Understanding Poetry
(Special English)

B. A. Part-III
(Semester-V Paper-VIII
(Academic Year 2015-16 onwards)
Unit-1
General Topics

Contents:

1.0 Objectives
   1.1 Elizabethan Poetry
   1.2 Metaphysical Poetry
   1.3 Neoclassical Poetry
1.1.1 Introduction
1.1.2 Types of Elizabethan poetry
1.1.3 Features of Elizabethan Poetry
1.1.4 Elizabethan Poets.
1.1.5 Summary
1.1.6 Glossary and Notes
1.1.7 Check Your Progress
1.1.8 Key to check your progress.
1.1.9 Exercises

1.1.0 Objectives-
   • To study and discuss the Elizabethan poetry
   • To focus on the metaphysical poetry.
   • To study the types of lyrical poetry.
   • To focus on the major poets of Elizabethan and Metaphysical poetry.
   • To focus on nature and origin of sonnet, song and elegy.
   • To develop the interest of students in poetry.
Preparation for the Unit:

In this semester you are going to learn about poetry, especially Elizabethan, Metaphysical and Neoclassical poets. The unit focuses on the types of lyrical poetry—sonnet, song and elegy. Poetry is one of the major forms of literature. Poetry can be defined in many ways. Wordsworth defines poetry as, 'a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility'. Poetry can be divided into two types—subjective or personal poetry and objective or impersonal poetry. In subjective poetry, the poet expresses his emotions, feelings, thoughts and experiences. This type of poetry is called lyrical poetry. The objective poetry deals with the outside world. It gives a very little room to personal feelings and emotions. The personal poetry is divided into lyric, ode, song, sonnet and elegy. The objective poetry is divided into ballad, epic and dramatic monologue etc.

As mentioned earlier, this unit deals with subjective or personal poetry and its types. The origin, definition, characteristics, and major poets of prescribed poetry are discussed thoroughly in this unit.

1.1 Elizabethan Poetry

1.1.1 Introduction

The Elizabethan age was regarded as a great age of English literature. English literature flourished and witnessed its culmination during this age. The Elizabethan literature refers to the bodies of work emerged during the period of Queen Elizabeth. (1558-1603). However, The proper Elizabethan literary age began in 1579 with the publication of Spenser’s *Shepherd Calendar*. It was a great flourishing age for English literature, especially in the fields of drama and poetry. Thomas Kyd, Christopher Marlowe, and William Shakespeare popularized drama. *Hamlet, Romeo and Juliet, Dr. Faustus* and *Macbeth* ruled over the masses. Poetry also obtained popularity during this age along with drama. It became a chief form of literature. William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, Philip Sidney, Walter Raleigh, Christopher Marlowe are the important poets of Elizabethan age. This age is also known as the ‘Age of Shakespeare’. The poetic forms sonnet, elegy, lyric, ode, and song became popular in this age. Let us study them.
1.1.2 Types of Elizabethan poetry

(Definition and origin and features of lyric, sonnet, song and elegy are, in detail, discussed in this unit under the title Lyrical Types.)

**Elizabethan Lyric-**

The Elizabethan lyrical poetry is the glory of the age. It produced many beautiful lyrics. Sweet songs were written and published during this period. So the age is called, 'The Nest of Singing Birds'. Love was the chief theme of lyrics which was expressed in various ways. One of the finest Lyricists of the age was Sir Philip Sidney. He was a courtier, soldier and a poet. His famous book of sonnets is *Astrophel and Stella*. It was published after his death. Another great poet of the age was Sir Walter Raleigh. He was also a soldier, courtier and a poet. His poetry is known for the plain style. Most of his poems are short lyrics. They were inspired by actual events. His lyrics have the themes like love, loss, beauty and time. *What is Our Life* is his famous lyric. Some examples of Elizabethan lyrics can be found in Shakespeare’s plays.

**The Elizabethan Sonnets-**

The Elizabethan sonnet made the Elizabethan poetry rich and vivid. The sonnet was born in Italy. Petrarch introduced sonnets in Italy. Wyatt and Surrey brought it to England. They introduced sonnets to English literature. The famous poet Thomas Watson made some experiments in the sonnet form. Earlier, the sonnet was written in 18, 15, or 12 lines. The rhyme-scheme depended on the wish of the poet. During the period of Sidney, sonnet was written in 14 lines and it was written in iambic meter. Most of the sonneteers followed Italian or Petrarchan method separating lines into two groups- Octave (8 lines) and Sestet (6 lines). But Shakespeare divided it into three groups- four lines in each group. He also introduced a final couplet of 2 lines. The rhyme-scheme was varied. Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser and William Shakespeare are the well-known sonneteers of the Elizabethan era.

**Elizabethan Songs-**

A song became very popular in the Elizabethan Age. The court of the Elizabeth is called ‘a nest of singing birds’. Even Shakespeare wrote many beautiful songs for his plays. The Elizabethan Age witnessed many kinds of songs- love songs, religious songs, patriotic songs, war songs and philosophical songs. They carried every mood-
grave, romantic, sentimental mocking etc. Love is the main theme of Elizabethan songs. The other themes of song are joy, sorrow, praise of wine, childhood and nature. Sir Philip Sidney wrote many songs. They express passion, beauty, romance and fancy. They have loftiness and superb musical quality. His famous songs are ‘Only Joy! Now here you are’ and ‘Rings out your bell’. Shakespeare wrote many beautiful songs for his comedies and romances. His songs are spontaneous, fresh and they carry rustic realism. Some of his songs express the touching feeling of love. Shakespeare has inserted songs in his famous comedy As You Like It. Shakespeare’s contemporary dramatists also wrote songs for their plays. Thomas Dekkar's and Ben Johnson's plays have lovely songs. Thomas Campion wrote attractive songs and lyrics. His famous collections of songs are Two Books of Ayres (1601) and Songs of Mourning (1613). They are very famous for high musical quality. Thus, a song is very popular form of poetry. Lord Byron’s ‘She Walks in Beauty’ and Tennyson’s ‘Tears, Idle Tears are perfect examples of songs, though they deal with a different mood. Even Donne has written songs. His Go and Catch the Falling Star is a very famous song.

**Pastoral Poetry**

Pastoral Poetry is one more form of elegy. It is known as pastoral elegy. It is very famous from of the elegy. In this type of elegy the poet is expected to speak as a shepherd. He weeps over the death of his fellow shepherd. The setting of this elegy is rustic life and the poets used images like sheep, shepherds, flowers and rural life. Pastoral poetry became popular in the Elizabethan Era. Spenser’s Shepherd’s Calendar is the famous pastoral poem. Shakespeare also wrote pastoral poetry. Most of this type of poetry of this period is romantic by nature.

**Satire**

Satire grew and flourished in the Elizabethan era. Spenser’s Mothers Hubbard’s Tale is the best example of satirical poem. But John Donne is the most important poet of satire. He wrote the satire of classical type. His satires are serious and they are criticism of life. Of the Progress of the Soul is an example of memorable satire. Humour, wit and ironical descriptions have made his satires classical. Joseph Hall and Joseph Marston are also important satirical poets of the Elizabethan age.
**Religious and Epic Poetry**

During the Elizabethan age religious and epic poetry flourished. Robert Southwell wrote religious poetry. His *St. Peter’s Complaint* is a famous religious poem. Edmund Spenser wrote romantic epic-*Faerie Queen*. It was the first romantic epic. But as an epic, it is incomplete.

The poetry is rich, vivid, beautiful and natural. The poetry witnessed its golden period in this age. The Elizabethan songs and lyrics are very famous even today. They are source of joy for the lovers of poetry. The Elizabeth Poetry was rich in expression.

**1.1.3 Features of Elizabethan Poetry**

1. **A variety of poetical forms** - The Elizabethan age witnessed all varieties of poetic forms. Sonnets, lyrics, songs etc. were produced by many reputed poets. Sonnets travelled to England from Italy and they were refined by the poet like Shakespeare. Thomas Campion is a well-known lyric poet of the age. He wrote over a hundred lute songs. It was a generic form of music. Sir Philip Sidney is a well-known poet of songs. Even Shakespeare wrote many songs. William Shakespeare wrote 154 sonnets which are very famous in English literature. Edmund Spenser popularized pastoral elegy during Elizabeth Era. In short, a variety of poetical forms was used in the Elizabethan era.

2. **The use of metaphor, repetition, pun and paradoxes** - This is the typical characteristics of Elizabeth poetry. The poets make use of metaphors. The metaphor is used to compare women to objects of rare beauty. The repetition is used to develop the theme of the poem. The paradox is used to focus on the importance of opposites. William Shakespeare’s sonnets are well-known for metaphors. They are also famous for pun.

3. **Theme of romance and courtly love** - The Elizabethan era is marked for love poetry. Love poetry is characterized by romance, imagination and youthful energy. Sidney’s *Astrophel and Stella*, Spenser’s *Amoreth*, Daniel’s *Delia*, Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander* and Shakespeare’s sonnets are famous and remarkable love poems of this period.

4. **Patriotism** - patriotism is one of the noticeable characteristics of Elizabethan poetry. The poets William Warner, Samuel Daniel, Michael Drayton have
written memorable patriotic poems. Daniel’s *civil War of York and Lancaster* and Drayton’s *The Barons War* are the best examples of patriotic poetry.

5 **Elizabethan sonnet**—one of the best features of Elizabethan poetry is the Elizabethan or English sonnet. Thomas Wyatt introduced Italian sonnet to England. Wyatt introduced the Petrarchan model. Elizabethan sonnets are different from Petrarchan sonnets. Elizabethan sonnets are written in iambic pentameter and consist of 14 lines each. They are divided into three quatrains and a couplet. (for a detailed discussion see Elizabethan Sonnet discussed under the title Elizabethan Lyrics)

**Here are some more characteristics of Elizabethan Poetry.**

6 The lyric of the periods is accompanied to music.

7 Songs and Lyrics of the period were very natural and not artificial.

8 Songs and Lyrics were inserted in the plays.

9 Most of the Dramatists were good poets.

10 Sonnet sequences were very popular.

11 People liked music and songs.

12 The diction is mostly simple and sweet.

Apart from these characteristics, originality, emotion, and fantasy are the characteristics found in Elizabethan poetry.

These chief characteristics made the Elizabethan poetry very popular.

**1.1.4 The Elizabethan Poets**

1 **Sir Thomas Wyatt** (1503-42) and **Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey**—Wyatt and Surrey travelled to Italy and brought to England the Italic and classic influence. Wyatt wrote songs, sonnets and elegies. The first book to feature his verse *Tottel’s Miscellany* of 1557 was published after his death.

2 He followed the Italian model and introduced sonnet to England. He also introduced personal and autobiographical note in English poetry. Surrey too wrote sonnets. His sonnets are effective. He introduced a new form of sonnet. It is followed by Shakespeare. He was the pioneer of blank verse.
3 Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586) was the most respected literary figure before Shakespeare and Spenser. He has written prose, critical essay and poetry. His Apology for Poetry is a collection of critical writings. His collection of sonnets Astrophel and Stella is very famous. This collection consists of 108 sonnets. These are love sonnets. He wrote sonnets in Petrarchan style. Sir Philip Sidney wrote many songs. They express passion, beauty, romance and fancy. They have loftiness and superb musical quality. His famous songs are ‘only Joy! Now here you are’ and ‘Rings out your bell’. His body of work places him among the array of great writers of his age.

4 Edmund Spenser (1552-1599) is addressed as ‘the poet’s poet’. His main poetical works are The Shepherds Calendar and Amoretti and The Faire Queen. He is known for good poetic style and diction. He introduced Spensnserian stanza which has been imitated by many poets. He is also famous for picturesque description. He is widely praised for his smoothness, melody, richness of language and diction.

5 Christopher Marlowe (1564-1594) and George Chapman (1559-1634)

Marlowe was a poet, playwright, and translator. His plays are known for the use of blank verse. His poem The Hero and Leander was left incomplete due to his untimely death. Chapman completed it. The Passionate Shepherd to His Love is his famous lyric. It is the best example of the pastoral style of British Poetry. Chapman also translated Iliad and Odyssey and wrote some sonnets

6 William Shakespeare (1564-1616), the greatest British dramatist, composed many beautiful sonnets. He also wrote two long poems- Venus and Adonis and Rape of Lucrece. He wrote 154 sonnets and they are very famous in English literature. He introduced a new form of sonnet known as English sonnet or the Shakespearean sonnets. Most of his sonnets are addressed to a girl, a rival poet, or a dark beauty.

1.1.5 Summary

Elizabeth age was the great age of English Literature. Poetry and drama flourished in this era. Great dramatists Shakespeare, Marlowe and others enriched English plays and took them to the masses. In this era poetry too flourished and became popular. Songs, sonnets, elegies, and lyrics were produced and enjoyed. The
English literature produced during the time of Queen Elizabeth is called 'Elizabethan literature'. The actual Elizabethan literary age began in 1579 with the publication of Spenser’s *Shepherd Calendar*. It was the age of Elizabethan songs, lyrics, and especially sonnets. Patriotism, theme of love, Elizabethan sonnet, and a variety of poetical form are the chief characteristics of Elizabethan poetry. Sir Thomas Wyatt, Sir Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, George Chapman and William Shakespeare are the important poets of the Elizabethan age.

### 1.1.6 Glossary and Notes

- **Flourish** -- to grow well and healthy.
- **Metaphor** -- a way of describing something by comparing
- **Pun** -- a word or phrase that has two meanings
- **Noticeable** --easy to notice
- **Quatrains** -- a group of four lines in a poem
- **Diction** -- the way in which someone pronounces words; choice and use of words in literature
- **Fantasy** --an exciting or unusual experience or situation created by imagination
- **Satire** -- a way of talking or writing about something; away of criticising a person or and idea etc.

### 1.1.7 Check Your Progress

**A)** Answer the following questions in one/ word/ sentence/ phrase.

1. Who brought the sonnet form to England?
2. What was the chief theme of the Lyric?
3. Give an example of pastoral poetry.
4. Mention one of the chief poets of Elizabethan age.
5. Who wrote the satire of classical type?

**B)** Fill in the blanks.

1. The proper Elizabethan literary age began in --------------.
2. Spenser's ------------------------ is the famous pastoral poem.
3. ------------- wrote religious poetry in the Elizabethan age.
4. --------------is addressed as ‘the poet’s poet’.
5. Marlowe’s -------------- was left incomplete due to his untimely death.

1.1.8 Key to check your progress.
A) 1) Wyatt and Surrey
   2) Love
   3) Spenser’s Shepherd’s Calendar
   4) William Shakespeare
   5) John Donne

B) 1) in 1579
   2) Shepherd’s Calendar
   3) Robert Southwell
   4) Edmund Spenser
   5) The Hero and Leander

1.1.9 Exercises
A) Answer the following questions.
   1. What are the special features of Elizabethan poetry?
   2. Discuss William Shakespeare as the major poet of the Elizabethan period.

B) Write a short note on the following,
   1. Satire
   2. Elizabethan sonnet
   3. Pastoral poetry.
   4. Types of Elizabeth Poetry.
1.2 Metaphysical Poetry

1.2.1 Introduction and Definition

The term metaphysical—applied to—poetry—was first used by Dr. Johnson. He borrowed the term from Dryden. Once Dryden remarked that ‘he (Donne) affects the metaphysics.’ Dr. Johnson picked up the term and used for a group of 17th Century poets. The poets, who wrote during the 17th century under the impact of John Donne, are described as metaphysical poets. In short, Donne and his followers are stamped as metaphysical poets. The metaphysical poetry covers a long period of time i. e from 1592 to 1678. John Donne started writing about 1592 and Marvell died in 1678. Thus, metaphysical poetry covers a large period of time. It involves great social, cultural and intellectual changes. Metaphysical poetry is a different kind of poetry. The metaphysical poems have some common characteristics. They are loaded with strange imagery, paradox, and complicated thoughts. Metaphysical poetry is also known as intellectualized poetry. British poets John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crawshaw, Andrew Marvell and Henry Vaughan are known as metaphysical poets. What is the meaning of ‘metaphysical’?

Definition—

1. The meaning of ‘meta’ is ‘after’. So the word ‘metaphysical’ means after the physical.

2. The dictionary defines 'metaphysical' as ‘concerned with the study of metaphysics’.

Definition—

1. The meaning of ‘meta’ is ‘after’. So the word ‘metaphysical’ means after the physical.

2. The dictionary defines 'metaphysical' as ‘concerned with the study of metaphysics’.
3. Metaphysics is the part of the study of philosophy that is concerned with trying to understand and describe the nature of reality.

1.2.2 Background

The period of early 17th century was very different from that of Elizabeth’s glory days. It was an age of transition. The established religious orders were shattered by the social reform of Levellers and Diggers. England began transforming from an agricultural to a manufacturing country. It was the beginning of the period of science and technology. It was also the period of political insecurity, religious controversy, and intellectual confusion. As a result of it, optimism and confidence began withering, raising questions of uncertainty and of pessimism. Metaphysical poetry reflected this ethos. The metaphysical poets' work express the lack of coherence and certainty in the world they belong to.

The typical Elizabethan poet dealt with simple and traditional themes. He took interest in producing charming love lyrics. The metaphysical poets were intellectual, learned and cultivated men. They expressed their intellectuality in the matter and manner of their poetry. The metaphysical poets, in their poems, try to express their ideas and feelings of the fast changing and complicated world in which they happen to be. W. R. Goodman, in his book, writes about these poets, ‘they were interested in their own experience and in movement of thought and attitudes in the world about them, and their interest was of an analytical nature’. Thus, the metaphysical poets were men of learning and they tried to show it. Apart from this, the metaphysical poetry has some characteristics. They are as following.

1.2.3 Characteristics of Metaphysical poetry

1. Delight in Novel Thoughts and Expression- This is one of the characteristics of metaphysical poetry. The metaphysical poets wished to say what had not been said before. They were interested in thought in their diction. They expressed their thoughts in their own way.

2. Obscurity – The metaphysical poets try to find out the verbal equivalent for the states of mind and feeling. So the metaphysical poets are difficult to understand. They put forward dissimilar ideas without trying to explain them. The reader is always confused by their use of elliptical language.
3. **Scholarship**- This is the important characteristic of Metaphysical poetry. It distinguishes this poetry from other poetry. The metaphysical poets show their scholarship and learning. They put their knowledge in such a way that a common reader finds it difficult to understand what the poet wants to say.

4. **Religious and Amorous**- The metaphysical poetry is a fine fusion of these two things. It can be divided into two divisions-religious and amorous. Carew, Suckling and Marvell wrote religious poetry. Herbert, Crashaw and Vaughan wrote amorous poetry. However, John Donne wrote both religious and amorous poems.

5. **Imagery**- The imagery used in this poetry is not as an ornament or illustration. It is used to communicate thoughts and to explore experiences. This is the purpose of metaphysical comparison. In metaphysical poetry the comparison is used as a means of exploring the experience it conveys. Moreover, the use of far-fetched imagery serves to be another characteristic of the metaphysical poetry.

6. **Refined language**- The language of metaphysical poets is refined one. It is the language of learned men. It is idiomatic. It is quite free of any conventional limitations. The poems of Marvell are fine examples of refined language.

Thus, a new kind of poetry emerged with John Donne (1573-1631). This poetry is known as metaphysical poetry. It is characterized by genuine poetic feeling, harsh meters, and unusual images and turns of speech. These are known as conceits. Following are the metaphysical poets.

### 1.2.4 Metaphysical Poets

1. **John Donne** (1573-1631) is the pioneer of Metaphysical poetry. He wrote *Satires, Songs and Sonnets* and *Elegies*. His poetry can be divided into three categories-amorous, religious and satirical. His love poems *Songs and Sonnets* reveal the mood of the lover expressed in colloquial language. An element of satire runs in his love poetry. *A Hymn to God the Father* is his remarkable religious poem. His love poems are confessions and prayers. Donne’s satires reveal his critical mind. *Of the Progress of the Soul* is an example of memorable satire. His poetry reveals his philosophy, subtlety, scholarship and it is a fine blending of thought and devotion and light and serious methods.
2. **George Herbert** (1593-1630) is recognized as a pivotal poet. Throughout his life he wrote religious poems. Some of his poems are popular hymns. *King of Glory* and *King of Peace* are famous examples of it. Henry Vaughan calls him ‘a most glorious saint and seer’. He is much appreciated by readers for his clarity of expression. His poem *The Temple* shows his religious interest, especially his love and respect for Church of England. His poetry is known for simple and homely language and a good sense of humour. He is also known as a lover of humanity.

3. **Richard Crawshaw** (1613-1649) is one of the major figures of metaphysical poetry. His most popular work is *Steps to the Temple* (1646). He was interested in religion so he wrote religious poems. His religious poetry expresses mystical nature and ardent religious faith. His poetry was influenced by Spanish mystics. His poetry is more emotional than thoughtful and it is remarkable for striking and fantastic comparison.

4. **Henry Vaughan** (1622-1695) published four collections of poetry. They are *Poems* (1646), *Older Silex Scintillans* (1650), *Iscanus* (1651), and *Thalia Rediviva* (1678). His early poetry reveals the influence of Ben Johnson. His poetry is famous for fantasy.

5. **Thomas Carew** (1594-1639) wrote lyrics, songs, and elegies. They deal with love, love making and feminine beauty. Many of his songs are addressed to Celia who was his beloved. His elegy on John Donne has been praised by critics. He is a poet of lyrical talent. This is reflected in his collection of poetry *Poems* (1640). This collection also shows the influence of Donne and Ben Johnson.

6. **Andrew Marvell** (1618-1667) called himself a classical scholar. His famous poems are *The Mistress*, *The Davideis*, *Pindaric Odes* and *To His Coy Mistress*. His work consists of subtlety of wits, passionate argument and scholarly imagery. His poems reveal the theme of love and patriotism. His poems are sweet and refined and they are fine blending of fantasy and conceits. His poetry shows his talent and scholarship. Marvell was the last metaphysical poet.

The Metaphysical poetry did not flourish after the Restoration period. It was on the wane. However, after the First World War the metaphysical poetry started appearing in the poems of T. S. Eliot, F.R. Levis and Helen Gardner.
1.2.5 Summary

The metaphysical poetry emerged with the debut of John Donne. It has some peculiar characteristics. The term metaphysical was borrowed by Dr. Johnson. He borrowed it from Dryden. Dryden once remarked about Donne’s poetry, ‘he affects the metaphysics.’ Johnson picked up the term and applied to the poetry written in the early 17th century. The poets, who wrote poems under the influence of John done, are called metaphysical poets. The term ‘meta’ means ‘after’. So metaphysical means after the physical. Metaphysical poetry reflected political insecurity, religious controversy and intellectual confusion of that time. They also expressed the lack of coherence and certainty of their age. The metaphysical poetry bears typical characteristics. They are: Delight in Novel Thoughts and Expression, Obscurity, Scholarship, Religious and Amorous themes, Imagery and Refined language. Apart from this metaphysical poetry is a fine fusion of thought and passion. John Donne is the pioneer of metaphysical poetry. His poetry can be classified into three categories-amorous, religious and satirical. His poetry is a mixture of thought and devotion. George Herbert’s poems are known for simplicity and homely language. Richard Crawshaw’s poems are more emotional than thoughtful. Henry Vaughan’s poetry is famous for fantasy. Thomas Carew’s lyrical talent gets reflected in his poems. Andrew Marvell’s poem reflect theme of love and patriotism. Metaphysical poetry was on the wane after the Restoration period. However, poets like T.S. Eliot, F. R. Levis and Helen Gardner revived it in their poems. Critics and scholars have defined this poetry as the poetry which is born out of man’s passionate thinking about life, love and death.

1.2.6 Glossary and Notes

**Complicated**  -- difficult to understand or to deal with

**Obscurity**  -- the state of not being known or remembered; difficult to understand

**Amorous**  -- involving or expressing love

**Elliptical**  -- having the shape of an ellipse

**Fusion**  -- the combination of separate things

**Genuine**  -- real; not artificial; sincere and honest
1.2.7 Check your progress

A) Answer the following questions in one/word/sentence/phrase.
1. Who is the pioneer of the metaphysical poetry?
2. Mention the period of the metaphysical poetry.
3. What is the meaning of ‘meta’?
4. Who calls himself a classical scholar?
5. Whose poetry is famous for fantasy?

B) Fill in the blanks
1. The term metaphysical-applied to-poetry- was first used by --------------
2. ---------------------is a poet of lyrical talent.
3. The ------------------ poet dealt with simple and traditional themes.
4. The early 17th century was an age of ------------------------.
5. -------------- wrote both religious and amorous poems.

1.2.8 Key to your progress-

A) 1) John Donne
2) 1592 to 1678
3) After.
4) Andrew Marvell
5) Henry Vaughan

B) 1) Dr. Johnson
2) Thomas Carew
3) Elizabethan
4) Transition.
5) John Donne.
1.2.9 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions

1. What are the characteristics of metaphysical poetry?

2. Give definition of metaphysical poetry and write in brief about metaphysical poets.

B) Write a short note on the following,

1. Religious and amorous poetry

2. John Donne.

3. Andrew Marvell.

4. The early 17\textsuperscript{th} century period of England.
1.3 LYRICAL TYPES-SONNET, SONG, ELEGY

1.3.1 LYRIC

• Introduction

The lyric is very famous and old form of poetry. A lyric is written to express personal experience sad feelings of the poet. Self-expression is the core of a lyric. It is also known as a short poem which is divided into small stanzas. The lyric is written with a sense of musical language.

• Origin of Lyric

The word ‘Lyric has its roots in Greek. The word ‘Lyric’ has come into English from Greek word ‘Lyre’. Lyre is a musical instrument with string across used in ancient Greek. So, lyric means poetry sung to the accompaniment of lyre. Greeks traditionally divided their song into two kinds-lyric poetry and choric poetry. Lyric is the expression of personal feelings whereas the choric is a collective singing with musical instrument. Lyric has been the most popular form of English poetry. What is a lyric then? Here are some of the definitions of a lyric.

• Definitions

1. Oxford English Dictionary defines lyric as ‘the name for a short poem usually divided into stanzas . . . directly expressing the poet’s own thoughts or sentiments.

2. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English gives the definition of the lyric as ‘a poem, usually a short one, written in a lyric style’.
3. According to Wikipedia the Encyclopedia the lyric is ‘a form of poetry which expresses personal emotions or feelings, typically spoken in the first person’.

4. The lyric can be defined as a short poem which expresses personal emotions or feelings.

- **Features of the lyric**
  1. In lyric the poet expresses his single emotion in simple language.
  2. It appeals to the heart than to the brain.
  3. Subjectivity-
  4. The feeling precedes the thought.
  5. A lyric is always composed in a musical language.
  6. The poet tries to express his feelings with ease and sincerity.
  7. Love, joy, sorrow, death and birth etc are common themes of the lyric.

The types of lyrics are Sonnet, Ballad, Ode, Elegy, and Song. Though there are six types of lyric, you are going to learn for this semester three types of lyrics. They are; the Sonnet, the Song and the Elegy. Let us study the types.

**1.3.2 Lyrical Types-Sonnet, Song and Elegy.**

- **SONNET-**

- **Introduction-** Sonnet is the most popular form of the lyric. It is also the most popular form of subjective poetry. While writing a sonnet a poet has to be very brief and has to express his emotions in controlled manner. It has been very popular form of poetry since ancient time (13th Century).

- **Origin-** The word sonnet is perhaps an abbreviation of Italian word Sonetto which means a little sound. It is a short poem with fourteen lines. It has a rigid technical structure. This poetic form was originated in Italy. The great Italian poet of 13th century Giacomo da Lentini is the inventor of sonnet. However, it was brought to the perfect form by the great Italian poet, Petrarch (1304-1374). Before Petrarch the famous poet Dante used this form of poetry. But Petrarch used it so effectively and brilliantly that there came to exist the Petrarchan sonnet.
• **Definition**- A sonnet is a poem with 14 lines which rhyme with each other in a fixed pattern. So a sonnet is defined as a poem of 14 lines with a fixed rhyme scheme.

• **The Structure of Sonnet** – The Structure of the sonnet is fixed one. It has fourteen lines. These fourteen lines are divided into two parts. They are called 'Octave' and 'Sestet'. An octave has eight lines. A sestet has six lines. It has a fixed rhyme-scheme. But the English poets changed its structure. They divided it into four parts. It has three quatrains-a stanza of four lines each and a couplet-a stanza of two lines.

• **Types of Sonnet**- There are two main types of sonnets
  1. The Italian or Petrarchan sonnet
  2. The English sonnet or the Shakespearean sonnet.

1. **The Italian or Petrarchan sonnet:**

   Sonnet was born in Italy. Hence it is known as Italian sonnet. The Italian poet Petrarch used this form effectively and he brought it to perfection in his *Sonnets to Laura de Noves*. The Petrarchan sonnet is considered as stricter in form than the English sonnet. Petrarch addressed his sonnets to a woman Laura. They express his love for the lady. He expressed his love for Laura even after her death.

   **Structure of the Italian sonnet**

   This type of sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines which expresses a single thought or feeling. This sonnet is divided into two parts-Octave and Sestet. Octave is of eight lines whereas Sestet is of six lines. In the Italian sonnet the main theme is stated in the octave. It is further developed into sestet.

   The rhyme scheme of Octave is ABBA, ABBA. The Sestet differs from Octave as far as rhyme scheme is concerned. It rhymes as CDE, CDE or CD, CD, CD. It also rhymes as CDC, DCD, or CDE, DCE.

   Octave can be divided into two stanzas with four lines each. They are called quatrains. The Sestet can be divided into two stanzas with three lines each. They are called tercets. In the Italian sonnet there is a division between the first eight lines and the last six lines. This division is known as 'caesura'. Generally, the sonneteers put their ideas in the octave and arrive to a climax at the end of it. Sestet carries a turning
point which brings the idea to a concluding point. So, one finds a sense of completeness at the end of the sonnet. This turning point is called ‘a Volta’. But this division is not found in this type of the sonnet. Sometimes Milton and Wordsworth do put their ideas in the octave but they run into the ninth line of the sestet instead of stopping the idea in the eighth line of the octave. So they seem to break the tradition of dividing the sonnet into two fixed compartments.

- **Summary**

  Italian or Petrarchan sonnet consists of two parts. They are known as octave and sestet. They have structure of fixed lines. The former consists of eight lines while the later consists of six lines. They are labelled as quatrains and tercets. This type of sonnet carries a turning point which is called Volta. Thus, there is a water-tight compartment in this type of sonnet. But Milton and Wordsworth sometimes seem to break this compartment and take liberty.

- **The English sonnet or the Shakespearean Sonnet-**

  Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard brought the form (sonnet) to England. They imitated the Italian sonnet and made this form very popular in England. They wrote verses for pleasure. It was Wyatt who introduced the Petrarchan model. He wrote 31 sonnets on the themes of love and beauty. Surrey wrote love sonnets which were addressed to Lady Geraldine. They were full of melancholy and sadness. But Surrey gave a new pattern to his sonnets.

  Shakespeare used this new pattern of Surrey adding his ease and grace. He introduced three quatrains of four lines each and a couplet of two lines at the. He followed the rhyme-scheme-ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. Shakespeare used this form brilliantly. It is today known as the Shakespearean sonnet. In this type of sonnet the idea is stated and developed in the first twelve lines and concluded in the last two lines.

  Great poets like Milton and Spenser made this form very popular and gave it reputation in England. Prior to them, the Elizabethan poet Thomas Watson made this form popular and gave it reputation. In 1582 he published one hundred love poems. These poems were described as sonnets. However, Sidney’s sonnet sequence *Astrophel and Stella* (1591) marks the real beginning of Elizabethan sonnet. He imitated Petrarch, and Watson. Petrarch wrote his sonnets for his beloved Laura and
Sidney expressed his deep love for his beloved Penelope. Spenser wrote his sonnets in new rhyme-scheme-ABAB, BCBC, CDCD, EE. Spenser’s collection of 88 sonnets entitled *Amoretti* is an unforgettable contribution to the growth and development of the sonnet. These sonnets are addressed to his wife Elizabeth Boyle and they are autobiographical which tell a story of love without sin.

William Shakespeare skillfully and brilliantly used this form of poetry and made it very popular in England. His sonnet is known as a Shakespearean sonnet. He wrote the majority of his sonnets possibly in 1549. He did not choose Italian or the Petrarchan pattern. He chose the Spenserian pattern of three quatrains with alternate rhyming and couplet to conclude. Thomas Thorpe made the collection of 154 sonnets available to readers. He printed the collection in 1609. Shakespeare’s sonnets are dedicated to W. H. and to a Dark Lady. 126 sonnets are addressed to W. H and 26 are written for a Dark Lady. His sonnets move around the theme of love, death, fame and friendship etc. However, the autobiographical note runs in his sonnets. They are also famous for beauty of images and perfect style.

Poets like Henry Constable, Daniel, Drayton, Lodge, Fletcher and Percy contributed their talent and skill for the growth and development of the sonnet. Constable’s sonnets are famous for melody, beauty and sensuousness. Daniel’s sonnets are marked with the theme of love. Drayton is a famous sonneteer of Elizabethan age. In his sonnets he puts forward the platonic idea of beauty. His sonnet sequence *Idea* represents his platonic idea of beauty. Thus, the Age of Shakespeare was the golden age of the sonnet. These poets contributed something new to this form to enrich it. John Milton and William Wordsworth too wrote sonnets. They preferred the Petrarchan pattern.

- **Summary**

  The English sonnet differs from the Italian sonnet. The English sonneteers follow different rhyme- scheme in their sonnets. In England Wyatt and Surrey began writing sonnets. Wyatt followed the Petrarchan model while Surrey introduced a new pattern to the sonnet. Shakespeare followed Surrey and used his form very effectively and brilliantly. He made the form popular in England. His collection of 154 sonnets is very famous in English literature. He addressed his sonnets to W. H. and to a Dark Lady. His sonnets are famous for beauty of language and style. However, the contribution of Thomas Watson, Sidney, and Spenser to develop the
sonnet form cannot be forgotten. They, with their merit and talent, enriched the sonnet form. Their sonnets carry melody and beauty. Lodge, Fletcher and Percy contributed their merit and wrote some sonnets and acquired a very important position in the array of great Elizabethan sonneteers. John Milton and William Wordsworth preferred sonnet writing but they followed the Petrarchan pattern.

In short, a sonnet is a very popular form of poetry which is used to express poet’s emotion and feeling.

• **THE SONG-**

• **Introduction**- The song is one of the types of lyric. It is a short musical composition or a short poem mainly made for singing.

• **Definitions**-
  1. The dictionary defines the song ‘as a relatively metrical composition suitable for singing’.
  2. It is also defined as ‘a short poem or number of verses set to music or intended to be sung.

• **Nature**- A song should be emotional. It is an expression of a single thought or emotion. It is subjective in nature. The feeling or emotion of the poet is expressed in a simple and musical language.

• **Chief Characteristics of Song**-
  1. A song is supposed to be emotional.
  2. It should move around a single thought, feeling or emotion.
  3. It conveys feelings rather than ideas.
  4. A song is subjective and the feeling or emotion is expressed subjectively.
  5. The language of a song is simple and lucid.
  6. A song deals with simple themes such as joy, sorrow, love, and childhood.
  7. It has stanzas consisting of few lines.
  8. A song is just an expression of emotion or feeling without any other purpose.
Themes-

A song became very popular in the Elizabethan Age. The court of the Elizabeth is called ‘a nest of singing birds’. Even Shakespeare wrote many beautiful songs for his plays. The Elizabethan Age witnessed many kinds of songs- love songs, religious songs, patriotic songs, war songs and philosophical songs. They carried every mood- grave, romantic, sentimental and mocking etc. Love is the main theme of Elizabethan songs. The other themes of song are joy, sorrow, praise of wine, childhood and nature.

Sir Philip Sidney wrote many songs. They express passion, beauty, romance and fancy. They have loftiness and superb musical quality. His famous songs are ‘only Joy! Now here you are’ and ‘Rings out your bell’. Shakespeare wrote many beautiful songs for his comedies and romances. His songs are spontaneous, fresh and they carry rustic realism. Some of his songs express the touching feeling of love. Shakespeare has inserted songs in his famous comedy As You Like It. Shakespeare’s contemporary dramatists also wrote songs for their plays. Thomas Dekkar's and Ben Johnson's plays have lovely songs. Thomas Campion wrote attractive songs and lyrics. His famous collections of songs are Two Books of Ayres (1601) and Songs of Mourning (1613). They are very famous for a high musical quality. Thus, a song is very popular form of poetry. Lord Byron’s ‘She Walks in Beauty’ and Tennyson’s ‘Tears, Idle Tears' are perfect examples of songs, though they deal with a different mood. Even Donne has written songs. His Go and Catch the Falling Star is a very famous song.

Summary

A song is a short poem made for singing. It deals with a single emotion, feeling and thought. It is emotional, simple and subjective. It focuses on feelings and not on ideas. It deals with theme of joy, sorrow, love, and childhood. The Elizabethan age is regarded as the golden era of songs. The court of the Elizabeth is called ‘a nest of singing birds’. Love songs, war songs, religious songs etc proliferated in this era. Sir Philip Sidney, William Shakespeare, Thomas Dekker, Ben Johnson and Thomas Campion contributed their literary merit to enrich this form. Even Byron and Tennyson also tempted to write songs. Thus, a song is a very popular form of poetry.
THE ELEGY-

Introduction - An elegy is one of the important forms of poetry. It came to England from Greece. It bears some characteristics which distinguish it from other forms of poetry. Let us study the definition, origin, nature, characteristic and a cursory survey of elegy.

Definition-

1. The dictionary defines elegy as ‘a poem or song written to show sadness for someone or something that no longer exists’.

2. An elegy is a mournful, melancholic or plaintive poem, especially a funeral song or a lament for dead.

3. An elegy can be defined as a poem of mourning which expresses personal sorrow over the loss of someone or something.

Origin and Nature-

Elegy originated and flourished in ancient Greece. In the Greek Literature the word Elegy was used to refer a poetical composition written in a special metrical form. It has two lines. The first line consists of six feet of Dactyls. The second line is comprised of five feet of Dactyls. Any poem, whatever may be the theme, written in this way was called an elegy. An elegy deals with themes like war, love, patriotism, death and any other subject matter. Thus, the word elegy was a Greek word. It was a poem in elegiac meter. It was not used for a poem of mourning. However, in modern times, the elegy has got a new meaning. Nowadays the theme of an elegy is more important than its meter. It now means a poem of lamentation. In this type of a poem, a poet expresses his sorrow over the death of a particular person or over the loss of something. So one can find in English literature especially in Renaissance period elegies were written on the theme of death. So the English elegies are sorrowful. They do not have elegiac metrical form. Thus, in modern times, an elegy is judged on its theme. Hence, it must bear some qualities.

1. It should be sorrowful.

2. It must deal with dark and grave themes like fall of something or lost love.

3. It must be a tribute to somebody or something loved or lost.

4. It should reveal a pensive mood of a poet.
• **A brief survey**

Tennyson wrote *In Memoriam* to express his feelings over the death of his friend Arthur Hallam. In this elegy he expresses mystery of life and death. Mathew Arnold’s famous elegy *Rugby Chapel* records the passage of life of mortal men. He wrote the elegy after he visited his father’s grave.

There are two types of elegies-personal elegies and impersonal elegies. In personal elegies the poet expresses his personal loss of someone very near to him. The elegies discussed above belong to the first type. In impersonal elegies the poet deals with life in general and its sorrow. Thomas Gray’s *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* belongs to the second type. This is the most famous elegy in English literature. Walt Whitman’s *Captain O my Captain* can be treated as elegy.

• **The Pastoral Elegy**

This is one more form of the elegy. It is known as pastoral elegy. In this type of elegy the poet is expected to speak as a shepherd. He weeps over the death of his fellow shepherd. The setting of this elegy is rustic life and the poet uses images like sheep, shepherds, flowers and rural life. Sicilian Greeks are the originators of the pastoral elegy. Theocritus, Bion and Moschus are the pioneers of this elegy. Theocritus composed ‘*Idylls and Epigrams*’ which is the best example of pastoral elegy. Further, Vergil introduced this form in Latin. He wrote the elegy ‘*Eclogues* and *Georgics*’ which is the perfect form of pastoral elegy. The pastoral elegy rooted in English soil with Spenser’s *Shepherd’s Calendar*. The poem introduces Colin Clout and depicts his life as a shepherd. John Milton’s *Lycidas* and Shelley’s *Adonais* and Arnold’s *Thyris* are the best examples of pastoral elegies in English poetry. *Lycidas* is an elegy over the loss of Milton’s friend Edward King.

• **The distinctive feature**

The distinctive feature of the elegy is that the poet can take liberty, throw light on some points which he/ she feels important. Death is main theme of an elegy. The poet laments over the loss of his dear one. But he can divert from this theme and can bring different themes like his views on death, tribute to his friend, and his political views etc. This is the special feature of the elegy and it is reflected in many elegies. In *Lycidas* Milton laments over the death of his friend. But as the poem proceeds, he laments the degradation of poetry and religion. Tennyson's *In Memoriam* is on the
death of his friend but the poet talks on life and destiny. This is digression but it does not affect the structure of the poem. Such digressions can take place in elegies only. So it is a very distinctive feature of this form of poetry. Byron’s elegy on *Tahyrza* is the best example of such a distinctive feature of elegy.

- **Summary**

  An elegy travelled from ancient Greece to England. It is a poem of mourning which is a powerful expression of sad feelings. It is also a lamentation over the loss of someone or something. It shows a pensive mood of the poet. In ancient Greece the poet used to follow the conventional rules of the elegy. It was a poem in elegiac meter. However, in England the theme of the elegy remained at the centre rather than the elegiac meter. Now it means a poem of lamentation. So the English elegies are sorrowful. There are two types of elegies-personal and impersonal. In personal elegy the poet expresses his personal loss. In impersonal elegy life in general and its sorrow are reflected. Milton’s *Lycidas*, Tennyson’s *In Memoriam* are the examples of personal elegies. Thomas Gray’s *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* is the best example of an impersonal elegy. Moreover, there is one more type of elegy. It is known as pastoral energy. In this type of elegy the poet speaks as a shepherd. He expresses his grief over the loss of his fellow shepherd. These elegies have rural background and they use images of sheep, flowers and rustic life. Sicilian Greeks are the originator's of the pastoral elegy. Theocritus, Bion and Moschus are the pioneer's of this elegy. Spenser rooted this form of the elegy in England. John Milton’s *Lycidas* and Shelley’s *Adonais* and Arnold’s *Thyrsis* are the best examples of pastoral elegies.

  The unique feature of the elegy is that the poet can divert from the main theme and can introduce a new theme. John Milton’s *Lycidas* and Tennyson *In Memoriam* serve the best examples of it. This unique feature distinguishes the elegy from the other lyrical forms of poetry.

1.3.3 **Glossary and Notes**

- **Abbreviation** - A short form of word or expression
- **Distinguish** -- to be able to recognize and understand the difference between two similar things
- **Degradation** - the process by which something changes to worse condition
Digression --moving away from the main subject

1.3.4 Check your progress

A) Answer the following questions in one word/sentence /phrase.
   1. What is a lyre?
   2. Define the term 'song'.
   3. What are the types of sonnet?
   4. Mention the types of elegy.
   5. Write one of the features of lyric.

B) Fill in the blanks
   1. ----------------------- means a little sound.
   2. -----------------1591) marks the real beginning of Elizabethan sonnet
   3. A song should be ---------
   4. Elegy originated and flourished in ---------------------
   5. A sonnet is a poem of ---------------lines.

Answers to Check Your Progress

A) 1. Lyre is a musical instrument with string across.
    2. The song is a relatively metrical composition suitable for singing.
    3. Italian or Petrarchan and English or Shakespearean sonnet.
    4. Personal and Impersonal elegy.
    5. Subjectivity is one of the features of lyric.

B) 1. Sonetto
    2. Astrophel and Stella
    3. Emotional
    4. Ancient Greece
    5. 14
1.3.6 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions
   1. What are the features of lyrical poetry?
   2. What are the features of the song?
   3. Distinguish between the Petrarchan and English sonnet.
   4. Personal and Impersonal Elegy.

C) Write short notes on the following.
   1. The distinctive feature of elegy.
   4. Origin and nature of elegy.

1.3.7 Further Reading
2.1.0 OBJECTIVES:

After the studies of this poem you will be able to:

- Know Philip Sydney as a sonneteer.
- Understand the theme of the poem.
- Acquaint yourself with the Elizabethan poetry.

2.1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Sir Philip Sydney was born on 30th November 1554 at Penshurst. He was the second child of Sir Henry Sydney and Lady Mary Dudley, daughter of the Duke of Northumberland. He received his early education at Shewsbury School where he developed his life-long friendship with Fulke Gravile. Then he went to Christ College, Oxford in 1571.
Sydney left Oxford without a degree. He went to Paris, Vienna, Venice and Prague. He returned home in 1577. He now entered the Court and became at once extremely popular. He was patronised by his uncle, the Earl of Leicester. In the Summer of 1575, he first met Penelope, the Stella of his sonnet sequence *Astrophel and Stella*. He along with his friends, Gabriel Harvey and Edmund Spenser started a literary society called the Aero-pagins. Sydney's old college friend, Fulke Grevile and Edward Dyer, also became its members.

Sydney, with his qualities of head and heart, earned reputation as a poet. However, in 1580 he earned wrath of the queen when he criticised her proposed marriage with the Duke of Anjou. Instead, he advocated her matrimonial alliance with his uncle. As a result, he was banished from the Court. Sydney went into retirement at Wilton and there he wrote *Arcadia*, and his *Apology for Poetry*.

In 1581, he again came in favour of the court. He was knighted in January, 1583. In the month of September the same year, he married Frances Walsingham, the daughter of the Queen's famous secretary of State. Two years later he was appointed as the Governor of Flushing. In 1586, he got seriously wounded in the battle of Zulphen. He passed away on 17 October 1586 and was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral after a glorious public funeral.

2.1.2 THE TEXT :

Let not old age disgrace my high desire,  
O heavenly soul, in human shape contained:  
Old wood inflamed doth yield the bravest fire,  
When younger doth in smoke his virtue spend.  
Nor let white hairs, which on my face do grow,  
seem to your eyes of a disgraceful hue,  
Since whiteness doth present the sweetest show,  
Which makes all eyes do homage unto you.  
Old age is wise and full of constant truth;  
Old age well stayed from raging humor lives;  
Old age hath known what ever was in youth;  
Old age are come, the greater honor gives:
And to old age since you yourself aspire,
Let not old age disgrace my high desire.

2.1.3 SUMMARY:

The poet says that the old age should not affect his high desire. Human life is the gift of the god. It is heavenly soul. He says the old age has its own benefits. Just as the old wood gives the blazing fire, the old age is full of fire. It is like a seasoned wood. When we are young we waste our energy in useless things. So the poet asks us not to make fun of his white hair because the whiteness represents sweetness and pleasure in life. He further says that old age is wise. It is full of constant truth. It does not allow to waste time in humor i.e. doing meaningless things. A person gets greater honour in his old age because old people have a lot of experience. Therefore, you should not be ashamed of old age. The poet repeats that the old age should not discourage his high spirit.

2.1.4 ANALYSIS OF THE POEM:

'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire' is a very thoughtful sonnet written by Sir Philip Sydney. Sir Philip Sydney is one of the best sonneteers of Elizabethan period. He made his name among the contemporary poets like Edmund Spenser, Shakespeare, Michael Drayton and Samuel Daniel. In this sonnet he underlines the virtues of old age.

The poet does not allow the old age to discourage his high spirit. He thinks human life to be a god given gift. In order to stress the virtue of old age, he has given the example of old wood. He says that the old wood gives the bravest fire whereas the younger wood seethes with smoke. So old age is like old wood that is full of energy. The poet requests us not to look disgracefully at the white hair on his face because whiteness is the symbol of sweetness and maturity. The old age is full of wisdom and constant truth. The old age does not allow one to waste his time uselessly. It enables a person to avoid the mistakes done in young age. It is full of worldly experience and gives greater honour. Therefore you should not be afraid of old age. He appreciates being in his old age.

The poem is a sonnet having the end-rhyme scheme as ABAB, CDCD, EFEF, GG. There is an example of a metaphor 'Old Wood' stands for old age. Just as the old wood gives the blazing fire, the old age is full of blazing energy. The poet has used
the plural form of 'hair' as 'hairs'. Although it is a grammatical mistake, the poets are allowed to break the rules of grammar under the poetic licence. There are some archaic words—doth, unto, hath.

2.1.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.I: Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence only:

1) What is the form of this poem?
2) What is the end-rhyme scheme of the poem?
3) Make a list of archaic words in the poem and give their current meaning.

Q.II: Complete the following sentences by choosing one of the correct alternatives given below them:

1) 'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire' is a _______.
   a) song   b) elegy   c) sonnet   d) ballad.
2) 'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire' is composed by _______.
   a) Philip Sydney   b) Sir Philip Sydney
   b) Sir Philip Sidne   d) Sir Philip Sidni.
3) Old _______ inflamed doth yield the bravest fire.
   a) wool   b) wood   c) log   d) clothe.

2.1.6 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:

Disgrace: bring shame or discredit on.
Yield: give
Hue: a colour
Doth: does
Unto: to
Raging: extreme, very painful.
Hath: had
Aspire: strong desire.
2.1.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q. I: 1) sonnet

2) abab, cdcd, efef, gg

3) doth = does, unto = to, hath = had/have,

Q. II 1) c 2) b 3) b

2.1.8 EXERCISES:

Q. 1: Write a critical appreciation of the poem 'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire.'

Q. 2: Write short notes on the following:

1) Message in the poem 'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire.'

2) 'Let Not Old Age Disgrace My High Desire' as a sonnet.

2.1.9 FURTHER READING:

i) Buxton Johh: Sir Philip Sidney and the English Renaissance, (Macmillan)

Poem 2.2 : The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

-Christopher Marlowe

Contents :
2.2.0 Objectives
2.2.1 Introduction
2.2.2 The Text
2.2.3 Summary
2.2.4 Analysis of the poem
2.2.5 Check your progress
2.2.6 Glossary and notes
2.2.7 Key to check your progress
2.2.8 Exercises
2.2.9 Further Reading

2.2.0 OBJECTIVES :
After studying this poem you will be able to :

- Understand Marlowe as a love poet.
- Know features of Elizabethan song.
- Appreciate the beauty of simple language.
- Understand the theme of the poem.

2.2.1 INTRODUCTION :

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593), Shakepeare’s predecessor, was born at Canterbury in February 1564, two months before Shakespeare himself was born. His father, John, was a fairly well-to-do shoe-maker, and his mother, Catherine, the daughter of the rector of St. Peter’s. They had nine children, of whom Christopher was the second. Though nothing definite is on record about Marlowe's life, it is believed that he had his early education at King’s School, Canterbury, later joined
Cambridge University and took his B.A. in 1583. The University refused to admit him to the M.A. degree, because of his poor record (though brilliant, he was not sufficiently studious), his irregularity in attendance and his atheistic views. But the Privy Council interfered and the University was forced to grant him the M.A. degree in 1587, because, as is believed, he had served the government secretly as a spy during his frequent absences from College. These espionage activities exposed him to the influence of disreputable people.

Leaving the University he arrived in London, ambitious of a literary career. During the six years he spent-in London, he wrote Hero and Leander and other poems, and the plays Tamburlaine the Great, two parts (1587), Dr Faustus (1588), The Jew of Malta (1590), Edward-II (1591), The Massacre of Paris (1593), and the unfinished Dido, Queen of Carthage (1593).

2.2.2. THE TEXT:

Come live with me and be my love
And we will all the pleasures prove
That valleys, groves, hills and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields

And we will sit upon rocks,
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee bed of roses
And a thousand fragrant poises,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle,

A grown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds,
With coral clasps and amber studs,
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come leave with me and be my love.

The Shepherds's swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning ;
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

2.2.3 SUMMARY :

The poet earnestly requests his lady love to come with him and respond to his love. He asks her to enjoy the pleasures that the valleys, groves, hills, fields, woods and mountains give. Then he invites her to sit upon the rocks and watch how shepherds feed their flocks. He requests her to listen to the madrigals sung by birds. Further he promises her to give bed of roses, a cap of flowers and a kirtle decorated with leaves of myrtle. He offers her a gown made of the finest wool and fair lined slippers decorated with buckles of the purest gold. Next he offers her a belt made of straw decorated with ivy buds and amber studs. The poet asks her to take delight in the dance of shepherd's swains in the May morning. He requests her to come and be his love if she likes these small things in the nature.

2.2.4 ANALYSIS OF THE POEM :

'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love' is a very beautiful and simple country song composed by Christopher Marlowe. It was first printed in The Passionate Pilgrim, in 1599, where it consists of four stanzas. The prescribed poem, having six stanzas, was printed in Englands Helicon in 1600.

In the beginning we find a shepherd full of passion of love for his would be beloved. It appears that his beloved is hesitant to respond to the advances of love. Therefore, the lover in this poem is asking her to enjoy the small pleasures that the things in nature give to the human beings. He says that the valleys, groves, hills, woods and mountains are the source of unending joy. Then the poet tries to lure his lady love by promising her to accompany her all the time. He tells her that they will sit upon the rocks for hours together watching how shepherds feed their flocks and listen to melodious madrigals sung by the birds to the music of the falls by the shallow rivers. Further the poet makes her many promises to make her happy. He
promises her to give the bed of fragrant roses. He offers her a cap and kirtle decorated with flowers and leaves of myrtle. He promises to give her a gown made of the finest wool and slippers having buckles of the purest gold that will protect her from the severe cold. Then he offers her a belt made of straw decorated with ivy buds, coral clasps and amber studs. He invites her to watch how shepherd's swains dance and sing in the fine morning of May. He tells her, if she likes to enjoy these small, beautiful things in the nature, she should not waste her time and being his beloved she should enjoy with him.

The poem is remarkable for its simple and rustic diction. This song is as sweet and melodious as the feeling of the poet for his beloved. The poet's passion for his beloved is genuine and the mood of the poet is calm, serene and gay. The poem is notable for its imaginative richness, its sweet melody, its romantic glamour and its love for Nature. It is a poetic piece of pleasure and sweetness which immediately captures the readers heart. The poem underlines the small pleasures that the things in nature offer to us. It is a perfect communication between the mood of the poet and the things in nature.

The poem has six stanzas. Actually these are six quatrains. The end-rhyme scheme is perfect. It is aabb, cedd, eeff, gghh, iijj, kkjj. There are some examples of alliteration which make the poem melodious- madrigals, coral clasps, shepherd swains shall, May morning, mind may move. There is an examples of transferred epithet -'Melodious birds sing madrigals' here the birds are not melodious but the madrigals sung by the birds are melodious.

The title of the poem is apt and significant. It is suggestive. It highlights the passionate feelings of a lover for his beloved. It prepares the reader for reading a beautiful love song.

The poem is full of rustic background. The lovers in the poem belong to a pastoral background. The references to the fields, mountains, hills, valleys add to the calm and quiet atmosphere in the rural area. Then the promises made by the poet show that he will offer his beloved things made of the simple things in Nature. He is not going to offer her any artificial things. Thus the pastoral atmosphere during Summer enhances the beauty of the poem.

The poem is remarkable for its colour imagery. The references to various gifts the lover wishes to offer to his beloved denote a galaxy of different attractive colours
e.g. valleys, groves, hills and fields represent green colour. The river falls represent white colour. The bed of roses represent pink whereas the buckles of slippers show golden colour. The coral represents red colour whereas the amber represents yellow colour. Therefore, the reader visualises the colourful atmosphere while reading the poem.

2.2.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :

Q. I : Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence only:

1) What is the form of this poem ?
2) What is the theme of the poem ?
3) What gifts the poet wishes to offer to his beloved ?
4) Which season is suggested by reference to 'May Morning' ?
5) What is the end-rhyme scheme of the poem ?

Q II : Rewrite the following sentences by choosing one of the correct alternatives given below them :

1) The poem is written in _______.
   a) 1600          b) 1598
   c) 1601          d) 1597

2) The stanza having four lines is called a _______.
   a) couplet         b) tercet
   c) quatrain       d) sonnet

3) _______ are singing madrigals.
   a) birds          b) cuckoos
   c) nightingales   d) skylarks

4) The time denoted in the poem is _______
   a) winter         b) rainy season
   c) summer        d) autumn.

5) The poet promises his beloved to offer her a belt of straw decorated with ____ studs.
2.2.6 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:

- groves = small wood or group of trees.
- steepy = sloping sharply
- madrigal = a love song
- poise = support
- myrtle = a shrub bearing white flowers
- buckles = fastner
- coral = red
- amber = yellow
- swain = a young, rustic man
- ivy = a vine
- clasp = buckle

2.2.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.I 1) song
    2) poet's passion for his beloved
    3) bed of roses, gown, slippers, belt and a cap.
    4) Summer.
    5) aabb, ccdd, eeff, gghh, ijjj, kkjj.

Q.II 1) 1600  2) quatrain  3) birds  4) Summer  5) amber.

2.2.8 EXERCISES:

Q. 1 :
   i) Critically appreciate the song 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love.'
   ii) How does the poet express the shepherd's earnest feelings for his beloved?

Q. 2 : Write short notes on the following:
i) The colour imagery in the poem.
ii) The Shepherd's feelings for his beloved.
iii) Gifts offered by the shepherd to his beloved.
iv) The pastoral background in the poem.

2.2.9 FURTHER READING.
Poem 2.3 : Shall I Compare Thee...

- William Shakespeare

Contents :
2.3.0 Objectives
2.3.1 Introduction
2.3.2 The Text
2.3.3 Summary
2.3.4 Analysis of the poem
2.3.5 Check your progress
2.3.6 Glossary and notes
2.3.7 Key to check your progress
2.3.8 Exercises
2.3.9 Further Reading

2.3.0 OBJECTIVES :

After studying this poem you will be able to :

- Identify the lyrical types such as sonnet, song and elegy.
- Understand Shakespeare as a sonneteer.
- Understand the features of Elizabethan lyrics.
- Analyse the poem focusing on its theme.

2.3.1 INTRODUCTION :

William Shakespeare was born on 23 April, 1564 at Statford on -Avon, Warwickshire. He was educated at the Free Grammar School at Stratford where he was taught Latin and arithmetic. He married Anne Hathaway, a woman eight years his senior and left Statford about 1585 and arrived in London to seek his fortune. He worked in subordinate capacity at theatres for about twenty years, worked hard and
produced on an average a couple of plays a year, and grew steadily in fame and wealth. He became shareholder in two of the leading theatres of the time, the Globe and the Black Friars, and purchased property in Stratford and London and spent the last days of his life there. He died on 23 April, 1616.

Shakespeare began his literary career as a poet and continued to write poetry throughout his literary career. The poems written by him fall under three groups. They are a) longer narrative poems, b) sonnets, and c) songs strewn in his plays. Of these we are concerned with sonnets.

Shakespeare has his distinctive place among the English sonneteers. He handled the sonnet form so perfectly that the English sonnet came to be known as the Shakespearian sonnet. Instead of using the Petrarchan form of 8 + 6, he divided his sonnet into 4 + 4 + 4 + 2 i.e. three quatrains followed by a couplet, with a perfect end-rhyme scheme as abab, cdec, efef and gg.

Shakespeare wrote a sonnet sequence of 154 sonnets. They fall into two clear groups. The first is called The Fair Man. The sonnets in this group are addressed to a very close friend of Shakespeare. He is referred to as William Herbert - he is either Willaim Herbert, the Earl of Pembroke, or Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton. The second series, a small group of 28 sonnets, is addressed to a young and charming lady, who is called The Dark Lady. The sonnet under our study belongs to the first group.

2.3.2 THE TEXT :

Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:
Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May,
And summer's lease hath all too short a date:
Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,
And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometimes declines,
By chance, or nature's changing course untrimm'd;
But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou ow'st,
Nor shall death brag thou wander'st in his shade,
When in eternal lines to time thou grow'st;
    So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
    So long lives this, and this gives life to thee.

2.3.3 SUMMARY:

The poet asks his friend if he should compare him to a summer's day. However, he finds his friend to be more lovely and more moderate than a summer's day. Summer does not last long and even the buds of May could be shaken by the rough winds. However, it is not so with you. Sometimes the sun shines very hot and often his gold complexion gets dim. My friend, you are free from such extremes. I know that all beauty must fade sometime, but your eternal youth shall not fade at all. You shall never lose the possession of beauty that you own. Even death cannot boast that you wander in his shade. Hence I feel confident that my verse would make your life eternal. Though everything is short-lived, your life shall go on as men can breathe and eyes can see.

2.3.4 ANALYSIS OF THE POEM:

'Shall I compare Thee...' is a very beautiful sonnet composed by William Shakespeare. It is sonnet No. 18 in the sequence. Here Shakespeare praises for his friend's charm. He is aware that the beauty of his friend cannot last forever. Time is surely going to destroy it. But he is confident that with his pen and poetic ability he will immortalize the beauty of his friend. This idea is developed in a natural manner in the sonnet.

In the beginning, the poet asks his dear friend, "Shall I compare thee with a summer's day?" But he says that his friend is more lovely and more temperate than the summer. He further says that rough winds of summer damage the sweet buds of May. The summer sun is sometimes too bright or too dim. All beautiful things lose their beauty in the course of time. But the poet says that his friend's charm will not fade. His friend will not lose possession of beauty. Even death cannot boast that he is overshadowed by it. The poet boasts that he will immortalize his friend through his verse. He says:
"So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,
So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."

The poet has compared the beauty of his friends with the beauty of summer. Actually it is a comparison through contrast. On one side there is a beautiful and handsome image of his friend and on the other side there are summer's sweet breath, and sweet scent of flowers. The beauty of both of them is short-lived. They can not survive the destructive forces of time. However, the poet is hopeful of immortalizing the beauty of his friend through his verses. He is proud of his friend's personality and as there was a custom during the Elizabethan time among the poets, he boasts of his pen and poetic ability that will give immortality to his friend.

The poet has presented a universal truth through this sonnet. He underlines the fact that all things are mortal. They are going to be destroyed in the course of time. He knows that his friend will die some day. However, the poet with his strong prowess i.e. through his verse will make him immortal. Neither his beauty nor his virtues will be allowed to fade away. It is absolutely true because even today his sonnets hold the readers' mind and it is through them lives his friend.

The poem is full of rich imagery. The image of a summer's day is coupled with the rough winds that shake the darling buds of May, and the eye of heaven shining brightly or dimmed. Death is spoken as a braggart that is to be defeated by the poet. The eternal summer represents friend's beauty of youth. The eternal lines represent the verse of the poet that will remain undestroyed through infinite time.

2.3.5 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q. I: Answer the following questions in one word, phrase or sentence each:

1) What is the form of this poem?
2) What is the poem about?
3) What does the poet boast of?
4) Which figure of speech contain in 'But thy eternal summer shall not fade'?
5) What is the end-rhyme scheme of the poem?

Q. II: Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:
1) William Shakespeare wrote _______ plays.
   a) 30        b) 37        c) 35        d) 40
2) Shakespeare belongs to _______ period of English literature.
   a) Jacobian   b) Georgian   c) Elizabethan d) Classical
3) Shakespeare wrote _______ sonnets.
   a) 151        b) 152        c) 153        d) 154
4) Shakespeare has addressed 126 sonnets to his friend W. H. and remaining
   28 sonnets are address to ______
   a) the Sweet Lady   b) the Dark Lady
   c) the Beautiful Lady d) the Cute Lady.
5) The poet has compared the beauty of his friend with the beauty of____.
   a) summer b) winter c) autumn d) rainy season

2.3.6 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:

thee = you
thou = you
art = are
lease = a certain time
hath = have
owest = owe
brag = boast
growest = grow

2.3.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:
Q.I 1) sonnet
2) Poet's praise of his friends beauty.
3) Making his friend immortal through his poem.
4) Metaphor, comparision between summer and youth
5) abab, cdcd, efcf, gg.

Q.II 1) 37  2) Elizabethan  3) 154  4) The Dark Lady  5) Summer.

2.3.8 EXERCISES:

Q.1 i) Critically appreciate the Sonnet 'Shall I Compare Thee'.
   ii) How does the poet describe the beauty of his friend?

Q.2 Write short notes on the following:
   i) Shakespeare's boast of making his friend immortal.
   ii) The use of images in the poem.

2.3.9 FURTHER READING:
   i) Dasgupta N.K. : Shakespeare's The Sonnets ; Agra : Agarwal Publishers
Objectives:

After studying this unit you will be able to:

1. Understand – the meaning of metaphysical poetry.
2. Explain – different terms & poetic devices used by the metaphysical poets.

Introduction:

Dr. Johnson first used the term 'Metaphysical school of poetry'. He referred to the poetry of John Donne, Cowley & others. John Donne was the founder of this school of poetry. He was later followed by Crashaw, George Herbert, Cowley, and Andrew Marvell. Intellectual wit, novel, learned imagery, peculiar blend of passion, thought & feeling, use of hyperbole, paradox, farfetched conceits are some of the main characteristics of this type of poetry. It is a record of every mood, passion, feeling, thought and idea. These poets used subtle & unexpected comparisons. They turned to analysis, brooding on religion & probing of their souls. They developed more individual styles. This poetry is conversational, subtle & argumentative.

Poets & Poems –

1) John Donne – The Flea.
2) Andrew Marvell – To His Coy Mistress.
3) George Herbert – The Pulley.

3.1 The Flea

- John Donne.

Structure:

3.1.0 Objectives
3.1.1 Introduction
3.1.2 The Text
3.1.3 Summary
3.1.4 Analysis of the Poem
3.1.0 Objectives:

After studying this part of the unit students will be able to

- Understand Donne as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Explain Donne’s concept of love.
- Study relationship between physical and spiritual love.
- Identify Donne’s Intellectual conceits.

3.1.1 Introduction:

John Donne (1572 -1631) was born in 1572 in London. He was the son of a rich iron merchant. His father’s & mother’s, families were Catholics. Due to it, his education couldn’t be continued at Oxford & Cambridge. He fell in love with Anne More & they were married just before Christmas in 1601. It ruined Donne’s career. Anne bore 12 children in 16 years of marriage. Donne was elected as MP in 1602. He was awarded Doctorate from Cambridge, in 1615. His wife died in 1617. In December 1623, he suffered a fatal illness & on 31st March 1631 he died. It is said that his final illness was stomach cancer, but it has not been proved.

John Donne is considered as the pre eminent representative of the metaphysical poets. His poetry is noted for its vibrancy of language & inventiveness of metaphor. He is particularly famous for his mastery of metaphysical conceits.(an extended metaphor that combines two vastly different ideas into a single idea often using imagery.) Common themes of his poems are love, death & idea of true religion. The 1st edition of his poetry appeared after his death (Poems, 1633).

The present poem ‘The Flea’ is a metaphysical poem, first published posthumously in 1633. The exact date of its composition is unknown. It presents the
conceit of a Flea which has sucked blood from the male speaker and his female lover. It serves as an extended metaphor for the relationship between them.

3.1.2 The Text:

The Flea

--- John Donne

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deniest me is;
It sucked me first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea our two bloods mingled be;
Thou know'st that this cannot be said
A sin, nor shame, nor loss of maidenhead,
Yet this enjoys before it woo,
And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
And this, alas, is more than we would do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge, and you, w'are met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.
Though use make you apt to kill me,
Let not to that, self-murder added be,
And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?
Wherein could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph’st, and say'st that thou
Find’st not thy self, nor me the weaker now;
’Tis true; then learn how false, fears be:
Just so much honor, when thou yield’st to me,
Will waste, as this flea’s death took life from thee.

3.1.3 Summary:

The speaker addresses his beloved that the Flea is a little thing and she must look at it. She denies. He adds that the flea has sucked his blood first and then her blood. So, now, in the flea, in the form of the blood, they are mingled. This mingling of the blood in the body of the flea is not sin, shame or loss of virginity. The flea has joined them together. It’s body has now swollen up. As she moves to kill the flea, the speaker opposes her saying her to think about this act. He says that now in the flea’s body their blood is mingled and thus they are united & cloistered in the living walls of the flea. So, to kill the flea would be a sacrilege, “three sins in killing three.”

But the beloved kills the flea and the lover calls her cruel & rash. She has purpled her nails with the blood of the innocent flea. He asks her, ‘what was the fault of the poor creature?’ It has sucked a drop of her blood. The lover answered that both of them will not be weak after killing the flea. He says that her fears are false and she will lose no honour in yielding herself to him.

3.1.4 Analysis of the Poem:

This poem presents Donne’s metaphysical idea by using image of a flea that has just bitten the speaker & his beloved. It creates the conflict whether the two will engage in premarital sex. The flea has sucked the blood of the speaker first then that of the beloved. Now, it’s body contains mixed blood of the two. This mingling is innocuous. Middle stanza of the poem presents the speakers thought & efforts to save the flea’s life considering it as “the marriage bed.” Development of action & thought is continued in the third stanza.

The beloved kills the flea. The speaker protests this action by blaming her for being cruel and rash. He criticizes that by killing the flea, she has purpled her nails in the blood of innocence. To him the flea was not guilty except, it has sucked a blood drop. After killing the flea, she is triumphant. Speaker says that her fear is false & no more, they would be weak. She must learn that she has lost the little life in the death
of the flea. So, she will lose no honour in yielding herself to him. Also, he wishes that she should accept all this & be ready to mingle in him. It shows that Donne’s interest is not primarily in the flea but in the exploration of love relationship. He emphasizes the need of physical union. Through this poem he demonstrated that even true spiritual love has it’s basis in physical union. The body & the soul must be satisfied. But, the poet regrets that such direct enjoyment & consummation like the flea isn’t possible for human being. Poet has tried to explore love relationship.

It is a dramatic lyric in the sense that the lover is the speaker and the beloved is listener. Development of the action is another feature of this poem. Each stanza presents this developed action.

“The flea is you & I and this Our marriage bed and marriage temple is….” Here, Donne compares body of the flea to a temple & marriage bed. It’s body is a temple in which they have been married and as their blood is mingled in its body, it is also their marriage bed. It is one of Donne’s famous conceits. The rhyme-scheme in each stanza is similar. It is AABBCCDD. It is a fine lyric remarkable for its realism & it’s emotional intensity. The poet hopes for their union. Other poets imitated Ovid who composed poem on the same subject. But, Donne is not primarily interested in the flea, but in the exploration of love relationship and this has made the poem unique.

3.1.5 Glossary and Notes:

Marke – observe carefully.
How little……….me. - the physical union that she denied.
Confesse it - acknowledge it.
This - the mingling of their bloods in the body of the flea.
Maiden head – Virginity.
Pamper’d - having fed upon.
This enjoys before it wooe – The flea has enjoyed her [(beloved) through sucking of her blood.]
This, alas…….would doe – The poet regrets that like the flea, he can’t have physical union with his beloved.
Oh stay – Oh, stop.
Three lives – life of flea, lover & beloved.
Marriage bed – in the flea’s body they become one as after marriage performed in the church.

Parents grudge – objections of her parents.

Cloistered – in the privacy of.

Living walls of the Jet – body of the flea.

This – murder of the lover.

Sacrilege – sin of suicide.

Three sinnes – murder, suicide & killing of the flea.

Sudaine – rash

Will wast – will be lost.

3.1.6 Check your progress:

Q.1 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1) What is the form of this poem?
2) Who is the speaker?
3) What has the beloved denied?
4) Where did the two bloods mingle?
5) Give the meaning of ‘three lives.’
6) What are the three sins described in the poem?
7) Why did the beloved’s nails become purple?

Q.2 Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) ………………has written a poem on the same subject.
   a) Petrarch   b) Ovid   c) Cowley   d) Wyatt.

2) ………………..made this poem original.
   a) The need of physical union.   b) The need of psychological union
   c) Interest in the flea   d) Exploration of the love relationship.

3) Donne compares the body of the flea to a …………………
   a) School   b) building   c) temple   d) public place.
4) Poet thinks that………………must be satisfied.
   a) the body     b) the soul
   c) the body and the soul   d) none of these.

5) The flea has sucked the blood of…………..
   a) the lover     b) the beloved
   c) both lover & the beloved   d) none of these.

3.1.7 **Key to Check Your Progress :**

Q.1 1) Dramatic lyric.
   2) The lover.
   3) Physical union before marriage.
   4) In the body of the flea.
   5) Life of the flea, the lover & the beloved.
   6) Murder, suicide & killing of the flea.
   7) Because she has killed the innocent flea.

Q.2 1) b    2) d    3) c    4) c    5) c.

3.1.8 **Exercises:**

Q.1 1. Write critical appreciation of the poem ‘The Flea.’
   2. Discuss John Donne as a metaphysical poet.

Q.2 Write short notes on the following.
   1. Title of the poem.
   2. Donne’s use of imagery and conceit in ‘The Flea.’

3.1.9 **Further Reading :**


3.2 The Pulley

- George Herbert.

Structure:

3.2.0 Objectives
3.2.1 Introduction
3.2.2 The Text
3.2.3 Summary
3.2.4 Analysis of the Poem
3.2.5 Glossary and Notes
3.2.6 Check Your Progress
3.2.7 Key to Check Your Progress
3.2.8 Exercises
3.2.9 Further Reading.

3.2.0 Objectives:

After studying this poem students will be able to

- Understand George Herbert as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Understand the meaning of the poem that man is restless. So, he must return to the God for peace & rest.

3.2.1 Introduction:

George Herbert (1593-1633) was born on 3rd April 1593 in Wales. He was the son of Richard Herbert & Magdalene He was one of the ten children. His family was wealthy & powerful in both national & local govt. He was graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge in 1616. In 1620, he became university's Public Orator. In 1624, he became Member of Parliament representing Montgomery. In 1629, he entered the Priesthood. In 1633, he died. Shortly before his death, he sent the manuscript of 'The Temple', his poems, to the Nicholas Ferrar to publish them and in the same year (1633), all Herbert's English poems were published in 'The Temple: Sacred Poems
& Private Ejaculations.' All his English poems are religious and some have been used as hymns. We notice directness of expression and use of conceits in them. Precision of the language is the mark of his poetry.

3.2.2 The Text:

The Pulley

- George Herbert.

When God at first made man
Having a glass of blessings standing by,
“Let us,” said he, “pour on him all we can.
Let the world’s riches, which dispersed lie,
Contract into a span.”

So strength first made a way;
Then beauty flowed, then wisdom, honour, pleasure.
When almost all was out, God made a stay,
Perceiving that, alone of all his treasure,
Rest in the bottom lay.

“For if I should,” said he,
“Bestow this jewel also on my creature,
He would adore my gifts instead of me,
And rest in Nature, not the God of Nature;
So both should losers be.

“Yet let him keep the rest,
But keep them with repining restlessness;
Let him be rich and weary, that at least,
If goodness lead him not, yet weariness
May toss him to my breast.”
3.2.3 Summary:

This poem was published in 1633, in George Herbert's poetic collection 'The Temple: sacred poems and Ejaculations.' It presents myth, moral & spiritual note. The first stanza states that when at first God decided to make man holding a glass of blessings, he said, "Let us pour on him all we can." The world's riches should be contracted into a span. God poured all his blessings - strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, and pleasure. Almost everything was out from that glass & God stopped realizing that only single blessing remained behind at the bottom of the glass and that was 'Rest.'

He thought that if he gifted man with 'rest', man will adore his gifts & not 'God' So, both should be losers. So, at last, God decided not to give rest to man & so, man is restless. He said that man may be rich and weary. If not goodness but, weariness may lead him to the God. The poet says that God has used a different method to lift man to him.

3.2.4 Analysis of the Poem:

George Herbert is labeled as the saint of the metaphysical school. He presented sublime thoughts in this poem. He was much influenced by John Donne but, he never attained the effect of Donne. Through this poem, Herbert forwards the plan and scheme of the God to create man. The poet says that when God at first created man, he had a definite scheme in his mind. From his glass of blessings, he poured almost everything - strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, pleasure and blessed man with these gifts.

When he realized that only 'Rest' left behind, God paused thought over and decided not to bless man with this gift. He offered all good things to man because he wanted to pull man to him. He wished to provide man spiritual needs. He kept man restless because he knew that only ‘restlessness ’ of man will make his creature to worship him. Otherwise man will adore God's gifts and not God. He bestowed man with all material things but not with spiritual peace. He knew that man will get tired of these material things and then he will turn to God.

Here, the poet speaks logically. He sings of the glory of the God in this small poem. God has created man, a creature, that can understand and think. But, he controlled man by not giving him 'Rest.' So, man must turn to the God for rest and
peace. The meaning of Herbert's 'The Pulley,' can be drawn as, 'man is always restless and needs it more.' So, he turns to the God. Pulley is a mechanical device used to lift things that are too heavy. Here, Herbert states that God has set up the Pulley as a spiritual device that will draw man to him. 'The Pulley' makes use of chains & wheels to lift heavy load. Here, 'rest' will lift man to the God. Its deeper meaning is very vast and useful for mankind.

Whatever Herbert expresses, he expresses it through images. They are simple and homely. Use of paradox and synecdoche as poetic devices is another marked feature of this poem. Following are the examples.

Paradox = 'Let him be rich and weary.'

Synecdoche = 'Let us', said he, 'Pour on him all we can.'

This poem can be read as an explanatory tale about the creation of the mankind. We notice simplicity of the language here. The title of the poem is significant. It presents core meaning of the poem. The religious idea is conveyed through a scientific image of the pulley. It requires knowledge of some basic laws of Physics. It is the metaphysical note in the poem.

3.2.5 Glossary and Notes:

- **Pulley** - a mechanical device used to lift heavy things.
- **Blessings** - gifts.
- **Perceive** - realize, understand.
- **Adore** - admire.
- **Repining** - dissatisfying.
- **Weary** - tired.

3.3.6 Check your progress:

Q.1 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1) What is the meaning of 'The Pulley'?
2) What are the gifts given to man by the God?
3) What will toss man to the God’s breast?
4) Where does the rest lie?
5) When will man turn to the God?

Q.II Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) ………………………first made the way..
   a) Pleasure   b) Wisdom   c) Strength   d) Honour

2) God has made a stay when …………………
   a) the glass was broken.   b) almost all was out.
   c) the glass was empty.   d) everything was in the glass.

3) To Herbert, ‘this jewel’ is …………………
   a) satisfaction   b) uneasiness   c) rest   d) pleasure.

4) The line ‘Rest in the bottom lay’ presents a…………….
   a) Simile   b) Paradox   c) Hyperbole   d) Metaphor.

5) This poem was published in…………….
   a) 1665   b) 1637   c) 1635   d) 1633.

3.2.7 Key to Check Your Progress :

Q.I 1) a mechanical device used to lift heavy things.
   2) Strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, pleasure
   3) weariness.
   4) at the bottom of the glass.
   5) when he will be restless.

Q.II 1) c   2) b   3) c   4) b   5) d.

3.2.8 Exercises :

Q I 1. Write critical appreciation of the poem ‘The Pulley.’
   2. Discuss 'The Pulley' as a metaphysical poem.

Q.II Write short notes on the following.

1. Title of the poem.

2. Poetic devices used by the poet.
3. Meaning of the line ‘both should losers be.’

3.2.9 Further Reading:


Unit 3.3
To His Coy Mistress

-Andrew Marvell.

Structure:
3.3.0 Objectives
3.3.1 Introduction
3.3.2 The Text
3.3.3 Summary
3.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
3.3.5 Glossary and Notes
3.3.6 Check Your Progress
3.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress
3.3.8 Exercises
3.3.9 Further Reading.

3.3.0 Objectives:
After studying this unit students will be able to

- Understand Andrew Marvell as a Metaphysical Poet.
- Explain this poem as a provocative poem.
- Guess the meaning of the Roman term 'Carpe diem' (By seizing the day) used by Horace.

3.3.1 Introduction:

Andrew Marvell (1621=1678) was born in South Yorkshire, England on March 31, 1621. His father was a minister. In 1638, his mother died and in 1639, he was graduated from Trinity College, Cambridge University. His father died in 1640. Then between 1642 to 1646, he traveled & visited many countries. In 1651 & 52, he worked as a tutor to Mary Fairfax, daughter of Sir Thomas Fairfax at Nun Appleton. During this time, he wrote, ‘To His Coy Mistress.’
Between 1653-57, he served as a tutor to a ward of Oliver Cromwell. In 1659, he was elected as MP to parliament. He died in 1678 & his best poetry was published in 1681. During his lifetime, Marvell was known as a public figure. He was gifted with an admirable faculty for image making. Like Donne in his poetry, we notice dramatic quality, use of speech rhythms.

3.3.2 The Text:

To His Coy Mistress

-Andrew Marvell.

Had we but world enough and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love’s day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges’ side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the flood,
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time’s winged chariot hurrying near;
   And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found;
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song; then worms shall try
   That long-preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
   And into ashes all my lust;
The grave’s a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
   At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
   Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
   Let us roll all our strength and all
Our sweetness up into one ball,
And tear our pleasures with rough strife
   Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

3.3.3 Summary:

This poem is written in 1651 or 52, when Marvell was a tutor to Mary Fairfax. The speaker is a male lover, who is addressing to his beloved. It is an attempt to convince her to love him. The first part of the poem states the condition that if they
had time & if she mayn’t be shy and hesitate, they should make love and be happy. The second part states how that condition can’t be satisfied because they are finite human beings. The ending part presents the inevitable conclusion: they must know that time is fleeing. Before they know it, their youth will be gone & there will be only the grave. So, at last, poet pleads – ‘seize the day.’ It means that ‘make love at this time,’

3.3.4 Analysis of the Poem:

This poem is written by Andrew Marvell. Here, Marvell followed the classical tradition of Latin love elegy. The speaker praises and addresses his mistress to seize the day (carpe diem). The speaker begins it by honouring the lady properly. He states that if the two lovers had enough time, they might play games of courtship. To present this infinite time frame, he refers to the ‘Biblical Flood’ and 'Conversion of Jews.' 'Then he uses the metaphor of a vegetable love.'

It presents that the time would allow him to praise her features = eyes, forehead, breasts and the heart. He says that perhaps, it will take hundreds and thousands of years. He adds that the lady clearly deserves it because she is superior. He asserts that he would never value her at 'a low rate.'

In this part, Marvell praises the lady’s beauty by highlighting her individual features. He constructs elaborate images of his beloved's beauty. It shows the use of erotic blazon. He makes the beloved as an inattainable object & asserts futility of this beauty. We notice shift of mood in line no.21. This second part states that how all this is unattainable because ‘Time’s winged chariot’ is always near. It is a brilliant metaphor used for passage of time. Here, the speaker’s mood shifts from lady’s limitless virtue to focus on the rapidly passing time. He assures the lady that once dead, her virtues & her beauty will lie in the grave. As the body turns to dust. So, will her beauty & thus, his lust will be reduced to ashes & the chance of their physical union will be lost forever. He tries to persuade her to submit herself into him. The speaker argues that the grave is a private place. But, no one embraces the other there. This part presents mortality of human life.

The third & the final section of the poem presents the plea through which the speaker attempts to win over the lady. A vibrant layer of the morning dew & the lady’s skin seem similar to the speaker. It encourages her to ‘sport’ with him. He states that in the course of the time, everything & everyone will be destroyed. But,
they can turn the tables on the time by consuming the time through passionate
lovemaking. He says that now, it is time to enjoy their physical union by embracing
& dancing. The last four lines present the plea for the mistress to submit herself into
him. He wants to make an end of all this & enjoy their union. At last, he says that
their love could conquer time. So, he concludes: ‘Seize the time.’ (carpe diem). This
part shows greatly exaggerated metaphors to woo his mistress. The speaker tries to
win over both her heart & her head. It shows metaphysical concept. In brief, the three
sections of this poem can be visualized as =

The first section (lines 1-20) presents the idea what would happen if the young
man and woman had unlimited time.

The second section (lines 21-32) points out the limits of human life because it is
mortal.

The last section (lines 33-46) urges the lady to seize the day (time ) & submit.

This poem presents the theme of carpe diem (seize the day) & focus on the
importance of time in human life. Marvell uses the logical argument in three parts.
Comparison of physical & metaphysical, use of metaphors, exaggerated images
(hyperbole) are the main poetic devices used here. The young man, presented here as
the speaker is impatient. The title of the poem is suggestive. The third person
possessive pronoun “His” refers to the young man. The word ‘coy’ presents the
meaning ‘hard to get’. Marvell presents that the young man & the lady live
somewhere in England. In line no.7, the poet mentions the ‘Humber.’ Perhaps, it is
the Northeast England near the river Humber.

3.3.5 Glossary and Notes:

Coyness – hesitancy, reluctance.

Humber - river in Northeastern England which flows through ‘Hull’, Marvell’s
hometown.

Flood – biblical flood.

Conversion of the Jews – Jews converted to Christians.

Vegetable love – love nurtured like a vegetable.

This state – dignity.
Tims’s winged chariot – metaphor for the passage of the time.

Vault – grave.

Quaint - unusual, preserved carefully or skillfully.

Hue - colour.

Transpires - emits, breaths out.

Slow chap – chap means jaw of the beast. Here, chewing or eating slowly.

Iron gates of life - life full of difficulties and suffering.

3.3.6 Check Your Progress:

Q.I Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1) What is the meaning of 'carpe diem'?
2) Who is the speaker in this poem?
3) What does the speaker wishes to have?
4) Give the meaning of ‘Coyness’.
5) What is ‘Humber’?

Q.II Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) There are………characters in the poem.
   a) 3    b) 2    c) 5    d) 4.
2) Marvell’s concerns in this poem are actually ………………….
   a) man & woman.   b) speaker & listener.
   c) time & space.   d) lover & beloved.
3) This poem has ………………sections.
   a) two    b) four    c) five    d) three.
4) In this poem, the young man ………….. a young lady to accept his love.
   a) informs    b) pleads    c) instructs    d) orders.
5) This poem was published in………….
   a) 1678    b) 1681    c) 1680    d) 1679.
6) This poem was composed in………..
   a) 1650    b) 1653    c) 1651=52    d) none of these.

3.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress:
Q.I 1) Seize the day.
   2) A young man.
   3) union of lover & beloved.
   4) hesitancy, reluctance.
   5) river in the Northeastern England.
Q.II 1) b  2) c  3) d  4) c  5) b  6) b

3.3.8 Exercises:
Q.I 1. Write critical appreciation of the poem ‘To His Coy Mistress.’
   2. Write detailed analysis of the personality and character of the young man.
   3. Write a paragraph on the images of ‘Time and Space’ in the poem.

Q.II Write short notes on the following.
   1. Significance of the phrase ‘vegetable love.’
   2. Persuasive argument in the poem.
   3. Title of the poem.

3.3.9 Further Reading:
Objectives –
After studying these units you will be able to:
- Understand – the significance of Neoclassical Poetry.
- Explain – the features of Neoclassical Poetry.

Introduction:
There are four poems included in this section. They represent different features of the poetry of the Age of Pope and Dryden. This period is recognized by various names. It is called as The Restoration Age, The Augustan Age and The Pseudo-Classical or Neo-Classical Age. As Dryden and Pope dominated the literary scene, their names were bound to be attached with the age. The period was divided into two parts namely The Age of Dryden and The Age of Pope. But the two sections together make up The Neo-Classical Age that covers the period of hundred plus years. Actually, Neo-Classicism is a term that denotes the period in the European literature during 17th and 18th century. It was characterized by a conscious effort to restrain, polish and objectivity of Classicism. It is characterized by formal perfection and imitation of the past masters. The poets followed the so-called ‘rules’ laid down by the ancient poets. Correctness was regarded as the supreme virtue. Spontaneity was replaced by artificiality. The tone was superficially moralizing.

It is the poetry of the town and the fashionable upper circles of the city of London. Neo-classical poets lacked lyrical intensity but excelled in satiric poetry. Their language and diction is highly artificial. They used Heroic Couplet – as the metre of their poetry with mastery. The poetry of this period was satiric, argumentative and reflective.

Poets and Poems –
1. John Dryden: Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out Of the Town in the Spring.
2. Alexander Pope: To Mrs. M.B. on Her Birthday.
4.1 Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring

John Dryden

STRUCTURE:
4.1.0 Objectives
4.1.1 Introduction
4.1.2 The Text
4.1.3 Summary
4.1.4 Analysis of the Poem
4.1.5 Glossary and Notes
4.1.6 Check Your Progress
4.1.7 Key to Check Your Progress
4.1.8 Exercises
4.1.9 Further Reading

4.1.0 OBJECTIVES:
After studying this unit students will be able to

• Understand John Dryden as a Neo-Classical Poet.
• Understand Dryden’s skill in exquisite song writing.

4.1.1 INTRODUCTION:
John Dryden was born on 9th August, 1631 into an extended family of rising Puritan gentry in Northampton shire. This son of a country gentleman was admitted to Westminster School where he received classical education. He took his B.A. degree in Trinity College, Cambridge in 1654. He was an English poet, literary critic, translator and playwright who was made Poet Laureate in 1668. His poetry was known for its satiric power, gift of song-writing and his craftsmanship. He is the great of the poets who link up the Renaissance with the Neo-classical age.
Dryden was a versatile writer who began his literary career as a poet. With the Restoration, the theaters reopened and Dryden turned to writing plays as an easy way of earning money. Some of his notable plays are – The Indian Queen, its Sequel The Indian Emperor, Secret Love or The Maiden Queen, An Evening Love, Antony and Cleopatra and All For Love. His books Essay on Dramatic Poesy, Absalom and Achitophel and The Dunciad are much discussed.

4.1.2 THE TEXT:

John Dryden: Song To a Fair Young Lady, Going Out Of The Town in the Spring

Ask not the cause why sullen spring
    So long delays her flow'rs to bear;
Why warbling birds forget to sing,
    And winter storms invert the year?
Chloris is gone; and Fate provides
To make it spring where she resides.
Chloris is gone, the cruel fair;
    She cast not back a pitying eye:
But left her lover in despair,
    To sigh, to languish, and to die:
Ah, how can those fair eyes endure
To give the wounds they will not cure!
Great god of Love, why hast thou made
    A face that can all hearts command,
That all religions can invade,
    And change the laws of ev'ry land?
Where thou hadst plac'd such pow'r before,
Thou shouldst have made her mercy more.
When Chloris to the temple comes,
    Adoring crowds before her fall;
She can restore the dead from tombs,
And ev'ry life but mine recall.
I only am by love design'd
To be the victim for mankind.

4.1.3 SUMMARY:

The poem consists of four stanzas of six lines. The first four lines have the rhyme scheme ABAB and then a rhyming couplet. The same pattern is observed throughout the poem which gives musical quality to the song. Dryden was an exquisite song-writer. The numerous songs scattered through his plays are pure gems of art. His poem 'Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in Spring is an example of his true poetic power. The subject of this poem is woman's beauty and charm. It is a lofty tribute to the beauty of the young lady who is merciless. She is so beautiful that when this fair young lady goes out in the Spring, the spring becomes morose and delays her flowers to bear. The cycle of nature inverts and even the singing birds forget to sing. The goddess of flowers and Spring follow the fair young lady.

The poet questions the great God of Love, why he has offered such a graceful beauty to the lady who breaks the hearts of the people mercilessly. However, when she returns in the glory of Chloris, her beauty has the strength to restore the dead from tombs. The poem is a love story of a deceived lover.

4.1.4 ANALYSIS OF POEM:

1-6:

The poet knows the reason why the spring is sullen, why the birds have forgotten to sing and why the winter storms have come back ignoring their actual timetable. The reason is that the Goddess of Spring – that is the beautiful fair lady has gone out of the town and the Goddess controlling the destiny of human beings has decided to make it spring where the fair lady resides.

7-12:

The beautiful but cruel young lady who is called 'Chloris' has gone without casting a merciful eye upon her lover. She has left her lover to sigh and die in despair. The fair eyes of the lady have wounded the lovesick heart. There is no remedy over the wounds in love.
13-18:

The poet questions here to the great God of love why He has created such a beauty that can command all hearts of all the lands. The commanding beauty without kindness causes grief in the lives of lovesick people.

19-24:

In this concluding stanza of the poem, the poet describes the situation of the lovers when the goddess of beauty returns back to the town. The crowd of admiring lovers falls before her. The dead lovers are restores from their tombs. No doubt, the poet is one of her victims who are designed by love.

4.1.5 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:

Sullen = sulky, morose
Warble = sing in vibrating tone
Invert = to turn something upside down or inside out
Chloris = a nymph and the goddess of flowers and spring
Fate = One of the goddesses said to control the destiny of human beings.
Languish = to lose strength and become weak to pine away in longing (here in lovesickness)
Adoring = showing adoration, admiration
Invade = to move into
Restore = to reestablish, bring back into existence

4.1.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.I. Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1) Why is the spring sullen?
2) Who forget so sing?
3) What is the condition of the lover?
4) What is the question that the poet asks to the God of Love?
5) What does the crowd do when Chloris returns?
Q.II Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) Warbling birds forget to ________.
   a) fly    b) eat    c) sing    d) play.

2) Chloris is called the ________ fair.
   a) kind    b) cruel    c) honest    d) angry.

3) The fair eyes give ________ to the lover.
   a) wounds    b) tears    c) sorrow    d) pleasure.

4) The fair young lady is ________.
   a) merciless    b) humble    c) fearful    d) destructive.

5) The poet is designed by love to be the ________ for mankind.
   a) enemy    b) friend    c) curse    d) victim.

4.1.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.I 1) because Chloris is gone.
   2) the warbling birds.
   3) the lover is left to languish and die.
   4) 'Why have you offered her beauty but not mercy?'
   5) the adoring crowds fall before her.

Q.II 1) c  2) b  3) a  4) a  5) d

4.1.8 EXERCISES:

Q.I 1) Write a critical appreciation of the poem ‘Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring’.
   2) Draw the character-sketch of the fair young lady in the poem.

Q.II Write short note on the following.

1) The effects of Chloris’ absence in the town.

2) Significance of the title ‘Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring’.
4.1.9 FURTHER READING:


4.2 To Mrs. M. B. On Her Birthday  

Alexander Pope

**STRUCTURE:**

4.3.0 Objectives
4.3.1 Introduction
4.3.2 The Text
4.3.3 Summary
4.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
4.3.5 Glossary and Notes
4.3.6 Check Your Progress
4.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress
4.3.8 Exercises
4.3.9 Further Reading

**4.2.0 OBJECTIVES:**

After studying this unit students will be able to

- Understand Alexander Pope as the Neo-classical poet.
- Understand precise and quotable quality of the poet.
- Understand terms like Sabbath, raptures, gay conscience of life, etc.

**4.2.1 INTRODUCTION:**

Alexander Pope was born on May 21, 1688 in London in a Roman Catholic family. His father was a prosperous tradesman. As Alexander was a sickly and delicate child, he was denied the privilege of education at a first-class school. With a studious bent of mind, he more than made up for his imperfect schooling by reading at home. Pope displayed remarkable correctness in verse writing before he was sixteen. His poetic career can be divided into three periods.

In the first period of his poetic career he wrote – The Pastorals, Windsor Forest, Essay on Criticism, The Rape of the Lock and Some minor Poems. The
second period is the period of great Homer translations. In this middle period Pope also created some original poetry. ‘Elosia to Abelard’ and The elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady are Pope’s chief achievements in emotional poetry. In the last and the greatest period of his poetic career, he has produced the masterpieces like The Dunciad, Moral Essays and the Imitations of Horace.

Pope’s poetry is mainly didactic and satirical. However, there are few lyrics on his name and one of them is ‘To Mrs. M.B. on Her Birthday’. In the poem, Pope wishes long health, long youth and pleasures to Mrs. M. B. on her birthday.

4.2.2 THE TEXT:

Alexander Pope: To Mrs. M.B on Her Birthday

Oh be thou blest with all that Heav'n can send,  
Long Health, long Youth, long Pleasure, and a Friend:  
Not with those Toys the female world admire,  
Riches that vex, and Vanities that tire.  
With added years if Life bring nothing new,  
But, like a Sieve, let ev'ry blessing thro',  
Some joy still lost, as each vain year runs o'er,  
And all we gain, some sad Reflection more;  
Is that a Birth-Day? 'tis alas! too clear,  
'Tis but the funeral of the former year.  
Let Joy or Ease, let Affluence or Content,  
And the gay Conscience of a life well spent,  
Calm ev'ry thought, inspirt ev'ry grace.  
Glow in thy heart, and smile upon thy face.  
Let day improve on day, and year on year,  
Without a Pain, a Trouble, or a Fear;  
Till Death unfelt that tender frame destroy,  
In some soft Dream, or Extasy of joy,  
Peaceful sleep out the Sabbath of the Tomb,  
And wake to Raptures in a Life to come.
4.2.3 SUMMARY:

The present poem is written in heroic couplet which is characterized by brevity and preciseness. It is one of those few poems in which he neither poses as a didactic or a satiric poet. The very name of the poem gives us the clue to the theme of the poem. It is a wishing on the birthday of the lady, Mrs. M. B. He wishes her the best of life that heaven can send her. Life is running ahead and birthday is the funeral of former year. In fact, every birth-day adds the count-down of life by one year. He wishes all the virtues of human life for her. He wishes that she should be blessed with calm thought, moral sense of right and wrong, happiness, content of heart and smile upon her face.

Pope has sincere affection for this lady. He knows which things are precious in a woman’s life and the life after death. The poem is a rare example pen that deals with such a delicacy of feelings and emotions for a lady. It is written in a simple straightforward language. Each couplet of the poem brings to light his epigrammatic style. The lines are quotable and easily be memorized. They are packed with thought and Pope becomes successful in saying what he has to in the fewest possible words. The poem is remarkable for its correctness and honesty of thought.

4.2.4 ANALYSIS:

‘Oh, be thou blest … Vanities that tire’

In these lines, Pope wishes that Mrs. M. B. should be blessed with long health, long youth, long pleasure and a friend. These things are the measures of a happy life. He criticizes trivial things and vanities which the female world admired in his age.

‘With added years … the former year’

Life should bring new reflections, new wisdom during the passing years. Each year we come to know the vanity of life and the joys we aspire prove worthless. Every birthday takes an year away from life. So birthday is the death of the former year of life.

‘Let joy or ease … Trouble or a Fear’

The poet wishes that let the joy or ease in life, prosperity or content, the sense of happiness of a well-spent life calm her thoughts and give vigour to her every grace. Let her jocund heart smile upon her face. Let the coming years be spent without pain, trouble or fear.
‘Till death … Life to come’

These lines are the culmination of his sublime thoughts about Mrs. M. B. Human life is mortal. However, the poet wishes that the Death should take her away in some soft dream or ecstasy of joy. Let the life after death bring her extreme pleasures.

4.2.5 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:

Toys = things of little importance

Vex = cause distress, trouble

Tire = bore

Funeral = a ceremony in honour of a deceased person

Conscience = moral sense of right or wrong

Inspirit = strengthen or give vigour

Sabbath = the Biblical seventh day of week observed as the day of rest

Raptures = extreme pleasures

4.2.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q. I. Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentence each.

1) Which blessing from the heaven Pope asks for Mrs. M. B.?

2) What do we gain on each birthday?

3) What is a birth-day?

4) What is meant by ‘Death unfelt’?

5) Where does the poet wish Mrs. M. B. to wake?

Q. II. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) The style of Pope in this poem is ________.
   a) satiric   b) epigrammatic   c) symbolic   d) prosaic

2) The poet prays for blessings from the ________.
   a) Heaven   b) God   c) forefathers   d) Hell

3) ________ tire the female world.
a) riches b) toys c) vanities d) beauty

4) Pope wishes ________ in the heart of Mrs. M. B.
   a) joy b) calm c) anger d) glow

5) ‘Sabbath’ in the poem means ________.
   a) day of peace b) day of death c) day of smile d) day of rest

4.2.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q. I. 1) Long health, long youth, long pleasure and a friend.
   2) some sad reflection more
   3) the funeral of the former day.
   4) death coming without feeling/ noticing.
   5) to Rapture.

Q. II. 1) b  2) a  3) c  4) d  5) d

4.2.8 EXERCISES:

Q. I. 1) Write a critical appreciation of the poem ‘To Mrs. M. B. on Her Birthday’
   2) Discuss Pope as an epigrammatic poet.

Q. II. Write short notes on the following.
   1) Title of the poem.
   2) Pope’s Reflections on Birthday.

4.2.9 FURTHER READING:

1. Tillotson, Geoffrey : On the poetry of Alexander Pope
2. Knight, G. W. : Literature of Peace; On the Genius of Alexander Pope
4.3: The Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard

Thomas Gray

STRUCTURE:
4.3.0 Objectives
4.3.1 Introduction
4.3.2 The Text
4.3.3 Summary
4.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
4.3.5 Glossary and Notes
4.3.6 Check Your Progress
4.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress
4.3.8 Exercises
4.3.9 Further Reading

4.3.0 OBJECTIVES:

After studying this part of the unit students will be able to –

• Understand Thomas Gray as a Neoclassical poet.
• Gray’s philosophy of meaninglessness of life.
• Study elements of Elegy.
• Understand manner of expressing universal feelings and thoughts.

4.3.1 INTRODUCTION:

Thomas Gray (1716-71) was born in London and educated at Eton and Cambridge. In 1757, he was offered the laureateship which he refused. In 1768, he was appointed Professor of History at Cambridge. He died in 1771 after a few days illness and was buried at Stoke Pogis in Bucks. This is the place which inspired him to write his famous elegy entitled ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard’.

The present poem is Gray’s meditation on a typical English churchyard with mounds, gravestones, and yew trees. The poem was published by Dodsley in 1751. It
was begun at Stoke Poges in 1742 and completed in 1750. The Elegy is Gray’s greatest poem and one of the most popular elegies in English. It contains his reflection on the lives of the simple poor people.

4.3.2 THE TEXT:

Thomas Gray: The Elegy Written in a Country Church Yard

1  The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
2  The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea,
3  The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
4  And leaves the world to darkness and to me.

5  Now fades the glimmering landscape on the sight,
6  And all the air a solemn stillness holds,
7  Save where the beetle wheels his droning flight,
8  And drowsy tinklings lull the distant folds;

9  Save that from yonder ivy-mantled tower
10  The moping owl does to the moon complain
11  Of such, as wandering near her secret bower,
12  Molest her ancient solitary reign.

13  Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree's shade,
14  Where heaves the turf in many a mouldering heap,
15  Each in his narrow cell for ever laid,
16  The rude forefathers of the hamlet sleep.

17  The breezy call of incense-breathing morn,
18  The swallow twittering from the straw-built shed,
19  The cock's shrill clarion, or the echoing horn,
20 No more shall rouse them from their lowly bed.

21 For them no more the blazing hearth shall burn,
22 Or busy housewife ply her evening care:
23 No children run to lisp their sire's return,
24 Or climb his knees the envied kiss to share.

25 Oft did the harvest to their sickle yield,
26 Their furrow oft the stubborn glebe has broke;
27 How jocund did they drive their team afield!
28 How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke!

29 Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
30 Their homely joys, and destiny obscure;
31 Nor Grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
32 The short and simple annals of the poor.

33 The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
34 And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
35 Awaits alike the inevitable hour.
36 The paths of glory lead but to the grave.

37 Nor you, ye Proud, impute to these the fault,
38 If Memory o'er their tomb no trophies raise,
39 Where through the long-drawn aisle and fretted vault
40 The pealing anthem swells the note of praise.

41 Can storied urn or animated bust
42 Back to its mansion call the fleeting breath?
Can Honour's voice provoke the silent dust,
Or Flattery soothe the dull cold ear of Death?

Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid
Some heart once pregnant with celestial fire;
Hands that the rod of empire might have swayed,
Or waked to ecstasy the living lyre.

But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page
Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
Chill Penury repressed their noble rage,
And froze the genial current of the soul.

Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear:
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Some village-Hampden, that with dauntless breast
The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.

The applause of listening senates to command,
The threats of pain and ruin to despise,
To scatter plenty o'er a smiling land,
And read their history in a nation's eyes,

Their lot forbade: nor circumscribed alone
Their growing virtues, but their crimes confined;
Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne,
And shut the gates of mercy on mankind,
The struggling pangs of conscious truth to hide,
To quench the blushes of ingenuous shame,
Or heap the shrine of Luxury and Pride
With incense kindled at the Muse's flame.
Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife,
Their sober wishes never learned to stray;
Along the cool sequestered vale of life
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.
Yet even these bones from insult to protect
Some frail memorial still erected nigh,
With uncouth rhymes and shapeless sculpture decked,
Implores the passing tribute of a sigh.
Their name, their years, spelt by the unlettered muse,
The place of fame and elegy supply:
And many a holy text around she strews,
That teach the rustic moralist to die.
For who to dumb Forgetfulness a prey,
This pleasing anxious being e'er resigned,
Left the warm precincts of the cheerful day,
Nor cast one longing lingering look behind?
On some fond breast the parting soul relies,
Some pious drops the closing eye requires;
Ev'n from the tomb the voice of nature cries,
Ev'n in our ashes live their wonted fires.

For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured dead
Dost in these lines their artless tale relate;
If chance, by lonely Contemplation led,
Some kindred spirit shall inquire thy fate,

Haply some hoary-headed swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
'Brushing with hasty steps the dews away
'To meet the sun upon the upland lawn.

'There at the foot of yonder nodding beech
'That wreathes its old fantastic roots so high,
'His listless length at noontide would he stretch,
'And pore upon the brook that babbles by.

'Hard by yon wood, now smiling as in scorn,
'Muttering his wayward fancies he would rove,
'Now drooping, woeful wan, like one forlorn,
'Or crazed with care, or crossed in hopeless love.

'One morn I missed him on the customed hill,
'Along the heath and near his favourite tree;
'Another came; nor yet beside the rill,
'Nor up the lawn, nor at the wood was he;
113 'The next with dirges due in sad array
114 'Slow through the church-way path we saw him borne.
115 'Approach and read (for thou can'st read) the lay,
116 'Graved on the stone beneath yon aged thorn.'

4.3.3 SUMMARY:

This popular elegy of Gray opens in the atmosphere of the darkling twilight. Sitting at the graveyard, the poet looks at the fading lights of the twilight. He thinks of the dead lying in their narrow cells. Now they cannot enjoy the beauty of the morning, the blazing hearth or the care and love of the housewife. No sound can wake them up from their eternal sleep.

The poet thinks of the dead humble rustics, who lived the life of clear conscience and truth. At the end of the poem the poet falls into a subjective mood and thinks about his own death. He thinks that the epitaph on his grave will tell people that he was unknown to fame and had a noble and generous heart.

4.3.4 ANALYSIS OF THE POEM:

1-12 The curfew tolls the knell …..solitary reign.

From line first to twelve Gray meditates on the people buried in the graves. The inevitable mortality of human life first strikes his mind. Sitting in a village churchyard at dusk, he mourns the fact that, the poor people cannot return to life to experience its joys and sorrows. The lines explain the poet’s solitude and the stillness of the scene by describing the few things that remain to disturb it. He describes the tinkling of the cattle who have returned home, the drone of the beetle and the sound of the owl from the church tower. This owl is the solitary ruler over the churchyard since ancient times. With these descriptions, Gray creates the backdrop for his melancholy reflection about eternal truths.

13-28 Beneath those rugged elms, that yew-tree’s shade ……………

How bowed the woods beneath their sturdy stroke. :

These are the churchyard scenes Gray uses to invoke important images. He uses the images of strength of the elm trees, the shade of yew trees and the cock’s clarion.
The dead people cannot wake up from their eternal sleep and enjoy the earthly joy with their families. When they were alive, with great joy they worked in the field. The trees in the field bowed down under the vigorous strokes of their axes.

29-44  Let not ambition mock their useful toil ............

Or flattery soothes the dull cold ear of death? :

In this part of the poem, Gray addresses the upper classes – those who have ambition, grandeur, power, nobility and pride. He advises them not to mock the poor for their simplicity or not having elaborate statues on their graveyard memorials. The pride of ancient decent and high birth, the pride of wealth and grand position and every career, however glorious has to end in death. The poet advises that one ought to live with an eye on death and behave with modesty, not outraging the essential human dignity.

45-76  Perhaps in this neglected spot is laid ............

They kept the noiseless tenor of their way. :

These lines provide the central message of the poem. The poor are born with the same natural abilities as members of the upper classes. The poor dead people in the churchyard were denied knowledge, education and opportunity.

Gray uses the images of ‘gem of purest ray’ and ‘flowers born to blush unseen’, for the poor rustics. Poverty and illiteracy robbed them of many opportunities. There could have been Hampdens, Miltons and Cromwells among them. They remained hidden as the brightest pearls in the unexplored caves of the sea. Away from the urban struggle for wealth and power, they led a quiet life.

77-92  Yet, even these bones from insult to protect ........

Even in our ashes live their wonted fires. :

In this part of the poem, Gray returns to the churchyard. He remarks on the Grave’s simple markers with their badly spelled inscriptions, names and dates. Some bear unpolished verses or consoling biblical texts; some are decorated with ‘shapeless sculpture’. Gray reflects that the voice of general human nature can be heard crying from these graves. Even when a person is dead and buried, a dead person is thankful for loving epitaph inscribed on his grave. They have the passionate desire to be remembered.
93-116 For thee, who mindful of the unhonoured dead ………

‘Graved on the stone beneath you aged thorn.’:

In these lines, Gray imagines an old peasant who does not fit into either of the classes described earlier. He is a wanderer, a man who vigorously meets the sun at dawn, lies by a favourite tree and gazes listlessly at a brook in the noon. He mutters his fancies, resembling a madman or a hopeless lover. Gray thinks that he is like a poet, a man of exceptional sensibility, unfit for the world’s work, meditative and sad. The poet hopes that one day he would die and be buried among these obscure villagers. Then somebody may say, as he is saying in elegy_ there sleeps a poet that I have often seen him walking here at day-break. Thus the poem ends with autobiographical touch.

4.3.5 GLOSSARY AND NOTES (Line-wise):

1. The curfew tolls = the evening bell rings (originally it signified the bell rung at 8 o’clock as a signal to put out all fires.
   Knell = bell rung announcing death.
2. Lea = meadow.
3. Plods … way = walks along wearily.
4. Drowsy … folds = the tinkling sound of the sheep bells producing a sleepy effect.
5. Ivy-mantled = covered with the ivy, a creeping plant.
7. Where heaves … heap = the grassy land rises in mound over the graves.
8. Narrow cell = small grave.
9. Clarion = an instrument producing a shrill sound to which the cock’s cry is compared.
11. Lisp = speak imperfectly.
12. Their furrow … broke = ploughing has broken the hard ground into furrows.
13. Annals = history, account
33. Heraldry = the science of tracing the line of birth.

38. Trophies = monuments to preserve the memory of dead persons.

   Fretted vault = carved roof of church.

41. Storied urn = urn on which is inscribed the history of the dead person. An urn is a vessel to preserve the ashes of the dead used by the ancient Greeks / Romans.

46. Pregnant with celestial fire = full of divine inspiration.

47. Hands … the living lyre = rulers or poets.

49. Her ample page = knowledge is represented as a big book.

50. Rich with … time = rich with accumulated learning of ages.

51. Noble rage = ambition and aspiration.

52. Genial current … soul = hopes and thoughts.

57. Village-Hampden = some villager who was bold and independent like John-Hampden. (1594-1643). The great English patriot.

57-58. Some village … withstood = Just as Hampden resisted the tyranny of the king, the bold villager opposed the petty tyranny of the village squire.

59. Some mute … Milton = some villager having a poetic gift like Milton.
   Some Cromwell … blood = some villager having a patriotism and military genius like Cromwell who defeated Charles I.

61. The applause … command = to get applause for their eloquent speeches in the senate.

62. The threats … despise = to ignore the threats of torture or of ruin.

65. Their lot forbade = their poverty prevented.
   Circumscribed = restricted, confined.

67. Wade through … throne = win a throne through great blood-shed as Cromwell did.

68. Shut mankind = become cruel.
70. Quench = overcome, satisfy, fulfil
   Genius shame = natural sense of shame.
72. Muse’s flame = poetic inspiration.
73. Ignoble strife = mean struggle.
75. Sequestered = retired, secluded.
79. Uncouth rhymes = clumsy verses.
80. Implore = request humbly.
90. Pious drops = tears of grief.
92. Wonted fires = the passionate desire to be remembered.
97. Haply = perhaps
   Hoary headed swain = grey haired rustic.
104. Pore = gaze
108. Or crazed … love = disappointed in love.
115. Lay = song, poem.
119. Fair … birth = intellectual power of Gray.
127. In trembling hope = hope of salvation mixed with of punishment.

4.3.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:
Q.I. Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentence each.
1) What is the form of the poem?
2) What is the time indicated at the beginning of the poem?
3) What is meant by ‘narrow cells’?
4) Whom does the poem lament?
5) Explain the meaning of the line ‘Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest.’
6) To whom does the poet call ‘unlettered muse’?
Q.II. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) In the elegy Gray meditates over the lot of ___________ people.
   a) landlord    b) politician    c) urban    d) rustic

2) The elegy points out the ________ of life.
   a) value    b) greatness    c) meaninglessness    d) sympathy

3) The feelings expressed in the poem are ________.
   a) genuine and sincere    b) sarcastic    c) comic    d) urban

4) ‘The boasts of heraldry’ signifies ________
   a) education    b) status    c) pride of high birth    d) pride of beauty

5) The opening stanza describes the ________ in the poem.
   a) atmosphere of the evening and landscape
   b) lamentation for the dead
   c) poet’s autobiography
   d) creative power

4.3.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

Q.I. 1) Elegy  2) Evening  3) small graves
   4) the poor dead villagers of the churchyard
   5) Some illiterate genius/poet like Milton
   6) the illiterate village poet.

Q.II.1) d  2) c  3) a  4) c  5) a

4.3.8 EXERCISES:

Q.I.

1. Write a critical appreciation of the poem ‘Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard.’

2. Discuss Gray’s universal appeal in the elegy.
Q.II. Write short notes on the following.

1. Title of the poem.
2. Contrast between the country life and the city life.

4.3.9 FURTHER READING:

1) Gray’s Poems – A. F. Bell
2) Gray – Poetry & Prose – Y. Crofts
3) Gray – Edmund Gosse.
4.4: A Poison Tree

William Blake

STRUCTURE:

4.4.0 Objectives
4.4.1 Introduction
4.4.2 The Text
4.4.3 Summary
4.4.4 Analysis of the Poem
4.4.5 Glossary and Notes
4.4.6 Check Your Progress
4.4.7 Key to Check Your Progress
4.4.8 Exercises
4.4.9 Further Reading

4.4.0 OBJECTIVES:

After studying this poem students will be able to

- Understand William Blake as a symbolic poet.
- Understand the great spiritual learning of the poet.

4.4.1 INTRODUCTION:

William Blake was born in London on 28th Nov. 1757. His father was a hosier who showed a remarkable understanding of his son’s mental set up and gave him training in painting, sculpture and engraving. He earned his livelihood by working as an engraver. Without much formal education, Blake had great spiritual learning. Major literary works of Blake are as follows:

 Songs of Innocence (1789), This Book of Thel (1794), Songs of Experience (1793), Marriage of Heaven and Hell (1793).
4.4.2 THE TEXT:

William Blake: *A Poison Tree*

I was angry with my friend:  
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.  
I was angry with my foe:  
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears,  
Night and morning with my tears;  
And I sunned it with smiles,  
And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night,  
Till it bore an apple bright.  
And my foe beheld it shine.  
And he knew that it was mine,

And into my garden stole  
When the night had veiled the pole;  
In the morning glad I see  
My foe outstretched beneath the tree.

4.4.3 SUMMARY:

The present poem is taken from Blake’s famous book ‘The Songs of Experience’. The poison tree is the symbol of evil in human life. This allegorical poem is concerned with the subject of anger. Blake believed that it was wrong to suppress natural impulse. Anger restrained produces the apple of hate which finally destroys friendship. The speaker of the poem reveals to his friend that he is angry and hides the anger from his enemy. As a result the anger grows much like a tree. By suppressing or hiding the anger it grows into a poison tree. Anger destroys the victim
of anger as well as anger bearer. Blake wants to state that suppressing one’s anger can actually make it grow more than it was before.’

The original title of the poem in his anthology ‘Songs of Experience’ was ‘Christian Forbearance’. It suggests that the aim of the poet here was against self-restraint. Self-restraint gives birth to evil fruit. Suppression of anger leads to the cultivation of anger. It is anger which is nursed in the garden of Experience, and which is subtly transformed into temptation, and then to death.

The poem is built round the idea that to give outlet to emotion is natural, to suppress it is unnatural. Yet, it is not the speaker who eats the apple that is symbolic of this Fall. Both the speaker and his enemy are fallen in their own ways.

4.4.4 ANALYSIS OF THE POEM:

Blake is a great symbolic poet. In this poem he attacks those, who obstruct normal impulse. He points out that, by suppressing normal impulse, we do nothing but injure ourselves. In this poem the poet aims at pointing out that, when you suppress and nurse an emotion like anger, it grows into revengefulness. The social awareness of the poet is remarkable. The poet here is a nameless speaker.

‘I was angry …. My wrath did grow’

The poet was angry with his friend. He told his friend about his anger and the anger was out of him. On the other hand, he clashed with a person that he did not like. He did not give an outlet to the anger and it grew more.

‘And I watered … soft deceitful wiles.’

He watered his anger with his tears day and night. He provided the sunlight of his smiles and soft deceitful tricks. Thus, the poet nourished the plant of his anger, the poison tree. He was turned into a sworn enemy of the man.

‘And it grew … that it was mine.’

Anger poisons the human spirit and endangers the ability to use logical reasoning. Finally, the poison tree bears the fruit of fury in the form of a beautiful appealing apple. The fruit image reminds us of the ‘Biblical forbidden fruit’. Evil comes to the people with an attractive form. The enemy desired the apple and he knew that it belonged to the poet.
‘And into my garden … beneath the tree.’

The poet’s enemy went into his garden and stole the bright fruit. It was a poison fruit which killed the enemy. He ate the apple and died. The poet was glad that he became successful in his cruel plan of nourishing the anger. He was pleased that his revenge was successful.

**4.4.5 GLOSSARY AND NOTES:**

1) Wrath = anger  
2) Foe = enemy  
3) Wiles = evil tricks  
4) Veiled the pole = dark night produced  
5) Outstretched = extend by stretching (here lie dead).

**4.4.6 CHECK YOUR UNDERSTANDING:**

Q.I. Answer the following in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1) On which human evil does the poet meditate in this poem?  
2) What does the poison tree bear?  
3) What did the enemy do after he saw the fruit?  
4) Why is the speaker glad to see the next morning?  
5) Which figure of speech is used throughout the poem?

Q.II. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1) The man in the poem watered the poison tree with ________ .  
   a) wine  b) water  c) tears  d) smile.

2) The man in the poem used ________ to sun the tree.  
   a) wrath  b) smiles  c) love  d) hate.

3) If one is angry, he should ________ .  
   a) get an outlet  b) suppress anger  
   c) forget anger  d) smile brightly
4) ‘A Poison Tree’ is taken from Blake’s _______
   a) Songs of Innocence    b) Songs of Experience
   c) Poetical Sketches     d) This Book of Thel.

5) ‘The night had veiled the pole’, means _______
   a) night disappeared     b) sunset
   c) it was all dark       d) it was eclipse.

4.4.7 KEY TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:
Q.I. 1) anger  2) apple  3) stole the apple
      4) to see enemy dead  5) metaphor.
Q.II.1) c  2) b  3) a  4) b  5) c

4.4.8 EXERCISES:
Q.I.
1) Write a critical note on the poem ‘A Poison Tree’.
2) Discuss William Blake as a great spiritual poet.

Q.II. Write short notes on the following.
1) Symbols and images used in the poem.
2) Title of the poem.

4.4.9 FURTHER READING:
S. Foster Damon : William Blake: His Philosophy And Symbols
P. Berger : William Blake: Poet And Mystic
Margaret Bottral (ed.): Songs of Innocence and Experience, A Selection of Critical Essays.