (whose identity is as much a mystery as the identity of "W.H", and whom we refer to as "Dark" because of the many references to her complexion found in sonnets 127 – 152), and a Rival Poet.

4.2.1 Sonnet 130: "My Mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun"

Summary Sonnet 130 can be considered as an exposition of the Dark Lady, as Shakespeare rejects many of the conventional exaggerations of love poetry in order to praise her. He begins with a bold statement that the eyes of his beloved are "nothing like the sun" (overturning the conventional comparison where the beloved's eyes would be *brighter* than the sun – or at least as bright as it). He continues this same technique throughout the sonnet, understating her attractions (e.g. her lips are red, but not as red as coral; her skin is not as white as snow, her hair appears to be like "black wires") but presenting them honestly. Having dealt with her physical attributes, he then moves on to things like her breath and her speech, always following the same pattern as before. Having created a picture of his beloved "dark lady" that is so far removed from the conventional picture of beauty as to almost disgust, he underlines his love for her stating that she is as special as any woman "belied" (misrepresented) by "false compare" (untrue comparisons).

Analysis In his parodying of the Petrarchan love sonnet, Shakespeare names and the rejects many things especially from the natural world that might appear in a conventional love poem -- the sun, coral, snow, roses, perfume, music and a goddess. Perhaps the most important image is the familiar one in the eleventh and twelfth lines --

the poet has not seen a goddess (he does not claim his mistress is a goddess, as some might do) but knows that his beloved is down to earth or has her feet on the ground. To the reader who wants to see women as dainty and idealized creatures, this may seem shocking; but to the reader who is attracted by real and tangible flesh and blood, the image will be more persuasive.

Themes The sonnet illustrates the sincerity of his love despite the absence of conventional beauty

The sonnet questions the stereotypical idea of beauty

It also satirizes the idealizing and idolizing of the beloved commonly found in love sonnets.

Techniques

i. Shakespeare parodies the Petrarchan style of writing love sonnets (see **Additional material** for an example of Petrarch's love sonnets to his beloved Laura), subverts and reverses the conventions employed by Petrarch.

ii. Use of clichéd imagery (e.g. eyes like the sun, cheeks full of roses, musical speech) – but overturns the cliché in the end.

iii. Meaningful and well developed argument

iv. Satire

Glossary

dun (line 3) a dull, greyish brown colour

damasked (line 5) one of the three types of roses in Shakespeare's time: red, pink and a red and pink mixed rose, which was known by this name as it was believed to have originated from Damascus, in Syria.

reeks (line 8) - the use of 'reeks' was probably not quite as harsh and damaging to the concept of beauty as it seems to a modern ear. In Elizabethan times, it tended to be associated with steamy, sweaty and unsavoury smells. The original meaning seems to have been 'to emit smoke'.

rare (line 13) – precious, of fine and unusual quality

belied (line 13) – falsely portrayed

false compare (line 13) false and deceptive comparisons, insincerities. *compare* could also hint at 'compeer', one who is comparable, on an equal footing.

Additional material

The following extracts illustrate the Petrarchan convention of idealizing the lover:

The way she walked was not the way of mortals
but of angelic forms, and when she spoke
more than an earthly voice it was that sang:

a godly spirit and a living sun
was what I saw, and if she is not now,
my wound still bleeds, although the bow's unbent.

Petrarch, Canzoniere 90 (trans. Mark Musa)

My Lady's hair is threads of beaten gold; Her front the purest crystal eye hath seen;
Her eyes the brightest stars the heavens hold;
Her cheeks, red roses, such as seld have been;
Her pretty lips of red vermilion dye;
Her hand of ivory the purest white;
Her blush AURORA, or the morning sky.
Her breast displays two silver fountains bright;
The spheres, her voice; her grace, the Graces three;
Her body is the saint that I adore;
Her smiles and favours, sweet as honey be.
Her feet, fair THETIS praiseth evermore.
But Ah, the worst and last is yet behind :
For of a griffon she doth bear the mind!

-Bartholomew Griffin-

4.2.2 SONNET 138: "When my love swears that she is made of Truth"

Summary The sonnet describes a less than perfect relationship based on lies and deceit. Each partner is aware of each other's lies, yet they continue to flatter each other. In the first quatrain, the speaker pretends to believe his mistress even though he knows full well that she is lying. At the same time, he is pretending to her that he is younger. In the second quatrain he develops his argument, pointing out that he vainly believes her claim that he is young, even though they both know the opposite to be true, thus together suppressing "simple truth". He then moves on to question why she does not acknowledge her unjust behaviour, and he his old age, arriving at the conclusion that "love's best habit" is in appearing to trust one another, despite knowing that trust has no real basis. The couplet introduces some wry humour by pointing out that the couple are comfortable together because of and despite the lies they tell each other.

Analysis The various meanings of "lie" are used operation in the 1st quatrain itself: to tell untruths, to deceive oneself, and to have sex with someone. The poet is deceiving himself even as he knows that his lover is deceiving him. Also the homonym of made/maid (i.e. a virgin) is also suggested in line 1. Still the speaker prefers to accept his love's declarations though deep down he knows she is swearing falsely. He knows that he is neither a youth nor a man unschooled in the deceptions that are part of the fabric of everyday life.

In the second quatrain "vainly" could refer to his vanity, as well as the futility of foolishly believing his false-speaking beloved. Thus the lovers not only lie to (and with) each other but the speaker, at least, lies to himself.

The two questions rose in the third quatrain about the woman's acknowledgement of her deception and the poet's acknowledgement of his age are significant because they reveal a certain complicity in this false relationship. It also leads to the understanding that "love's best habit is in seeming trust", a line that brilliantly captures the attitude that is 'put on' (i.e.

"habit" as clothing) by people to maintain a relationship, in keeping with the usual practice (i.e. "habit" as custom) of deception.

With the concluding couplet comes a sense of circularity and completion by returning to the pun on "lie" stated in the opening quatrain. They continue to "lie" with each other because habits are hard to break. It is better to enjoy the pleasure of this lying relationship than acknowledge the woman's falsehoods and the speaker's old age.

Themes The nature of truth and flattery in romantic relationships,
the divergence between appearance and reality.

Techniques i. Punning – various meanings of "lie", "made", "vainly"
ii. Metaphor – "love's best habit"

Glossary

made of truth (Line 1) truthful, faithful in love, unable to lie. It also suggests 'maid' i.e a virgin

untutored youth (Line 3) inexperienced

unlearned (Line 4) unaware of

world's false subtleties (Line 4) the ways of the world, the cynical tactics used by the world

I credit (Line 7) I believe

simple truth (Line 8) the obvious, unadorned truth

habit (Line 11) usage, custom or clothing

seeming (Line 11) appearing

4.3 Background to Elizabethan and Metaphysical poetry

Elizabethan literature generally reflects the exuberant self-confidence of a nation expanding its powers and its increasing wealth during times of success, prosperity and learning.

John Donne's writing was moulded and stimulated by the times he lived.

The Rennaissance in England was an era of new learning which resulted in reforming and revolutionising the thinking and reasonning of the time.

It was also the time when England began building an empire.

The beginning of English naval power and overseas exploration brought new knowledge which continuosly questioned the Catholic world view that had previously dominated intellectual and artistic life.

New knowledge and information widened horizens with a new understanding of the nature of the universe which resulted in the theories of Nicolaus opernicus and Johannes Kepler.

4.3.2 Origin of the term Metaphysical

Samuel Johnson was the first to call John Donne and the followers of his poetic tradition "metaphysical poets". According to him, in the beginning of the 17th century there "appeared a race of writers that may be termed the metaphysical poets" *The Lives of the Poets* (1781). However, the poets he recognized as metaphisical poets did not form a school or start a movement. Most of them did not even know or read each other. George Herbert , Henry Vaughan, Thomas Traherne, Abraham Cowley, and Andrew Marvell are other principal metaphysical poets.

4.3.3 Main Characteristics of Metaphysical poetry

- The use of Metaphysical conceits, i.e. a far-fetched and ingenious extended comparison which is very original and logical.
- According to Ben Jonson, metaphysical wit was made up of "heterogenous ideas" that were "yoked by violence together".
- Ideas were often presented as a logical and persuasive argument. Usually there is an argument with the poet's lover, with God or with himself.
- Use of learning, intellect and philosophy: Metaphysical poets played with thought as the Elizabeathans had played with words. They used new knowlege gained from geography, astronomy, medicine, chemistry and physics, as well as alchemy
- The poems are often based on personal experinces or moments in life.
- Use of colloquial, everyday speech instead of conventional poetic diction favoured by the poets of the Petrarchan tradition
- Abrupt and dramtic openings
- Rugged meter (not sweet and musical) to convey their attitude and purpose.
- Conventional themes handled unconventionally: love, with its physical and sexual aspects, the union of souls, and religious devotion.
- Metaphors created from all spheres of life and learning
- Some psychological analysis
- Lyrical
- Bold and innovative in the selection of subject matter and in the use of new knowledge and learning.

4.3.4 Biographical sketch

John Donne -- the poet and prose writer -- is regarded as one of the most important writers of the Renaissance period.

John Donne was born to a Roman Catholic family in 1572.

After studying at Oxford, he took part in expeditions of the Earl of Essex to Cadiz in 1596 and the Azores in 1597, and became a private secreatry to the Lord Keeper, Sir Thomas Egerton.

Later he was ordained into the Anglican Church in 1619, becoming the Dean of St Pauls.

John Donne's works cover an enormous variety of genres and subjects which include religious works, essays, sermons and poetry – satires, lyrics, elegies, epigrams and sonnets.

4.3.5 The Good-Morrow by John Donne

This poem was written in 1633. The title is taken from the first line of the second stanza.

Genre

An aubade, a morning song sung to a lover after a night of lovemaking

Form

Seven line stanzas with a rhyme scheme of ABABCC

Themes

The immortality of love

Perfect love that is a result of the union of souls

A frank expression and an assertion of passionate love.

Donne celebrates love as a supreme experince in the world. He rejects the rigid and superficial Elizabethan conventions influenced by Petrarch. Instead he adds realism, sincerity and passion.

Form and structure

The first stanza refers to the past experiences of love, the second one is about the present and the poet's awareness of the uniqueness of their love, and the third comments on the future, in which their love is immortal.

In the first stanza the lover asks a rhetorical queston on the life he led until he discovered his present love. He sees his former love as an immature and a chlidish one which now seemed unreal and of superficial emotions, as if it was was done in a kind of sleep, or unconsciously. In contrast is his present love, which he glorifies.

But this, all pleasures fancies be;
If ever any beauty I did see,
Which I desired, and got, 'twas but a dream of thee'.

The second stanza is therefore a celebration of the present. Each soul has "awakened" to the other, and has discovered a whole world in it. The union is self-sufficient; the outer world is rejected, under the symbols of maps and discoverers. Here the poet shows his awarness of the new world and new learning.

The third stanza shows the perfect union and the contentment of the lovers. The poet says their love is equally given, or “equally mix’d”, which, therefore will not weaken or die. Their perfect love is not only immortal; it makes the lovers immortal too.

> ‘If our two love be one, or thou and I
> Love so alike that none do slacken, none can die’.

Techniques

- Metaphysical conceit of comparing the two lovers to two hemispheres
- First person point of view
- Dramatic and colloquial opening with intimate rhetorical questions posed to his lover
  - ‘I wonder, by my troth, what thou and I Did till loved?
- Use of logical arguments, and an argumentative tone
- Alliteration
  - ". . . *W*ere *w*e not *w*ean'd till then?" "Or *s*norted we in the *S*even *S*leepers' den?"
- Repetition
  - “My face in thine eye, and thine in mine appears”
- Parallelism
  - “without sharp north, without declining west”

.

- Invocation: In line 8, the poet addresses himself to his soul and his lover's, and wishes them a "good-morrow". The whole of the poem is a sort of invocation; the poet is speaking to his lady, who doesn't intervene.
- Metaphors
  “*hemi*sphere” is a perfect metaphor for any incomplete thing.

- Imagery

    - Draw images from highly unpoetic sources. In the last line, “love so alike, that none doe slacken, none can die” is a reference to medical theory of the day which believed that good health was maintained by the perfect balance of the four humours. The increase of one humour (for example, blood or phlegm) over the other results in illness. Here the poet compares this balance to their love, which is given equally to each other.

    - Use of abstract images showing the influence of art, philosophy, and religion.

        ex- . Donne’s poem suggests the Neo-Platonic concept of the link between physical love and spiritual love: experiencing physical love is the first step on the way to lovind God.

Glossary

by my troth (line 1) a colloquial swearword, an oath.

The seven sleepers den (line 4) The seven young men of Ephesus who were believed to have escaped the Roman persecution of the Christians by sleeping in a cave for 200 years.

4.3.6 “Goe, and catch a falling star” by John Donne

This poem was also published in 1633.

Form

Unusual xtanzas of nine lines of varying length, with particularly short – two word – lines (7^{th} and 8^{th} lines)

Themes

Infidelity, fickleness of females, female sexuality, inconstancy of women

This is a playful poem that is experiments with imagery and is a good example of metaphysical wit, written for private enjoyment among friends. It is probably not meant to impart a serious or complex theme.

Structure

- The first stanza gives seven impossible commands. The first four orders themselves are enough to tell the reader that what the poet is suggesting can not ever happen. All the impossible tasks point to the futility of attempting to find a woman ‘true and fair’. Then he challenges the reader to "Teach me to hear mermaids singing," meaning that he has as much chance of acquiring that skill as a man has of finding a faithful woman.
- In second stanza, he further suggests that a seeker could, " Ride ten thousand nights and days," until his hair turns, " snow white," without finding "a woman true, and fair."
- In the third stanza he confirms his cynical standpoint by addressing the reader. He accuses women of a total lack of the ability to remain true to any man. The whole poem has a sense of playful tone as in traditional English Riddle Songs.

Techniques

- Metaphysical conceit from the field of travel and sailing: “what wind will serve to advance an honest mind?”
- First person point of view- ‘Tell me where all the years are,...’
- Dramatic opening with an order given in an authoritarian tone: “Go, catch a falling star”
- Rhetorical questions – the whole poem is a series of unanswerable questions.
- Logical and argumentative – the questions in each verse end with a cynical answer

- Colloquial language
- Humour / playfulness
- Startling imagery
    - Ex.- ‘mandrake root’, a plant that is believed to increase human fertility, is used to create humour as the root itself cannot conceive a child. this act of futility is compared to a chance of finding a woman ‘true and fair’.
- Irony and cynicism in the tone of the poet

Glossary

mandrake root (line 2) **–** Shaped like a female body

Devil’s foot (line 4)– divided, or cleft, like that of a goat’s

4.4 George Herbert

George Herbert was the son of Magdalen Herbert, friend of John Donne and the younger brother of Lord Herbert of Cherbury. He was born in 1593 and had an impressive career at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was appointed public orator and received an annual allowance from King James. His ambition was to become a courtier. According to a contemporary writer, “he loved fine clothes, as orator at Cambridge, he showed himself an adept in learned, elegant and outrageous flatter, and he hoped that as his predecessors he might attain the place of a secretary of State.” But the powerful friends on whom he relied for high office died and he decided to take orders. It was not a happy decision. Herbert himself makes the following observation about his decision “I did acquaint a court friend with my resolution who persuaded me to alter it as too much below my birth and the excellent abilities and endorsement in my mind”. But there was no option and the choice seems to have caused much tension and trauma in Herbert and they are reflected in his poems.

The note of conflict and personal experience give life to a poetry which would otherwise have been too entirely doctrinal and didactic.

Although becoming a priest was a decision imposed on him, Herbert reconciled to his situation and there are records that he was a very dedicated and humane representative of the English church. In fact in him the church found a voice of its own- His first volume of poetry ‘The Temple, Sacred Poems and Ejaculations was printed in 1633, the year that Herbert died.

4.4.1 Poetry of George Herbert

George Herbert’s poetry is widely considered to be some of the finest metaphysical poetry. The main theme in his poetry is the struggle between the ordinary lay life and a life surrendered to God. It reflects his own life- the tension between the courtier and priest.

George Herbert was influenced by John Donne, and the new metaphysical strain of the poetry of his time. But he was not restricted by John Donne’s style, and developed his own. The metaphysical strain in his poetry is characterized by alternating moods of shock and repose.

Herbert’s poems are quite musical and includes many different forms of song and poem, but they also reflect the human discourse of the time-conversational, persuasive and proverbial.

He often uses Christian imagery but in unexpected ways. In this respect his poems are semi-autobiographical and explain the nature of God's love, as he discovered it through his own experience. This is illustrated in his poem- Holy Scripture I where a counter statement disputes the initial content. It has been remarked that, "Herbert's poems are rough and troubled by contrary movement". Herbert questions conventional attitudes to poetry (and art).

> Doth poetry,
> wear Venus' livery? Only serve her. turn
> why are not sonnets made of Thee? and lays upon thine altar burnt?

Sonnets were essentially love poems, at the time and hence carnal and seoular. He changed this situation as did Donne but Donne used the sonnet to write secular poems as well.

Critics have commented on Herbert's 'wit'. "a wit like a penknife is too narrow a sheaf, too sharp for his body"
His alertness to nuance is uncanny"

This is evident in affliction I

> Yet, for I threatened the siege to rouse
> not simpering all mine age
> then often didst with academic praise
> melt and dissolve my rage
> I took thy sweetened pill.

Protest and rebellion are dissolved in acceptance and reconciliation.

4.4.2Avarice

Theme-

- Greed of man for ‘money’
- Goes deeper to cover the larger perspective of the process of giving validity to money.
- The relationship between secularism and the fall of man from the higher purpose of spiritual advancement
- Herbert concentrates on the process that gives money value- Metal is transferred from its ‘cave or grot’ and hammered into coins. Money is hammered with a man’s face.
- This means money is given a stamp, a right to command the labour of man and the produce of the earth.
- Money is made both physically and through consent. It is turned into something that has value.
- As long as men possess money they think they are wealthy. The value of money is ‘perpetual’ while man’s possession of it is ‘ephemeral’.
- Money is valued as an expression of man’s intentions (his earthly desires).

‘Metaphysical wit’

- Final couplet clinches Herbert’s argument and gives expression to the metaphysical wit.

  ‘Man calleth thee his wealth
  who made thee rich;
  and while he digs out thee,
  falls in the ditch’

  The roles of man and money are reversed.
- The relationship between man and money is perceived, as the ‘relationship between state and religion (Christianity).
- Money is a symbol of government (authority of the State)

  Governance is possible because of consent (the governed give their tacit consent) a coin/ note is given value.
- This comprises the basis of all monetary systems and ensure money supply and gives it value.
- The consent given by man and the contract upheld by the State becomes a competitor to God’s purpose (the dichotomy between God and Ceaser.)

- ‘Soul that belongs to God and the ‘coin of the empire’. Too much preoccupation with the former leads to a neglect of the latter. Politics and economics are the ‘Province’ of the state (Ceaser’s own: the physical body)
- Central issue is the conflict between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Man. Christ turned his back on the Kingdom of the World.
- Poet argues man should turn his back on money which cannot accompany him when he ‘falls into the ditch’
- It is a ‘bane of bliss and source of wo’
- Money (caring for the physical body/ politics and government) symbolize sin.
- By their existence they create a ‘God’ over God.
- Man’s greed for money closes the Kingdom of God to him.

Techniques

The metaphysical ‘wit’ in the poem is generated by using the following techniques:

1.	Personification	-	Conceives ‘money’ as person, addresses it as ‘thou’ and ‘thee’.
2.	Metaphors	-	‘Kingdom’ (secular world, man’s soul)
		-	‘Cave and grot’ (mine)
		-	‘Stamp and Seal’ (authority, governance)
		-	Ditch (spiritual degeneration)
3.	Anti-thesis	-	‘Bane of bliss’
4.	Versification	-	Four quartrains and a final clinching couplet.
5.	Alliteration	-	‘thou, that thou’
		-	‘fresh and fine’
		-	‘stamp and seal’
6.	Assonance	-	source of woe
		-	base and low
		-	thee bright
		-	comest thou
		-	cave and grot
7.	Paradox	-	‘Thou art the man, and man but dross to thee’
		-	‘while he (man) digs out thee, falls in the ditch’
8.	Repetition (for emphasis)	-	base and low
		-	Cave and grot

Activities

a) Give words from contemporary usage for the following words/ phrases:
woe, whence, fain, wert, grot, dross

b) Paraphrase the following lines in modern English :

- money, thou bane of bliss
- thy parentage is base and low
- he was fain, when thou wert destitute
- by fire he made thee bright
- thou hast got the face of man
- stamp and seal transferred our right

c) Trace the process of minting money as described by George Herbert.

d) Write a short note on one of the following topics.

i. The metaphysical wit in Avarice

ii. Wealth vs. Soul

4.5 The Augustan Poets

The poets Dryden and Pope belong to the Augustan Age, which refers to the last decades of the 17th and the first half of the 18th century. During this time dramatists, poets and novelists such as John Dryden, Alexander Pope, Joseph Addison, Jonathan Swift and Oliver Goldsmith wrote in imitation of Classical writers such as Virgil, Horace, Ovid and Tibellus who lived during the reign of the Emperor Augustus (27 BC - AD 14). It is also called the neoclassical age for this reason.

Augustan poets believed that the 'nature' of the world was one that was derived from Classical theory – that there is a rational and comprehensive moral order of the universe created by God. This view came from Classical theory and affected all aspects of their writing.

Both Dryden and Pope described their views on writing based on the concept of nature: Dryden in *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), and Pope in *Essay on Criticism* (1711). Dryden was probably the most prominent personality during the early part of the Augustan age. He forms the link between the Restoration and the Augustan age. He initially wrote Restoration drama, and later wrote satirical, allegorical verses, including *Absalom and Achitophel*. Pope dominated the latter years of the Augustan Age.

Features of Augustan poetry

- satirised politicians, public figures as well as social foibles (minor failings) of the upper classes
- A striving for harmony, decorum and precision in content, language as well as form
- the imitation of classical models
- "The phrase [Augustan age] suggests a period of urbane and classical elegance in writing, a time of harmony, decorum and proportion" (Cuddon 1981: 62)
    - 'Urbane' refers to the elegance, polish and sophistication associated with life in cities, which is reflected in the content, the settings as well as the language of these poets

- Decorum, or more specifically literary decorum, refers to the conventions of language appropriate to the subject matter, as well as to appropriate human behaviour, the subject of many Augustan poems

- The use of allegory

Satire in the Augustan Age

The Augustan age was known as the Golden Age of satire, gave the form a new dignity and an identity.

Satire is a type of verse or prose that criticizes an ridicules the vices and the excesses of society, usually with the intent of putting things right. So they satirised politicians (Achitophel, Zimri), writers (Shadwell as well as Zimri) and the excesses of people in high society (the two families in The Rape of the Lock).

Satirists believe that they have a function to perform in society, morally and aesthetically. Their duty was to promote justice, order, as well as creative perfection through their satire. In Dryden's words, the outcome of satire should be "the amendment of vices".

They satirise by using humour and wit, as well as extremely harsh criticism

Augustan satire is largely derived from the Classical tradition of satirists such as Aristophanes, Juvenal, Horace, Martial and Petronius.

There were two types of satire:

1) The Horatian Satire, in the tradition of Horace – gentler, more sympathetic criticism, written as a more tolerant, urbane and amused spectator of human foibles. Horatian satires ridiculed their subjects through clever and amusing descriptions

Ex: The Portrait of Zimri and the rest of Absalom *and Achitophel*, and *The Rape of the Lock*, are all Horatian satires

2) The Juvenalian Satire, in the tradition of Juvenal – often angry and harsh criticism that is bitter, misanthropic and consumed with indignation. Juvenalian satirists point an angry, accusing finger at their subjects.

   Ex: Pope's *Dunciad* and the works of Jonathan Swift are examples of Juvenalian satire. Swift, in particular, is known for his extremely harsh, even savage criticism. In contrast, there is humour, and control over the anger in the satire of both Dryden and Pope.

Satire in the Augustan age also included the form of the poem, the Alexandrine couplet (see **form** in "Zimri"). The order the satirist seeks in society is reflected in the order of this unvaried poetic form.

Although the Golden Age of satire was the Augustan age, satire is evident in mediaeval writing such as beast tales and fabliaux, in Chaucer, etc.

Dryden and Pope, along with Addison, Steele and Johnson are considered the best satirists in English literature.

4.5.1 The portrait of Zimri in "Absalom and Achitophel" by John Dryden

Biographical sketch

John Dryden, the poet, literary critic, and dramatist, was born in 1631 in Northamptonshire, England, and died in 1700. Dryden was well known for his plays as well as his poetry during his day.

He studied Classics in Westminster School, where he was a King's scholar, and at Trinity College, Cambridge. After graduation in 1654, he moved to London. His father died in 1657, the same year he entered the civil service. He also began writing plays (heroic tragedies) and satires during this time, the first significant one being Heroic Stanzas (1658) on the death of Oliver Cromwell. He subsequently wrote several poems in praise of the King, Charles II.

Dryden married Lady Elizabeth Howard, the daughter of the Earl of Berkshire, in 1663. They had three sons. His first play *The Wild Gallant* was first performed in 1662, and the next, *The Rival Ladies* (1663), also included his now well-known principles of dramatic criticism. He wrote *Annus Mirabilis* in 1666 to celebrate the English navy's victory over a battle in the Anglo-Dutch war.

Dryden wrote *An Essay on Dramatic Poesy* in 1668 when the theatres were reopened after the Restoration. In the same year he earned a contract with the King's Theatre Company to produce three plays per year. He was made Poet Laureate in 1668, an appointment given by the British monarch to write verses celebrating national occasions and honouring the Royal Family.

His best play *All for Love*, written in 1678, was his first work in blank verse. He also continued to write political essays. In 1679 he was beaten up by thugs in an attack apparently ordered by a nobleman who suspected him of writing *An Essay on Satire* which ridiculed public figures. The real author of this essay was never found out, neither was Dryden's hand in it proven.

Absalom and Achitophel appeared in 1681. His didactic religious poem promoting Anglicanism, *Religio Laici*, followed in 1682. After the Revolution of 1688 that overthrew King James II and

brought about the ascension of William III, Dryden was out of favour with the government and court and lost his laureateship. His only income then was from writing plays and translating poetry from Latin and Greek, including Virgil, Ovid, Lucretius, Horace, Theocritus. He also modernized Chaucer.

Dryden died in May 1700 from infection caused by gout, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

Genre

Absalom and Achitophel (A&A) is an allegorical, mock-heroic epic, a political satire.

Form

The poem is written in Alexandrines, which are heroic couplets of iambic pentameters. Each line consists of ten syllables, or five metrical feet, and this stays unchanged in the entire poem.

Background to the poem: Politics of the time

A&A was written in a time of political turmoil. The King at the time, Charles II, had no legitimate children, so his brother James Stuart, the Duke of York, was to ascend the throne after him. Although the king of England is the head of the Church of England (Anglican Church), James had converted to Catholicism. This angered the Parliament, particularly the Earl of Shaftsbury ("Achitophel" in the poem) who wanted one of the illegitimate children of the king, the Duke of Monmouth ("Absalom" in the poem), to be king instead, and wanted a bill passed barring James' ascension (the Exclusion bill).

During this time, anti-catholic sentiment among the public was whipped up through pamphlets and rumour. The false story of a conspiracy about the Catholics to take over the country was spread deliberately (the Popish Plot), and many believed and acted on it, persecuting and even executing Catholics. They were forced to take a pledge of allegiance to the State (which was Anglican, or Church of England) and those who refused were branded traitors.

Dryden wrote A&A during this controversy. The poem is very critical of Shaftsbury and Monmouth, and generally supportive of King Charles II ("David" in A&A) and James, though he is not uncritical of their flaws.

The character of Zimri is based on the Duke of Buckingham, a supporter of Shaftsbury. Buckingham was a poet and a dramatist as well as a politician. He had a brilliant mind, but was inconsistent and profligate. Dryden saw him as a wasted talent who was unnecessarily subordinating himself to Shaftsbury and his crowd.

Although the poem was based on political events, there is also a personal attack in this extract. Zimri, the Duke of Buckingham had ridiculed Dryden very effectively in his play, *The Rehearsal* (1671), in which Dryden was the main personage. Dryden was attacking him in return in the portrait of Zimri. According to Dryden, "The jest went round, and he was laughed at in his turn who began the frolic," as he described the event in *The Discourse on Satire*, suggesting that the exchange was not taken very personally by either himself or Buckingham.

Background to the poem: the allegory

The poem borrows from a Biblical tale from the Old Testament of King David's third son Absalom who rebels against his father, and is killed.

Dryden describes the contemporary political events allegorically through this Biblical story of Absalom's revolt. King Charles is David in A&A, England is Israel, London is Jerusalem, etc.

Zimri was a King of Israel (800 BC) who reigned for seven days after killing the king Elah. When the army elected another king, he set fire to his palace and perished. Therefore the name Zimri suggests a traitor who murdered his master.

It is said that Dryden wrote the poem A&A at the King Charles II's request, to turn people against Shaftesbury.

Description of the poem

The extract describes a character that is excessive in practically every aspect of his life: in his occupations, in his reactions, in his likes and dislikes, in his point of view, in his attitude to people, in is lifestyle and in the way he spends money.

Thus, Zimri can be described as fickle, overenthusiastic, profligate, impetuous and inconsistent. These negative qualities are brought to light one by one through the progression of the couplets. Dryden does not use any of these adjectives to describe Zimri. Instead, he is able to convey their meaning by describing his personality and his actions.

Themes

There is a strong moral theme in the extract which is indirectly brought out through the portrayal of the Zimri: That a man must be rational and be guided by reason in all aspects of his life.

It is particularly important that public figures are guided by reason, as they have a greater social and moral responsibility towards others in society.

The poem also suggests that the inability to curb such excesses leads to ridicule, to exploitation and to ruin.

Language

The language is very dramatic. It has the immediate effect of the spoken word. The lines sound like the quick repartee of a witty conversation, although they are Alexandrines of consistent, unchanging metre that have clearly been crafted with extreme care and deliberation.

Dryden's comments on the writing verse satire in *Discourse on Satire* are applicable to his portrayal of Zimri:

> "How easy it is to call rogue and villain and that wittily! How hard to make a man appear a fool, a blockhead, or a knave, without using any of these opprobrious terms!"

Dryden achieves this in his portrayal of Zimri. He manages to avoid insulting terms (i.e. “opprobrious terms”), and conveys the negative characteristics of Zimri by describing his behaviour.

Techniques

Each couplet presents a self-contained idea or a description, which all contribute to creating the overall picture of Zimri as an excessive, irrational, irresponsible individual.

Mockery, exaggeration, irony and humour are also used.

There is irony and sarcasm in words like “all mankind’s Epitome” (line 4) and “squand’ring wealth was his peculiar Art” (Line 17). Being the epitome of mankind, and a peculiar art (unique talent) can sound like praise, but the poet actually is being extremely critical because his “peculiar art” is to waste money.

In some couplets, a sense of balance is achieved in the second line, or in the second part of a line, by modifying or adding a new dimension to the meaning in the first part, which sounds like a compliment. The effect of this modification is often paradoxical and humourous:

> Stiff in opinions → always in the wrong
> Was everything by starts → and nothing long.

There is also irony in the word-level juxtaposition in “But in the course of one revolving moon / was chemist, fiddler, statesman and buffoon.” The pairing of “Chemist” and “fiddler”, and “statesman” and “buffoon” are also anticlimactic, the first pair of words suggesting less of a disparity than the second, as there is a much bigger fall when a statesman becomes a buffoon (a jester or a joker) than when a Chemist becomes a fiddler.

The interpolation of the words “painting, rhiming” between “women” and “drinking” in line 9 suggests that Zimri did everything with the same excessive enthusiasm, but also could not differentiate between aesthetic work and the physical indulgences.

There are many juxtapositions of opposites -- “over violent or over civil”, “railing and praising”, “everything [by starts and] nothing [long]”, “God or Devil” – to show the extremities of Zimri’s character. They too have the uncomplicated and very direct exaggerations of spoken conversation.

The final part of the extract (from line 15) show more serious flaws in Zimri, where the lines are more overtly negative.

Glossary

***various* (line. 3)** changeable

***epitome* (l. 4)** embodiment or model (here, of mankind)

***rayling* (l. 13)** complaining or denouncing

***Civil* (l. 15)** polite

***still* (l. 18)** always

***Estate* (l. 19)** property

***spight* (l. 23)** in spite [of]

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4.6 Alexander Pope

Biographical sketch

Alexander Pope was born on May 21st, 1688 in London to a Roman Catholic Family.

Although he was a sickly and delicate child, he found his delight in books.

Since he was born to a family which was financially stable, this made it easy for Pope to follow his own inclinations.

It is said that a brief interview with Dryden when he was twelve determined his career.
In 1709, he completed his ***Essay on Criticism***, a didactic poem on the canons of literary taste and styles.

This was followed by The ***Rape of the Lock*** in 1712, a brilliant satire on the fashionable life of his time. The artificial cynical tone of the time and the frivolous nature of women are exquisitely portrayed in this epic.

Soon after this was published, Voltaire called him "the best poet of England and, at present, of all the world". Eventually at the age of twenty four, he had come to be regarded as the leading poet of his time.

Between 1715 and 1725 Pope was occupied with the task of translating Homer's ***Iliad*** and the ***Odyssey*** (written in rhyming pentameter- the heroic couplet).

While he was occupied with Homer's translations he published two powerful poems, An Elegy to the ***Memory of an Unfortunate Lady*** and the ***Epistle of Eloisa to Abelard***

Pope died in 1774 and was buried at Twickenham.

Poetic Conventions

- **Epic:** An epic (from Greek: έπος or επικό "word, story, poem") is a lengthy narrative poem, usually concerning a serious subject containing details of heroic deeds and events significant to a culture or nation.

- **Mock-Heroic** works are typically satires or parodies that mock common Classical stereotypes of heroes and heroic literature. Typically, mock-heric works invert the heroic work by either putting a fool in the role of the hero or by exaggeration the heroic qualities to such a point that they become absurd.

- **Rhyming Couplet** A couplet is a pair of lines of verse. It usually consists of two lines that rhyme and have the same meter. Traditionally, couplets are smart rhyme, although not all couplets rhyme (a poem may use white space to mark out couplets as well). Couplets with a meter of iambic pentameter are called ***heroic couplets***. The poetic epigram is also in the couplet form. Couplets can also appear in more complex rhyme schemes. For example, Shakespearean sonnets end with a couplet.

4.6.1 An extract from "The Rape of a Lock" (Canto Lines 1-26)

Poetic Conventions in The Rape of the Lock

- ***Invocation of the Muse***: In Greek mythology there were nine muses, all sisters, who were believed to inspire poets, historians, flutists, dancers, singers, astronomers, philosophers and other thinkers and artists. In "The Rape of the Lock", Pope does not invoke a goddess; instead he invokes his friends, John Caryll, who asked Pope to write a literary work focusing on an event (the snipping of a lock of hair) that turned the members of two families into bitter enemies.
- ***Division of the poem into Books or Cantos***: the traditional epic is long, requiring several days of reading. Pope presents only five cantos containing less than six hundred lines. Such miniaturizing helps Pope demonstrate the smallness or pettiness of the behaviour exhibited by the main characters in the poem.

- ***Description of Soldiers preparing for Battle***: in the Iliad, Homer describes in considerable detail the armour and weaponry of the great Achilles, as well as the battle field trappings of other heros. In the Rape of the Lock, Pope described Belinda preparing herself with combs and pins: with " puffs, powders, patches": nothing that " Now awful beauty puts on all its arms"
- ***Descriptions of Heroic Deeds***: Pope describes the exploits of Belinda and the Baron during a card game called *Ombre,* which involves three players and a deck of forty cards.
- ***Account of a great sea voyage***: Belinda travels up the Thames in a boat.
- ***Participation of Deities or Spirits in the actions***: supernatural beings take part in the action.
- ***Presentation of scenes in the underworld***: the gnome *Umbriel* visits the underworld in the Rape of the Lock

The Setting

- Canto 1: London and its environs in the early 1700, on a single day, and at the London residence of Belinda as she prepares herself for a gala social gathering.
- Canto 2: On a boat carrying Belinda up the Thames
- Canto 3-5: Hampton Court Palace, a former residence of King Henry VIII

Background to Rape of the Lock

The Rape of the Lock had its origins in an actual, if trivial, incident in polite society: in 1711, the twenty-one year old Robert, Lord Petre, had, at Bedinfield, surreptitiously cut a lock of hair from the head of the beautiful Arabella Fermor, whom he had been courting. Arabella took offense, and a schism developed between her family and Petre's. John Caryll, a friend of both families and an old friend of Pope's, suggested that he creates a humorous poem about the episode which would demonstrate to both sides that the whole affair had blown out of proportion and thus effect a reconciliation between them. Pope produced his poem, and it seemed to have achieved its purpose, though Petre never married Arabella. It became obvious in the course of time, however (especially after a revised and enlarged version of the poem, which existed at first only in manuscript copies, was published in 1714) that the poem, which Pope maintained "was intended only to divert a few young ladies", was in fact something rather more substantial, and the

Fermors again took offense -- this time at Pope himself, who had to placate them with a letter to explain that Arabella and Belinda, the heroine of the poem, are not identical. This letter is usually printed before the text of the poem.

Canto 1 (the opening of the poem follows the typical epic manner which is an invocation to the Muse).

Dire-offense – serious mischief, terrible misunderstanding

Amorous causes – love affairs

Mighty contents – great disputes

I sing – writing poems

Caryll – John Caryll (1666-1738) was an intimate friend of Pope

Muse – the Goddess who presides over the writing of poetry (there were nine muses in Greek mythology, each presiding over a different kind of art.

Belinda – it is by this name that Pope calls Miss Arabella Fermor the principle character of the poem.

Vouchsafe to view – to read (the poet means that Belinda might do him the favour of reading this poem.

Goddess – the Muse of poetry

Belle – beautiful lady, Belinda

To assault – go attack violently (referring to the act of cutting a lock of hair from the ladies head.)

Yet unexplored – still unknown

Sol – sun (Sol derives from the Latin word meaning *sun*)

Timorous – timid

Oped – opened

Eclipse – dazzle

The day – the sun

Lapdogs – small pet dog

Rousing shake – rising of the sun

Thrice run – ringing the bell three times.

Downy pillow – a pillow stuff with feathers

Her guardian Sylph – a spirit of the air (this particular Sylph is regarded as Belinda's guardian).

A youth more glittering than a birth- night beau – This is a description of Belinda's guardian Sylph who appears to Belinda in a dream in the shape of a young man more gaudily dressed than a fashionable courtier attending an evening party held in honour of the birth anniversary of a king or a queen.

That even in slumber caused her cheek to glow – Even though Belinda was asleep, a blush appeared on her cheek when she saw in her dream a handsome young man in fine clothes. This young man, we are told in lines 25-26, speaks to Belinda's ear in a low voice.

4.7 William Blake

Biographical sketch

Born in 1757, in London, father a hosier living in Broad Street, Soho, Blake was the second son of four boys and a girl.

His younger brother Robert was significant in his life, shared his love for art.

He was determined to become an artist from a very young age, and joined a drawing school at age 10.

However, his father couldn't afford the apprenticeship fee at the end of his training, so he joined a master engraver's workshop, where he learnt all the techniques of engraving, etching, stippling and copying, working there for seven years, becoming a master craftsman.

Though he left formal school at 10, his learning was not affected. He was a voracious reader, and by 12 was writing his own, original and distinctive poetry.

He entered the Royal Academy in 1997 after his apprenticeship. Here he started 'copying nature' but soon gave it up for more imaginative art, which was very unconventional and almost too adventurous at the time.

In 1783, at the age of 25, he printed Poetical Sketches with help from his friends. During this time he also married Catherine Boucher, the daughter of a gardener, who was illiterate. Blake taught her to read and write. They had no children.

He attended gatherings of poets and intellectuals, sharing his writing with them, sometimes singing his poems in tunes of his own composition. He was well known in his literary circles, but his books did not sell.

Blake also wrote a burlesque novel in 1784 called An Island in the Moon, ridiculing contemporary manners and conventions, including himself. Some of the Songs of Innocence were originally in this text. Blake took them out and began assembling a collection after realizing their value.

His younger brother Robert, whom he was teaching, died after a serious illness in 1787. This was a great blow to the poet, who nursed him throughout. It is said that Blake did not sleep for two weeks leading up to his brother's death, and it is after this that he began to see visions and spirits. Blake claims that he saw his brother's spirit at the moment of his death. The spirit appeared to give him advice several times later during Blake's live.

Blake's works were all illustrated, etched and produced by him. It was a laborious and intricate process, which meant that not many copies were produced.

Blakes poetry was not widely read and he was unknown during his lifetime. Neither his art nor his poetry was fully understood until the 20th century. He is now considered a great, visionary poet.

4.7.1 "The Tyger" by William Blake

Genre

The four line quatrain is borrowed from popular forms of verse such as children's rhymes, ballads and broadsheets.

Form: Quatrains borrowed from ballads and children's rhymes, ABAB

Background: Early Romantic poet, visionary, extremely unusual writing during the time

The Tyger is a poem from the Songs of Experience in Songs of Innocence and Experience, the parallel of which is The Lamb in Songs of Innocence. Blake intended to show "the two contrary states of the human soul" the two sections. The parallel poem in the Songs of Experience is often a retort or a response to the poem in the Innocence. As such, The Tyger is a response to The Lamb.

Blake was critical of the prohibitions and the restrictions imposed by the powerful Church on people at the time, which he felt were unchristian.

The collection was published in 1789, with illustrations and engravings by the poet himself

Blake probably saw a tiger for the first time in London when an animal was gifted as an exotic pet to the Royal family. We can imagine that it was a very rare sight to a westerner: beautiful, fearsome and most of all, unknown (unlike for us where it is known for its power, danger and beauty, and has been accorded cultural and symbolic meaning)

Themes

The poet's struggle to understand the power of God to create beautiful, familiar and gentle creature as the lamb, as well as the fearsome and dangerous tiger

"Did he who make the lamb make thee"

The intense wonder the poet feels in something that is beautiful and dangerous/fearsome at the same time

Blake's lack of comprehension, even implicit criticism of the God in the Old Testament, who is angry, vengeful and destructive, unlike the benevolent, forgiving God of the New Testament. The Tiger and the Lamb symbolize these two depictions of God

It is an indirect comment on the Church in his day adopting the rigidity of the Old Testament, a theme also brought out in Garden of Love

The tiger's fearsome possibilities are also similar to the imagination and the creative urges of an artist

The poem raises the questions implicitly: “why is there death and destruction in the world?”, “why does God create these terrible and beautiful creatures?”, “is God happy when he creates terrible creatures that are capable of destruction?” This dilemma is not resolved in the poem.

The tiger is symbolic of God’s power, potential, as well as his design and intention in why he would create a tiger

Blake’s feelings of wonder and bewilderment are a reaction against scientific rationality that quantifies and describes in clinical terms, leaving out human reactions.

The instinctive and emotional reaction of the poet to what he sees and the immediacy of his reaction, a human ability valued by Romantics.

His feels a mix of wonder, fear, admiration, bewilderment, even horror, showing the complexity of human reactions

An additional theme to explore

A postcolonial theme: Blake looks at the Tiger through the eyes of a European, seeing it as an exotic creature from the Orient (specifically from the new colony India). It is now displaced in an alien English setting. The poet tries to understand the tiger through his own religious and poetic worldview, which is inadequate. Therefore there is bewilderment. There is no attempt, or an ability on the part of the poet to understand it through an awareness of the tiger’s own surroundings. The Tyger is symbolic of the Unknown (therefore mysterious, fearsome, beautiful, attractive and repellent at the same time) originating from unknown realms outside the poet’s familiar world, and this evokes a reaction that is made up of compelling attraction, fear and disgust at the same time (based on Edward Said’s *Orientalism*)

Techniques

The poet addresses the Tiger, but all his questions indirectly address the Creator of the tiger

Personification of the tyger

The series of rhetorical questions convey the wonder and awe the poet feels when he looks at the tiger, and the immediacy of his reaction to the tiger. The questions also convey his near-bafflement as he cannot comprehend why God would create such a creature, and through this, his wonder at God's power and potential (the two final lines of the poem)

The poet uses the traditional metaphor of God the Creator as a blacksmith hammering things to shape in a smithy: this is brought out fairly indirectly through references to the tools (anvil, fire, hammer, chain etc)

The visual impact of the tiger is stressed: 'burning bright', 'symmetry' etc

Repetition at word level "tyger, tyger" and at verse level (first and final verses)

Parallelism (the repetition of structures) in "What the shoulder/what the art", What dread hands/what dread feet". The alteration of a single word in the last two lines of Verse 1 and last verse to "could" and "dare": He could, but why would he want to create such a fearsome creature as a tiger is a more frightening thought, one that questions the benevolence of God.

Language

- The repetition and parallelism echo the incremental repetition of ballads
- The rhythm of the poem echoes the hammering of metal in a smithy.
- Questions stated very directly, compactly, with ellipsis: "what the anvil?"
- The word "what" is repeated at least once in each verse – his state of wonder, uncertainty.

Glossary

frame (line 4) - make
deeps (l. 6) - seas
sinews (l. 10) – tendons
dread (l. 12, 15) (adj) - dreaded, frightening
anvil (l. 15) – the heavy steel block with a smooth surface upon which heated metals are hammered into shape

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4.8 John Keats

Brief Biography

John Keats (1795-1821), one of the younger Romantic poets, died young of consumption (tuberculosis, or TB) at 25.

He was born in Moorgate, London, the son of a stable worker. He had three siblings.
After leaving school, he apprenticed with a doctor.

His father died in an accident (1804). His mother died of TB (1810), and then he and his siblings moved to Hampstead.

His younger brother, Thomas, died in 1818 of the same disease when he was 19.

During this time he met Charles Armitage Brown, who became a great friend and support and went on to write his biography after his death.

According to Brown, Keats discovered his gift for poetry after reading Edmund Spencer's *Faerie Queen*. He was initially an avid student of medicine, and he also read much on natural history. Later on he turned to literary works of Shakespeare and Chaucer. He was largely self-taught in his craft.

When Keats started writing poetry he gained an immediate following, most notably Leigh Hunt, another lesser known Romantic poet, who edited a literary magazine called The Examiner. Percy Shelley was another admirer of his poetry, and went on to become a great friend.

In 1818, he completed his epic poem Endymion. He traveled to the Lake District in the same year. During this time, unknown to him, he was becoming ill with tuberculosis.

Keats had to return from the Lake District when his younger brother Thomas fell seriously ill with TB, and he looked after him until his death. He then moved in to Brown's house.

Soon after Thomas' death, he met and fell in love with a young woman, Fanny Brawn. They shared an emotional, passionate relationship, but tinged with despair because of Keats' fatal illness. Fanny looked after Keats until his death.

1819 was a prolific year for Keats. During this time his illness gradually worsened. He was given extreme medical treatments like bleeding and near starvation according to the medical beliefs of the time. This probably increased his suffering. But he still went ahead with his next volume of poems *Lamia, Isabella, the Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems*, which included "Ode to a Nightingale", which was published in 1820.

The pain and the suffering he alludes to in Ode to a Nightingale is the result of his experiences at the time: his mother's death, his brother's death, his own worsening illness, his awareness of his own mortality, the physical pain, the emotional intensity of love and his great poetic intellect that was still flourishing despite all this.

The volume was very well received. Keats then travelled to Rome to seek health in warmer climes, but he was terminally ill. He died in a room near the Spanish Steps, and is buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome.

Keats' writing only took place during the last five years of his life. The three Odes that he is best known for were written within a month, and other poems were completed between the ages of 23 and 25. He is also well known for his letters, which, according to T S Eliot, are "the most notable and the most important ever written by any English poet".

Genre of poetry

This poem is an ode, in particular the Romantic meditative ode, a form developed by the Romantic poets. An Ode is a grand, "full dress" poem in its size, content and in its formal language and its public purpose. However, this ode belongs to the category of private, reflective odes, as opposed to the Odes that are usually written for public occasions, for example Tennyson's "Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington".

This is the second great ode written by Keats. The first one was "Ode on a Grecian Urn", the third, "To Autumn".

The basic structure that appears in many of Keats' poems (according to Jack Stillinger) can be found in this Ode as well:

1. It traces a poet's attempt to escape into an ideal world, usually offered by some element of nature, in order to escape the unhappiness of the real world.

2. Then realizing that the ideal world does not give him what he is looking for, he comes back to the real world.

3. After his return, however, he is changed positively by the experience, because he has gained a better understanding of his own world. So the feelings expressed at the beginning of the poem are quite different from those at the end of the poem.

4.8.1 “Ode to a Nightingale” by John Keats

Background to the poem

Written in 1819, when Keats was ill (see biographical notes).

It is similar to Shelley’s “To a Skylark” in the poet’s inspiration. Parallels to Wordsworth’s Solitary Reaper (see the last six lines)

Keats hears a nightingale as he sits in the garden one evening, when he was quite ill. It is believed that he wrote the first draft of the poem while sitting there.

At one level, a very personal, autobiographical poem. The speaker in the poem and the voice of the poet are one in this poem.

Form

10 line verses of varying metre, rhyme scheme: ABABCDECDE

Themes

There are several Romantic features of Romantic poetry in this poem:

> The power of imagination, intense feeling (physical and emotional), delight in natural beauty, natural imagery, the close association of natural beauty and poetic inspiration, imagery from a range of human senses and feelings, human conflict, journey of self-discovery, an attempt to find meaning and salvation in pure poetry, the effect of dreams on the dreamer.

In addition, specific themes in this Ode are:

The yearning to find happiness and meaning through poetry

Awareness of pain and suffering vs the joy and ecstasy brought by the bird’s song: the idea that human joy and pain are inextricably linked

The contrast between the ideal and the real world: the yearning for the ideal followed by the realization that the ideal world is not real and not his “sole self”

Awareness of his own sickness and mortality vs the beauty and the immortality of the bird’s song

The Nightingale is symbolic seen as a savior to release him from pain and to inspire poetry in him

The conflict between the need to experience passionate feelings and the yearning to escape passion

Techniques

This poem used to be considered a 'sensuous poem' for its many references to feelings, sensations (sights, sounds, taste), ecstasy and despair, as well as intoxication and sedation caused by wine and drugs.

There is intense feeling and "concomitant concentration of expression" (William Walsh)

Borrows images from nature, summer, the woods, night sky, the countryside

and the association of wine and music is an ancient image for poetic inspiration

Allusions to music (*Provençal song*), Classical history (*Hippocrene*), Classical mythology (*Bacchus and his pards*) the Bible (*Ruth*)

The nightingale is symbolic of nature, joy and his desire to escape the world of suffering,

Language

Keats follows the formal, decorous poetic language associated with the ode.

Keats' language is also extremely compressed and varied.
Examples of personification (Haply the Queen Moon sits on her throne/cluster'd round by all her starry fays) alliteration (deep-delved, the fever and the fret, beaded bubbles winking at the brim), assonance (b**ee**chen gr**ee**n)

It does not have the 'simplicity' of expression of Wordsworth's poetry. Keats did not attempt to write in the language of 'rustic men', like Wordsworth.

Synaesthesia: a poetic device used by Keats (examples: sunburnt mirth, blushful Hippocrene) when he combines different senses in one phrase. For example, 'mirth', or merriment, is an abstract feeling that cannot get 'sunburnt', and Hippocrene is a fountain in ancient Greece, which cannot blush.

Glossary
***hemlock* (line 2)** a drink made out of a poisonous plant
***opiate* (l. 3)** a drug taken to induce sleep (a sedative) usually made of opium
***Lethe* (l. 4)** A river in Hades (Hell) the water of which causes one to forget one's past
***Dryad* (l. 7)** A nymph of the woods
***beechen* (l. 9)** of the beech tree
***vintage* (l. 11)** wine
***Flora* (l. 13)** Roman goddess of flowers; here, flowers and plants
***Provençal* (l. 14)** from the region of Provence in southern France. In the Middle ages, the poets of Provencal poets, or the troubabours, were famed for their love lyrics.
***South* (l. 15)** here, wine from the south of France, Keats' own contraction
***Hippocrene* (l. 16)** A fountain in ancient Greece that was sacred to the Muses
***palsy* (l. 25)** Paralysis of muscles, followed by loss of sensation and tremors
***spectre* (l. 26)** ghost, phantom
***Bacchus* (l. 32)** God of wine and merrymaking
***pards* (l. 32)** Leopards. Bacchus' chariot was pulled by leopards
***viewless* (l. 33)** unseen, invisible
***Poesy* (l. 33)** Poetry
***haply* (l. 36)** by chance, by luck, perhaps
***Fays* (l. 37)** fairies
***verdurous* (l. 40)** from verdure: lush green and flourishing vegetation
***embalmed* (l. 43)** full of perfumes
***eglantine* (l. 46)** honeysuckle, a kind of flower
***Darkling* (l. 51)** in the dark
***abroad* (l. 57)** outside
***high requiem* (l. 60)** a religious song for the dead
***Ruth* (l. 66)** a Biblical character, a woman who left her home to live in Bethlehem, and therefore was homesick
***casements* (l. 69)** windows
***Adieu* (l. 73)** Goodbye
***Fancy* (l. 73)** imagination
***glade* (l. 78)** an open space in a forest

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4.9 Percy Bysshe Shelley

A brief biography

Shelley had an extremely colourful but short life similar to many other Romantic poets. He was born in 1792 to a well-to-do family in Horsham, Sussex, England, one of seven children of a country squire.

He had access to a good education as afforded by his family's status. He went to Eton and then entered University College, Oxford in 1804. However he was unhappy at school and in University. At Eton he was shocked by the "fagging" (i.e. ragging). In university he was misunderstood as a result of his idealism and his controversial views on atheism, vegetarianism, free love and what was considered 'radical' politics at the time like advocating reform in Ireland.

He was expelled from Oxford for his atheistic views after he wrote the pamphlet "The Necessity of Atheism" with his friend Thomas Jefferson Hogg. Estranged from his father for his beliefs and his expulsion, he eloped with sixteen year old Harriet Westbrook, his first wife, to Scotland. They married in 1811, and settled in for while in Cumberland, where they got to know Southey and Wordsworth, among other writers. They had two children, but the marriage broke up as a result of his controversial views.

Soon afterwards, Shelley made friends with William Godwin, an atheistic journalist, whose wife was Mary Wollstonecraft, the feminist, and whose daughter Mary he was to marry later. During this time he continued to write poetry, and was politically active in various reform movements.

Mary, who later became a novelist, was his intellectual equal. They eloped in 1814 and settled in Switzerland. Both fathers disapproved of the elopement, and cut them off, forcing them to support themselves. During this time Lord Byron became a frequent visitor and a close friend. Byron was also politically active, and also enjoyed sailing with Shelley. Mary Shelley wrote her well known novel *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus* during this time. The story was apparently inspired by the ghost stories related by Byron and Shelley to each other.

The Shelleys returned to England in 1815, when Shelley inherited a generous sum of money from his grandfather. His estranged wife Harriet drowned herself in 1816, and he and Mary married the same year. In 1817, their joint travel writing was published.

They moved to Italy in 1818, living in various cities including Rome and Pisa, where they both continued to write. On 8 July 1822 during a sailing trip Shelley's schooner sank in a storm, and, at the age of 29, he drowned. He was cremated and his ashes buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome. Mary Shelley returned to England with her son. She began compiling and publishing most of Shelley's work, writing extensive introductions and notes to them in *The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe*.

Shelley was also a friend of John Keats. He wrote "Adonais" on the death of Keats in 1821, a year before his own death.

4.9.1 “To a Skylark” by Percy Bysshe Shelley

Genre a lyrical ode

Form An unusual from of five line stanzas, first four being trochaic trimetres, and ending with a iambic hexameter (or an Alexandrine), with a rhyme scheme of ABABB.

The fifth line in each stanza is unusually long, and sometimes clinches the main idea of the verse.

Background to the poem

Shelley’s wife Mary wrote: “it was on a beautiful summer evening, while wandering among the lanes whose myrtle hedges were the bowers of the fire-flies, that we heard the caroling of the skylark which inspired one of the most beautiful of his poems.”

Published in 1890, this is not considered one of his best poems, unlike “Ozymandias” or “Ode to Autumn”, but it is a very popular one.

Skylarks nest on the ground and fly vertically upwards when disturbed. Its ability to fly straight up is probably its most distinctive feature. Because of this, skylarks have been used by poets (in the poems of John Clare and Thomas Gray for example) as symbols of spiritual enlightenment.

Analysis of the poem

- The poem is a very personal and effusive response to the bird's singing.

- The poet begins the poem by addressing the skylark directly. He sees the bird as a divine creature, and its singing as a disembodied expression of beauty and joy

- The bird's flight upwards is seen as the rising crescendo of music as well as feelings of uncontrollable joy.

- To the poet, the skylark's song is superior to any other expression of joy or natural beauty. He does not understand the contents of the song, though he can feel its joyfulness (verse 13).

- He says that all familiar human music ("chorus hymeneal, triumphant chant") feels empty and lacking in something when compared with the skylark's song. He wonders what inspires the skylark ("what objects are the fountain of thy happy strain"), and the series of questions in verse 15 suggests that he believes it lies in nature, feelings of love and the total absence of sorrow in the skylark (verse 15)

- He is convinced that the skylark has never experienced languor or annoyance, or sadness and the negative aspects of love (verse 16).

- The poet is also convinced that the bird itself is superior to humans in many ways:
    - The skylark is capable of more profound truths and dreams than mortals like himself. Otherwise, the bird could not sing such pure notes.
    - The bird is spontaneous (unlike humans who "look before and after"), contented (unlike dissatisfied mortals who "pine for what is not"), and capable of pure joy, (unlike us, as our joy is always tinged with sorrow: "our sincerest laughter/with some pain is fraught", and our sweetest songs have sadness in them).
    - According to Shelley, even if we can shun hate, pride, fear and unhappiness (verse 18), we still would not be able to equal the skylark.

- These attributes of the skylark are more valuable to a poet than all the beautiful verses and all learning (treasures… found in books)

The poem ends with an appeal to the skylark to teach at least half its skill, and he will be a poet that can make the whole world listen to him, as he is listening to the skylark now.

Themes

The themes expressed in the poem reflect the Romantic views of the divine quality of nature, the need for the expression of human emotions, the appreciation of beauty, creativity and the human imagination, and above all, poetic inspiration from nature.

The specific themes in the poem are:

- The ability of the creature of nature to experience pure joy, unlike humans who are incapable of feelings untouched by sorrow

- The poet's yearning for the pure joy in the skylark's song, as well his yearning for the ability express this pure joy like the skylark though his poems

- Therefore the poet's yearning for pure poetic expression, like the skylark's song

- The unity and the correspondence between heaven (the divine) and nature

- The correspondence between nature and pure joy

- The poet's role according to Shelley: to inspire joy and rapture in the reader (a Romantic theme)

- A poet's yearning for an audience

Techniques

There is much emphasis on sound and imagery in this poem. The imagery is borrowed from nature.

The images are very visual ("pale purple evening melting") and easy to grasp.

Comparison is a technique widely used in the poem, as seen in the repetition of the phrase *like a*. The poet compares the skylark and its singing to:

- a cloud on fire
- a star in heaven, which is extended to how the "arrows" (the light) of the silver sphere (the star) seem to fade as dawn comes
- the moon 'raining out' its beams
- a rainbow cloud shedding raindrops
- a poet hidden behind his thoughts
- a princess singing to sooth her sorrows
- a glow worm shedding its light in the field
- a rose spreading its petals and perfume in the wind

It is said that Shelley's imagery is not very original or varied. He uses a limited range of poetic images over and over again in his poetry (D W Harding).

The skylark is a metaphor for poetic expression, for an ideal state of existence and for pure joy untouched by sorrow.

There is also the use of exaggeration: "from the earth thou springest / like a cloud of fire" to describe the small brown bird, "All that ever was Joyous / and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass" to describe its singing, which is not considered that beautiful, unlike the nightingale's song.

Language

- Conventional poetic diction in its choice of words ("*Hail to thee!*") and poetic inversions.

- His expression is not very compact, as each verse presents a single idea, often clinched in the last line. Some verses present the same idea (ex. Vs 9, 10 and 11). This poem does not have the compression of ideas or the compactness of "Ozymandias".

- The language musical and extremely rhythmic.

- There is assonance (line endings in verse 17 for instance: asleep, dream, in v 21 gladness, madness)

- Much use of alliteration: *Singing doest soar, and soaring ever singest* (Verse 2), *sunken sun* (v. 3), *pale purple* (v 4), *silver sphere* (v 5), *soothing her love laden /soul in secret hour* (v 9), *like a glow-worm golden, dell of dew* (v 10), etc.

Further ideas to explore

A criticism of this poem, as well as of the poet, is that Shelley often imposes his own feelings and already-held views on his subject matter, and does not learn anything new from his experience with nature (D W Harding). In this poem it does seem that Shelley is carried away by his feelings and his own convictions about unrestrained joy, rather than being carried away by the actual singing of the bird. D W Harding calls Shelley self-absorbed and narcissistic.

There are several parallels between this poem and Keats' "Ode to a nightingale":

- both birds seen as supernatural, divine creatures (blithe spirit, immortal bird)
- Both birds evoke strong feelings in the poet – intense pleasure and pain in Keats, rapture in Shelley
- both birds represent pure expression, and inspires poets to accept this as a poetic ideal

Shelley compares the skylark's song to several things in the course of the poem (see techniques) none of which are highly original or innovative. The comparisons are numerous, overt and explained to the reader in full, so they are not very complex or subtle.

At the same time, Shelley's poem lacks the intellectual and philosophical weight, as well as the level of self-awareness of Keats' Ode. Shelley stops at "the unpremeditated outpouring of the full heart" which "suggests the use of language for as direct as possible an expression of emotional states, dependent as little as possible upon intellectual analysis and ordering" (D W Harding, p. 218)

Glossary

blithe (verse 1) joyous, gay
umpremeditated (v. 1) spontaneous
unbodied (v. 3) removed from body
unbidden (v. 8) unasked
ariel hue (v. 10) the colour of the sky -- blue
vernal (v. 12) pertaining to spring (adj.)
sprite (v. 13) a supernatural creature like an elf, a fairy or a goblin
chorus hymeneal (v. 14) a chorus in a wedding song
triumphal chaunt (v. 14) a triumphal song
strain (v. 15) tune
joyance (v. 16) joy
satiety (v. 16) satisfaction
measures (v. 20) rhymes

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4.10 Alfred Lord Tennyson (1809-1892)

The Historical Background

The previous Romantic Age was an age of poetry where poetry occupied centre stage.
By mid 19th century, the reading habit has come to stay, and the public looked forward to reading fiction for family entertainment.
Baudelaire had published Fleurs *de Mal*, Whitman *Leaves of Grass*, and Tennyson *The Idylls of the King*; these are considered representative of the age.
(The major historical events of the period will also provide useful insights
Contemporary Dickens)

The poet

Tennyson Alfred, Lord (1809-1892)
Ulysses and *Morte D'Arthur* were published in 1842 .These assured him of his literary reputation.

In 1850, Tennyson was appointed Poet Laureaute .In this year he published *In Memoriam* on the death of Arthur Hallam It is interesting to note that Miltonb too ahd written a poem Lycidas on the same theme. In 1855 Tennyson published *Maud.*

The fact that he was the official poet, and that he had to play the part of a public figure, made it necessary for him to keep abreast with the age, put into verse the thought and feeling typical of the times.

Personally, Tennyson was haunted by the classical tradition; he harked back to Virgil, and to the classics like Keats. But unlike Keats Tennyson moved towards romance. Keats moved away from romanticism, his poetry has the balance of romance and reality, which is missing in Tennyson. Tennyson weaves a soft gentle dreamy romanticism away from the melancholia that comes with profound reflection and deep resignation in Keats. While Tennyson was 'feminine' Keats was 'virile'.

4.10.1 Morte D' Arthur (Lines 239-264)

Background to the poem

Tennyson's choice of King Arthur's tales is referenced to his interest in the classical. Tennyson is supposed to have based his poem on Monmouth's version of the Arthurian legend.

In understanding a legend it is important to remember that 'names' like England, were not used at the time, and that the regional importance of places was always not so.

There are many versions of the Arthur legend. There are no records against which the legend can be verified. The Stonehenge too is given to many interpretations.

The History of Kings of Britain was written in 1135 AD by Geoffrey of Monmouth. This itself was based on other earlier histories, Celtic myths and legends

The Roman invasion of Britain came to an end in AD 410. Then followed a long drawn out tussle for power between the Picts and the Scots. The Angles and the Saxons were invited by 'king' Vortingen (A.D.449) to help him sort out the problem, but they betrayed Vortingen, turned against him and massacred the British chiefs. – this is known as the Massacre of the Long Knives. Ambrosius Aurelianus became King, and with the wizard Merlin he raised the spirit of the dead chieftains. In this he was helped by his brother, and his son Arthur. Merlin is also reputed to have produced the Excalibur, the possession of which can only be by the true ruler of Britain.

According to legend Stonehenge is the place where the dead soldiers were raised.

Arthur falls in love with Mordred, they have a son who is given the same name – Mordred. Then to his horror is revealed the fact that Mordred is his half sister; he orders all baby sons born at the same time to be put to sea. Mordred is providentially saved.

Arthur then marries Guinevere, daughter of king Lodegrance of Camylarde .She brings a round table as dowry, and so Arthur establishes his court- basic democracy with its implied equality. In the Tales of the Knights of the Round Table are the tales told by the Knights, for the rule was that none may partake of any meal unless there was a tale of a heroic deed.

News of Guinevere's betrayal with Sir Lancelot reaches Arthur through his son Mordred. Guinevere is saved from 'prescribed' death by Lancelot, and the two are expelled to France. Mordred claims Arthur's throne, and in the battle of Camlann all that remains of the knights are Arthur fatally wounded, and Sir Bedivere.

The last scene is Arthur sailing away with three women with the legendary Excalibur thrown into the lake.

Legends are interpreted in different ways. Some can be symbolic.

- Arthurs's three half sisters= the 3 witches
- Avalon where Arthur sent on his death= a magical land
- All human institutions are doomed to fail
- Interpretation of love;Arthur'Mordred/Arthgur Guinevere
- Relationship between Lancelot and Guinevere
- Choice for Arthur-husband as against king
- Loyalty / truth/fellowship/honour-dramatized
- Decorum/passion
- The end of Arthur –meaning? – honour/self sacrifice
- Death and destruction also produce repentance, forgiveness, and salvation.

Description of the poem

Excerpt of the long poem-describing the 'passing away' of King Arthur

Arthur: meeting God

: coming to terms with himself

; last words/ message

Tennyson selects the positive –nobility, chivalry, dignity

But is the dying Arthur disillusioned?

Theme

-The old order changeth..

Comfort thyself. What comfort is in me?

I have lived my life

Men—nourish a blind life within the brain

Grievous wound-literal or symbolic?

The theme however does not lend itself to many interpretations.

It is more of a numbing of the sense which is achieved through his technique.

Language

Words evoking**, -** sunset- dusk –enchantment – romanticism

The margins are not sharp

"Tennyson is essentially English, he has the gift of arranging English words in a magical and memorable order

Techniques

Tennyson known as a good craftsman.

Blank verse'

Although it should be unrhymed iambic pentameter, Tennyson works out the lines to give it more rhythm than is usually found in Blank verse.

Blend of words and movement lyrical

sharp imagery haunting cadences

melodious phrases

gentle movement

Directions for study

-The mood of the poem /pace of the lines

- Arthur's tone

- The effect of the questions

Effect of the description of Avilion

Look for similarities in technique/imagery etc. with any other Tennyson poem you area familiar with.

2008 /25TH September

Tennyson is essentially English, he has the gift of arranging English words in a magical and memorable order. My

Lines in blank verse=unrhymed iambic pentaametere,most common form of continued unrhymed lines the cadence of spoken language moree closely than any other from

King Arthur, legendary

Tools of Assessment

5.1 G.C.E. (A/L) English

Tools of Assessment (General)

Competency	Competency Levels	Assessment	Evaluation Criteria
1.0	1.1	Prepares a graphic in relation to one of the prescribed texts.	
	1.2	Analyses 2/3 selected passages/ poems from prescribed texts	
	1.3	Prepares poster on a completed unit	
	1.4	Prepares chart after discussion in groups on one of the texts	
	1.5	Analyses a text and group presentation	
	1.6	Analyses a text: Writing a critical essay (individual work)	
	1.7	Writes short review on one of the texts studied (group work)	
2.0	2.1	Draws mind map/ family tree (Arrange the various genres into major and minor components)	
	2.2	Poster	
	2.3	Summarizes features and presents in the form of an essay.	
	2.4	Writes a critical evaluation of a selected text for a wall paper performance in case of drama.	
	2.5	Writes appreciation of a selected text/ watches video and evaluates it.	
3.0	3.1	Draws graphic / paints picture	
	3.2	Draws chart combined with graphic	
	3.3	Mind map	
	3.4	Written assignment after oral presentation	
4.0	4.1	Analyses selected texts and writes assignment.	
	4.2	Makes diary entries	
	4.3	Writes critical essay/ dramatizes a scene from a play studied in class.	
5.0	5.1	Does selected grammar activities to improve power of communication / expression	
	5.2	Writes short paragraphs relevant to different stages in an essay. Analyses essays in order to understand cohesion.	

5.2 School Based Assessment: Activities related to texts set for study

Teachers may use the following, or adapt the following to be used as School Based Assessments for their classes

General (for all texts)

1. Using the internet and/or the encyclopedia, search for information on the life story of a poet/playwright/novelist. Use this information to make a poster presentation, and present it to the class before the text is studied. This can be done as group work.

Poetry

1. Write a dialogue between the lover and the poet based on Sonnet 138

2. Write a letter addressed to Shelley or to Keats on why you like, or dislike, in his poem. Write it in an informal style as if you are addressing a friend.

3. Imagine that one of the poets is a celebrity in modern times and is visiting your school to recite his poem. Design a poster to publicise this event.

Drama

1. Design costumes for a scene of the menials in **A Midsummer Night's Dream**. You can do it in visual medium (draw, sketch, paint, collage) or a description, but should be followed by a justification as to why each character is dressed like that.

2. Select a scene with interesting dialogues from **Midsummer Night's Dream** or **Othello** and translate it into colloquial modern Sri Lankan English.

3. Pick out four extracts which show the changing nature of the relationship between Othello and Desdemona. Comment on the content and styles of each.

4. What images/ words are associated with a) Othello, b) Desdemona, c) lago? Give three examples of each across the spread of the play and comment briefly on their significance.

5. Recreate the scene settings for each of the four acts using boxes with one side cut out. Pay careful attention to exactly where Chekov places things on the stage. (This Should be done in groups) One member is selected to comment on a theatrical aspect of a scene

Novel

Sense and Sensibility

1. Compare and contrast the women in the 1800s and those of today in relation to attitudes to love, marriage, propety and education.

Grate expectations

2. Imagine that the following characters are coming to a masked ball you have oragnised. Describe how each one would be dressed. Write short notes on each character in order to introduce him/ her.

    a) Miss Havishman
    b) Joe
    c) Magwich
    d) Estella
    e) Jaggers

Short Story

1.After teaching a short story, group the students as necessary.

Get each group to discuss.

- Setting of the short story and its significance
- Themes/Issues addressed in the short story
- Characterization and thematic significance of each character
- Significance of the literary devices for narration

Get each group to present their findings/the content of their discussion to the class.

Make sure that each student talks about at least one topic in the list.

Presentations can be marked individually as well as group-wise.

Marks can be given for

Content (e.g 08/20)

Language (e.g 08/20)

Presentation (e.g 04/20)

1. Discuss in groups
    - Which short story will be most exciting to dramatize?
    - Write the script in groups
    - Dramatize it

2. Imagine that you are a provincial reporter of a local newspaper and report on the funeral described in the ***Professional Mourners b***y Alagu Subramaniam

3. Prepare a speech to be delivered in the class about what you would do if you were in Mr Doran's situation in James Joyce's ***The Boarding House***?
   Would you agree to marry Polly Mooney? Justify your claim.

4. Imagine that you are Vera in ***The Open Window*** by Saki. Write a diary entry reflecting on your meeting with Nuttle.