



SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION

B. A. Part-III English

Semester - V Major Elective (M.E.)

**British Literature Renaissance to
Romantic Age**

Semester - VI Major Elective (M.E.)

**British Literature Victorian Period to
Post Modern Period**

(In accordance with National Education Policy 2020)
(Implemented from the Academic Year 2026-27)

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Preface

This self learning material has been designed in accordance with objectives of NEP 2020. It is offered as a four credit Major elective course which introduces various phases of British literature. It offers a comprehensive exploration of British literature, tracing its dynamic evolution from the Renaissance through the Romantic era to the Victorian, Modern, and Post-Modern periods. Designed as an academic companion, it bridges literary movements with definitive texts.

Students will traverse the philosophical ambitions of Marlowe's Renaissance stage, the wit of 18th-century periodical essayists, and the transcendental fervor of Romantic verse. The journey continues through Dickensian social critique and the disillusionment of war poetry, culminating in modern alienation and the raw energy of Osborne's post-war drama. May this book inspire critical inquiry and illuminate the enduring power of British letters.

The writing team has made a sincere efforts to fulfil the course's intent. The Board has endeavoured to ensure the book's quality and comprehensiveness in accordance with NEP 2020's guidelines.

Heartfelt thanks are also given to the writing team and University Press staff for their dedicated efforts.

■ Editor ■

Prof. (Dr.) Vaijayanta Patil
Jaywant Mahavidyalaya, Ichalkaranji,
Tal- Hatkanangale, Dist. Kolhapur

Prof. (Dr.) Balkrishna Wagmare
Krantiagrani Dr. G. D. Bapu Lad
Mahavidyalaya, Kundal, Tal- Palus,
Dist. Sangli

Writing Team

Author's Name	Unit No	
	Sem. V	Sem. VI
Prof. (Dr.) Vaijayanta Patil. Jaywant Mahavidyalaya, Ichalkaranji Tal- Hatkanangale, Dist-Kolhapur	1	
Dr. Shashank Mane, Jaysingpur College, Jaysingpur Tal-Shirol, Dist-Kolhapur	2	
Mr. Deval Tulshikatti, Chandrabai-Shantappa Shendure College, Hupari Tal- Hatkanangale, Dist- Kolhapur	3	
Dr. Mangal Londhe, Yashwantrao Chavan Mahavidyalaya, Urun-Islampur Tal- Walwa, Dist-Sangli	4	
Prof. (Dr.) Balkrishna Waghmare Krantiagrani Dr. G. D. Bapu Lad Mahavidyalaya, Kundal, Tal.-Palus. Dist - Sangli		1 & 3
Prof. (Dr.) P. M. Patil, Arts Commerce & Science College, Palus, Tal. Palus, Dist Sangli		2
Dr. Raghunath Dhamakale, The New College, Kolhapur, Dist. Kolhapur		4

■ Editor ■

Prof. (Dr.) Vaijayanta Patil
Jaywant Mahavidyalaya, Ichalkaranji,
Tal- Hatkanangale, Dist. Kolhapur

Dr. Balkrishna Waghmare
Krantiagrani Dr. G. D. Bapu Lad
Mahavidyalaya, Kundal, Tal- Palus,
Dist. Sangli

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Each Unit begins with the section 'Objectives' -

Objectives are directive and indicative of :

1. What has been presented in the Unit and
2. What is expected from you
3. What you are expected to know pertaining to the specific Unit once you have completed working on the Unit.

The self check exercises with possible answers will help you to understand the Unit in the right perspective. Go through the possible answer only after you write your answers. These exercises are not to be submitted to us for evaluation. These are provided to you as Study Tools to help keep you in the right track as you study the Unit.

Module-I

General Topics

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1.0: Objectives:

After studying this module students will be able to:

1. Study the origin and development of Elizabethan Drama.
2. Comprehend the concept, salient features and poets of Metaphysical poetry.

3. Understand the development of periodical essays in the 18th century.
4. Study the origin and development of Romantic Poetry.

1.1: Introduction:

Dear students, the paper ‘British literature’ is prescribed to you as Major Elective (ME) for the Third year of your degree course. It provides a brief outlook of British literature ranging from Elizabethan drama up to Modern and postmodern British era covering a lot of different periods in the history of English literature. British literature explores the evolution of English literary traditions from Anglo Saxon. It has over a thousand years of rich history, traditions and culture.

1.2: Presentation of Subject Matter:

1.2.1: Section 1: Elizabethan Drama

The history of English literature is divided into different segments of time for the convenience which is called as ‘periods’ or ‘ages. Renaissance or ‘Early Modern period’ is one of the influential periods which marks cultural, intellectual and artistic revival in England from the late 15th to early 17th century. The term Renaissance is commonly applied to the period of European history following the Middle Ages. Lexically the term denotes ‘rebirth’ or ‘revival’. It has been described as ‘the birth of the modern world out of the ashes of the Dark Ages’; as the discovery of the world and the discovery of man; and as the era of the emergence of untrammelled individualism in life, thought, religion and art.(p.264, *The Glossary of Literary Terms*) This era is known for the new learning, the new religion, the new world, and the new cosmos. The Renaissance spans from 1500 -1660 and is subdivided into different periods. like

1. Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)
2. Jacobean Age (1603-1625)
3. Caroline Age (1625- 1649)
4. Commonwealth Period (1649-1660)

Elizabethan Drama deals with the development of the form drama during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603). It is considered as the golden age for English theatre representing the literary contributions of great dramatists like Christopher Marlow, William Shakespeare. The Elizabethan drama can be divided into three phases- Pre-Elizabethan Drama, The Elizabethan Drama and The Post Elizabethan Drama.

Characteristics of Elizabethan Drama:

1. Influence of previous theatre traditions:

Elizabethan drama is deeply influenced by the contributions of Shakespeare's predecessors who prepared the ground for the wonderful flowering of the English theatre in the next phase. The Elizabethan drama deeply influenced from late medieval dramaturgical traditions such as Miracle play, Mystery play, Interludes, etc. Miracle plays are the type of plays with its subjects from the lives of the saints. The Mystery plays took up the subjects from the Bible while Morality plays, the form which has more direct links with Elizabethan drama that dealt with personified abstractions of virtues and vices who struggle for man's soul. Interludes are the type of Morality play which dealt in the same allegorical way with general moral problems but with more pronounced realistic and comic elements. These plays were usually performed between plays, during the feasts or at court for entertainment. These types of plays proved a crucial role in the development of Elizabethan drama thematically and structurally. These forms paved the way for the rich, complex and enduring drama of the Elizabethan age by gradually shifting from religious themes to the life of human beings. These forms proved to be foundations for the Elizabethan drama. the contribution of 'University wits' also proved helpful for shaping of the form drama.

2. Development of Genres- Tragedy, Comedy and Historical plays:

Elizabethan era is considered as the golden period for the genre drama. During this period, various types of drama were popular. Among them the most important genres were historical plays, tragedy, and comedy.

Historical plays: History plays also known as chronicle plays that dealt with English or European history was the popular form of drama developed during that era. They were founded upon historical events and characters and show the strong national

spirit. These plays helped to awaken the feelings of patriotism and national pride. The historical plays developed during Elizabethan era presented political issues, conflicts, war and struggle. These plays were full of dramatic excitement. For instance, William Shakespeare's *Richard III*, *Henry VI* and Christopher Marlow's *Edward II* are famous history plays.

Important Features of Historical Plays:

- English or European historical events and personalities
- Focus on politics, conflict and power
- Full of action, war scenes, and heroic speeches
- Inspired patriotism and national spirit

Tragedy: Tragedies are the plays that are the representations of serious themes and actions and have disastrous conclusion on the part of protagonist often with the tragic end of protagonist or other major characters representing goodness. Thus, the tragedy ends in some tremendous catastrophe involving the death of the principal character. The New learning in the 16th century introduced classical Greek and Latin tragedies and comedies. The Elizabethan dramatists were deeply influenced by the tragedies of ancient Greek, Latin and Roman playwrights. However, English dramatists added more action, emotion, and psychological depth. Tragedy was the popular genre of drama during Elizabethan era. Christopher Marlowe's *Dr. Faustus* and *The Jew of Malta*, William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, *King Lear* etc. are exceptionally popular. Revenge tragedies that deal with violence, bloodshed also popular during that time. Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are some of the examples of revenge tragedies. The catastrophe must not be the result of mere accident or coincident, but must be brought about by some essential trait in the character of the hero acting either directly or through its effect on other persons. The tragic hero is generally a great person, but he possesses a weakness or tragic flaw that leads to his downfall. This flaw may be ambition, jealousy, pride, hesitation, or uncontrolled passion.

Main Characteristics of Tragedy:

- Serious and noble subject matter

- Conflict between good and evil
- Hero with a tragic flaw
- Emotional intensity and suspense
- Violence, suffering, and catastrophe
- Ends with death or destruction

Comedy: It is a type of play written for the purpose of amusement and entertainment. Comedies end happily, often with marriage, reconciliation, or social harmony. Elizabethan comedy developed into various forms, such as romantic comedy, comedy of errors, and satirical comedy. Romantic comedy was dominant and most popular genre. This type of comedies was characterized by the plots focusing on love overcoming obstacles and with happy ending. These plays usually deal with love stories, misunderstandings, mistaken identities, clever dialogue, and humorous situations. They often take place in beautiful natural settings such as forests or gardens. William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Thomas Dekker's *The Shoemaker's Holiday* and Thomas Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*.

Main Characteristics of Comedy:

- Light and humorous in tone
- Love and romance as central themes
- Mistaken identity, misunderstanding and confusion
- Happy ending e.g. marriage or reunion at the end
- Wit, fun, and laughter

Elizabethan Theatre:

Elizabethan era was remarkable for the blooming and flourishing of theatrical traditions. The legacy of Queen Elizabeth I as well as her support for arts and theatre helped for the establishment of theatres. Earlier there were companies of actors like 'The Queen's Men', 'Lord Chamberlain's Men'. These companies of actors used to travel throughout England for dramatic performances. A permanent theatre 'The Red Lion' opened in 1567 in outskirt of London but it did not succeed due to its remote

location. Then in 1576 'The Theatre' was established in Shoreditch, in North of London. Other theatres such as 'The Rose' (1589), The Swan, 'The Fortune' , 'The Red Bull' and the most famous 'The Globe' were opened.

Structurally, the theatres were round or octagonal in shape and built of stone and wood and without a roof. The three sides of the stage were open and audience could view the stage. The stage was surrounded by three sides by 'pits' or 'yards' in which the audience stood. For the young nobles and gallants who could afford the extra fees sitting arrangement were available in three tiers of galleries that skirted the pit. To separate the front of the stage from rear stage there consisted a bare platform with curtain or 'traverse'. The upper level behind the stage could be used as a balcony in the play.

During Elizabethan era, there were also private theatres which were indoor theatres and were available for private performances. These theatres were roofed and with more complicated interior arrangements. These were originally used by child actors. The first private theatre was 'Blackfriars' opened in 1576.

Characteristics:

1. The theatres were without roof and plays used to be performed during day time.
2. There were socially heterogeneous audience from lower classes to the noblemen or well to do people.
3. Female roles were performed by boys or young men. Women were not allowed to act on the stage.
4. Minimal scenery was used on the stage. Most of the times dialogues were used to establish scenes.
5. Costumes were decorative, expensive and considered as main visual component of the play.

Elizabethan Playwrights:

Elizabethan period is called as golden age for English drama as the form flourished in all respects. Some of the most important British playwrights belong to the Elizabethan era. Maximum number of plays were written during that era. The

most renowned playwrights of this era were William Shakespeare, George Chapman, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Kyd, John Lyly Christopher Marlowe.

1. **Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593):** Marlowe was the most impressive and successful dramatist of the group ‘University Wits- a group of English dramatists of late 16th century graduated from at the universities of Oxford or Cambridge. They made Elizabethan drama more literary and, in some respects, more dramatic. Marlowe’s dramatic debut is considered as one of the most remarkable in literary history. His plays are known for use of blank verse, character portrayal, etc. His most well-known plays include *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Doctor Faustus*. His early death in 1593 cut short his career which might be remarkable one.
2. **John Lyly (1554-1606):** John Lyly is known for his prose comedies. His plays are unequal with delicate imagination and euphuistic prose. His prose comedies were very famous. His plays included *Campaspe*, *Endymion*, *the Man in the Moon* and *Midas*. These are considered as the first prose comedies.
3. **Thomas Kyd (1558–1594):** Kyd has greater popularity as the founder of ‘romantic tragedy’. His *The Spanish Tragedy*, which established a new genre of Elizabethan Drama known as “revenge tragedy”. Kyd adapted some main elements by mingling the themes of love, conspiracy, murder, and revenge to Senecan tragedy to roaring melodrama. He moved the violence to the stage instead of reporting it indirectly.
4. **Robert Greene: (ca. 1573– ca.1592):** Greene turned to drama as a source of livelihood. He wrote for public stage. His plays include *The Honourable History of Frier Bacon and Frier Bungay*, *The Scottish History of James the Fourth*, etc.
5. **William Shakespeare (1564–1616):** William Shakespeare is the most successful dramatist not only of the Elizabethan era but all ages. He started his career as an actor, accustomed with the public taste and then through his plays proved his mastery as a skilled dramatist. He handled successfully the techniques and conventions of his days and also a universal genius of the highest order combining technical proficiency of understanding of human psychology. His plays have been translated into every major language of the world and are performed more often than those of any other playwright. He is known as the

"Bard of Avon" or "the Bard". His literary works include 39 plays which include tragedies, comedies and history plays. Shakespeare's early plays were primarily comedies and histories and are considered as some of the best examples of these genres. His masterpiece tragedies are *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. In the last phase of his life, he wrote tragicomedies such as *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest*.

6. **John Webster (c. 1580–c. 1634)** : Webster is known for his two tragedies, *The White Devil* and *The Duchess of Malfi*. Webster's work is Gothic in nature and comes almost hundred years before the Gothic movement started. In contemporary times Webster's tragedies appear quite modern and remain popular with actors and audiences.
7. **Ben Jonson (1572–1637)**: Ben Jonson's career spanned during both Elizabethan and Jacobean eras. His early literary work began during Elizabethan era. His first successful play was *Every Man in His Humour*, which inaugurated a new comic form that came to be known as "the comedy of humours". Jonson's other work *Volpone*, or *The Fox*, *The Alchemist*, etc.

The plays during Elizabethan era dealt with some important themes like revenge, ambition and power, love and romance, fate as well as the aspects related to human culture of Blank verse which is unrhymed iambic pentameter with prose and other forms of poetry is another characteristic feature of the age. Serious characters of high stature and nobility often speak in blank verse, especially when discussing important issues, while comic and lower-class characters may not use blank verse. Also, soliloquy and asides were other important aspects.

Check Your Progress – I

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives.

1. The Elizabethan period is considered as the golden age for..... .
A. English Drama
B. Fiction
C. Biography
D. Prose writings

2. Tragedies are the plays that are the representations of serious themes and actions and have
 - A. happy ending
 - B. disastrous conclusion
 - C. comic
 - D. both comic and tragic conclusion
3. The theatres during Elizabethan era were in shape.
 - A. square
 - B. hexagonal
 - C. triangular
 - D. round or octagonal
4. Which of the following is NOT an Elizabethan playwright?
 - A. Thomas Kyd
 - B. Christopher Marlowe
 - C. T. S. Eliot
 - D. William Shakespeare
5. *The Spanish Tragedy* by Thomas Kyd is a
 - A. revenge tragedy
 - B. Comedy of Humours
 - C. Historical play
 - D. Comedy of errors

Q. 2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Who is known as the greatest playwright of the Elizabethan age?
2. Who is the writer of *Doctor Faustus*?
3. Define the term 'University Wits'.
4. What is Miracle play?
5. Mention any two names of some theatres established during Elizabethan era.

Q. 3 Write short notes on the following.

1. Elizabethan Tragedy
2. William Shakespeare as an Elizabethan dramatist
3. Characteristics of Elizabethan drama

4. Christopher Marlowe as an Elizabethan dramatist
5. The structure of Elizabethan theatres

1.2.2 Section 2: Metaphysical Poetry

During 17th century there emerged a group of poets who directly or indirectly have some common characteristics in the procedure of poetry writing. This group of poets is called as Metaphysical poets. It is John Dryden who first used the phrase 'metaphysics' in his 'Discourse Concerning Satire' (1693) while referring to the poetry of John Donne that '(John Donne) affects the metaphysics'. In 1779, Samuel Johnson extended the term and used it for a group of poets from Donne and his followers in his discussion of Cowley in *Lives of English Poets*—"The metaphysical poets were men of learning, and to show learning was their whole endeavour." Thus, the term Metaphysical Poetry is used to indicate a group of 17th century poets employing common poetic style, use of language and poetic argument.

Historical Background:

The period during the emergence of the metaphysical poets was the period of political and ideological conflict and social tensions. The common people faced unease. With the death of Queen Elizabeth I, there came a change, the literary form drama which was dominated in 16th and 17th century was being faded. It was the period of transition. In such a situation the metaphysical poetry broke and drove true sensitive minds towards self-explorations and self-examinations. Poetry became more personal. In the beginning, the term 'metaphysical' carried negative implications which denoted something unnatural and weird without seriousness of thought. But critics like Dr. Johnson, J.C. Grierson and T.S. Eliot praised the poetic excellence of the group.

Samuel Johnson's views on Metaphysical Poetry:

Johnson in his essay *Lives of English Poets* (1781) argued that almost all the poets of this group were men of learning and their major function was to make the manifestation of their poetic learning and talent. They did it in their use of farfetched comparisons, lacking feeling, etc. According to him these poets used heterogeneous ideas together using complex language and comparisons.

T.S. Eliot's views on Metaphysical Poetry:

In his essay "The Metaphysical Poets" (1921), T.S. Eliot reviewed the metaphysical poetry. He praises the metaphysical poets for their 'unified sensibility' - the ability to fuse intense emotion with intellect and wit. According to T.S. Eliot it is extremely difficult to define the term metaphysical poetry and poets of the group. According to him these poets kept thought and emotions unified.

Characteristics of Metaphysical Poetry:

1. **Use of conceits:** It is one of the striking features of the metaphysical poetry. Conceit is a kind of comparison between two dissimilar things or situations. Though this comparison is dissimilar and unusual it is meaningful. These poets used conceit as an ornament. They used it for the purpose of showing wit and intelligence to prove or persuade their points or to fuse logic with emotions. These poets excelled in the use of conceits in their poetry. An excellent example of a conceit is found in Donne's poem "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" where the lovers are compared to a pair of compasses. To denote the continuing relation between the speaker and his lady during their physical parting the poet uses this conceit.
2. **Wit and Learnedness:** The metaphysical poets were men of learning and their poems were full of wit and intellectuality. Their poetry discussed human knowledge, philosophy, death, eternity, etc. Their poetry was characterized by intellectual arguments, philosophical discussions with the skilful use of conceits and imaginations. They used wittily illustrations, comparisons and allusions. Johnson praised Donne as a man of extensive and various knowledge. As he rightly commented, they wanted "to say what they hoped had been never said before". For example, Donne in the poem "Death Be not Proud" considers death not as mighty and dreadful but 'a short sleep past'.
3. **Unified Sensibility:** T.S. Eliot used this phrase 'unified sensibility' while reviewing the metaphysical poets in his article "The Metaphysical Poets". It means fusion of both emotion and reason or blending of passion and thought. The poetry of these poets appeals to heart as well as displays rationalism or reason and knowledge. It is a kind of recreation of thought into feeling.

4. **Use of Paradox:** Paradox is a kind of figure of speech that denotes self-contradictory concepts or statements that illuminates a truth. It seems contradictory but contains truth. The metaphysical poets often used the paradox to make the poetry more thought provoking. For instance, the poem “Death, Be Not Proud” by John Donne, has conclusion with paradox where the poet argues that “And death shall be no more, Death thou shalt die”. Here, the poet considers death merely a transition to eternal life.
5. **Abrupt, unconventional openings:** Metaphysical poetry is notable for its unconventional openings. Sometimes the poems open with actual incidents or the discussions related to individual or public situations. For example, the poem “To his Coy Mistress” by Andrew Marvell opens unconventionally “Had we but World enough and Time, This coyness Lady were no crime”. Another example of unconventional opening is the opening of the poem “The Canonization”- ‘For God’s sake hold your tongue, and let me love.’
6. **Colloquial and conversational style:** The metaphysical poetry is known for colloquial and direct diction. Simple but heavily stressed words make the poetry more appealing and striking. The metaphysical poets frequently used natural and conversational language to express their intensity of thought and emotion.
7. **Scientific and scholarly references:** As already discussed the metaphysical poets were the men of learning. They often used references from astronomy, geography, medicine, philosophy in their poetry. For example, Donne refers to various concepts like compass, planet, medicinal plants, etc. which reflects curiosity of the age and learning.

Similarly, some other features like cynicism, religious and philosophical themes, complexity, exploration of themes like love, etc. were some common features found in the poetry of metaphysical poets.

Metaphysical Poets:

1. John Donne (1572-1631):

John Doone is the most successful poet of this tradition and is considered as the leader of the group. His poetical works consists of five satires, twenty elegies and the *Songs and Sonnets* which is the collection of most interesting poems written different

times, different mood and about different persons. In fact, his poetry was not published during his lifetime but known to many mores in his circle.

John Donne's religious, polemic and scholastic elements in his poetry helped to determine his mind. One could find almost all the features of metaphysical poetry in his poems like conceits, cynical strain, scholastic philosophy, etc. The chief quality of his poetry is union of passion logical reasoning as well as wit and seriousness. Another feature of his poetry is that his poems generally open with a question. His most celebrated poems include "The Good Morrow", "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning", "Death Be Not Proud", etc. His poetry is well known for philosophical depth, ingenious use of conceits. human experiences, etc.

2. George Herbert (1593-1633):

He is considered as the finest of religious 'metaphysicals'. His poetry was influenced by Donne but at the same time shows his own identity. His poetry reflects the complexity of spiritual life and devotion. His poetry was characterized by introspective nature, exploration of personal struggle, faith and blends metaphysical elements with devotional themes. Herbert's distinguishing feature of his poetry is the simplicity and adequate use of language and style, use of conceits, colloquial tone, etc.

3. Richard Crashaw (1612-1649):

Crashaw is generally considered with Herbert among the religious metaphysicals. But he differs from Donne and Herbert in his poetic style and technique as his poetry is argumentative, musical and mystical. He is known as devotional poet of metaphysical school. His witty poetic style reflects inner tension. One could find blending of sensuous and spiritual imagery in his poetry. Crashaw's well-known poetical collections include *Steps to the Temple*, (1646)

4. Henry Vaughan (1622-95):

Vaughan considered himself as a disciple of Herbert. Though it is true, the individuality of tone distinguishes him from other poets of the school. His poetry is notable for the expression of religious feelings. Vaughan is known for deep faith, love for nature, innocence, spiritual awakening, connection between humanity and divine.

5. Abraham Cowley (1618-87):

Abraham Cowley was a versatile poet. He is generally regarded as one of the later metaphysical poets. His "The Mistress" (1647) is the most famous poetical work which reflects the metaphysical style of love poetry. His poetry is famous for the wit, imaginative comparisons and polished style.

6. Andrew Marvell (1621-78):

His poetic style combines true metaphysical wit with perfect classical grace. He is known for striking wit, intellectuality, satirical tone, philosophical depth, imagination and logical thinking. One may find a kind of smoothness and balance in his poetry. He often writes about passing time, urgency of life, and morality. His poem "To his coy Mistress" expresses wonderful manipulation of exaggerated images. In fact, his poems are very unequal and followed a popular fashion of verse comment on contemporary affairs.

Check Your Progress – II:

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives.

1. The term is used to indicate a group of 17th century poets from John Donne to his followers employing common poetic features.
 - A. Metaphysical poetry
 - B. Romantic poetry
 - C. Victorian poetry
 - D. Modern poetry
2. in the essay *Lives of English Poets* commented that -“The metaphysical poets were men of learning, and to show learning was their whole endeavour.”
 - A. Samuel Johnson
 - B. T.S. Eliot
 - C. John Dryden
 - D. Andrew Marvel

3. T.S. Eliot praised the metaphysical poets for their in his essay “Metaphysical Poets”.
 - A. Negative Capability B) Unified Sensibility
 - C. Romantic Imagination D) Sublime
4. Who among the following is NOT a metaphysical poet?
 - A. John Donne B. Andrew Marvel
 - C. George Herbert D. William Blake
5. Which of the following is a remarkable feature of Metaphysical poetry?
 - A. Simple narrative style B. Use of Conceit
 - C. Supernaturalism D. Epic style

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Who did first use the term ‘Metaphysical’ for the group of poets from Donne to his followers?
2. Who is considered the chief of the Metaphysical poets?
3. Who did write the poem *To His Coy Mistress*?
4. What is mean by ‘unified sensibility’?
5. Name any two characteristics of metaphysical poetry.

Q.3 Write short notes on the following.

1. Dr. Johnson’s views on metaphysical poetry
2. T.S. Eliot’s review of metaphysical poets
3. Use of conceits as the characteristic feature of metaphysical poetry
4. John Donne as metaphysical poet
5. Andrew Marvel as metaphysical poet

1.2. 3 Section 3: Development of Periodical Essays in the 18th Century

Introduction:

18th century is remarkable period for the rapid social, political and literary development in England. Prior to that the first British newspaper, *The Oxford Gazette*, was published in 1645. In the literary field, the 18th century especially the first half is remarkable for the origin and development of the literary form 'periodical essay'. Periodical essay which originated in the first half of the 18th century is a short non-fiction prose compositions devoted to comment on various subjects from manners, morals to literature and are being published regularly in journals or newspapers.

Form and Content:

Periodical essays are very specific in its form and content. These essays are short maximum in one to two pages published in contemporary journals or magazines. A single essay used to deal with a single idea or subject. These essays might deal with anything that pleased its author. It covered generally the subjects related to morals, manners and culture of contemporary English society. The thought was developed in one balanced comparatively short piece of writing. It covered generally not more than the two sides (in two columns) of a sheet. These essays were different from newspapers as they dealt with matters that were contemporary with manners and morals, with tendencies of the time rather than actual events. The essay writers adopted colloquial manner of language to reach wider public. The essays were written simple, clear and conversational style deal with topics related to everyday life.

Reasons for the development of Periodical Essays:

The periodical essays got tremendous popularity immediately due to following reasons.

1. Origin of printing press:

The first British newspaper, *The Oxford Gazette*, was published in 1645. Ultimately the printing technology was improving. The rise and expansion of printing technology helped to print and produce newspapers and journals easily. This resulted into the easy availability and circulation of reading materials. This helped to create a particular platform for the rise and development of periodical essays.

2. Rise of Middle class:

The 18th century witnessed the rise of middle class. With their steady rise, influence and number the period witnessed their taste to read something related to contemporary issues. The group preferred simple realistic, practical material to read.

3. Spread of Literacy:

In the 18th century, there was a kind of revolutionary spread of literacy which expanded the circle of readers. The new readers welcomed something light, instructing and entertaining. There was a greater demand for accessible and interesting reading materials.

4. The Coffee House Culture:

Coffee houses became the chief gathering places for the writers and were the natural centres for the interaction and discussion of ideas and information. People used to gather at the coffee houses to talk about politics, society and daily life. Each coffee house had its own clientele, and discussion was on topics of their interest and they used to import to the particular trade or social group that “belonged” there.

Popular Periodicals of the age:

The Tatler:

The periodical *The Tatler* was an important periodical started by Richard Steele in 1709. It is the pioneering periodical. It used to publish essays three times a week. It was a periodical which was devoted to comment on manners, morals, and literature. In it, Joseph Addison was Steele’s assistant. There was total 271 essays which were published between April 1709 to January 1711 by *The Tatler* out of which Addison contributed 42 essays and Steele contributed 188 essays and 36 essays were contributed by both- Addison and Steele. In 1711 the periodical stopped its publication.

Joseph Addison and Richard Steele were the major contributors for the periodical. Under Addison’s influence, the journal focused directly on men and books. However, it was Steele who developed more and more brighter ideas and thoughts to imply moral and teaching with entertainment. Steele invented fictional ‘The Trumpet Club’ in the *Tatler*. Addison developed many ideas to give perfections to these ideas.

The Spectator:

The Tatler suddenly stopped its publications. But *The Spectator* which used to publish daily except Sundays started in March 1711 by Joseph Addison and Richard Steele from London. It published total 555 essays during the period of March 1711 to December 1714. Out of 555 essays Addison who was the senior partner, penned 274 essays and Steele produced 240.

The Spectator covered variety of topics necessary to a proper social education. The subjects varied from contemporary fashion to literary discussions like appreciating Milton. Some other topics that the essay dealt were the contemporary traditions, wit and judgement, laughter, pleasures of imagination, etc. Thus, it covered various topics related to society and people concerning the manners, morals, ideas, etc. The periodical adopted a fictional method of presentation through a “Spectator Club”. Its imaginary members dealt with the authors’ own ideas about society. These “members” included representatives of commerce, the army, and the town. In the very first issue of *The Spectator* Addison introduced himself as ‘a spectator of mankind.’ An imaginative character Sir Roger de Coverley, an old-fashioned country gentleman, was first introduced by Steele in the second issue of the periodical and later given perfection by Addison. One of the distinguishing features of the periodical is the large number of women readers as many topics of the essay dealt with them. Another feature is its political neutral position.

There was greater influence of the periodical among the people both urban as well as countryside people. In this respect the periodical succeeded to bridge up a gap between urban and countryside areas. The essays published in *The Spectator* were collected in various volumes and reprinted repeatedly. It remained popular among many generations for its discussions on manners, morals and literature.

The Rambler:

In the second half of the 18th century Dr. Johnson, started the periodical *The Rambler*. It was produced between 1750 and 1752 and used to appear twice in a week Tuesdays and Sundays. There were total 208 essays published in the periodical. Most essays in *The Rambler* are found to have moral themes and a kind of seriousness in style. The essays dealt with the subjects like morality, human life, literature and criticism, etc.

The Guardian:

Another 18th century periodical is *The Guardian* started in 1713 by Richard Steele. It used to publish daily and Addison and Steele penned various essays. Though it could not be as popular as the earlier *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*, it gained considerable popularity as up to 1797, 26 editions were produced.

In the second half of the 18th century there was a change in the publications of periodical essays. The essays which used to be published independently in periodicals stopped and were incorporated into newspapers. For instance, Johnson published a series of essays. *The Idler* in the newspaper *The Universal Chronicle* which appeared between 15 April 1758 to 5th April 1760.

Characteristic features of the Periodical Essays:

The essays published in the periodicals in 18th century have some specific characteristics.

1. Manners, Morals and Literature:

The periodical essays were dealt with various topics. The range of topics could be found varied from fashion to literary discussions necessary for proper social education. However, the essays generally devoted to comment on morals, manners and literature. These subjects were the major concern for the writers of periodical essays. These writers continued to provide valuable insights from the events from everyday matters. The moral content discussed in the essays was accepted enthusiastically by the contemporary English society. Many writers specially Addison and Steele were successful in their attempt to bring philosophy ‘out of closets and libraries’ and to coffeehouses. There were number of essays on public behaviour, politeness, on hypocrisy greed, etc. Likewise, literary discussions were also part of these essays. there were many essays on literary issues like appreciating Milton, good reading habits, etc.

2. Interaction between authors and readers:

Though the essays published in the periodicals without the direct contact between reader and writer, the readers expressed their comment and reactions through the letters written to editors. These letters were published in the periodicals. This interaction between readers and writers is another distinguishing feature of the 18th century periodical essays. These interactions were in the form of question

answer and exchanges of comments. These letters came from different types of readers from females, scholars to countryside people and dealt with various topics like discussions on social issues, individual problems, etc. It created a sense of intimacy between reader and author.

3. Effect of Coffeehouse culture:

Coffee-house culture which developed specially in the 18th century were the public places for discussions on various issues. One could find the effect of the discussions and gatherings of these coffeehouses on the 18th century periodical essays. The essays published in the periodicals used to be circulated and discussed in the coffeehouses.

4. Mirror to middle class life:

The topics in the essays published in the periodicals of 18th century concerned with different classes of people especially for middle class. The essays published by Addison and Steele became a kind of mirror of middle class life reflecting the daily life, manners, morality, their interests, etc.

5. Bridging the gap between urban and countryside life:

Addison and Steele, the major contributors for periodical essays were the great educators of the English middle class in the beginning of the 18th century. At the same time, they tried to bridge the gap between town and country. The character of Sir Roger de Coverley introduced by Steele was itself an old- fashioned country gentleman. their essays aimed to discuss manners, morals and literary and intellectual discourses for both urban as well as countryside people.

6. Moralizing and didactic purpose:

The periodical essays of the 18th century proved to be instructive due to its moralizing and didactic nature. The writers through their knowledgeable discussions, wit, satire encouraged the readers for moral values and manners. This purpose was also accomplished through the editorial voices.

7. Women readers:

The improvement in women education resulted into the increase of women readers. Women readers were growing part of the periodicals and the editors tried to appeal them through the topics related to them. Many periodicals started to publish

one or more issues or sections to topics related to women. There were many examples. *The female Tatler* claimed to have been penned by 'A Society of Ladies'. The themes of the periodicals were mostly domestic. *The Female Spectator* published by Eliza Haywood is another example of growing part of women readers.

8. Periodical Essay and the 18th century social life:

The periodical essays written during 18th century were primarily social in purpose. They concerned with the topics from society revealing social conditions, customs and manners. the writers ridiculed at the vices and absurdities and discussed necessity of social and moral values.

Major 18th Century periodical essay writers:

1. Joseph Addison (1612-1719):

Joseph Addison is one of the major contributors for the rise and development of periodical essays through his influential contributions to *The Tatler* (1709–1711) and *The Spectator* (1711–1712, 1714) alongwith Richard Steele. He is the typical representative of the age. He aimed at popularizing a far wider world of thought and things. His essays in *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* had a variety range of subjects from domestic themes, fashion to morals and manners. He considered his essays to be moral educational program to which he had been criticised philosophy was “he has brought philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges to dwell in clubs and assemblies at tea-tables and coffee-houses”.(P.No. 595, A Critical History of English Literature, Volume II). Actually, Addison red the early *Tatlers* in Ireland and then he joined Steele in this venture. His essays contain direct discussion on men and books. He reduced gossiping in his essays. He developed the character of Sir Roger de Coverley from Steele’s first sketch. Addison was the assistant of Steele in *The Tatler* and contributed 42 out of total 271papers. In *The Spectator*he was senior partner and wrote 274 essays. His essays were a kind of mediation between town and country.

2. Richard Steele (1612-1729):

Steele is the originator of *The Tatler*. He founded the periodical *The Tatler* (1709–1711) and *The Spectator* (1711–1712, 1714) along with Addison. These two publications proved milestones in the development of periodical essays. It also showed the literary talent of Steele. He created a fictional character Issac Bickerstaff

as a persona for his periodical *The Tatler*. He serves as the observer, commentator and moral guide through whom Steele presents his ideas and thoughts. Likewise, the fictional character of Sir Roger de Coverley in *The Spectator* is Steele's first sketch and developed by Addison. Comparing to Addison, Steele was more warm-hearted, sentimental, sympathetic and concerned with middle class morality. He originated most of the bright ideas for the periodical essays. It was he who invented the *Tatler's* Trumpet Club. He contributed majorly for *The Tatler* and for *The Spectator* he published 240 out of 555 essays.

Samuel Johnson (1709-84):

Samuel Johnson is considered as the man of letters in 18th century England and one of the vigorous figures in literary history. He was a versatile writer- poet, critic, essayist, editor and journalist and represents his age. Speaking to his contribution as an essayist of periodical essays he produced the periodical *The Rambler*. The periodical appeared twice a week each number consisting single essay. It produced 208 essays between 1750-1752. Johnson contributed a series of weekly essays to a newspaper *The Universal Chronicle* from April 1758 to April 1760. Most of the essays in the series have based on moral themes.

Oliver Goldsmith (1728-1774):

Oliver Goldsmith was an essayist, novelist, poet, and playwright. Though known for his novels, Goldsmith his contribution for periodical essays is also remarkable. He contributed to various periodicals like *The Monthly Review* and his own *Bee*. Goldsmith's *The Citizen of the World* is a collection of essays originally published in *The Public Ledger*.

Check Your Progress – III:

Q.1: Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. The periodical essay as a literary genre emerged and developed during the early part of thecentury.
A.15th
B.16th
C.17th
D.18th

2. What among the following is not the reason for the development of periodical essays in 18th century?
 - A. Origin of printing press
 - B. Rise of middle class
 - C. Philosophy of Rousseau
 - D. Coffee- house culture
3.is not 18th century periodical.
 - A. *The Tatler*
 - B. *The Spectator*
 - C. *The Rambler*
 - D. *The Nature*
4. The periodical *The Tatler* was started by Richard Steele in
 - A. 1709.
 - B. 1711
 - C. 1713
 - D. 1715
5. Joseph Addison and Richard Steele were the major contributors to the periodicals..... .
 - A. *The Idler* and *Bee*
 - B. *The Female Tatler*
 - C. *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*
 - D. *The Rambler*

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Define the term 'periodical essay'.
2. Who is the originator of *The Tatler*?
3. Who is Sir Roger de Coverley?
4. Name any two contributors of 18th century periodical essays?
5. Give the titles of any two periodicals in 18th century.

Q. 3 Write short notes on the following.

1. Form and content of periodical essays
2. *The Tatler*
3. *The Spectator*
4. Richard Steele as a major contributor to 18th century periodical essays
5. Joseph Addison as a major contributor to 18th century periodical essays

1.2.4: Section 4: Romantic Poetry

Romanticism or Romantic era is a literary, artistic and intellectual movement that was started in Europe at the end of 18th century focusing nature, imagination and individualism. It emerged as a reaction to neoclassical traditions. The term ‘Romanticism’ is associated with ‘romance’ of the mediaeval period which had a certain feeling of remoteness. It is also associated with novel or vernacular. It is considered as something imaginative, remote from everyday life.

The movement is prominently flourished in the field of poetry. Earlier, the middle of the 18th century is considered as the period of transition in the field of poetry. Not all the poets practised the contemporary literary traditions. There were some poets who preferred the strong personal feelings and interests to write poetry along the contemporary poetical traditions. That period was considered as transitional period or pre-romantics.

Background to the romantic Poetry:

Many critics and historians claim that the romantic period started in 1798 with the publication of *The Lyrical Ballads* by William Wordsworth and S.T. Coleridge up to 1837 the time of accession of Queen Victoria. The Romantic era witnessed a considerable shift in printing, literacy and reading habits. The shift in the poetical style, content and technique was marked by the following reasons or background.

1. Impact of French Revolution:

The French revolution that took place in 1789 had its deep impact in English political culture and literature. The revolution promoted the ideas of liberty equality and fraternity. The English poets were greatly influenced by the ideals of French revolution. Their celebration of individualism and freedom is the result of the influence of French revolution.

2. Rousseau’s teachings:

Another significant influence on the romantic poetry is the teachings of Rousseau through his philosophical doctrines. He encouraged the environmentalist approach to nature as well as his concern for humanity helped the romantic poets especially Wordsworth, Shelley, Goethe, etc. to develop aesthetic view towards nature, landscape, and imagination. In the book *Emile*, Rousseau developed a new

form of education. Also, his message 'Return to Nature' was enthusiastically welcomed by the poets of romantic era.

3. Beginning of Industrial Revolution:

The 18th century specially the second half witnessed the rise of industrial revolution in England. During this period, England moved from a primarily agricultural to a modern industrialized society. The rapid growth of industrialization resulted into urbanization, and mechanization. As a result of it, there increased a deep longing and love for nature and countryside life.

4. Reaction against Neoclassicism:

Romanticism emerged as a strong reaction against the set traditions of neoclassical period. It developed as a revolt against the rigid, rational approach of neoclassical literary traditions.

Salient Features of Romantic poetry:

1. Love for nature:

As we have already discussed that Romantic poetry emerged as a reaction to neoclassical traditions the romantic poets developed an approach of humanity peacefully coexisting with nature and natural life. These poets believed in the blending of soul of man with the nature. Nature for the Romantics was not just a location or background, they treated it as a guide, spiritual philosopher, and a living powerful sense of presence. Nature was a kind of source of joy and inspiration. William Wordsworth, the major poet of the era has been considered as nature poet as he considered nature as teacher, guide, philosopher in his poetry. His poems like. "Tintern Abbey", "Daffodils" celebrate nature and expresses fusion of nature with human emotions. Similarly, P.B. Shelley in the poem "Ode to the West Wind" compares himself as leaf, a cloud drawing not only parallel with nature but being itself nature.

2. Individualism and Subjectivity:

Subjectivity was one of the characteristics of Romantic poetry. Romantic poetry emerged as an antithesis to neoclassical traditions. The poets expressed their own feelings and ideas. There was importance to liberty of thoughts and uniqueness of the individual experience. In the *Preface to Lyrical Ballad* which is considered as the

manifesto of Romantic poetry Wordsworth defined poetry as ‘Spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.’ Many of his poems express his own emotions and thoughts. In the poem “Tintern Abbey” he expresses his feeling about his second visit to Tintern Abbey when Wordsworth was on a walking tour in the area of the river Wye valley along with his sister Dorothy. In the same way, Lord Byron’s ‘Byronic hero’ is introspective individual.

3. Free play of Imagination:

Romantic poets emphasized imagination as the vital force to express their feelings. Romantic poets dealt with the themes beyond ordinary life. For example, S.T. Coleridge’s poems like “Kubla Khan” or John Keats’ poem “Ode on a Grecian Urn” are fine examples of imagination.

4. Supernaturalism:

Supernaturalism deals with life beyond known world. The Romantic poets dealt with supernatural elements not for entertainment or sensationalism but the sake of deeper moral and philosophical and psychological truth. S.T. Coleridge’s “Rime of Ancient Mariner” is fine example of supernatural elements. Also, John Keats’ poem “La Belle Dame Sans Merci” represents supernatural enchanting details.

5. Love of Gothic and Medieval elements:

Gothic elements refer to ‘gothic architecture’ that denotes remote setting, use of high pointed arch, flying buttresses, etc. that creates horror and pressure. Though gothic elements are prominently observed in the novels of Romantic era, poetry of that age also celebrated gothic and medieval elements. S. T. Coleridge has skilfully used these gothic elements in many of his poems like “Christabel”.

6. Note of Melancholy:

Melancholy is related to sadness and the desperate feelings. As the Romantic poets freely expressed their individual feelings through their poetry, they did not restrict and suppress their dejected feelings. Poets like John Keats, P.B. Shelley, S.T. Coleridge explored sensitivity of human emotions and truth of life through melancholy note. P. B. Shelley in the poem “Ode to the West Wind” expresses his personal sufferings in the words ‘I fall upon the thorns of life, I bleed’.

7. Simplicity of diction:

The poets of this era rejected complex, formal language. Another significant feature of Romantic poetry is the use of everyday language of ordinary people. The Romantic poets looked for new metres and stanzas to replace traditional forms. William Wordsworth in his “Preface to Lyrical Ballads” deals with the theory of Poetic Diction’ which advocates language of ordinary people in poetry. He was of the opinion that poetry should reflect the common experiences and emotions of humanity,

8. Love for Rustic life:

Nature and the rustic, countryside people living in the lap of nature are the real concerns for the Romantic poets. Villagers, peasants, shepherds, labourers, etc. dwelling in countryside area are the central figures for the Romantic poets. Wordsworth believes that true poetry comes from the language and experience of common people. For instance, William Wordsworth poems like “Michael, “Lucy Gray” or “Solitary Reaper” are fine examples of love for rustic life.

9. Humanitarian Outlook:

The Romantic poets have been inspired by the deep feelings about human rights and social reforms. This humanitarian outlook celebrated equality and respected common ordinary, rustic people.

Major poets of Romantic Poetry:

There are two phases of romantic poetry. The first generation who are known as the elder generation of Romantics and the second generation is known as younger generation. The first generation of poets include William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge, Robert Southey, etc. while the second one includes John Keats, Lord Byron, P.B. Shelley.

First Generation of Romantic poets:

1. William Wordsworth (1770-150):

William Wordsworth brought a completely new approach in the field of poetry with his publication of *Lyrical Ballads* with S.T. Coleridge in 1798. He is the most famous of the Romantic poets. In the preface to *Lyrical Ballads*, he defined poetry as spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings. He was of the opinion that poet is a man

of unusual emotional vitality and poetry is the record of a certain state of mind. The key themes of his poetry are sentimentalization of nature, and representation of nature as teacher, guide, philosopher. His poetry also deal with rustic life and people, human nature, etc. Thus, he is always regarded as nature poet. His poems like “Daffodils”, “Tintern Abbey”, “Lucy Gray” focused exclusively on nature with rural setting and the inhabitants in countryside area. His poetry expresses the effect of nature on poetic mind. Nature bestowed in his poetry with some healing power. The other aspects of his poetry are emphasis on emotion and imagination, celebration of rustic, ordinary life, simple diction, meditative verse, etc. His poetry often reflects this pantheistic view, that reflect landscapes as spiritually significant and imbued with a sense of morality and philosophy The poem "Tintern Abbey" is a fine example of it.

S.T. Coleridge (1772-1834):

Samuel Tayler Coleridge is one of the major poets of the first generation of Romantic poets and a poet who collaborated William Wordsworth in *Lyrical Ballads*. As a poet one could explore meditative view, brilliant magical symbolic descriptions, nature, supernatural atmosphere, etc. His Romanticism is different from that of Wordsworth. His poems are a fine blend between meditative and magical mode. He explored the conscious and unconscious states of mind, mixed reason and passion in his poetry. His poems are known for visual image created by powerful use of language. He is best known for the use of supernatural elements and mystic imagination in many of his poems like “Rime of Ancient Mariner”, “Kubla Khan”, “Christabel”, etc. Nature in the poetry of Coleridge is always in connection with his inner landscape with external things, as a companion to active mind.

3. Robert Southey (1774-1843):

He is one of the trios of the first generation of Romantic poets and a ‘Lake Poet’ along with Wordsworth and Coleridge. He served as Poet Laureate for 30 years. His four epics of poems include *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801), *Madoc* (1805), *The Curse of Kehama* (1810) and *Rodrick, the Last of the Goths* (1814). His short poems deal with humanitarian morality. One could find mythological elements, history, emotional and imaginative elements in his poetry.

Second Generation of Romantic poets:

P.B. Shelley (1792-1822):

Percy Bysshe Shelley is a popular poet of second generation of Romantic era. He is known for his vivid imagination, platonic idealism, rebellious nature, love for nature, pantheistic view towards nature, passionate emotions, etc. in his poetry. He wrote an elegy "Adonais" (1821) on the death of John Keats. It is considered as one of the well-known elegies in English literatures. His most celebrated poem "Ode to the West Wind" deals with the power of nature. His poems like "To a Skylark", "Cloud" are well-known.

John Keats (1795-1821):

He is considered as the greatest poet of the second generation of Romantic poetry. He influenced the poetical world of his age though he received very short life. His poems are also known for 'Hellenism' - the term derived from Greek and means Greek culture, manner, Greek spirit and Greek idioms. It came to Keats through his reading of translations of Greek classics. "Lamia", "Ode to Psyche", "Ode to Nightingale", "Endymion", etc. his lyrics are remarkable. His poetry is characterized by a "sensuous" devotion to beauty, powerful variety of imagery, and intense emotional depth, aiming for "art for art's sake". His poetry explores a kind of connection between joy and melancholy. Escapism is one of the characteristics of his poetry. It means his poetry moves away from harsh realities. His poem "Ode on Grecian Urn" deals with the relationship between art and life while the poem "Ode to Nightingale" is known for reflection of emotions in the poem.

Lord Byron (1788-1824):

George Gordon Byron is one of the major figures in the second generation of Romantic poetry. He is best known for his poetical works like *Don Juan* and *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*. His poems are characterized by passionate emotional expression, his heroes were rebellious protagonists, praise for nature,

Check Your Progress – IV:

Q.1: Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. The Romantic age begins with the publication of William Wordsworth and S.T. Coleridge's poetical collection.....
A. *Lyrical Ballads* B. *Paradise Lost*
C. *Don Juan* D. *The Waste Land*
2. The Romantic poets were inspired by the historical event
A. French Revolution B. World war - I
C. World war – II D. All of these
3. Romantic poetry emerged as a reaction against ----- .
A. Modernism
B. Neo classical period
C. Victorian period
D. Elizabethan period
4. Who among the following is NOT a 'Lake poet'?
A. William Wordsworth B. S.T. Coleridge
C. Robert Southey D. John Keats
5. *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* is written by.....
A. William Wordsworth
B. S.T. Coleridge
C. Robert Southey
D. John Keats
6. Which of the following is NOT the characteristic feature of the Romantic poetry?
A. Love for nature B. Supernaturalism
C. Love for Rustic life D. Adherence to rules and regulations

7. Which of the following poet is NOT the poet of the second generation of Romantic poetry?

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| A. William Wordsworth | B. Lord Byron |
| C. P.B. Shelley | D. John Keats |

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Give any two names of second generation of Romantic poets.
2. Who has written the poem “Ode on a Grecian Urn”?
3. Define Hellenism.
4. Whose philosophical doctrines the Romantic poets were impressed by ?
5. Who is the poet of the poem “Rime of Ancient Mariner”?

Q.3 Write short notes on the following.

1. Reasons for the emergence of Romantic Period?
2. Wordsworth as nature poet
3. Supernaturalism as the characteristic feature of Romantic poetry
4. First generation of Romantic poetry
5. Second generation of Romantic poetry

1.3 : Summary:

British literature explores the evolution of English literary traditions from Anglo Saxon. Renaissance or ‘Early Modern period’ is one of the influential periods which marks cultural, intellectual and artistic revival in England from the late 15th to early 17th century. The Renaissance spans from 1500 -1660 and is subdivided into different periods. Like Elizabethan Age, Jacobean Age, Caroline Age and Commonwealth Period. Elizabethan Drama, which is also known as the English Renaissance Drama, deals with the development of the form drama during the reign of Queen Elizabeth (1558-1603).The Elizabethan drama deeply influenced from late medieval dramaturgical traditions. Influence of previous theatre traditions, development of Genres, Elizabethan era was remarkable for the blooming and flourishing of theatrical traditions. The most renowned playwrights of this era were

William Shakespeare, George Chapman, Thomas Dekker, Thomas Heywood, Ben Jonson, Thomas Nashe, Thomas Kyd, John Lyly and Christopher Marlowe.

The Metaphysical poetry is a group of 17th century poets employing common poetic style, use of language and poetic argument. It was the period of transition as Renaissance encouraged learning, humanism, scientific spirit, etc. Many critics like Samuel Johnson, T.S. Eliot reviewed and praised the traditions of Metaphysical poetry. Use of conceits, wit and learnedness, unified sensibility, use of paradox, abrupt and conversational style, scientific and scholarly references, etc. are some of the features of Metaphysical poetry. John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Henry Vaughan, Abraham Cowley, Andrew Marvell, etc. are the major poets of this tradition.

Periodical essay which originated in the first half of the 18th century is a short non-fiction prose compositions devoted to comment on various subjects from manners, morals to literature and are being published regularly in journals or newspapers. The essays which were written in simple, clear and conversational style deal with topics related to everyday life, manners, morals, literature, etc.. Origin of printing press, rise of middle-class readers, spread of literacy, the coffee-house culture, etc. are some of the reasons for the development of periodical essays. *The Tatler* and *The Spectator* were the major periodicals of that period. The other periodicals included *The Rambler*, *The Guardian*, etc. The salient features of the periodical essays included manners and morals, interaction between authors and readers, bridging the gap between urban and countryside life, moralizing and didactic purpose, etc. Joseph Addison and Richard Steele are the major contributors for the rise and development of periodical essays. The contribution of Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith were also remarkable.

Romanticism or Romantic era is a literary, artistic and intellectual movement that was started in Europe at the end of 18th century focusing nature, imagination, individualism. The movement is prominently flourished in the field of poetry. Impact of French Revolution, Rousseau's teachings, beginning of industrial revolution, reaction against neoclassical traditions, etc. are some of the reasons for the emergence of Romantic poetry. The characteristic features of this tradition include love for nature, individualism and subjectivity, free play of imagination, supernaturalism, love for simple, rustic life, etc. The first generation of the Romantic

poetry are William Wordsworth, S.T. Coleridge and Robert Southey while the second generation includes John Keats, P.B. Shelley and Lord Byron.

1.4 Terms to Remember:

1. Renaissance: It means rebirth and the term is commonly applied to the period of European history following the Middle Ages.
2. Elizabethan Age: It is the period of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I. However, the term is also loosely used to late 16th and early 17th centuries.
3. Metaphysical Poetry: the term is used to indicate a group of 17th century poets employing common poetic style, use of language and poetic argument.
4. Periodical essay: Originated in the first half of the 18th century is a short non-fiction prose compositions devoted to comment on various subjects from manners, morals to literature and are being published regularly in journals or newspapers.
5. Romanticism: It is a literary, artistic and intellectual movement that was started in Europe at the end of 18th century focusing nature, imagination, individualism.

1.5 Answers to Check Your Progress:

Check Your Progress – I

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives

1. - A. English Drama
2. - B. disastrous conclusion
3. - D. round or octagonal
4. - C. T.S. Eliot
5. – A. revenge tragedy

Q. 2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. William Shakespeare

2. Christopher Marlowe
3. A group of English playwrights of late 16th century who were graduated from Oxford or Cambridge universities .
4. The type of plays with its subjects based on the lives of saints
5. 'The Rose', 'The Swan', 'The Fortune', 'The Red Bill', 'The Globe'

Check Your Progress – II

Q.1: Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives

1. - A. Metaphysical poetry
2. - A. Samuel Johnson
3. – B. Unified Sensibility
4. - D. William Blake
5. - B. Use of Conceit

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Samuel Johnson
2. John Donne
3. Andrew Marvell
4. Fusion of both emotion and reason
5. Use of conceits, wit and learnedness, unified sensibility, etc.

Check Your Progress – III:

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. – D.18th
2. – C. Philosophy of Rousseau
3. – D. The Nature
4. – A.1709
5. – *The Tatler* and *The Spectator*

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. Periodical essay which originated in the first half of the 18th century is a short non-fiction prose compositions devoted to comment on various subjects from manners, morals to literature and are being published regularly in journals or newspapers.
2. Richard Steele
3. the fictional character in *The Spectator* is Steele's first sketch and developed by Addison.
4. Richard Steele, Joseph Addison, Samuel Johnson, Oliver Goldsmith
5. *The Tatler*, *The Spectator*, *The Guardian* , *The Rambler*, *The idler*

Check Your Progress – IV:

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternatives:

1. – A. *Lyrical Ballads*
2. – A. French Revolution
3. – B. Neoclassical Period
4. – D. John Keats
5. – A. William Wordsworth
6. – D. Adherence to rules and regulations
7. – A. William Wordsworth

Q.2 Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence each.

1. John Keats, P.B. Shelley, Lord Byron
2. John Keats
3. the term derived from Greek and means Greek culture, manner, Greek spirit and Greek idioms.
4. Jean -Jacques Rousseau
5. S. T. Coleridge

1.6 Exercises:

Q.1 Answer the following questions in about 150-200 words:

1. Describe the salient features of Elizabethan drama.
2. Write a detailed note on Elizabethan tragedy.
3. Write a detailed note on Elizabethan Theatre.
4. Describe the contribution of Elizabethan playwrights.
5. What are the characteristics of metaphysical poetry?
6. Write a note on the metaphysical poets.
7. Describe the form and content of 18th century periodical essays.
8. What are the reasons for the development of periodical essays in the 18th century?
9. What are the characteristics of periodical essays?
10. Write a note on the 18th century periodicals.
11. Explain in brief the background to the rise of Romantic poetry.
12. What are the characteristics of the Romantic poetry?

1.7 References for further study:

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Module II : Drama

Doctor Faustus - Christopher Marlowe

Text Prescribed: *Doctor Faustus* - Christopher Marlowe

Contents:

- 2.0 Objective
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 About the playwright
- 2.3 Brief synopsis of the play
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- 2.7 Doctor Faustus as a dramatic character
- 2.8 Exercises
 - 2.8.1 Multiple choice questions
 - 2.8.2 Questions for further study
 - 2.8.3 Glossary
- 2.9 References

2.0 Objectives:

After studying this module students will be able to :

1. To understand the plot and major events of *Doctor Faustus*.
2. To analyse Faustus' ambition, pride, and downfall.
3. To study themes like good vs evil, sin, temptation, and damnation.

4. To examine the roles of characters such as Faustus, Mephistophilis, and the Angels.
5. To understand Marlowe's dramatic techniques, comic scenes, and moral message.

2.1 Introduction: *Doctor Faustus* is one of the most famous plays from the Elizabethan age. It was first performed in 1592 and is based on German stories about a scholar who sells his soul to the devil in exchange for magical power. The play survives in two major versions: the shorter 1604 "A" text and the expanded 1616 "B" text, which includes additional scenes and material of debated authorship. Though once considered less authoritative, the "B" text has gained renewed scholarly interest, especially regarding its comic elements and their thematic significance.

Doctor Faustus combines elements of classical tragedy and Elizabethan drama. The play follows a five-act structure and uses a Chorus to introduce and comment on the story. The play deals with important themes such as ambition, the limits of human knowledge, Christian beliefs, and Renaissance humanism. Many critics have discussed whether the play supports the idea of predestination in Calvinism and how it reflects the fears and religious conflicts of the Reformation period.

The play has remained very influential over the years and has inspired many adaptations in theatre, films, and other forms of media. Since the seventeenth century, performances of the play have also been connected with supernatural stories and legends. The characters of Faustus and Mephistophilis continue to be famous and important figures in Western literature.

2.2 About the playwright: Christopher Marlowe (1564-93) was one of the greatest playwrights and poets of the Elizabethan age. He was born in 1564 at Canterbury, England, the same year as William Shakespeare. Marlowe studied at Cambridge University and became famous for his powerful dramas written in blank verse.

Marlowe is known for introducing strong tragic heroes who are ambitious and desire unlimited power, knowledge, or wealth. His plays often deal with themes such as ambition, pride, power, and downfall. His writing style is admired for its poetic beauty and dramatic intensity.

Some of his major works include *Doctor Faustus*, *Tamburlaine*, *The Jew of Malta*, and *Edward II*. Among these, *Doctor Faustus* is considered his most famous play because it presents the tragic story of a scholar who sells his soul to the devil for knowledge and power.

Marlowe greatly influenced the development of English drama and prepared the way for Shakespeare. His use of blank verse became highly influential in English theatre. However, his life was short and controversial. He died in 1593 at the age of only twenty-nine under mysterious circumstances. Despite his short life, Marlowe remains one of the most important dramatists in English literature.

2.3 Brief Synopsis of the Play: Faustus is a scholar, who has earned expertise in several fields of knowledge. When the play opens, we see Faustus unhappy with his studies of medicine, law, logic, and theology. He feels that ordinary human knowledge has limits, so he decides to practise necromancy or black magic. He asks his servant Wagner to call Valdes and Cornelius, two experts in magic from Germany. Faustus tells them that he wants to learn magic and needs their help.

Later, when Faustus is alone in his study, he begins using magical spells. Suddenly, Mephistophilis appears in the form of an ugly devil. Faustus asks him to go away and return in the shape of a friar. Faustus then learns that it is not his magical power that brought Mephistophilis. The devil explains that whenever someone curses God and the Holy Trinity, devils appear automatically. Faustus then sends Mephistophilis back to Lucifer with an offer. He is ready to sell his soul in exchange for twenty-four years of unlimited power.

Later, Faustus begins to feel worried and unhappy about his decision. At that moment, the Good Angel and the Evil Angel appear and give him opposite advice. The Good Angel asks him to repent and return to God, while the Evil Angel encourages him to continue with magic. Mephistophilis appears again, and Faustus agrees to sign a contract with his blood even though several warning signs appear to stop him.

After some time, Faustus starts regretting his bargain with the devil. The Good Angel continues asking him to repent. To distract him, Lucifer and Mephistophilis show him the Seven Deadly Sins. Afterwards, Mephistophilis takes Faustus to Rome.

There, both become invisible and play tricks on the Pope and some friars in the Pope's private room.

Later, Faustus and Mephistophilis travel to the court of the German Emperor. Faustus uses magic to bring the spirit of Alexander the Great before the Emperor. He also punishes a knight who doubts his powers by making horns grow on his head. Afterwards, Faustus sells a horse to a horse-courser and warns him not to ride the horse into water. But when the man rides it into a pond, the horse suddenly turns into a bundle of hay. The horse-courser becomes angry and accuses Faustus of cheating him.

Faustus continues performing small magical tricks, such as bringing fresh grapes during winter. Later, at the request of his scholar friends, he brings the spirit of Helen of Troy before them. An old man then appears and advises Faustus to pray to God and seek salvation. However, Faustus feels that it is too late for repentance and forgiveness.

Finally, when the scholars leave, the clock strikes eleven and Faustus realises that only one hour remains before he must give his soul to the devil. As time passes, he becomes more fearful and hopeless. When the clock strikes twelve, devils appear with thunder and lightning and carry Faustus away to eternal damnation.

2.4 List of characters:

- **Doctor John Faustus:** A learned scholar in Germany during the fifteenth century who becomes dissatisfied with the limitations of knowledge and pledges his soul to Lucifer in exchange for unlimited power.
- **Wagner:** Faustus' servant, who tries to imitate Faustus' methods of reasoning and fails in a ridiculous and comic manner.
- **Valdes and Cornelius:** Two German scholars who are versed in the practice of magic and who teach Faustus about the art of conjuring.
- **Lucifer:** King of the underworld and a fallen angel who had rebelled against God and thereafter tries desperately to win souls away from the Lord.
- **Mephistophilis:** A prince of the underworld who appears to Faustus and becomes his servant for twenty-four years.

- **Good Angel and Evil Angel:** Two figures who appear to Faustus and attempt to influence him.
- **The Clown:** The clown who becomes a servant of Wagner as Mephistophilis becomes a servant to Faustus.
- **Horse-Courser:** A gullible man who buys Faustus' horse, which disappears when it is ridden into a pond.
- **The Pope:** The head of the Roman Catholic church, whom Faustus and Mephistophilis use as a butt of their practical jokes.
- **Charles V, Emperor of Germany:** The emperor who holds a feast for Faustus and at whose court Faustus illustrates his magical powers.
- **Knight:** A haughty and disdainful knight who insults Faustus. In re-venge, Faustus makes a pair of horns appear on the knight.
- **Duke and Duchess of Vanholt:** A couple whom Faustus visits and for whom he conjures up some grapes.
- **Robin:** An ostler who steals some of Dr. Faustus' books and tries to conjure up some devils.
- **Rafe (Ralph):** A friend of Robin's who is present with Robin during the attempt to conjure up devils.
- **Vintner:** A man who appears and tries to get payment for a goblet from Robin.
- **Old Man:** He appears to Faustus during the last scene and tries to tell Faustus that there is still time to repent.
- **Seven Deadly Sins, Alexander, Helen of Troy, and Alexander's Paramour :** Spirits or apparitions which appear during the course of the play.
- **Chorus:** A device used to comment upon the action of the play or to provide exposition.

2.5 *Doctor Faustus*: Act-wise summary

Doctor Faustus has five acts, and they are further divided into scenes. A detailed summary of the play is as follows:

Prologue / Chorus: The play begins with a chorus which announces the theme of the play. It tells audience that the play presents the good and bad fortunes of Dr. John Faustus. The play is not concerned with war, love, or proud deeds, explains the chorus.

Marlowe borrowed the technique of chorus from the classic Greek drama. Chorus is a group of people which stands outside the play but comments on the action of the play. The chorus directly talks to the audience revealing the background of the play or motives of the characters.

Before the play starts the chorus tells audience that the play presents the downfall of Doctor Faustus. The chorus compares the fall of Faustus with Icarus, a figure in classical mythology. Icarus becomes proud of his abilities ignoring his father's warning not to fly at a high altitude. Icarus' wings which are made-up of wax melt due to the sunlight causing him to fall into the sea and drown.

The chorus suggests the audience not to cross one's limits. Faustus will cross his limit and will ultimately be punished. Icarus and Faustus are both like Lucifer, who fell from heaven or God's favour due to his pride. Faustus is presented by the chorus as a man of uncontrolled appetite; his thirst for knowledge and power lead him to continuously engage himself with studies. He even goes further and crosses boundaries to try necromancy – a forbidden field for mortals. The chorus, thus, suggests that Dr. Faustus is himself responsible for his downfall. He chooses magic to gain uncontrolled power but will ultimately lose his soul to Devil.

Act I:

Scene 1: When the play starts, we see Faustus in his studies contemplating on his achievements. He realises that he has mastered every field of human knowledge such as logic, philosophy, medicine comma law, and theology. He can argue well over every treaties of logic, he is such a skilled physician that he has saved cities from the plague, he knows all the details in law, and in theology he takes two scriptural passages indicating all men must die and dismisses them. He feels that now necromancy is the only field of which he knows very little. He thinks that

necromancy would provide him delight, power, honour, and omnipotence. Hence, he asks Wagner, his servant to summon Valdes and Cornelius who will help him conjure up spirits. That dramatist justifies Faustus turning to magic in the first scene of the play. At a young age Faustus has learned so much and he still yearns to gain knowledge. The limitation of human knowledge leads him to turn to magic. He wishes to attain more power and glory.

Scene 2: Another reason why Faustus turns to magic, a prohibited field for man, is his dissatisfaction with theological ideas. He reads in the Bible that the reward of sin is death and also reads in it that every man is a Sinner. He, then, concludes that every man is doomed from the beginning. Since there is no hope for salvation, he turns to the practise of magic. But Faustus reads the passages from the Bible out of contexts and overlooks their meaning. He reads “the wages of sin is death” but does not read the next part “but the gift of God is internal life.” Faustus fails to understand that there is a promise for salvation mentioned in the bible.

While Faustus is waiting for Valdes and Cornelius, the two German scholars, the good Angel and the Evil Angel appear. The Good Angel advises Faustus to keep aside the “damned book” of magic and read the scriptures. The Good Angel tries to dissuade Faustus not to turn to magic from the beginning. The Evil Angel, however, appeals to Faustus’ ambition. Faustus then imagines that he will be able to do by the power of magic.

According to Christian cosmology there is a hierarchy in the universe created by God. There are the angels, then human beings, the animals, and finally the inanimate nature. God has put everyone in its proper place and each should be content to remain there. Any attempt to rise above or to descend from the assigned station or place is considered as a sin. Ambition to go beyond one’s natural place in the hierarchy is considered a sin of pride.

In a farcical scene Valdes and Cornelius, two scholars come to Wagner and inquire about Faustus. Wagner tries to show off his knowledge of logic to prove that the scholars’ question was wrong and they should not have asked it. Wagner’s arguments are superficial and funny. Wagner just imitates his master but unfortunately he is not as intelligent as his master. When Valdes and Cornelius meet Faustus, they fear that Faustus has fallen into the practise of magic. They plan to see the Rector to inform him about Faustus.

This scene contains a comic interlude; Wagner's actions parody those of Faustus in the previous scene. In the previous scene we had seen Faustus alone displaying his knowledge of logic to justify his resorting to necromancy. Wagner uses the same method to reveal where Faustus is. Thus, Faustus and Wagner, in a way are compared in this scene and we realise that their knowledge is futile as they try to achieve insignificant things with it. The scene also reveals that Faustus' choice affects more people; it is not limited to him. The Elizabethan dramatist presented higher or nobler characters speaking and elevated or formal language. This is evident in Valdes', Cornelius', and Faustus' speech or dialogues in the scene.

Scene 3: It seems that Faustus has learned magic and decides to try incantation for the first time. He recites a long passage in Latin renouncing the Holy Trinity and calling the powers of the underworld. Mephistophilis, a fallen Angel from the underworld appears in a hideous shape. Faustus drives him out as he is too ugly to look at. Faustus asks Mephistophilis to disappear and return in the shape of a Franciscan Friar. Faustus is glad as he feels that he has the power to call up devils. His first reaction is of pride. He feels that Mephistophilis is completely obedient to his will. When Mephistophilis reappears Faustus realises that it is not his magic which brings forth Mephistophilis. But Mephistophilis tells Faustus that a devil appears as soon as a person abjures the Trinity.

Later in the scene Faustus asks Mephistophilis several questions about Lucifer, the king of the underworld and learns that he is a fallen angel. Lucifer was thrown into hell by God because he got proud of his powers and revolted against God. Mephistophilis informs Faustus that hell is not a physical place but it is an absence of God. Mephistophilis also talks about his glorious days in heaven. Faustus sends Mephistophilis to Lucifer with the proposal that Faustus will exchange his soul for twenty four years of unlimited power. Faustus is excited of the proposed deal and things of all the glorious deeds he will perform with his magical power.

In this scene we see Faustus taking the first decisive step toward his own damnation by denouncing the Trinity and appealing the black powers of hell. The scene is dramatically important because of Faustus' incantations, his renouncing the Holy Trinity and the sudden appearance of Mephistophilis. It must have fascinated the Elizabethan audience.

Faustus feels that he has complete power and is absolutely free. But Mephistophilis' dialogues indicate that no person dealing with the devil is free. Another important action in the scene is Faustus' interest in Lucifer. He wants to know more and more about the character of Lucifer. Mephistophilis recites Lucifer's downfall. He says that Lucifer fell because of "aspiring pride and insolence." Lucifer had grown ambitious of his powers and believed that he could overthrow God. Thus, in a way, Mephistophilis underlines the themes of over ambition and pride in the play. In many ways Faustus is similar to the devil.

Mephistophilis is also nostalgic about heaven. He truly misses the bliss of heaven. Mephistophilis suddenly tells Faustus to "leave these frivolous demands, which strike a tenor to my fainting soul".

Faustus finally sends Mephistophilis back to Lucifer, naming the demands in exchange for his soul. After Mephistophilis leaves, Faustus gets completely absorbed in dreams of what he will do with his newly gained power. But ironically he wastes the power he has got in performing insignificant and paltry tricks. Thus, part of Faustus' tragedy is that he received magical powers but failed to utilise them in any significant manner.

Act II:

Scene 1: In another farcical scene, we meet Wagner and a clown. Throughout the play we notice that Wagner imitates his master, Faustus. Wagner is seen telling the clown that the clown is out of work. He accuses him of being desperate and threatens to sell his soul to the devil even for a shoulder of raw mutton. The clown suggests Wagner to at least have his mutton roasted in a fine sauce in exchange of his soul. Wagner asks the clown to serve him for seven years and threatens him to tear him to pieces by lice if he refuses the offer. To show his power he summons Baliol and Belcher – two devils – to frighten the poor clown. The clown is frightened and agrees to serve Wagner. Wagner promises him that he would teach the clown how to summon up devils. But the clown warns to turn himself into a flea using magical powers so that it can sit on a pretty wench!

This scene is a parody of the previous scene in which Faustus agreed to give away his soul to Lucifer in exchange of twenty-four years of absolute power. The conversation between Faustus and Mephistophilis are parodied by conversations between Wagner and the clown. Faustus aims for something bigger in exchange of

his soul, whereas Wagner is ready to exchange his soul for something trivial. In a way, the dramatist seems to highlight the trivial deal Faustus has made. Even complete power in exchange of one's soul today is not a worth deal because ultimately the person's soul will be permanently damned.

Both the scenes are dramatically effective because the Elizabethan audience got to see something sensational on the stage. No doubt they were thrilled to watch magic and devils on the stage and they must have laughed at Wagner and the clown. Thus, the play truly entertained the Elizabethan as well as the contemporary audience.

Scene 2: Faustus is alone in his study thinking seriously over his decision. He finally decides to go with his decision, to forget God and dedicate himself to Lucifer. The Good Angel and Evil Angel appear. The Good Angel scolds Faustus for his decision; he makes him think of the heaven and glory of God. The Evil Angel, on the other hand, highlights the value of power and wealth. He tickles Faustus' imagination by making him think of himself when he acquires ultimate power. Faustus falls prey to the Evil Angel and summons Mephistophilis. Mephistophilis tells Faustus that Lucifer will agree to the bargain if Faustus signs the deal with his blood. Faustus agrees and stabs his arm and begins to sign the deal. But surprisingly the blood congeals. Mephistophilis hurriedly brings fire to make the blood flow. An inscription "Homo Fuge!" appears on Faustus' arm as he begins to write again. Finally, Faustus signs the bond and orders Mephistophilis to deliver it to Lucifer.

It seems that Faustus is very much interested to know more about hell. Hence he begins to ask Mephistophilis about the nature of hell. While Mephistophilis describes hell, Faustus becomes sceptical and refuses to believe in the idea of hell. Faustus then changes the topic of conversation and tells Mephistophilis that he wants a wife because he feels lustful. Mephistophilis, however, convinces him that he does not require a wife to fulfil his carnal desires. He assures Faustus that he could bring any courtesan or paramour that he desires. Before Mephistophilis leaves, Faustus demands three books to know more about incantations and spells, about the planets and the heaven, and about plants and animals.

This scene is important in the play because Faustus finally signs the bond and his soul is eternally damned. The appearance of Good Angel and Evil Angel highlights the conflict in Faustus' mind. The Good Angel and Evil Angel could be

seen as projections of his thoughts over heaven and hell. Faustus throughout the play gets more influenced by the Evil Angel than Good Angel. The Evil Angel allures Faustus of the wealth and power that he will receive once he gets unlimited power.

Faustus signing the bond with his blood is dramatically effective and thrilling for the audience or readers. The bond is written in legal terms demanding the security from Lucifer. The old superstition is that a bond signed in blood is eternally binding. Later in the play Faustus realises that only the blood of Christ could release him from such a bond.

There are two omens in the scene to indicate to Faustus that he is in dire danger. First, his blood congeals, the second the words “Homo Fuge!” appear on his arm. These are the warnings to Faustus of the forthcoming dangers. But Faustus ignores them and signs the pact. Faustus is carried away by his emotions ignoring reason.

Faustus is haunted by the conception of hell. In scene three and in the present scene too, Faustus is keen to know about the hell. Mephistophilis again explains Faustus;

Hell hath no limits, nor is circumscribed
If one self place; for where we are in hell
And where hell is there must we ever be.
And to conclude when all the world dissolves,
An every creature shall be purified,
All places shall be hell that is not heaven.

Mephistophilis tells Faustus that hell is simply the absence of God. He says that he is in hell because he is away from the presence of God. Faustus, however, is unable to understand what Mephistophilis says. Marlowe shows how fast Faustus’ logical and reasoning powers are waning.

Scene 3: Faustus feels sad for his decision. He thinks that he should not have made a contract with the devil. Mephistophilis consoles him by saying that heaven is not as glorious as Faustus thinks. Mephistophilis further tells him that man is more wonderful than anything in heaven. The Good Angel and Evil Angel appear each

trying to influence Faustus decision. Faustus is haunted by the thought that he is damned. Earlier he had conjured up Homer – the famous Greek poet – to sing and sooth him. It consoles him that he could at least used his power once in some useful way. Faustus asks questions about theoretical matters to Mephistophilis. But his answers do not satisfy Faustus. He now wants to know about the power behind the universe and who made the world. Mephistophilis does not answer these questions, instead he asks Faustus to think of hell rather than philosophical matters.

Faustus is utterly dissatisfied with the contract and cries out for Christ to save him. At that moment Lucifer himself appears, reminding Faustus of the deal. He threatens Faustus that he could not break his promise. In order to divert Faustus Lucifer arranges for some entertainment for Faustus.

The seven deadly sins pride, covetousness, wrath, envy, gluttony, sloth, and lechery appear before Faustus. He is happy with the show. Lucifer hands him over a book and promises to return at midnight. The scene ends when Wagner announces that Faustus has gone to Rome to see the Pope.

One can observe a definite change in Faustus. He repents his decision of signing the pact. In this scene too, Faustus chooses the Evil Angel's advice. Thus, time and again Faustus got numerous opportunities to save himself, but at the crucial moments he decided to follow the Evil. We also see that Faustus wants to commit suicide in this scene when he realises that his soul is permanently damned. But committing suicide is also a sin in Christianity. Thus, he is tempted by another sin here.

One could also notice in the scene that Faustus is cheated. He made the pact in order to learn about the primal causes of the world, however Mephistophilis is unable to answer his questions and thus the bargain is broken in a way through Mephistophilis.

It is a highly dramatic moment in the scene when Lucifer appears on the stage. Even Lucifer tries to divert Faustus's attention by arranging the show of seven deadly sins. In the mediaeval plays the seven deadly sins were often shown on the stage as interludes to teach Christian values. But in the present scene they are treated as jest.

Act III:

Scene 1: The opening of this scene presents Marlowe's brilliant use of blank verse. The poetic language reveals the fact that Faustus has seen the world. Faustus describes his trip to Rome. On his way to Rome, he travelled over the Alps and various cities. Mephistophilis arranges an entry for Faustus to the Pope's private chamber. Faustus said Mephistophilis make themselves invisible before entering the chamber. Faustus then plays tricks on the Pope and a group of Friars who have come to visit the Pope. Faustus snatches their plates, cups, and finally boxes the Pope on the ear. Mephistophilis joins Faustus and both begin to beat the clergy and fling some fireworks among them. Faustus and Mephistophilis are happy to see that the Pope and the Friars are bewildered.

The chorus enters and reviews Faustus's career. Faustus returns home after visiting royal courts all over Europe. At home several learned people visit Faustus to ask him questions concerning astrology and the universe. Faustus satisfactorily answers their questions and gains more fame. Finally, the Emperor, Carolus the fifth asks him to come to his court.

In this scene Marlowe shows us how Faustus is wasting his powers, energy, and time. Faustus wanted unlimited power to know the world better; to understand the universe. But the readers understand that Faustus is wasting his powers. Marlowe does not follow the classical unities of time and place in this scene because he focuses on the magical gifts received by Faustus from the Devil. Faustus and Mephistophilis beating and making fun of the clergy is an example of slapstick comedy meant to please the lowly element in the audience.

In the end of the scene, we are shown that Faustus has attained fame in the field of astrology, is enjoying life, indulged himself into worldly pleasures and is no longer interested in leading a good life.

Scene 2: In another comic scene, we see Robin, the ostler, with a book, which he has stolen from Faustus's library. Using the book Robin wishes to conjure to make all the maidens in the village appear before him and dance naked. Ralph enters and informs Robin that a gentleman is waiting to have his horse taken care of. Robin ignores him and says that he has more important things to do. Later, they leave to clean their boots and continue with their conjuring. Robin ignores his duties to learn magic; he tries to follow his master.

The scene juxtaposes Robin with Faustus. They are both similar. Robin, like Faustus wants magic for his pleasure. Faustus, too, wanted a wife or a whore to fulfil his carnal desire when he got magical powers for the first time. The language in the scene is common and filled with obscene puns. Marlowe seems to present the truth that all human beings are the same.

Scene 3: Robin and Ralph try to conjure using Faustus book. Robin has stolen a silver goblet from a vintner. When the vintner appears to get back his goblet, Robin denies having it. While the vintner searches for his goblet, Robin begins to read incantations from Faustus book. These incantations summon Mephistophilis, who put some firecrackers at their backs. Robin is afraid and gives back the goblet to the vintner. Mephistophilis is angry at Robin and Ralph because he has to come all the way from Constantinople because these irresponsible servants used incantations without understanding them. He threatens to change them into an ape and a dog and then leaves. Robin and Ralph can only think about how much fun and how much food they might have if transformed into these animals.

This comic interlude contributes little to the development of the action of the play. The present and the previous scenes highlight men's desire to practise conjuring. Some critics believe that these scenes are not written by Marlowe, they must have been added later by some other playwright. The scene must have appealed more to ordinary people of the time.

Act IV:

Scene 1: The scene shifts to the German court. The emperor Carolus has invited Faustus at his court. The emperor wants Faustus to perform some magical tricks as proof of Faustus' magical powers. Faustus humbly responds to the emperor that he is not as skilled as the rumours report him to be but says he will try to please the emperor. The emperor wonders if anyone will ever attend the stature of Alexander the Great. He asks Faustus to bring Alexander and Alexander's paramour back to life. At this point a knight in the court doubts Faustus' abilities. He is sceptical and sarcastic towards Faustus. At Faustus requests Mephistophilis brings two spirits in the shape of Alexander and his paramour. After the emperor inspects a mole on the paramour's neck, he declares the two spirits are real. Faustus, by now, has punished the knight by making a pair of horns grow on his head. Faustus punishes the knight for doubting his abilities. The knight is furious and abuses Faustus for making fun of

him. Then at the emperor's request Faustus releases the knight from the spell and the horns are removed. The importer thanks Faustus for the conjuration and rewards him bounteously.

This scene again shows Faustus making use of his powers for entertaining people. He feels proud for satisfying the most trivial demands of people. Faustus is trying to impress people with his feats rather than striving to use the powers for noble purposes. Faustus wanted to benefit mankind and Germany with his powers before getting it. He is also revengeful to those who doubt his powers. He could have used his magic to instruct the emperor, to help the poor, but he is wasting his skills. Because the knight is sarcastic and insulting to Faustus, he becomes a type of foil for Faustus. Faustus makes a pair of horns grow on his head. For Marlowe's audience, a man whose wife was unfaithful to him was known as a cuckold and was represented as having a pair of horns growing out of his head. Therefore, besides the comic physical appearance of the knight, there was the added comedy of his being the cuckold or foolish man.

Scene 2: Faustus is anxious as he realises the end of his allotted time is drawing near. A horse-courser enters and asks Faustus if Faustus will sell his horse for 40 dollars. Faustus agrees to sell his horse but warns the horse-courser that he must never ride the horse into water.

When the horse-courser left, Faustus continues contemplating that he is condemned to die and then falls asleep. The horse-courser returns in a great fluster, accusing Faustus of cheating him. He thought, since Faustus warned him not to ride the horse into water, the horse had some magical quality, so he proceeded to ride the animal into a pond. But suddenly to his surprise the horse disappeared under him, and he found himself sitting on a bundle of hay and he almost drowned.

Mephistophilis cautions the horse-courser to be quiet because Faustus has just fallen asleep for the first time in eight days. The horse-courser, however, does not listen to Mephistophilis and pulls on Faustus' legs to awaken him. When Faustus is awakened, the horse-courser demands that Faustus should pay him back his money. He is astounded when Faustus' entire leg comes off. He is so frightened that he promises to pay Faustus 40 more dollars. Wagner enters to tell Faustus that the Duke of Vanholt desires to see Faustus. Faustus agrees to see the noble gentleman.

We see, for the first time in many scenes, Faustus pondering his ultimate feat. He becomes aware that time is running out and that he is and that his magical powers will soon end. Faustus also contemplates on the idea of death. Earlier he avoided to think of death but now he is aware that death will quickly approach him. Faustus realises that he is just an ordinary man. Previously he considered himself above ordinary men. In his dealings with Lucifer, he had hoped to acquire a God-like position. But at this period of inverted meditation, he realises he is nothing “but a man condemned to die”.

Faustus at such emotionally disturbed state plays practical jokes on the horse-courser. He is concerned with the insignificant sum of 40 dollars from the poor fellow. He enjoys blackmailing the horse-courser for an additional 40 dollars for attempting to awake him.

Another indication that Faustus is beginning to be conscious of his approaching fate is the fact that he has not slept for eight days. To Elizabethan audience, this would indicate the spiritual and mental condition of a person. For example, in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (1606), Lady Macbeth cannot sleep when her conscience begins to bother her. Thus, the audience would automatically know that Faustus is deeply troubled by his condition.

Scene 3: At the court of Duke of Vanholt, Faustus asks the Duchess, who is with child, if she has a desire for any special dainties. Although it is January, she desires to have a dish of ripe grapes. Faustus sends Mephistophilis after them, and when he returns with them, the Duke wonders how this could be accomplished. Faustus explains that he sent his spirit to India for them. The Duchess exclaims that the grapes are the best she has ever tested. The Duke promises Faustus that he will reward him greatly for his favour.

Once again, this scene shows what insignificant feats Faustus accomplishes with his powers. Faustus performs a magical trick of obtaining fresh grapes at the request of the nobility. The learned doctor spends some of his last fleeting moments providing “merriment” and “delight” for the Duke and Duchess. Faustus succeeds in temporarily diverting himself and others from important concerns of life.

Act V:

Scene 1: In this scene Wagner brings the news that Faustus is about to die because he has given all his goods and properties to his servants. He is unable to understand why Faustus continues to feast if he is so near death.

We see Faustus entering with scholars discussing who is the most beautiful woman in the world. Many scholars think it is Helen of Troy. Because of their friendship for him, Faustus agrees to raise her from the dead and let the scholar see her in all her pomp and majesty. At this moment music sounds, and Helen passes across the stage. The scholars are astonished to see Helen walking in front of them, they are also happy to see her beauty and thank Faustus for allowing them to see this paragon of excellence.

An old man enters, and the scholars leave. The old man pleads Faustus to repent of “thy most vile and loathsome filthiness”. The old man urges Faustus to ask for mercy of God. The old man feels that by doing so Faustus could save himself from damnation. Faustus fears that hell has him trapped but asks the old man to leave him alone for a while he ponders his sins.

Mephistophilis threatens Faustus for disobedience to Lucifer. But Faustus agrees to reaffirm his contract to the devil in blood again. Faustus writes the second deed and tells Mephistophilis that he desires Helen for his own paramour. When she appears, Faustus decides that Helen’s beauty shall make him immortal and thus he will not need salvation;

Was this the face that launched thousand ships,
And burned the topless towers of Ilium?
Sweet Helen, make me immortal with a kiss.
Her lips suck forth my soul; See where it flies exclamatory mark
Come, Helen, come, give me my soul again.
Here will I dwell, for heaven be in these lips,
And all is dross that is not Helen.

After Faustus exits with Helen the old man re-enters and expresses his disappointment with Faustus. He sympathises with Faustus because he, too, once has

been tempted but has won victory by turning to God. This scene deals with the central idea of the play, the idea of blood bond in which Faustus bartered his soul. Wagner's opening speech indicates that the time is shortly coming when Faustus will have to face death. In the beginning of the play, we saw that Faustus did not believe in death but now he must face not only physical death but eternal damnation.

Wagner informs audience the manner in which Faustus faces his forthcoming death. Faustus spends his time in merrymaking and other physical pleasures. He acts as though he does not know that the final day is about to come to him. This scene portrays Faustus performing his last act of conjuring. Again, at the request of a friend Faustus conjures up the image of Helen of Troy.

The appearance of the old man brings back into focus the conflict between good and evil that was expressed earlier by the Good Angel and Evil Angel. The old man remains Faustus of the faith of the Christian world. He offers himself as a type of guide who will conduct Faustus to celestial happiness. The old man consistently refers to the blood of Christ, which has saved him. This contrasts with the blood which was used earlier to sign the contract with Lucifer and the blood which Faustus will use in a few minutes to renew the pact.

The old man and Faustus both are approaching death. Faustus still has the body of a young person, going to the magical incantations, but has a blackened soul. The old man is ugly physically but has a beautiful soul and faith in Christ.

Faustus has already made a pact with Lucifer in blood. But he is now ready to sign another pact in blood with Lucifer. He makes the second contract to assure himself of getting Helen as his paramour. Originally, he had wanted power and knowledge, but now he is only interested in satisfying his baser appetites. Although the old man tempts him to turn to the paths of righteousness, the memory of the beautiful and desirable Helen intrudes upon his consciousness and causes him to think only of possessing her. Faustus thinks that Helen will be a paradise for him and ironically, he gives up all hope of eternal paradise.

The ending of this scene is very different from the final scene. The old man returns and says that he faced many temptations in his life but successfully overcame them. He believes that he has defeated Mephistophilis and the evil spirits. However, in the final scene, Faustus gets the same chance to repent but fails to defeat the powers of evil and is taken away to hell. The old man's victory reminds the audience

that Faustus also had many chances to repent and save his soul. But since Faustus never truly repents, it suggests that he knowingly chooses his own destruction.

Scene 2: Faustus is accompanied by three scholars to whom he says that he is in a dejected state because of what is about to happen to him. He admits that he has sinned so greatly that he cannot be forgiven. The scholars suggest him to call on God, but Faustus knows that he is unable to do so because he has obscured and blasphemed. He tells the scholars that he has done the very things that God most forbids man to do “for vain pleasure of twenty four years hath Faustus lost eternal joy and felicity”. One of the scholars wants to stay with Faustus until the last minute but Faustus and the others know that no one will be able to help him. Faustus must face the final moments alone.

After the scholars leave it is eleven o'clock and Faustus realises that he has only one hour left before midnight and his eternal damnation. He suffers because he realises that he will be deprived of eternal bliss and will have to suffer damnation. As the clock approaches twelve, he pleads that his doom is not everlasting. He is ready to suffer hundred thousand years if at last he could be saved. The clock strikes twelve, he cries out for God not to look so fierce upon him. Thunder and lightning flash across the stage and the devils arrive to take him away.

In the final scene Faustus completely realises what he has done. Towards the end of twenty four years he realises that he lived for vain joys, he has lost eternal life. There is a constant interplay between living and dying throughout the scene. Faustus tells one of the scholars that “had I lived with them then had I lived still, but now I die eternally”. Faustus even at the end makes no real effort to return to God. Because he realises the magnitude of his sin, he is almost afraid to return to God whom he has abjured. One of the reasons why he does not return to God is that he is afraid of the devil who has threatened him to tear him in pieces if he named God. But Faustus' explanation is false and empty. All he can finally do is to ask the scholars to pray for him.

Faustus does not realise that he could not stop time. As the clock strikes eleven he realises that he has only one hour left to leave. He desires to have more time to live and thus repent of his sins.

Stand still, you ever moving spheres of heaven,

That time Macy's and midnight never come;
Fare natures I, rise, rise again, and make
Perpetual day; Or let this RB but
A year, a month, a week, and natural day,
That Faustus may repaint an save his soul exclamatory mark

This scene projects Faustus' constant awareness of the passing of time. He is almost frantic as his end approaches. But in his last hours, too, Faustus cannot remain resolute and call on God. He tries at one point to invoke the aid of Christ but ends up by asking Lucifer to spare him. He even pleads that his body suffer punishment and his soul be spared.

Faustus is ready to suffer physically but warns his soul be spared from eternal punishment. This is one of the most dramatic scenes in all Elizabethan drama. Faustus is taken by horrible looking devils to his eternal damnation. His last words are effective statements of the horror of trafficking in the black arts. His final words are incoherent and incomplete, as though he was suddenly dragged off in the middle of his belly.

Epilogue / chorus: The chorus concludes the play, by making closing comments on the fall of Faustus. They say that Faustus had tried to go beyond the limitations of man and had thus fallen into eternal damnation. The chorus admonishes the audience to consider Faustus' example and not go beyond the boundary of lawful things. The chorus expresses the mediaeval view that Faustus' fall resulted from his pride and ambition.

2.6 Major themes in the play: *Doctor Faustus* is rich in themes that reflect human desires, weaknesses, and moral conflicts. One of the most important themes of the play is ambition. Faustus is highly educated and has mastered subjects like logic, medicine, law, and theology, but he is still dissatisfied. He desires unlimited knowledge and supernatural power, which leads him towards necromancy and black magic. His ambition becomes excessive and destructive, finally causing his downfall.

Another important theme is pride and overreaching. Faustus wishes to rise above ordinary human limits and become god-like. The Chorus compares him to

Icarus and Lucifer, both of whom fell because of pride. Faustus ignores warnings from the Good Angel, the old man, and even signs from heaven such as “Homo Fuge!” His pride blinds him and prevents him from seeking true repentance.

The conflict between good and evil is constantly shown throughout the play. The Good Angel and Evil Angel symbolise the inner struggle within Faustus’ mind. The Good Angel encourages him to repent and return to God, while the Evil Angel tempts him with wealth, pleasure, and power. Faustus repeatedly chooses evil, even though he receives many opportunities for salvation.

The play also deals with the theme of temptation and damnation. Lucifer and Mephistophilis tempt Faustus with magical powers and worldly pleasures. Faustus sells his soul for twenty-four years of enjoyment, but gradually realises that he has gained very little in return. Instead of using his powers for noble purposes, he wastes them on tricks and entertainment. In the end, he suffers eternal damnation because he fails to truly repent.

Another significant theme is the misuse of knowledge. Faustus begins as a brilliant scholar, but instead of using his intelligence wisely, he uses it for selfish desires and black magic. Marlowe suggests that knowledge without morality can destroy a person.

The play further explores the limitations of human beings. According to Christian beliefs presented in the play, humans should remain within the limits set by God. Faustus tries to cross these limits, challenge divine authority, and control supernatural powers. His tragic fate acts as a warning against disobedience, greed, and uncontrolled ambition.

Finally, the theme of time and mortality becomes very important in the last scenes. As the end of his twenty-four years approaches, Faustus becomes fearful and desperate. He wishes to stop time and escape death, but he cannot. His final suffering highlights the tragic consequences of his choices and reinforces the moral lesson of the play.

2.7 Faustus as a dramatic character: When we first meet Faustus, we see that he is unhappy with his studies in logic, law, medicine, and theology. Even though he is a highly learned scholar, he is not satisfied with human knowledge and feels limited by

it. He wants to gain greater knowledge and power. Therefore, he decides to practise necromancy and black magic. Faustus wishes to go beyond normal human limits and become almost God-like in power and abilities.

Faustus agrees to sell his soul to the Devil in exchange for twenty-four years of magical powers and the service of Mephistophilis. In the beginning, Faustus appears to be a great and intelligent man who wishes to do useful things for mankind. However, after making the pact with Lucifer, he slowly moves towards destruction. Instead of using his magical powers for noble purposes, he wastes them on foolish tricks, entertainment, and physical pleasures.

Throughout the play, Faustus repeatedly thinks about repentance and saving his soul. Many times he realises his mistake and feels afraid of damnation. He even comes close to asking God for forgiveness. However, he continues to remain loyal to Lucifer and Mephistophilis and never truly takes the first step towards repentance.

In the final scene, Faustus clearly understands the terrible mistake he has made. The scholars advise him to pray to God and seek forgiveness. Throughout the play, both internal thoughts and external forces suggest that Faustus still has a chance to repent and save himself. But Faustus keeps making excuses and delays repentance. Finally, when the devils arrive to take him away, it is too late. Faustus can only cry out in fear and horror as he faces eternal damnation.

2.8 Exercises

2.8.1 Multiple Choice Questions:

Q.1 Complete the following sentences by choosing the most correct alternatives:

1. What does the Chorus announce at the beginning of Dr. Faustus?
- A) A love story B) The rise and fall of Faustus
- C) A war story D) A comedy

Answer: B) The rise and fall of Faustus

2. Who is compared to Faustus in the Chorus?

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| A) Hamlet | B) Hercules |
| C) Icarus | D) Caesar |

Answer: C) Icarus

3. Why does Faustus turn to necromancy?

- A) He wants to become king
- B) He is poor
- C) He wants more power and knowledge
- D) He wants revenge

Answer: C) He wants more power and knowledge

4. Which subject does Faustus think can give him “delight, power, honour, and omnipotence”?

- | | |
|-------------|---------------|
| A) Law | B) Medicine |
| C) Theology | D) Necromancy |

Answer: D) Necromancy

5. Who advises Faustus to avoid magic and read the scriptures?

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| A) Wagner | B) Evil Angel |
| C) Good Angel | D) Mephistophilis |

Answer: C) Good Angel

6. What form does Mephistophilis finally take after Faustus asks him to change his appearance?

- | | |
|--------------|-----------------------|
| A) A king | B) A Franciscan friar |
| C) A soldier | D) A dragon |

Answer: B) A Franciscan friar

7. According to Mephistophilis, why was Lucifer thrown out of heaven?

A) Because he lied to God

B) Because he stole power

C) Because of pride and ambition

D) Because he helped humans

Answer: C) Because of pride and ambition

8. What warning appears on Faustus' arm when he signs the bond with blood?

A) “Lucifer Rules”

B) “Homo Fuge!”

C) “Beware of Hell”

D) “Turn Back”

Answer: B) “Homo Fuge!”

9. Why does Faustus ask Mephistophilis for a wife?

A) He feels lonely

B) He wants political power

C) He feels lustful

D) He wants children

Answer: C) He feels lustful

10. According to Mephistophilis, what is hell?

A) A burning cave underground

B) A prison ruled by Lucifer

C) The absence of God

D) A place filled with monsters

Answer: C) The absence of God

11. Which two figures appear repeatedly to influence Faustus' decisions?

A) Robin and Ralph

B) Lucifer and Wagner

C) Good Angel and Evil Angel

D) Pope and Friars

Answer: C) Good Angel and Evil Angel

12. What entertainment does Lucifer arrange for Faustus in Scene 6?

- A) A magic battle
- B) A royal feast
- C) A dance performance
- D) The show of the seven deadly sins

Answer: D) The show of the seven deadly sins

13. What does Faustus do while invisible in the Pope's chamber?

- A) Steals gold
- B) Burns books
- C) Plays tricks on the Pope and Friars
- D) Challenges the Pope to debate

Answer: C) Plays tricks on the Pope and Friars

14. How does Marlowe show that Faustus wastes his magical powers?

- A) By making him fight wars
- B) By making him perform childish tricks
- C) By making him rule a kingdom
- D) By making him teach students

Answer: B) By making him perform childish tricks

15. Why is Robin similar to Faustus in Scene 8?

- A) Both want to become kings
- B) Both use magic for pleasure and selfish desires
- C) Both fear Mephistophilis
- D) Both want to study theology

Answer: B) Both use magic for pleasure and selfish desires

16. Why does Mephistophilis become angry with Robin and Ralph in Scene 9?

- A) They stole gold from Faustus
- B) They called him using magic without understanding it
- C) They insulted Lucifer
- D) They refused to obey him

Answer: B) They called him using magic without understanding it

17. What magical punishment does Faustus give the knight in Scene 10?

- A) He turns him into a dog
- B) He makes him invisible
- C) He makes horns grow on his head
- D) He sends him to hell

Answer: C) He makes horns grow on his head

18. Why does the horse-courser become angry with Faustus?

- A) Faustus steals his money
- B) The horse disappears in water
- C) Faustus insults him
- D) Mephistophilis attacks him

Answer: B) The horse disappears in water

19. What does Faustus realise in Scene 11?

- A) He has become immortal
- B) His magical powers are increasing
- C) Time is running out and death is near
- D) Lucifer will forgive him

Answer: C) Time is running out and death is near

20. What special food does the Duchess of Vanholt desire in Scene 12?

- A) Apples
- B) Grapes
- C) Oranges
- D) Cherries

Answer: B) Grapes

21. Who advises Faustus to repent and seek God's mercy in Scene 13?

- A) Wagner
- B) Robin
- C) The Old Man
- D) The Emperor

Answer: C) The Old Man

22. Why does Faustus renew his pact with Lucifer in Scene 13?

- A) To gain more money
- B) To become king
- C) To get Helen as his paramour
- D) To defeat Mephistophilis

Answer: C) To get Helen as his paramour

23. What lesson does the Chorus give at the end of the play?

- A) Magic should be used wisely
- B) Knowledge is more important than faith
- C) People should not go beyond lawful limits because of pride and ambition
- D) Kings are more powerful than God

Answer: C) People should not go beyond lawful limits because of pride and ambition

2.8.2 Questions for further study :

1. Is Faustus' damnation tragic or an act of justice? Discuss in detail.
2. Compare the master-servant relationship in the drama
3. What is the function of the Good Angel and the Evil Angel in the drama?
4. How are the comic interludes related to the main plot?

5. How does Faustus' use of his magical powers correlate with his earlier desires and plans?
6. Comment on the weaknesses found in the structure of the drama.
7. After the original contract with Lucifer, is there a possibility for Dr. Faustus to repent?

2.8.3 Glossary:

Elizabethan — Related to Queen Elizabeth I's period (1539-1603).

Chorus — Group commenting on play events.

Necromancy — Magic involving spirits or dead people.

Omnipotence — Unlimited power.

Theology — Study of religion and God.

Cosmology — Study of universe structure and origin.

Hierarchy — System of ranks or levels.

Incantation — Magical chant or spell.

Damnation — Eternal punishment in hell.

Nostalgic — Missing the past emotionally.

Sceptical — Doubtful or unconvinced.

Omens — Signs of future events.

Bewildered — Completely confused.

Loathsome — Extremely unpleasant or disgusting.

Blasphemed — Spoke disrespectfully about God.

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Module-III

Essays

3.0 Objectives:

- 1 To explore the social, political, and cultural life of the 18th century, including urban and rural society, manners, and moral values reflected in essays.
- 2 To study the polished, balanced, and elegant prose style that became a hallmark of 18th-century essay writing.
- 3 To understand how essays aimed to instruct readers in morality, virtue, and proper conduct in daily life.
- 4 To examine how essayists portrayed human behavior, weaknesses, and virtues with wit and realism.
- 5 To develop the ability to analyze arguments, ideas, and themes presented in essays.
- 6 To learn how essays were published in journals and periodicals and influenced public opinion and taste.
- 7 To study common themes such as idleness, vanity, pride, social manners, education, and the use of language, in the essays.
- 8 To identify the use of gentle satire, irony and humour as tools for criticism and reform.
- 9 To gain knowledge of key writers like Addison, Steele, Johnson, and Goldsmith and their contributions.

3.1 Introduction:

The 18th century is often regarded as the golden age for English essay writing. This period witnessed the rise of some of the most influential essayists who shaped the form, style, and purpose of prose literature. Writers such as Joseph Addison, Richard Steele, Samuel Johnson, and Oliver Goldsmith played a crucial role in popularizing the essay as a medium of social, moral, and literary expression.

The essays of this period were largely published in periodicals like *The Spectator*, *The Tatler*, and *The Rambler*, which aimed to educate and entertain the growing middle-class readership. These publications addressed everyday issues, manners, morality, and human behavior in a simple yet elegant style, making literature accessible to a wider audience.

The 18th-century essayists focused on clarity, balance, and reason, reflecting the spirit of the Enlightenment. Their writings often combined wit, satire, and moral instruction. Addison and Steele, for instance, are known for their polished and conversational tone, while Johnson's essays are more serious and reflective, dealing with deeper philosophical concerns. Goldsmith, on the other hand, brought a touch of humour and human sympathy to his essays.

Overall, the essay writers of the 18th century established the essay as a powerful literary form that could both instruct and delight readers. Their contribution not only enriched English literature but also laid the foundation for modern essay writing.

3.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

3.2.1 Sir Roger at the Church (from *The Spectators*)

Joseph Addison

Joseph Addison is one of the most celebrated essayists of the 18th century, best known for his refined style and moral purpose. Through his contributions to *The Spectator*, he aimed to reform society by promoting good taste, manners and rational thinking. His essays are marked by clarity, elegance and gentle humour, making complex ideas accessible to the common reader. Addison's work reflects the spirit of the Enlightenment, emphasizing reason, moderation and social harmony.

"Sir Roger at Church" is an essay written by Joseph Addison, first published in "The Spectator" in 1711. In this essay, Addison reflects on the character of Sir Roger de Coverley, a fictional country gentleman, and his behavior and attitudes during church services.

Joseph Addison, along with his friend Richard Steele, founded "The Spectator," a periodical publication that featured essays, social commentary, and satire. "Sir Roger at Church" is part of a series of essays that depict the life and adventures of Sir Roger de Coverley.

Analysis:**Sir Roger's Character:**

Sir Roger de Coverley is depicted as a benevolent, traditional English country gentleman. He embodies virtues such as kindness, generosity, and a deep sense of duty to his community. Despite his old-fashioned ways, Sir Roger is well-respected and admired by those around him.

Sir Roger's Religious Observance:

In the essay, Addison observes Sir Roger's devoutness and reverence towards religious practices. Sir Roger is described as a regular churchgoer who attends services every Sunday without fail. His attendance is not merely out of obligation but stems from a genuine piety and reverence for God.

Sir Roger's Behavior in Church:

Addison highlights Sir Roger's demeanour during church services, noting his earnestness and sincerity in prayer. Despite his occasional eccentricities, such as falling asleep during sermons or humming hymns out of tune, Sir Roger's faith remains steadfast.

Sir Roger's Interactions with Others:

During church services, Sir Roger demonstrates his compassion and concern for his fellow parishioners. He is depicted as a friendly and approachable figure, often engaging in small talk and exchanging pleasantries with those around him.

Sir Roger's Reflections on Religion:

Through Sir Roger, Addison explores themes of faith and spirituality. Despite living in a rapidly changing world, Sir Roger's faith provides him with a sense of stability and comfort. His simple, heartfelt approach to religion serves as a contrast to the more cynical and worldly attitudes prevalent in society.

Conclusion:

"Sir Roger at Church" offers a glimpse into the life and beliefs of Sir Roger de Coverley, a character beloved for his warmth, kindness, and unwavering faith. Through Addison's portrayal, readers are invited to reflect on the enduring values of piety, community, and tradition. Sir Roger serves as a reminder of the timeless virtues that continue to enrich our lives today.

Check your Progress 1

1. **“Sir Roger at the Church” is a part of which publication?**
 - A. *The Tatler*
 - B. *The Rambler*
 - C. *The Spectator*
 - D. *The Idler*
2. **Who is the central character in this essay?**
 - A. Sir Andrew Freeport
 - B. Sir Roger de Coverley
 - C. Will Honeycomb
 - D. Captain Sentry
3. **Sir Roger de Coverley is portrayed as a:**
 - A. strict and cruel landlord
 - B. kind and eccentric country gentleman
 - C. poor farmer
 - D. religious preacher
4. **How does Sir Roger behave in the church?**
 - A. He sleeps throughout the service
 - B. He disturbs the service intentionally
 - C. He takes great interest and ensures discipline
 - D. He refuses to attend church
5. **What is Sir Roger’s attitude toward the congregation?**
 - A. He ignores them
 - B. He treats them with kindness and care
 - C. He criticizes them harshly
 - D. He avoids interaction

6. **What role does Sir Roger play in maintaining order during the service?**
- A. He sings hymns loudly
 - B. He acts like a guardian, correcting people's behavior
 - C. He leaves early
 - D. He punishes people physically
7. **Sir Roger's character reflects.....**
- A. urban corruption
 - B. hypocrisy in religion
 - C. benevolence mixed with eccentricity
 - D. complete ignorance
8. **How does Sir Roger treat the church chaplain?**
- A. With disrespect
 - B. With indifference
 - C. With kindness and support
 - D. With jealousy
9. **What is the tone of the essay?**
- A. Tragic
 - B. Satirical and humorous
 - C. Angry
 - D. Melancholic
10. **What does Sir Roger do if someone misbehaves in church?**
- A. Ignores them
 - B. Publicly scolds or corrects them
 - C. Leaves the church
 - D. Complains later
11. **The essay mainly highlights.....**
- A. political issues
 - B. religious conflicts
 - C. social life and manners of the time
 - D. war and history
12. **Sir Roger's presence in the church symbolizes.....**
- A. authority and care in rural society
 - B. fear among villagers
 - C. religious superiority
 - D. weak leadership

13. Who narrates the essay?

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| A. Sir Roger himself | B. A third-person narrator |
| C. Mr. Spectator | D. The chaplain |

14. Sir Roger ensures that his servants

- | | |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| A. avoid church | B. attend church regularly |
| C. work during service | D. sleep during prayers |

15. What quality makes Sir Roger admirable?

- | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|
| A. Wealth only | B. Pride |
| C. Humanity and concern for others | D. Strict punishment |

Exercise: Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.

1. Discuss the character of Sir Roger de Coverley as presented in “*Sir Roger at the Church.*”
2. Describe Sir Roger’s role in the church service. How does he maintain discipline and order?
3. Analyze the theme of benevolence and social responsibility in the essay.
4. How does Addison use humor and satire in portraying Sir Roger’s behavior in church?
5. Examine the picture of 18th-century rural society reflected in the essay.
6. Evaluate Sir Roger as an ideal country gentleman.

3.3.1The Club (from *The Spectators*)

Sir Richard Steele

Introduction:

Richard Steele, a contemporary and collaborator of Addison, played a significant role in the development of the periodical essay. As the founder of *The Tatler* and co-creator of *The Spectator*, Steele’s essays are more personal, emotional and socially engaged. He focused on everyday life, human relationship and moral

values. His style is warm and conversational, often reflecting sympathy for human weaknesses and a desire to improve society through gentle guidance.

3.3.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

The essay, "Of The Club" written by Richard Steele, describes the characters analysis of the members of The Spectator Club.

Sir Roger de Coverley

The first member of the Spectator Club is Roger de Coverley. He is a baronet of ancient descent. He is a man of singular behavior but his oddities are the outcome of good sense, but he is not stubborn or bitter. This makes him loved by all the people whom he meets. He remains a bachelor because he had been rejected by a young widow whom he had sought to marry when he was young. He is fifty-six years old and in his youth, before being crossed in love, he had been a dashing and fashionable man. But he had since then become serious and rather negligent about his dress and goes about wearing a coat and doublet of old-fashioned cut. He is also a justice of the quorum.

The Templar

The gentleman next in importance in the club is also a bachelor. He is a lawyer who belongs to the Inner Temple. He is not really interested in the study of law. He had been made to join by his stubborn father. He was more interested in literature and the theatre. He is also an excellent critic of the stage and manners. He has engaged a lawyer to answer the legal queries sent by his father. A regular theatre goer, his opinions on plays and actors are highly valued by people.

Sir Andrew Freeport

Another member of the club is Sir Andrew who is a prominent merchant. He has accumulated a large fortune through his own efforts and hard work. He was well acquainted with all the aspects, of commerce and trade. He believes that empires can be expanded through hard work and industry and by increasing trade rather than through the use of sheer might and force. He feels that what helps an individual to become prosperous will help the nation too, to become prosperous. The same simple methods are advocated by him in the case, of the nation as a whole. He has a number of maxims on frugality. He has ships coming in from different parts of the world.

Captain Sentry

He is an intelligent, courageous, but a modest man. He has a small estate of his own and is also the heir of Sir Roger. He left the army because he felt that one was required to be a courtier as well as a soldier to rise in that profession. He had taken part in a number of sieges and battles. He found that one could win promotion only if one was ready to assert one's claims and win over the superior officers. He does not, however, blame the generals for his having left the military career. He is an honest man and is frank. He is not obsequious either.

Will Honeycomb

Will Honeycomb was quite advanced in age but contrived to look much younger. He has maintained his youthful appearance and spirit. He talks and knows a great deal about fashions and their history. He can narrate the love affairs of the old English lords and ladies in detail. He is a gallant man and is held by all to be a fine, well-bred gentleman.

The Clergyman

A Clergyman visits the club sometimes and Steele is doubtful whether to include him among the members of the club. He is a philosophic person, and learned. He has a weak constitution. He is quiet but his integrity has won him many followers. He does not speak on religious subjects at the club unless someone initiates the conversation. He has little interest in the world and its affairs. He just wants to overcome his worldly infirmities in order to make himself fit for the next world.

Analysis:

It is to be remembered that Steele was the one who created the Spectator as well as the Spectator Club. Here are the sketches of the members of the club. It was left to Addison to take up these threads and develop them, especially Sir Roger and Will Honeycomb, into the characters as we know them in the later essays. Both Steele and Addison took it upon themselves to portray contemporary society. Steele conceived a club with members drawn / from different stages of life and society, and profession. Each of them has own individual qualities and each one's thoughts and actions furnish inexhaustible matter for comment to the Spectator. The club is thus a miniature version of the society of the day, and yet, there is no representative of the 'lower' classes. This is not surprising as the club was meant to be one of intellectuals

and, as such, could not accommodate the petty shopkeeper and artisan. However, it is almost for the first time in that age that we see a sympathetic treatment being meted out to the country gentleman and the trader or merchant who had hitherto been treated in literature with contempt. Sir Roger is eccentric but not silly. Sir Andrew may be slightly boring but he is not dishonest.

The humour is similar to that of Addison—mild, quiet, subtle and sympathetic. It is to be noted that the characters who are the butts of the gentle irony, have a greater appeal to the reader than the characters who are spared any ironic remark as the clergyman, and Captain Sentry. The irony adds color to the characters. Steele seems critical of the culture that is represented by Will Honeycomb. He also seems to disapprove the modes of promotion in the army. Steele is obviously not as elegant and easily fluent in his style as is Addison. But it cannot be denied that Steele provided the basis for Addison to develop in the character sketches of Sir Roger and Will Honeycomb.

Check your Progress 2

1. Who was the founder of The Club?

- | | |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| A. Oliver Goldsmith | B. Joseph Addison |
| C. Samuel Johnson | D. Richard Steele |

2. In which year was The Club founded?

- | | |
|---------|---------|
| A. 1750 | B. 1764 |
| C. 1775 | D. 1780 |

3. Which famous actor was a member of The Club?

- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| A. David Garrick | B. Charles Dickens |
| C. John Dryden | D. Alexander Pope |

4. Which famous politician was associated with The Club?

- A. Winston Churchill
- B. Edmund Burke
- C. William Pitt
- D. Robert Walpole

4. How did social gatherings like *The Club* influence intellectual and literary movements in 18th-century England?
5. Evaluate *The Club* as a symbol of Enlightenment thinking and cultural exchange.

3. Samuel Johnson's (Essay no.31)

3.4.1 Introduction:

Samuel Johnson stands as a towering figure in English literature, known for his intellectual depth and moral seriousness. His essays, particularly in *The Rambler* and *The Idler*, deal with universal themes such as human nature, morality, and the struggles of life. Johnson's prose is formal, balanced, and often aphoristic, reflecting his strong sense of ethics and realism. His essays aim not only to instruct but also to provoke deep reflection in readers.

3.4.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

Samuel Johnson, often referred to as Dr. Johnson, was an English writer who made lasting contributions to English literature as a poet, playwright, essayist, moralist, literary critic, biographer, editor, and lexicographer. We know well that Joseph Addison and Richard Steele created with their *Tatler* and *Spectator* papers a vogue for the periodical essay and both of them lasted almost to the end of the eighteenth century. One of their greatest successors in this genre was, Samuel Johnson who wrote three series of articles for weekly newspapers, naming them for the personae he adopted in each. The *Rambler* essays were published between 1750 and 1752; the *Adventurer*, in 1753 and 1754; and the *Idler*, in the *Universal Chronicle*, in 1758 and 1759.

"On Idleness", is an essay by Samuel Johnson, taken from 'The Idler'. Here, Johnson says that idleness is a silent and peaceful quality that neither raises envy by ostentation, nor hatred by opposition; and therefore no body is busy to censure or detect it. As Pride sometimes is hid under humility, Idleness is often covered by turbulence and hurry.

In the essay, Johnson refers to the moralists who like to say that pride is the most widespread vice. But idleness, Johnson argues, is perhaps even more widespread, largely because it doesn't involve anybody else but its practitioner, so it flies under

the radar. There are of course people who are conspicuous consumers of idleness, sleep so long they never see the light of the sun, move only from bed to couch and back, and like to boast about it. Then there are those who seem to be very busy because they always make plans and preparations, but they never accomplish anything. There are also those who fill their days with various occupations to avoid what they are really meant to do. Johnson here uses the example of his fictitious friend Sober (himself in reality) who spends his life practicing carpentry, shoemaking, being a plumber etc. and especially chemical experiments, producing various useless substances; he “counts the drops as they come from his retort and forgets that, while a drop is falling, a moment flies away”. Johnson says he often teased Sober about it, and Sober promised reformation, but always failed. Johnson hopes he is going to become usefully diligent. This essay is written by such a thinker who really knew what idleness was, and as one being guilty of it himself.

In fine, we can conclude saying that Johnson talks about the many forms idleness can take. There are idlers who are proud to call themselves idle, and there are idlers who disguise their idleness with pointless bustling. There are those who occupy themselves by making plans that will never come about. Then there are those who prefer "to fill the day with petty business, to have always something in hand which may raise curiosity, but not solicitude, and keep the mind in a state of action, but not of labour." The exemplar of this type is Mr. Sober and Johnson himself as his journey of life reflects. Full of ideas but too lazy to carry them out, he distracts himself with conversation and hobbies and characterizes the self. From this point of view, it can be reiterated that there are autobiographical elements present in the essay "On Idleness". But, whatever be the thematic analysis, it is true that Johnson began to be recognized as having had a lasting effect on literary criticism, and even as the only great critic of English literature.

Check your Progress 3

1. What is the central theme of “On Idleness”?

- | | |
|-------------------------|------------------------|
| A) Importance of wealth | B) Dangers of laziness |
| C) Value of friendship | D) Power of education |

2. **According to the essay, idleness leads to:**
- A) Happiness
 - B) Success
 - C) Misery and vice
 - D) Wisdom
3. **How does the essayist describe idle people?**
- A) Productive
 - B) Intelligent
 - C) Useless and unhappy
 - D) Wealthy
4. **What is suggested as the best remedy for idleness?**
- A) Sleeping
 - B) Constant activity and work
 - C) Entertainment
 - D) Isolation
5. **Idleness is often called the mother of:**
- A) Knowledge
 - B) Wealth
 - C) All vices
 - D) Success
6. **According to the essay, idle people waste:**
- A) Money
 - B) Time
 - C) Food
 - D) Energy
7. **What effect does idleness have on the mind?**
- A) It sharpens it
 - B) It weakens and corrupts it
 - C) It improves creativity
 - D) It brings peace
8. **The tone of the essay is:**
- A) Humorous
 - B) Critical and moralizing
 - C) Romantic
 - D) Scientific

9. Idle people are compared to:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------|
| A) Busy bees | B) Machines |
| C) Burdens on society | D) Leaders |

10. What does the essay encourage readers to do?

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------|
| A) Avoid work | B) Seek pleasure |
| C) Use time wisely | D) Travel frequently |

11. Idleness can lead a person towards:

- A) Discipline
- B) Great achievements
- C) Bad habits
- D) Fame

12. The essay mainly belongs to which type of writing?

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------|
| A) Narrative | B) Descriptive |
| C) Moral essay | D) Scientific essay |

Exercise: Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.

1. Discuss the dangers of idleness as presented by Samuel Johnson.
2. Explain how idleness leads to moral and intellectual decline.
3. "Idleness is the root of many evils." Explain with reference to the essay.
4. Describe the characteristics of an idle person.
5. What steps can be taken to avoid idleness in daily life?
6. Examine the importance of time management in overcoming idleness.
7. How does the essay convey a moral lesson to the readers?
8. Critically analyze the tone and style of the essay "On Idleness."

4 On the Use of Language - Oliver Goldsmith

3.5.1 Introduction

Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) was an Anglo-Irish writer, poet, dramatist, and novelist of the 18th century. He is best known for works such as *The Vicar of Wakefield*, *She Stoops to Conquer*, and *The Deserted Village*. In his essays and literary criticism, Goldsmith expressed clear and thoughtful ideas about the **use of language**, especially in writing and communication.

His views on language are mainly found in his essays published in **The Citizen of the World** and other periodical writings. Goldsmith believed that language should be **simple, natural, clear, and meaningful**, rather than artificial and overly ornamental.

3.5.2 Presentation of the Subject matter:

Goldsmith's Views on the Use of Language

1 Simplicity and Clarity

Goldsmith strongly believed that language should be **clear and easy to understand**. According to him:

- The main purpose of language is to **communicate ideas effectively**.
- Complicated words and difficult expressions confuse readers.
- Simple language has more power than decorative language.

He criticized writers who used complex vocabulary just to show their knowledge. He believed that good writing is not about impressing others but about expressing ideas clearly.

“To be simple is to be great.”

Goldsmith's own writing style reflects this belief. His sentences are smooth, balanced, and easy to read.

2 Natural Expressions

Goldsmith preferred **natural language** over artificial style. In the 18th century, many writers used heavy ornamentation and grand expressions. Goldsmith opposed this trend.

He believed:

- Language should reflect natural speech.
- Writers should avoid exaggeration.
- True emotion is better expressed in plain words.

His poetry, such as *The Deserted Village*, shows emotional depth without complicated language.

3 Avoidance of Affectation

Goldsmith disliked affectation, which means pretending to be more knowledgeable or refined than one actually is. He thought that:

- Using foreign words unnecessarily makes writing unnatural.
- Overuse of fashionable phrases weakens meaning.
- Writers should remain honest and sincere.

He valued authenticity in communication.

4 Languages as a Social Tool

Goldsmith saw language as a means of social connection. It helps people:

- Share ideas
- Build relationships
- Spread knowledge
- Express emotions

In his essays, he often discussed how language influences society and culture. He believed that good language improves moral understanding and social harmony.

5 Balance between Elegance and Simplicity

Although Goldsmith supported simplicity, he did not reject beauty in language. He believed in:

- A balance between elegance and clarity
- Graceful but understandable expression
- Emotional depth without complexity

His prose style is polished but never difficult.

Example from His Work

In *The Citizen of the World*, Goldsmith uses simple language to present deep observations about English society. He writes in the voice of a Chinese traveler observing London life. The language is humorous, clear, and thoughtful — proving his belief in effective communication.

Importance of His Views Today

Goldsmith's ideas about language are still relevant in modern times:

- In education, simple language improves learning.
- In media, clarity ensures better understanding.
- In professional communication, direct language avoids confusion.
- In digital communication, short and clear messages are more effective.

Today, in the age of technology and social media, Goldsmith's emphasis on simplicity is even more important.

Conclusion

Oliver Goldsmith believed that language should be: Simple, Clear, Natural, Sincere, Balanced. He opposed artificial and complicated writing styles. For him, the true purpose of language was effective communication and emotional connection, not display of superiority. His thoughts remind us that great writing is not about difficult words, but about meaningful expression.

Check your Progress 4

1. What is the main theme of the essay “The Use of Language”?

- A) Importance of wealth
- B) Proper and simple use of language
- C) Political issues
- D) Education system

2. **According to Goldsmith, language should be:**
- A) Complex and difficult
 - B) Ornamental and artificial
 - C) Simple and clear
 - D) Lengthy and decorative
3. **Goldsmith criticizes writers who:**
- A) Write short essays
 - B) Use plain language
 - C) Use difficult and unnecessary words
 - D) Avoid grammar
4. **What does Goldsmith suggest about the purpose of language?**
- A) To confuse readers
 - B) To impress others
 - C) To communicate ideas clearly
 - D) To show knowledge
5. **According to the essay, overly decorative language leads to:**
- A) Better understanding
 - B) Confusion
 - C) Simplicity
 - D) Enjoyment
6. **Goldsmith believes that good writing should be:**
- A) Simple and natural
 - B) Complicated and formal
 - C) Long and detailed
 - D) Emotional only
7. **What kind of words does Goldsmith prefer?**
- A) Rare and difficult
 - B) Foreign words
 - C) Common and familiar
 - D) Technical words
8. **The tone of the essay is:**
- A) Humorous and satirical
 - B) Serious and scientific
 - C) Tragic
 - D) Romantic

9. According to Goldsmith, language should reflect:

- | | |
|-----------|-----------------------|
| A) Pride | B) Clarity of thought |
| C) Wealth | D) Authority |

10. Writers who misuse language are often trying to:

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| A) Educate readers | B) Simplify ideas |
| C) Show off their learning | D) Help society |

11. What does Goldsmith warn against in writing?

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|------------------|
| A) Short sentences | B) Simplicity |
| C) Affectation and artificial style | D) Grammar rules |

12. The essay teaches that language should be used for:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| A) Entertainment only | B) Decoration |
| C) Clear communication | D) Argument only |

Exercise: **Answer the following questions in about 250 words each.**

1. Discuss Goldsmith's views on the proper use of language.
2. "Simplicity is the essence of good writing." Explain with reference to the essay.
3. Critically analyze Goldsmith's criticism of artificial and ornamental language.
4. How does Goldsmith emphasize clarity and communication in writing?
5. Examine the tone and style of the essay "The Use of Language."
6. What moral lesson does Goldsmith convey through this essay?
7. Compare simple language and complex language as discussed in the essay.

3.6 Summary:

Eighteenth-century essays represent a significant phase in the development of English prose, marked by clarity, elegance, and moral purpose. Writers like Joseph Addison and Richard Steele popularized the periodical essay through publications such as *The Spectator*, aiming to educate and refine society with wit and reason. These essays often addressed social manners, morality, and everyday life in a style

that was accessible to the growing middle-class readership. Later essayists like Samuel Johnson and Oliver Goldsmith added depth by incorporating personal reflection, criticism, and philosophical insight. Overall, eighteenth-century essays combined entertainment with instruction, contributing greatly to the rise of journalism and shaping modern essay writing.

3.7 Glossary

1. **Periodical Essay** :A short prose piece published regularly in magazines or journals like *The Spectator*, focusing on social, moral, and cultural topics.
2. **Didacticism** :The quality of teaching or instructing. Most 18th-century essays aimed to educate readers morally and socially.
3. **Prose Style** :The clear, polished, and balanced writing style used by essayists such as Joseph Addison.
4. **Middle-Class Audience** :The emerging group of readers for whom essays were written, focusing on their values, manners, and daily life.
5. **Moral Instruction** :Guidance on ethical behavior, a key aim of writers like Samuel Johnson.
6. **Satire** :The use of humor, irony, or ridicule to criticize society and human weaknesses, often seen in essays by Oliver Goldsmith.
7. **Character Sketch** :A brief description of a person's traits, such as Sir Roger de Coverley in Addison and Steele's essays.
8. **Urbanity** :Refinement, politeness, and sophistication in tone and subject matter.
9. **Coffee-House Culture** :Public places where people gathered to read, discuss, and debate essays and current issues.
10. **The Spectator** :A famous periodical founded by Richard Steele and Addison, central to 18th-century essay writing.
11. **The Tatler** :An earlier periodical by Steele that helped establish the essay tradition.
12. **Familiar Essay** :A personal and informal type of essay dealing with everyday experiences in a conversational tone.

- 13. Neoclassicism** :A literary movement emphasizing order, reason, and clarity, influencing essay writing of the period.
- 14. Social Criticism** :Analysis and critique of societal norms, customs, and behaviors.
- 15. Aphorism** :A short, witty statement expressing a general truth, often used by Samuel Johnson.

3.8 Answers: Check Your Progress: 1

- 1: C. The Spectator
- 2: B. Sir Roger de Coverley
- 3: B. Kind and eccentric country gentleman
- 4: C. He takes great interest and ensures discipline
- 5: B. He treats them with kindness and care
- 6: B: He acts like a guardian, correcting people's behavior
- 7: C: Benevolence mixed with eccentricity
- 8: C: With kindness and support.
- 9: B: Satirical and humorous
- 10: B: Publicly scolds or corrects them
- 11: C: social life and manners of the time
- 12: A: Authority and care in rural society
- 13: C: Mr. Spectator
- 14: B: Attend church regularly
- 15: C: Humanity and concern for others

Check Your Progress: 2

- 1: C: Samuel Johnson
- 2: B: 1764
- 3: A: David Garrick

- 4: B: Edmund Burke
- 5: C: London taverns
- 6: C: Literary and intellectual discussion
- 7: B: Joshua Reynolds
- 8: A: James Boswell
- 9: C: Writers, artists and thinkers
- 10: C: Literature and culture

Check Your Progress: 3

- 1: B: dangers of laziness
- 2: C: Misery and vice
- 3: C: Useless and unhappy
- 4: B: constant activity and work
- 5: C: All vices
- 6: B: Time
- 7: B: It weakens and corrupts it
- 8: B: Critical and moralizing
- 9: C: Burdens on society
- 10: C: Use time wisely
- 11: C: Bad habits
- 12: C: Moral essay

Check Your Progress: 4

- 1: B: Proper and simple use of language
- 2: C: Simple and clear
- 3: C: Use difficult and unnecessary words
- 4: C: To communicate ideas clearly
- 5: B: Confusion

- 6: A: Simple and natural
- 7: C: Common and familiar
- 8: A: Humorous and satirical
- 9: B: Clarity of thought
- 10: C: Show off their learning
- 11: C: affectation and artificial style
- 12: C: Clear communication

3.9 References for further reading.

1. Works of Joseph Addison & Richard Steele
 - *The Tatler* (1709–1711)
 - *The Spectator* (1711–1712)
2. Works of Samuel Johnson
 - *The Citizen of the World* (1762)
 - *Essays* such as *On the Use of Language*
3. Anthologies & Edited Collections
 - *Eighteenth Century Essays* – edited by Austin Dobson
 - *Selections from The Tatler and The Spectator*
 - *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* (18th-century section)
4. Cambridge & Academic Sources
 - *Eighteenth-Century English* (Cambridge University Press)
 - Studies on *periodical* essays and language development
 - Books on 18th-century English literature
 - Studies of the “Age of Johnson”



Module-IV

POEMS

Objectives:

- To introduce to the students the literary form poetry from British literature.
- To help the students to comprehend the prescribed texts in the context of contemporary conditions.
- To help the students to appreciate critically the prescribed texts in relation to the background of the poets and age.

4.0 Introduction:

In this module you are going to learn about poetry, especially Metaphysical Poetry and Romantic Poetry. 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 tranquillity’. 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 called lyrical poetry. The objective poetry deals with the outside world. It gives a very little room to personal feeling and emotions.

Dear students, in Module-I, you have studied the concept and features of Metaphysical poetry. Metaphysical poems have some common characteristics like use of conceits, wit, with strange imagery, paradox, and complicated thoughts. Metaphysical poetry is also known as intellectual poetry. British poets like John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell and Henry Vaughan are well known metaphysical poets. The metaphysical poetry bears typical characteristics. They are: Delight in novel thoughts and expressions, obscurity, scholarship, religious and amorous themes, imagery and refined language. Metaphysical poetry is a fine fusion of thought and passion. Critics and scholars have defined this poetry as the poetry with thinking about life, love and death.

Romanticism emerged as a reaction against the industrial revolution and enlightenment rationalism, championing the human spirit and imagination. Romantic poetry in English literature was a literary movement emphasizing emotion, nature

and individualism over neoclassical logic. The poets like Wordsworth, Keats, and Shelley, redefined poetry as the “spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings”. Core Characteristics of Romantic Poetry are Nature as inspiration, Emphasis on emotion/imagination, Individualism and freedom, the sublime and supernatural.

4.1 Presentation of subject Matter :

1.1 Death Be Not Proud - John Donne

John Donne

Structure:

- 1.1.0 Objectives
- 1.1.1 Introduction
- 1.1.2 The text
- 1.1.3 Summary
- 1.1.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 1.1.5 Glossary and Notes
- 1.1.6 Check Your progress
- 1.1.7 key to Check Your Progress
- 1.1.8 Exercises
- 1.1.9 further Reading

4.1.0 Objectives

- To understand John Donne as a Metaphysical poet.
- To understand how the author explains that his love is so pure and ideal that fate itself prevents the lovers from being together.

4.1.1 Introduction :

John Donne is a prominent member of the Metaphysical school of poetry. He is renowned for his thoughtful writing, use of intricate metaphors, and examination of subjects like religion, death, and the soul. Donne’s poetry frequently relates intense emotion with profound philosophical ideas. “Death Be Not Proud,” is a part of his

"Holy Sonnets", is a powerful religious poem that challenges the fear of death. He personifies Death in this sonnet and makes the case that, because it is ultimately determined by fate, chance, and divine will, it is not as strong or terrifying as it seems. The poem, 'Death, Be Not Proud' expresses the idea that death is only a transitory stage that leads to eternal life and should not be dreaded by combining logical reasoning with spiritual faith.

4.1.2 The Text

Death, Be Not Proud - John Donne

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, nor yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.
Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?
One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death, thou shalt die.

4.1.3 Summary:

"Death, Be Not Proud" is a sonnet. Donne presents the power and terror that are naturally connected to death. The poet personifies Death and says that, Death is neither powerful nor terrifying. Rather, death is likened to sleep, which provides relaxation and a greater awakening—eternal life. Donne goes on to say that human

activities like suicide and war, as well as factors like fate and chance, affect death rather than it being independent. The poem ends with the potent statement that although the soul endures eternally, death itself will ultimately come to an end.

4.1.4 Analysis of the poem:

The poem, "Death, Be Not Proud", is a notable example of metaphysical poetry since it challenges conventional wisdom using logical argument, paradox, and striking imagery. By using an apostrophe to address Death directly and methodically eroding its authority, the poet adopts a confrontational and argumentative tone. The core paradox in the poem, "Death, thou shalt die," sums up Christianity's belief in immortality and ultimate victory over death. The structure of the sonnet develops as a logical argument, progressing from the rejection of death's authority to its total subjection. In order to make abstract theological concepts more understandable, John Donne occasionally uses conceits, most notably the analogy between death and sleep. Ultimately, the poem emphasizes faith, reason, and the eternal essence of the human soul while transforming death from a frightening conclusion into a helpless transition.

4.1.5 Glossary and Notes:

- **Mighty and dreadful** – Terms used ironically to challenge the supposed power of death.
- **Slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men** – Suggests that death is not independent but controlled by external forces.
- **Poppy or charms** – References to drugs or spells that induce sleep, comparing them to death.
- **Rest and sleep** – Metaphors for death, presenting it as temporary and peaceful.
- **Eternity** – The concept of everlasting life after death.
- **Soul's delivery** – The idea that death frees the soul from the body.

Notes:

This sonnet is a classic example of Metaphysical poetry, using logical argument, wit, and paradox to challenge conventional fear of death. Donne personifies Death and diminishes its power by presenting it as a temporary state rather than an end. The poem reflects strong Christian beliefs about immortality and eternal life.

4.1.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. How does Donne personify death in the poem?
2. Why does the poet argue that death is not powerful?
3. What is the significance of comparing death to sleep?
4. How does religion influence the poem's message?
5. What is the central paradox in the poem?

4.1.7 Key to Check Your Progress

1. Death is personified as a proud being that the poet directly addresses and challenges.
2. It is shown as powerless because it depends on fate, chance, and human actions.
3. Sleep suggests rest and peace, making death seem less frightening.
4. Christian belief in eternal life supports the idea that death is not the end.
5. The paradox is that death itself will "die," meaning it will lose its power.

4.1.8 Exercises

Q.1 Answer the following questions.

1. Analyze the use of paradox in the poem.
2. Discuss how Donne challenges the fear of death.
3. Explain the metaphysical elements present in the poem.
4. Comment on the role of religious belief in shaping the poem's message.
5. Write a short note on the poetic devices used in the sonnet.

4.1.9 Further Reading

- "The Flea" by John Donne – Demonstrates wit and metaphysical conceit.
- "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" by John Donne– Explores spiritual love.

4.2 "The Definition of Love" - Andrew Marvell

Structure:

- 1.2.0 Objectives
- 1.2.1 Introduction
- 1.2.2 The text
- 1.2.3 Summary
- 1.2.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 1.2.5 Glossary and Notes
- 1.2.6 Check Your progress
- 1.2.7 key to Check Your Progress
- 1.2.8 Exercises
- 1.2.9 further Reading

4.2.0 Objectives

- To understand Andrew Marvell as a Metaphysical poet.
- To understand how the author explains that his love is so pure and ideal that fate itself prevents the lovers from being together.

4.2.1 Introduction :

Andrew Marvell is a Metaphysical poet. He is well-known for his wit and intelligence as well as for his poetic exploration of complex concepts like fate, love, and time. Marvell's poems are fascinating because they frequently combine feelings with reason, and employ strong imagery and original ideas to convey his ideas. "The Definition of Love" is one of his best poems, in which he describes love as ideal yet unachievable. He describes a form of love that is so perfect and pure, yet fate gets in the way and keeps it from happening, using paradoxes and philosophical reasons. So, the poem is really about the tension between what we want and what's impossible, and it shows love as both amazing and sad. Marvell's poetry is like a puzzle, where he uses words and ideas to create a picture of love that's both beautiful and frustrating. By exploring the complexities of love, Marvell's poem raises questions

about the nature of desire and impossibility, and whether it's possible to find a love that's truly perfect.

4.2.2 The Text

The Definition of Love - Andrew Marvell

My love is of a birth as rare
As 'tis for object strange and high;
It was begotten by Despair
Upon Impossibility.

Magnanimous Despair alone
Could show me so divine a thing
Where feeble Hope could ne'er have flown,
But vainly flapp'd its tinsel wing.

And yet I quickly might arrive
Where my extended soul is fixt,
But Fate does iron wedges drive,
And always crowds itself betwixt.

For Fate with jealous eye does see
Two perfect loves, nor lets them close;
Their union would her ruin be,
And her tyrannic pow'r depose.

And therefore her decrees of steel
Us as the distant poles have plac'd,
(Though love's whole world on us doth wheel)
Not by themselves to be embrac'd;

Unless the giddy heaven fall,
And earth some new convulsion tear;
And, us to join, the world should all
Be cramp'd into a planisphere.

As lines, so loves oblique may well
Themselves in every angle greet;
But ours so truly parallel,
Though infinite, can never meet.

Therefore the love which us doth bind,
But Fate so enviously debars,
Is the conjunction of the mind,
And opposition of the stars.

4.2.3 Summary:

In the poem "The Definition of Love," the poet depicts a love that is ideal in emotion but unattainable in practice. According to the presenter, fate itself keeps the lovers from being together since his love is so ideal and pure. He claims that strong powers like fate and destiny generated their love, but those same forces also hold them apart.

Marvell illustrates how the lovers are destined to be divided forever with powerful imagery and analogies, such as parallel lines that can never meet. Despite their profound, unwavering, and spiritual love, their circumstances prevent them from being united.

In general, the poem depicts love as powerful, unadulterated, and timeless, but sadly unfulfilled due to destiny.

4.2.4 Analysis of the Poem:

The poem "The Definition of Love" examines the dilemma of a love that is ideal in emotion but unattainable in practice. According to Marvell, love is strong, spiritual, and predestined, but it is also governed by fate in a way that prevents the lovers from ever being together. The role of fate is one of the poem's main themes. The speaker feels that fate established their love, fate also serves as a barrier between the lovers. Marvell personifies fate as a strong force that forbids their union because it envies their love's perfection.

Metaphysical conceits, or complex and peculiar analogies, are also abundant throughout the poem. Marvell likens the lovers to parallel lines that might go on

forever but never come together. The idea that their love can endure forever despite their physical separation is emphasized by this mathematical illustration. One of the main characteristics of metaphysical poetry is this kind of abstract and intellectual imagery. The difference between spiritual and physical love is another significant theme. The love portrayed in the poem is founded on a strong emotional and spiritual bond rather than physical proximity. The couples' love grows even more ideal and pure because they are unable to meet.

Structurally, the poem is written in regular rhyming quatrains, which give it a logical and reflective tone. The controlled structure mirrors the poet's attempt to logically explain the nature of his impossible love.

Overall, Marvell presents love as something profound, intellectual, and tragic. The poem suggests that the most perfect love may sometimes remain unrealized because of forces beyond human control.

4.2.5 Glossary and Notes

- **Despair** – A complete loss of hope; in the poem, it paradoxically gives rise to perfect love.
- **Impossibility** – A central idea suggesting that true love cannot be fulfilled due to fate.
- **Magnanimous** – Generous or noble; used to elevate the nature of love.
- **Conjunction of the Mind** – Union at an intellectual or spiritual level rather than physical.
- **Fate** – A controlling force that prevents the lovers from uniting.
- **Oblique** – Indirect; used to describe how lovers may only meet at an angle, not directly.
- **Parallel Lines** – A metaphor for lovers who can never meet despite moving together infinitely.

Notes:

The poem is a classic example of Metaphysical poetry, employing wit, paradox, and geometric imagery to define love as something perfect yet unattainable. Marvell uses logic and philosophical reasoning to elevate love beyond physical union into an abstract, intellectual experience.

4.2.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. What type of love does Marvell describe in the poem?
2. How does fate influence the lovers' relationship?
3. What is the significance of the metaphor of parallel lines?
4. Why does the poet call his love "rare"?
5. How does the poem reflect characteristics of Metaphysical poetry?

4.2.7 Key to Check Your Progress

1. Marvell describes an ideal, pure, and intellectual love that is unattainable.
2. Fate acts as a barrier, preventing the lovers from ever uniting.
3. Parallel lines symbolize lovers who remain close yet never meet.
4. The love is "rare" because it is perfect but impossible to achieve.
5. The poem uses paradox, wit, and logical reasoning—key features of Metaphysical poetry.

4.2.8 Exercises

Q.1 Answer the following questions :

1. Explain how paradox is used in the poem to define love.
2. Analyze the role of fate as an obstacle in the poem.
3. Discuss the significance of geometric imagery in expressing abstract ideas.
4. Compare physical love and spiritual love as presented in the poem.
5. Write a short note on Marvell's use of wit and intellectualism.

4.2.9 Further Reading

- "Lycidas" by John Milton – For its exploration of loss and poetic expression.

- "The Flea" by John Milton – Another Metaphysical poem using wit and conceit.
- "To His Coy Mistress" by Andrew Marvell– A contrasting view of love and time.
- "Holy Sonnets" by John Donne – For deeper insight into Metaphysical poetry.

4.3 "The Pulley" - George Herbert

Structure:

- 1.3.0 Objectives
- 1.3.1 Introduction
- 1.3.2 The text
- 1.3.3 Summary
- 1.3.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 1.3.5 Glossary and Notes
- 1.3.6 Check Your progress
- 1.3.7 key to Check Your Progress
- 1.3.8 Exercises
- 1.3.9 further Reading

4.3.0 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.

4.3.1 Introduction

The Pulley by George Herbert is a short yet profound metaphysical poem that explores the relationship between God and human beings. He is a prominent Metaphysical poet, is known for combining spiritual themes with intellectual

reasoning, and this poem exemplifies that style through its use of wit, logic, and extended metaphor.

The poem presents a philosophical idea about why human beings experience restlessness and dissatisfaction in life. Using the central metaphor of a “pulley,” Herbert imagines God as a creator who bestows various blessings upon humanity but deliberately withholds complete rest. This act is not cruel but purposeful, as it ensures that humans remain spiritually inclined toward God rather than becoming fully absorbed in worldly pleasures.

Thus, *The Pulley* reflects key characteristics of Metaphysical poetry, such as conceit, paradox, and theological reflection, while conveying the idea that human unrest ultimately serves as a means of drawing the soul closer to the divine.

4.3.2 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 dispersèd 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.”

4.3.3 Summary

The poem *The Pulley* presents a philosophical reflection on the relationship between God and humanity. The poem imagines God creating man and pouring blessings upon him—such as strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, and pleasure—from a glass. However, God deliberately withholds one blessing: rest. He fears that if humans possess complete satisfaction, they may forget Him and rely solely on worldly pleasures. By denying rest, God ensures that humans remain spiritually restless and are ultimately drawn back to Him. Thus, restlessness becomes a divine tool—a “pulley”—that lifts humanity toward God.

4.3.4 Analysis of the Poem

The Pulley is a classic example of Metaphysical poetry, characterized by intellectual depth, wit, and extended metaphor (conceit). The central conceit of the “pulley” symbolizes a mechanism through which human dissatisfaction elevates the soul toward divine connection. Herbert employs a conversational tone and theological reasoning to justify why suffering or dissatisfaction exists in human life.

The withholding of “rest” is paradoxical: what appears as a limitation is actually a spiritual advantage. The poem explores the tension between material fulfilment and spiritual longing, suggesting that complete worldly satisfaction could distance humans from God. Herbert’s structured rhyme and logical progression mirror the rational argument he constructs. The poem conveys that human unrest is purposeful, guiding individuals toward higher spiritual insight rather than mere earthly contentment.

4.3.5 Glossary and Notes

Glossary:

- Repining restlessness – A state of dissatisfaction or unease that leads to reflection.
- Glass (in poem) – A symbolic container holding divine blessings.

- Pulley – A mechanical device; metaphor for the force that draws humans toward God.
- Rich and weary – Suggests material abundance but spiritual exhaustion.
- Rest – Symbolizes ultimate peace, withheld to maintain dependence on God.

Notes:

- The poem reflects Metaphysical concerns with religion, logic, and paradox.
- Uses an extended conceit (pulley) to explain divine intention.
- Demonstrates the belief that human suffering has a higher spiritual purpose.
- Combines theology with poetic reasoning, typical of Herbert’s style.

4.3.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. What blessings does God give to man in the poem?
2. Which blessing is deliberately withheld, and why?
3. What does the “pulley” symbolize?
4. How does the poem justify human restlessness?
5. What is the central theme of the poem?

4.3.7 Key to Check Your Progress

1. God gives blessings like strength, beauty, wisdom, honour, and pleasure.
2. Rest is withheld so that humans remain spiritually connected to God.
3. The pulley symbolizes the force that draws humans back to God through restlessness.
4. Restlessness ensures that humans do not become fully absorbed in worldly pleasures.
5. The central theme is that dissatisfaction leads to spiritual growth and divine connection.

4.3.8 Exercises

Q.1: Answer the following questions :

1. Explain the central conceit of the poem and its significance.
2. Discuss the theme of divine intention in human suffering.
3. Analyze Herbert's use of paradox in the poem.
4. Compare material satisfaction and spiritual fulfilment as presented in the poem.
5. Write a short note on features of Metaphysical poetry in *The Pulley*.

4.3.9 Further Reading

- *The Collar* by George Herbert – Explores inner conflict and faith.
- *The Flea* by John Donne – A metaphysical conceit-driven poem.
- *The Definition of Love* by Andrew Marvell – Philosophical exploration of love.
- *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* by John Keats – A Romantic contrast focusing on illusion and love.

4.4 "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey"

– William Wordsworth

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 Wordsworth as a Nature poet.
- Understand Wordsworth how structures the poem around the development of his own consciousness, moving from youthful, instinctive enjoyment of nature to a mature, reflective understanding.

4.4.1 Introduction

William Wordsworth was a master figure in the Romantic Movement. He was known for his strong connection to nature and his belief that it had a spiritual effect on people. His poetry is known for its emphasis on emotion, simplicity, and reflection. He worked with Samuel Taylor Coleridge on "Lyrical Ballads", which helped shape Romantic poetry. Wordsworth wrote "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" in 1798. It is a reflective poem in which he returns to a landscape he knows well after five years. The poem talks about memory, personal growth, and how nature can heal and give you spiritual strength. It shows how his understanding of nature has grown over time.

4.4.2 The Text:

Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey

William Wordsworth

Five years have past; five summers, with the length
Of five long winters! and again I hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-springs
With a soft inland murmur. Once again
Do I behold these steep and lofty cliffs,
That on a wild secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and connect
The landscape with the quiet of the sky.
The day is come when I again repose

Here, under this dark sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these orchard-tufts,
Which at this season, with their unripe fruits,

Are clad in one green hue, and lose themselves
'Mid groves and copses. Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows, little lines
Of sportive wood run wild: these pastoral farms,
Green to the very door; and wreaths of smoke
Sent up, in silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as might seem
Of vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods,
Or of some Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These beauteous forms,
Through a long absence, have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind man's eye:
But oft, in lonely rooms, and 'mid the din
Of towns and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations sweet,
Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart;
And passing even into my purer mind
With tranquil restoration: feelings too
Of unremembered pleasure: such, perhaps,
As have no slight or trivial influence
On that best portion of a good man's life,
His little, nameless, unremembered, acts

Of kindness and of love. Nor less, I trust,
To them I may have owed another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that blessed mood,
In which the burthen of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the weary weight
Of all this unintelligible world,
Is lightened: that serene and blessed mood,
In which the affections gently lead us on,
Until, the breath of this corporeal frame
And even the motion of our human blood
Almost suspended, we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by the power
Of harmony, and the deep power of joy,
We see into the life of things.

If this
Be but a vain belief, yet, oh! how oft—
In darkness and amid the many shapes
Of joyless daylight; when the fretful stir
Unprofitable, and the fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of my heart—
How oft, in spirit, have I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro' the woods,
How often has my spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished thought,
With many recognitions dim and faint,

And somewhat of a sad perplexity,
The picture of the mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing thoughts
That in this moment there is life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was when first
I came among these hills; when like a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by the sides
Of the deep rivers, and the lonely streams,
Wherever nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one
Who sought the thing he loved. For nature then
(The coarser pleasures of my boyish days
And their glad animal movements all gone by)
To me was all in all. I cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding cataract
Haunted me like a passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood,
Their colours and their forms, were then to me
An appetite; a feeling and a love,
That had no need of a remoter charm,
By thought supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye. That time is past,
And all its aching joys are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for this
Faint I, nor mourn nor murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would believe,

Abundant recompense. For I have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes
The still sad music of humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of ample power
To chasten and subdue. And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me with the joy
Of elevated thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply interfused,
Whose dwelling is the light of setting suns,
And the round ocean and the living air,
And the blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all thought,
And rolls through all things. Therefore, am I still
A lover of the meadows and the woods
And mountains; and of all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the mighty world
Of eye, and ear, both what they half create,
And what perceive; well pleased to recognise
In nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts, the nurse,
The guide, the guardian of my heart, and soul
Of all my moral being.

Nor perchance,
If I were not thus taught, should I the more
Suffer my genial spirits to decay:

For thou art with me here upon the banks
Of this fair river; thou my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy voice I catch
The language of my former heart, and read
My former pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a little while
May I behold in thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this prayer I make,
Knowing that Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her privilege,
Through all the years of this our life, to lead
From joy to joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so impress
With quietness and beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash judgments, nor the sneers of selfish men,
Nor greetings where no kindness is, nor all
The dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which we behold
Is full of blessings. Therefore let the moon
Shine on thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds be free
To blow against thee: and, in after years,
When these wild ecstasies shall be matured
Into a sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all lovely forms,
Thy memory be as a dwelling-place

For all sweet sounds and harmonies; oh! then,
If solitude, or fear, or pain, or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing thoughts
Of tender joy wilt thou remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor, perchance—
If I should be where I no more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes these gleams
Of past existence—wilt thou then forget
That on the banks of this delightful stream
We stood together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature, hither came
Unwearied in that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far deeper zeal
Of holier love. Nor wilt thou then forget,
That after many wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and lofty cliffs,
And this green pastoral landscape, were to me
More dear, both for themselves and for thy sake!

4.4.3 Summary:

William Wordsworth's poem "Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey" is about how he has changed since he last saw the River Wye five years ago. He remembers how the natural beauty used to make him happy as a child, but now it gives him deeper emotional and spiritual comfort, especially when he's stressed out and living in the city. The poet says that the memory of this landscape has stayed with him and changed the way he thinks and acts even when he was far away. In the poem he realizes that his view of nature has changed from one of physical pleasure to one of a deeper connection that feeds his mind and soul. He talks to his sister, Dorothy, and hopes that she will find peace and happiness in nature.

4.4.4 Analysis of the Poem:

The poem is a very deep and considerate look at how the relationship between the human mind and nature has changed over time. William Wordsworth organizes the poem around how his own consciousness changes over time. He goes from enjoying nature instinctively as a young person to understanding it in a deeper, more mature way as a source of moral and spiritual guidance. A central analytical focus is the function of memory, which enables past encounters with nature to confer emotional stability and “tranquil restoration” in its physical absence, underscoring the Romantic emphasis on inner experience. The poem also shows Wordsworth's pantheistic view of the world, in which he sees a unifying "motion and a spirit" running through all parts of the natural world. This suggests that human beings and the universe are closely connected. The way this poem is written, with its blank verse and conversational tone, makes it feel really reflective and personal. It's like the poet is just talking to you, but in a beautiful, elevated way. The fact that it doesn't have a rigid structure makes it feel more like a stream of thoughts, you know, like how our minds actually work. The poet addresses to Dorothy, his sister, which adds this whole other layer of emotion and meaning. She's like a symbol of the poet's past self, and the fact that we can all connect with nature on a deep level. This poem is actually a big deal in the world of Romantic poetry, because it marks a shift from just describing the outside world to exploring the inner workings of the human mind. It shows how nature can shape who we are and how we think, which is a pretty powerful idea.

4.4.5 Glossary and Notes

- **Recollection in tranquillity** – Wordsworth's idea that poetry arises from emotions remembered and reflected upon calmly.
- **Sublime** – A quality of greatness in nature that inspires awe and spiritual elevation.
- **Serene** – Calm and peaceful; used to describe the poet's matured state of mind.
- **Sensations sweet** – The soothing and comforting memories of nature.
- **Abundant recompense** – The emotional and spiritual rewards nature provides over time.

- **Still, sad music of humanity** – A phrase indicating the deeper awareness of human suffering gained with maturity.
- **Blessed mood** – A meditative state in which the poet feels connected to a higher spiritual presence.

Notes:

The poem reflects core Romantic ideals such as the healing power of nature, the importance of memory, and the growth of the human mind. William Wordsworth shows a shift from youthful enjoyment of nature to a deeper philosophical and spiritual understanding, where nature becomes a guide and moral teacher.

4.4.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. What changes does Wordsworth observe in his perception of nature over time?
2. What role does memory play in the poem?
3. What is meant by the phrase “still, sad music of humanity”?
4. How does nature influence the poet’s mind and emotions?
5. What is the significance of Dorothy in the poem?

4.4.7 Key to Check Your Progress

1. His perception evolves from physical enjoyment to spiritual and philosophical understanding.
2. Memory preserves the beauty of nature and provides comfort in difficult times.
3. It refers to a mature awareness of human suffering and reality.
4. Nature provides emotional healing, moral guidance, and inner peace.
5. Dorothy represents the poet’s past self and the continuity of his bond with nature.

4.4.8 Exercises

Q.1 Answer the following questions :

1. Discuss the theme of memory and its significance in the poem.
2. Analyze Wordsworth's concept of nature as a moral guide.
3. Explain the transition of the speaker in one poem from youthful joy to mature reflection.
4. Comment on the philosophical elements in the poem.
5. Write a short note on the relationship between the poet and Dorothy.

4.4.9 Further Reading

- "Ode: Intimations of Immortality" by William Wordsworth – Explores memory and childhood experience.
- "The Solitary Reaper" by William Wordsworth – Focuses on emotion and memory.
- "Kubla Khan" by S. T. Coleridge – A Romantic poem with imaginative elements.

4.5 "Ode to the West Wind" - P. B. Shelly

Structure:

- 4.5.0 Objectives
- 4.5.1 Introduction
- 4.5.2 The text
- 4.5.3 Summary
- 4.5.4 Analysis of the Poem
- 4.5.5 Glossary and Notes
- 4.5.6 Check Your progress
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4.5.9 further Reading

4.5.0 Objectives

- To understand Shelley as a Romantic poet and his revolutionary and idealistic vision.
- To understand how the poet portrays the West Wind as a powerful force of destruction and regeneration, symbolizing change, renewal, and poetic inspiration.

4.5.1 Introduction:

Percy B. Shelley, the most prominent writer, is renowned for his revolutionary beliefs, vivid imagination, and profound connection to the dynamic and transformational force. His poetry frequently expresses a longing for spiritual rejuvenation and societal reform. One of his most well-known lyrical poems, "Ode to the West Wind," was written in 1819 and tackles the West Wind as a potent symbol of both destruction and rebirth. In addition to describing the great power of nature, Shelley conveys his own desire for inspiration and transformation in this ode. The poem presents the wind as a motivating force that can stimulate both the poet's creativity and the world's transformation by fusing philosophical contemplation with natural imagery.

4.5.2 The Text : Ode to the West Wind -P. B. Shelly

I
O wild West Wind, thou breath of Autumn's being,
Thou, from whose unseen presence the leaves dead
Are driven, like ghosts from an enchanter fleeing,

Yellow, and black, and pale, and hectic red,
Pestilence-stricken multitudes: O thou,
Who chariotest to their dark wintry bed

The winged seeds, where they lie cold and low,
Each like a corpse within its grave, until
Thine azure sister of the Spring shall blow

Her clarion o'er the dreaming earth, and fill
(Driving sweet buds like flocks to feed in air)

With living hues and odours plain and hill:

Wild Spirit, which art moving everywhere;
Destroyer and preserver; hear, oh hear!

II

Thou on whose stream, mid the steep sky's commotion,
Loose clouds like earth's decaying leaves are shed,
Shook from the tangled boughs of Heaven and Ocean,

Angels of rain and lightning: there are spread
On the blue surface of thine aëry surge,
Like the bright hair uplifted from the head

Of some fierce Maenad, even from the dim verge
Of the horizon to the zenith's height,
The locks of the approaching storm. Thou dirge

Of the dying year, to which this closing night
Will be the dome of a vast sepulchre,
Vaulted with all thy congregated might

Of vapours, from whose solid atmosphere
Black rain, and fire, and hail will burst: oh hear!

III

Thou who didst waken from his summer dreams
The blue Mediterranean, where he lay,
Lull'd by the coil of his crystalline streams,

Beside a pumice isle in Baiae's bay,
And saw in sleep old palaces and towers
Quivering within the wave's intenser day,

All overgrown with azure moss and flowers

So sweet, the sense faints picturing them! Thou
For whose path the Atlantic's level powers

Cleave themselves into chasms, while far below
The sea-blooms and the oozy woods which wear
The sapless foliage of the ocean, know

Thy voice, and suddenly grow gray with fear,
And tremble and despoil themselves: oh hear!

IV

If I were a dead leaf thou mightest bear;
If I were a swift cloud to fly with thee;
A wave to pant beneath thy power, and share

The impulse of thy strength, only less free
Than thou, O uncontrollable! If even
I were as in my boyhood, and could be

The comrade of thy wanderings over Heaven,
As then, when to outstrip thy skiey speed
Scarce seem'd a vision; I would ne'er have striven

As thus with thee in prayer in my sore need.
Oh, lift me as a wave, a leaf, a cloud!
I fall upon the thorns of life! I bleed!

A heavy weight of hours has chain'd and bow'd
One too like thee: tameless, and swift, and proud.

V

Make me thy lyre, even as the forest is:
What if my leaves are falling like its own!
The tumult of thy mighty harmonies

Will take from both a deep, autumnal tone,

Sweet though in sadness. Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit! Be thou me, impetuous one!

Drive my dead thoughts over the universe
Like wither'd leaves to quicken a new birth!
And, by the incantation of this verse,

Scatter, as from an unextinguish'd hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind!
Be through my lips to unawaken'd earth

The trumpet of a prophecy! O Wind,
If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?

4.5.3 Summary:

In the poem "Ode to the West Wind," Percy Bysshe Shelley describes the West Wind as a strong natural force that can bring about both destruction and rebirth. Shelly explains how the wind, which represents the cycle of death and rebirth, scatters seeds, drives away dead leaves, agitates the oceans, and signals the arrival of spring. As the poem goes on, Shelley expresses a strong desire to be uplifted and inspired by the wind by identifying with it. In the end, he uses the wind to disseminate his thoughts and words throughout the globe in the hopes that they will spur social transformation and renewal in the same way that the wind revitalizes the natural world.

4.5.4 Analysis of Poem:

Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Ode to the West Wind" is a potent representation of Romantic ideals that blends strong feeling, creativity, and a close bond with the natural world. The West Wind is shown as both a destructive and a creative force, representing the two facets of nature that bring both rebirth and death. The poet transforms the wind into a powerful, nearly divine force that controls both natural and spiritual transformation via the use of vivid imagery and personification. The poem's terza rima rhyme scheme, which reflects the wind's ceaseless flow, gives it a sense of movement and continuity.

As the poem proceeds, Shelley switches from portraying the wind's exterior strength to expressing his inner need for inspiration and freedom from his own constraints. As the poet hopes his ideas will spread and awaken society, the wind becomes a metaphor for revolutionary transformation and creative creativity. "If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?" is the final sentence. This sentence reflects "Reinforces a message of hope and inevitable renewal, making the poem both a universal statement about transformation and optimism and a personal plea."

4.5.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. How does Shelley describe the dual role of the West Wind in the poem?
2. What natural elements are influenced by the West Wind?
3. How does the poet connect himself with the West Wind?
4. What is the significance of the line "Drive my dead thoughts over the universe"?
5. What message is conveyed in the final line of the poem?

4.5.7 Key to Check Your Progress

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

1. The West Wind is shown as both a destroyer (removing dead leaves) and a preserver (spreading seeds for new life).
2. It influences the land (leaves), sky (clouds), and sea (waves and vegetation).
3. Shelley identifies with the wind and wishes to gain its power and freedom.
4. It reflects his desire to spread his ideas widely to inspire change.
5. It conveys hope and renewal—after hardship comes new beginnings.

4.5.8 Exercises

Q.1 Answer the following questions :

1. Analyze the symbolic significance of the West Wind.
2. Discuss the theme of destruction and regeneration in the poem.

3. Explain how Shelley uses nature as a source of inspiration.
4. Comment on the use of imagery and personification in the poem.
5. Write a short note on the poem as an expression of Romantic ideals.

4.5.9 Further Reading

- "To a Skylark" by P. B. Shelley– Explores poetic inspiration and ideal beauty.
- "Tintern Abbey" by William Wordsworth – Focuses on nature and reflection.
- "Ode on a Grecian" Urn by John Keats – A Romantic meditation on art and beauty.

4.6 "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" - John Keats

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- 4.6.4 Analysis of the Poem
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- 4.6.8 Exercises
- 4.6.9 further Reading

4.6.0 Objectives

- To understand Keats as a Romantic poet and his use of medieval themes and supernatural elements.
- To understand how the poet portrays the theme of love as enchanting yet destructive, leading to illusion, suffering, and emotional desolation.

4.6.1 Introduction:

A well-known member of the Romantic Movement, John Keats is famous for his vivid imagery, nuanced emotions, and preoccupation with beauty, love, and death. Keats's poetry frequently reflects the intensity and fleeting nature of human emotions by fusing creative and supernatural elements with sensory experience. The ballad "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" portrays a melancholic story of love and loss while referencing medieval themes. In this poem, Keats tells the tale of a knight who, after falling in love with an enigmatic and captivating woman, is abandoned and left hopeless. The poem examines issues of illusion, unfulfilled love, and the destructive force of beauty through its lyrical language and symbolic imagery.

4.6.2 The Text

"La Belle Dame Sans Merci" - John Keats

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
Alone and palely loitering;
The sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

I see a lilly on thy brow,
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

I met a lady in the meads
Full beautiful, a faery's child;
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

I set her on my pacing steed,
And nothing else saw all day long;

For sideways would she lean, and sing
A faery's song.

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;
She looked at me as she did love,
And made sweet moan.

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild, and manna dew;
And sure in language strange she said,
I love thee true.

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she gazed and sighed deep,
And there I shut her wild sad eyes—
So kissed to sleep.

And there we slumbered on the moss,
And there I dreamed, ah woe betide,
The latest dream I ever dreamed
On the cold hill side.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried—"La belle Dame sans merci
Hath thee in thrall!"

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke, and found me here
On the cold hill side.

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering,
Though the sedge is withered from the lake,
And no birds sing.

4.6.3 Summary:

John Keats' ballad "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" narrates the tale of a weak and lonely knight who is discovered wandering through a barren countryside. He describes how he met a lovely, enigmatic woman who captivated him with her beauty and warmth. He falls madly in love and thinks she is committed to him when she takes him to her fairy-like home. But when he sleeps, he sees warriors and pale kings in his nightmares, alerting him to the fact that the woman has charmed and deserted him. When he awakens, he finds himself alone and deserted, left in a state of sorrow and helplessness. The poem ends with the knight still wandering aimlessly, symbolizing the lasting pain and illusion caused by his encounter with the enchanting yet merciless lady.

4.6.4 Analysis of Poem

John Keats' "La Belle Dame Sans Merci" is a potent ballad that explores love, illusion, and emotional destruction. The poem has a straightforward form and lyrical language, but its supernatural components and medieval location give it a profound symbolic meaning. The "beautiful lady" symbolizes a romanticized but perilous kind of love that is alluring, seductive, and ultimately destructive. Keats uses striking imagery to convey the knight's inner emptiness and misery, such as the pale and dead landscape. The dream sequence, in which the knight is warned by ghostly entities, emphasizes the repercussions of being seduced with unachievable beauty and underscores the idea of illusion. The sense of mystery and suffering is heightened by the abrupt conclusion and unsolved story. Overall, the poem illustrates Keats's Romantic obsession with the conflict between beauty and transience, implying that strong emotional experiences—particularly those involving love—can result in both ecstasy and disaster.

4.6.5 Glossary and Notes

- **Knight-at-arms** – A medieval warrior; symbolizes chivalry and vulnerability in love.
- **Haggard** – Worn out or exhausted; reflects the knight's physical and emotional state.
- **Faery's child** – Suggests the lady's supernatural and otherworldly nature.

- **Garland / Fragrant zone** – Symbols of love and enchantment.
- **Elfin grot** – A magical, fairy-like cave indicating illusion and fantasy.
- **Pale kings and princes** – Victims of the same enchantress, symbolizing doomed lovers.
- **Sojourn** – A temporary stay; reflects the brief and deceptive nature of the knight's happiness.

Notes:

The poem is written in the form of a ballad with a simple structure but deep symbolic meaning. It combines Romantic fascination with medievalism and the supernatural. The beautiful lady represents an idealized yet destructive form of love, and the poem explores themes of illusion, transience, and emotional suffering.

4.6.6 Check Your Progress

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

1. Who is the central character in the poem and what is his condition?
2. How is the lady described in the poem?
3. What happens in the Knight's dream?
4. What is the significance of the setting?
5. What theme does the poem primarily convey?

4.6.7 Key to check your progress :

1. The central character is a knight who is weak, lonely, and abandoned.
2. She is portrayed as beautiful, mysterious, and supernatural.
3. He dreams of pale kings and warriors warning him about the lady.
4. The barren setting reflects loneliness, desolation, and emotional emptiness.
5. The poem conveys the theme of love as enchanting but ultimately destructive.

4.6.8 Exercises

Q.1 Answer the following questions :

1. Analyze the role of the supernatural in the poem.

2. Discuss the theme of illusion versus reality.
3. Explain how imagery contributes to the mood of the poem.
4. Comment on the significance of the dream sequence.
5. Write a short note on Keats's use of the ballad form.

4.6.9 Further Reading

- "Ode to a Nightingale" by John Keats – Explores beauty and transience.
- "The Eve of St. Agnes" by John Keats – Combines romance and medieval elements.



Modul -I

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1.0 Objectives:

After studying this module, students will be able to:

1. Analyse various factors that shaped the development of British novel, modern poetry, psychological novel, and postmodern drama.
2. Identify the major phases of development within each literary form.

3. Evaluate the major contributions of key British writers through analysis of their representative works.
4. Examine the characteristics of each form.
5. Assess how each literary form reflected the philosophical and social concerns of its age.

1.1 Introduction:

The Victorian novel, modern poetry, the psychological novel, and postmodern drama represent four transformative movements in English literary history. Each responded to unique historical circumstances while pushing the boundaries of literary expression. The Victorian novel (1837-1901) rose through serial publication and expanding readership. It became the dominant genre, engaging with industrialization and social reform. Modern poetry (1890-1950) broke decisively with Victorian conventions through Imagism and fragmentation. It responded to World Wars and spiritual dislocation. The psychological novel shifted focus from external action to interior consciousness. It developed techniques like stream of consciousness to explore human mind. Postmodern drama, emerged after 1956, challenged theatrical conventions through meta-theatricality, non-linearity, and emotional engagement with contemporary anxieties. Together, all these movements and literary forms demonstrated literature's capacity to interrogate the complexities of human experience across time.

1.2 Rise and development of Victorian Novel:

1.2.1. Introduction to the Victorian Novel:

The Victorian era represents the most significant period in the history of the English novel. It witnessed transformation of novel form into the dominant literary genre and a powerful medium for social critique. When Queen Victoria ascended to the throne in 1837, the novel occupied a vague position in English literary culture. It was popular with readers but critics regarded it as a form of light entertainment. By the time of Queen Victoria's death in 1901, the novel had become the preeminent literary form. It addressed the most profound philosophical, social, and political questions of the age.

The Victorian era was also a period of unprecedented change. The industrialization reshaped the landscape and social fabric. The expansion of the British Empire brought the nation into contact with distant cultures. Scientific discoveries, particularly Darwin's theory of evolution, challenged long-held religious certainties. The political reforms gradually extended the franchise and reshaped class relations. The novel proved suitable form to deal with these transformations.

1.2.2. Reasons for the Rise of the Victorian Novel:

The rise of the novel during the Victorian period cannot be attributed to any single reason. It resulted from the convergence of multiple social, economic, and cultural factors operating within the years 1837-1901. The rise of the novel was not merely a literary phenomenon but a cultural revolution. It was driven by changes in publishing, education, and reading practices, and shaped by the novelists' engagement with burning issues of the society. The development of the Victorian novel revealed a genre constantly evolving to meet new challenges.

A) The Growth of the Reading Public:

Perhaps the most fundamental condition for the novel's rise was the growth of the reading public. The Industrial Revolution created a growing middle class with disposable income and leisure time. The spread of elementary education through initiatives like the Forster Education Act of 1870 increased literacy rates. By the end of the century, basic literacy had become nearly universal in England.

This newly expanded readership demanded accessible entertainment that can offer moral and intellectual improvement. The novel, with its focus on character and social relations, catered this demand. The emergence of circulating libraries such as Mudie's Select Library also ensured that novels reach to wider audience through subscription-based borrowing.

B) Economic and Technological Factors:

The industrialization of printing press transformed the economics of book production. Introduction of steam-powered presses, machine-made paper, and improved distribution networks made books cheaper and widely available than before. The elimination of the "taxes on knowledge," the progressive reduction of stamp duties on newspapers (1836, 1855) and paper duties (1861), further reduced cost of publication.

The system of serial publication, which was popularised by Charles Dickens, also made novels more affordable to readers. The three-volume novel, or “triple-decker,” remained the standard format for first editions throughout much of the Victorian period. It was priced deliberately beyond individual purchase to ensure library sales. A novel issued in monthly or weekly parts at one shilling per instalment was within reach of many who could not afford the conventional three-volume format priced at one and a half guineas. This system also benefited publishers. This form also shaped the very structure of Victorian fiction. It encouraged novelists to employ cliffhanger endings, maintain multiple plot lines, and develop large casts of characters.

C) Social and Cultural Factors:

The Victorian novel’s capacity to address the profound social questions of the age also made it popular. Industrialization had created new social problems. Issues like urban poverty, child labour, and class conflict demanded literary attention. The novel with its ability to represent the lives of ordinary people became a medium for what came to be called the “Condition of England” question. Victorian novels reflected social issues like industrial capitalism, the growth of large cities, political reform, secularization, new scientific paradigms, class struggle, and debates on the “Woman Question.” Moreover, it was also an age of religious doubt and scientific controversy. During this period, the novel assumed functions once reserved for scriptures and sermons. It exerted significant cultural power and intervened in political, scientific, and intellectual contexts of the day.

1.2.3 Phases of Development

The Victorian novel has evolved significantly over six decades. The scholars typically identify three main phases of development within the period. These are as follow:

A) Early Victorian Period (1837–1850):

The early phase was characterized by social realism, often infused with humour and sentiment. It was also a period of emergence of the “Condition of England” novel. The novelists of this period set the conventions that defined this genre for decades. It has multi-plot narratives, large casts of characters, an authoritative omniscient narrator, and the message that virtue would ultimately be rewarded. Yet even in this early phase, there was considerable variety.

The early Victorian period was dominated by Charles Dickens whose *Pickwick Papers* (1836–37) had taken the literary world by storm. The Bronte sisters pushed the novel in darker and more psychologically intense directions. This period also saw the rise of the industrial novel. Benjamin Disraeli's *Sybil* (1845), Elizabeth Gaskell's *Mary Barton* (1848), and Charles Kingsley's *Alton Locke* (1850) addressed the social divisions created by industrialization and the suffering of the working classes. These novels tried to bridge the gap between the rich and poor. They appealed to the conscience of the middle-class reader.

B) Mid-Victorian Period (1850–1870):

The mid-Victorian period is regarded as the golden age of the English novel. Novel in this period became more intellectually ambitious, engaging systematically with philosophy, science, and political theory. This was the era of the great masterpieces like *Bleak House* (1853), *Middlemarch* (1872), *Vanity Fair* (1848). George Eliot gave the novel a philosophical sophistication. The sensation novelists of the 1860s, Willkie Collins and Mary Elizabeth Braddon demonstrated the genre's capacity for suspense and psychological manipulation. Collins's *The Woman in White* (1860) and Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862) combined Gothic elements with contemporary settings and explored the dark secrets lurking beneath respectable Victorian surfaces.

The novel of this period also became more formally self-conscious. The novelists experimented with point of view, structure, and the relationship between fiction and reality. The omniscient narrator remained dominant but writers like Collins introduced multiple narrators and documentary formats.

C) Late Victorian Period (1870–1901):

The late Victorian period witnessed the fragmentation of the novelistic tradition. The realism of George Eliot gave way to the naturalism of Thomas Hardy and George Gissing. They portrayed human life as determined by environment and heredity with an uncompromising bleakness. This thing shocked many contemporary readers.

This period also saw the rise of aestheticism and the Gothic revival. Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* (1890) challenged Victorian moral conventions and championed art for art's sake. Bram Stoker's *Dracula* (1897) revived the Gothic

tradition for a new age. It explored late Victorian anxieties about sexuality, immigration, and the decline of empire.

The 1890s witnessed the emergence of the “New Woman” novel. Sarah Grand and George Gissing explored women’s aspirations for independence and fulfilment. Meanwhile, Arthur Conan Doyle’s *Sherlock Holmes* stories established detective fiction as a popular genre. H.G. Wells’s scientific romances pioneered science fiction.

By the end of the century, the confident moral certainties of the early Victorian novel were replaced by doubt, pessimism, and formal experimentation.

1.2.4 Major Novelists and Their Key Works:

A) Charles Dickens:

Charles Dickens is the era’s most popular and prolific novelist. His genius lies in blending of social critique, melodrama, and unforgettable comic characters. He exposed the brutal realities of poverty, the inadequacy of workhouses, and the cruelty of the legal system. His key works include *Oliver Twist* (1837–39), which attacked the Poor Law. *David Copperfield* (1849–50) is his most autobiographical novel. *Bleak House* (1852–53) is a devastating satire of the Court of Chancery and *Great Expectations* (1860–61) is a dark and psychological story.

B) William Makepeace Thackeray:

Dickens focused on the poor and the sentimental sections of the society, while **William Makepeace Thackeray** offered a more cynical and satirical view of society. He exposed the hypocrisy and ambition of the upper-middle and aristocratic classes. His masterpiece, *Vanity Fair: A Novel Without a Hero* (1847–48), presents the ruthless social climber Becky Sharp through the Napoleonic Wars. The novel presents a world driven by greed and self-interest, and devoid of traditional moral anchors.

C) Bronte sisters:

The Bronte sisters infused raw passion and psychological depth into the Victorian novel. **Emily Bronte’s** *Wuthering Heights* (1847) is an elemental work of violent love and revenge. It is set against the wild Yorkshire moors and defies conventional morality. **Charlotte Bronte’s** *Jane Eyre* (1847) is a powerful first-

person narrative of a plain, passionate governess who demands equality and respect. This novel deals with issues of gender, class, and religious hypocrisy.

D) George Eliot:

George Eliot is the pen name of Mary Ann Evans. She represented the intellectual summit of the Victorian novel. She rejected the sensationalism of her peers and presented philosophical realism and the moral consequences of ordinary life. Her key works are *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), and her masterpiece, *Middlemarch: A Study of Provincial Life* (1871–72). *Middlemarch* is considered as the greatest English novel for its deep psychological insight and intricate social tapestry.

E) Thomas Hardy:

Thomas Hardy's major works offered a tragic vision of rural life. His novels, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895), depict individuals crushed by fate, social convention, and a hostile universe. These novels ended the Victorian novel's optimistic streak and paved the way for the 20th century pessimism.

Collectively, these Victorian writers transformed the novel into a serious art form capable of exploring the full spectrum of human experience.

1.2.5 Summary:

Rise and development of Victorian Novel represents one of the most significant chapters in English literary history. In the space of six decades, the novel form culturally became the dominant literary genre. It became capable of addressing the most profound questions of human existence and reached mass audience. This transformation was made possible by multiple factors operating within the Victorian period itself. The rise and growth of this form was happened due to expansion of the reading public through improved education, the industrialization of book production, the system of serial publication and circulating libraries, and the novel's unique capacity to engage with the social, political, and intellectual aspects of the age. Thus, the Victorian novelists created a body of work that continued to shape our understanding of the nineteenth century and to influence the novel form to this day.

1.2.6 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. The Victorian era occurred between
 - A) 1800-1850
 - B) 1837-1901
 - C) 1815-1914
 - D) 1848-1900
2. made novels affordable to readers by issuing them in monthly or weekly parts at one shilling per instalment.
 - A) Circulating library system
 - B) Three-volume novel system
 - C) Serial publication
 - D) Subscription publishing
3. contributed to the growth of literacy during the Victorian period.
 - A) The Elementary Education Act
 - B) The Forster Education Act
 - C) The Butler Education Act
 - D) The Balfour Education Act
4. was credited with popularizing the system of serial publication through works like *The Pickwick Papers*.
 - A) William Makepeace Thackeray
 - B) Charles Dickens
 - C) Anthony Trollope
 - D) George Eliot

5. contributed to the growth of periodical publication during the Victorian period.

- A) The elimination of income tax
- B) The progressive reduction of stamp duties on newspapers and paper duties
- C) The reduction of import tariffs on books
- D) The elimination of sales tax on printed materials

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

1. What is the real name of George Eliot?
2. What was the standard format for first editions of novels throughout much of the Victorian period?
3. Which circulating library introduced subscription-based borrowing of novels?
4. What name is given to the late nineteenth-century novels that explored women's aspirations for independence and fulfilment?
5. Who established detective fiction as a popular genre in the late Victorian period?

1.2.7 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. B) 1837-1901
2. C) Serial publication
3. B) The Forster Education Act
4. B) Charles Dickens
5. B) The progressive reduction of stamp duties on newspapers and paper duties

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

1. Mary Ann Evans
2. Three-volume novel or triple-decker
3. Mudie's Select Library or Mudie's

4. New Woman novels
5. Arthur Conan Doyle

1.2.8 Exercises:

A) Answer following questions in detail:

- 1) Write a detailed note on reasons for the rise of novel in Victorian Period.
- 2) Discuss various phases of the development of Victorian novel.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) Economic and Technological Factors for rise of Victorian novel
- 2) Social and Cultural Factors for rise of Victorian novel
- 3) Mid-Victorian Period (1850–1870) novels

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1.3 Rise and development of poetry in The Modern Age

1.3.1. Introduction to Poetry in the Modern Age:

Rise and development of poetry in The Modern Age represents a fundamental break with the traditions of the nineteenth century. Poets of this age found themselves dissatisfied with the conventions of Victorian verse with its ornate diction, formal regularity and moral certainties. The Modernist poetry in English began with the appearance of the Imagists. They wrote in reaction to the perceived excesses of Victorian poetry. They wanted poetry to “make it new” as Ezra Pound stated in his famous slogan. They took inspiration from ancient and remote cultures including ancient Greek literature, Chinese and Japanese poetry, the troubadours, Dante, and the English Metaphysical poets. This period conventionally spans roughly from 1890 to 1950. The modern British poetry of this era transformed not only poetic technique but the very understanding of what poetry could be and do in the modern world.

1.3.2 Origin and Development:

The origins of British Poetry in the Modern Age can be found in the late nineteenth century with a range of precursors. Walt Whitman’s long, unrhymed lines introduced a type of free verse. Robert Browning subverted the unified poetic self through the dramatic monologue. Emily Dickinson achieved a remarkable compression of meaning. Gerard Manley Hopkins wrote in a radically experimental prosody about conservative ideals and demonstrated that sound could drive poetry in new directions. However, the most significant immediate influence was the French Symbolist movement of the late nineteenth century. Poets like Charles Baudelaire, Stephane Mallarme, and Arthur Rimbaud developed techniques that moved away from direct statement toward the musical evocation of states of mind. This emphasis on the musicality of language and the power of symbol proved deeply influential on the generation of poets who came to maturity around 1910.

The first coherent movement within British modernism was **Imagism**. Its origin can be found in two poems by T.E. Hulme published in 1909 by the Poets’ Club in London. Hulme was a student of mathematics and philosophy and he had established the club to discuss his theories of poetry. Along with French poet and critic, F.S. Flint, Hulme and other poets began meeting at the Eiffel Tower restaurant in Soho, London to discuss poetry reform. They wanted to reform contemporary poetry

through free verse, the brevity of the tanka and haiku, and the removal of all unnecessary verbiage. The American poet Ezra Pound was also introduced to this group and found that their ideas resembled his own. In 1911, Pound introduced two other poets, H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) and Richard Aldington. Both were students of early Greek lyric poetry. In October 1912, Pound submitted their work under the term, “Imagiste” to Poetry magazine, and the term first appeared in print. The March 1913 issue of Poetry contained Pound’s “A Few Don’ts by an Imagiste” and Flint’s “Imagisme,” which stated the group’s principles: direct treatment of the “thing,” whether subjective or objective; the use of absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation; and composition in the sequence of the musical phrase, not the metronome. Between 1914 and 1917, four anthologies of Imagist poetry were published, featuring Pound, Flint, H.D., Aldington, Amy Lowell, William Carlos Williams, James Joyce, Ford Madox Ford, D.H. Lawrence, and Marianne Moore.

The outbreak of World War I gave setback for the budding modernist movement. Paper shortages made publication difficult and public sentiment favoured war poets like Wilfred Owen who wrote more conventional verse. The war also undermined the optimism of the Imagists and created conditions for the darker and more complex poetry of High Modernism. This change was reflected in major poems written in the war’s aftermath. Pound’s “Homage to Sextus Propertius” (1919) uses loose translations of the Latin poet to ridicule war propaganda and the idea of empire. His “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley” (1921) represents his farewell to Imagism and lyric poetry generally. The most famous English-language modernist work arising from post-war disillusionment is T.S. Eliot’s *The Waste Land* (1922). Eliot. After heavy editing by Pound, *The Waste Land* was published and Eliot was seen as the voice of a generation. The poem turned as a foundational text of modernism. Broken, fragmented, and seemingly unrelated slices of imagery come together to form a disjunctive anti-narrative. The reader is thrown into confusion, unable to see anything but “a heap of broken images,” yet the narrator promises to show how to make meaning from dislocation and fragmentation which was an essential modernist ambition.

Later developments saw the continuation and transformation of modernist impulses. **The Objectivist poets** emerged in the 1930s as a loose-knit group of second-generation modernists. It included Louis Zukofsky, Lorine Niedecker, Charles

Reznikoff, George Oppen, Carl Rakosi, and the British poet, Basil Bunting. Objectivist poets treated the poem as an object and emphasised sincerity, intelligence, and the clarity of the poet's vision.

After World War II, modernism gradually gave way to new movements such as confessional poetry in the work of Robert Lowell and Sylvia Plath. However, modernist impulses persisted in the British Poetry Revival of the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was a loose collection of groupings that reacted against the conservative Movement and was influenced by Basil Bunting. Leading poets included J.H. Prynne, Eric Mottram, Tom Raworth, Denise Riley, and Lee Harwood.

1.3.3 Characteristics of Modern Poetry:

A) Break with Victorian Conventions:

The most fundamental characteristic of modern poetry is its deliberate break with Victorian conventions. Modernists rejected the ornate diction, moralising tone, and formal regularity. They wrote poetry that drew on common speech and embraced new rhythms. The Imagist insistence on using “absolutely no word that does not contribute to the presentation” represented a radical economy of means.

B) Experimentation with Form and Technique:

Modern poets experimented extensively with form. Free verse became the dominant mode, though it was never entirely free. Modernist poetry also employed techniques of fragmentation, collage, and juxtaposition derived from cubist painting. *The Waste Land* exemplifies this approach, assembling seemingly disconnected fragments into a unified whole through techniques of allusion and structural patterning.

C) Impersonality and Objectivity:

The questions of impersonality and objectivity were crucial to modernist poetry. Modernism developed out of a tradition of lyrical expression emphasising the personal imagination. But for the modernists, it was essential to move away from the merely personal towards an intellectual statement that poetry could make about the world. Even when they reverted to the personal, like Eliot in *Four Quartets* and Pound in *The Cantos*, they distilled the personal into a poetic texture that claimed universal human significance.

D) Allusion and Intertextuality:

Modern poetry is characterised by extensive allusion to earlier literature and to cultures remote in time and space. Pound's *Cantos* draws on classical literature, Renaissance Italian history, Confucian philosophy, and much else. Eliot's *The Waste Land* has borrowings from anthropology, Buddhism, classical literature, and Elizabethan drama. This allusive method reflects the modernist sense that contemporary culture could only be understood in relation to the entire tradition.

E) Urban Themes and Dislocation:

Modern poetry is predominantly urban in its settings and concerns. The city appears not as the locus of civilisation but as a place of alienation, fragmentation, and spiritual emptiness. Eliot's "unreal city" in *The Waste Land*, with its crowds flowing over London Bridge, captures this sense. The experience of geographical, cultural, and psychological dislocation becomes a central theme in modern poetry.

F) Myth and Anthropology:

Modern poets drew extensively on myth and anthropology. Eliot acknowledged his debt to Jessie Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* and Frazer's *The Golden Bough* in his notes to *The Waste Land*. Myth provided a structural principle and a way of ordering the chaos of contemporary experience. It allowed poets to suggest continuities between ancient ritual and modern life.

1.3.4. Major Contributors and Their Key Works:

A) W.B. Yeats (1865–1939):

Yeats occupies a central place in modern British poetry. His career moves from late Romanticism to high modernism. His early works include "The Wanderings of Oisín" (1889) and "The Lake Isle of Innisfree" (1890). He used Irish mythology and Romantic idealism. His love for Maud Gonne and Irish nationalism made his poetry tougher. His mature modernist style appeared in "The Wild Swans at Coole" (1919) and "Michael Robartes and the Dancer" (1921). "The Second Coming" is a defining post-war poem about things falling apart. *The Tower* (1928) includes poems, "Sailing to Byzantium" and "Among School Children." These poems explore art, age, and eternity. His late work, including "Lapis Lazuli" and "The Circus Animals" fuses public statement with personal meditation.

B) T.S. Eliot (1888–1965):

Eliot is American-born but becomes the most influential British modernist poet. His “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (1915) uses dramatic monologue and urban imagery to show modern alienation. *The Waste Land* (1922) is the most important modernist poem. It has five sections and uses fragments, allusions, and multiple languages. It ends with a Sanskrit phrase “Shantihshantihshantih.” *The Hollow Men* (1925) shows despairing “hollow men.” *Ash-Wednesday* (1930) marks his conversion to Anglicanism. *Four Quartets* (1943) explores time, eternity, language, and silence. Each quartet is named after a place.

C) Ezra Pound (1885–1972):

Pound was the great promoter of modernism. He helped to establish Imagism. He promoted Eliot, Joyce, and others. “Hugh Selwyn Mauberley” (1921) is his farewell to London and lyric poetry. He then spends fifty years on *The Cantos*. This epic tries to include history. This ambitious work was marred by his politics and anti-Semitism.

C) The War Poets:

WW-I poets experienced trench warfare directly. Their work has a disillusioned tone. Wilfred Owen was killed a week before the Armistice. His poem, “Dulce et Decorum Est” exposes the lie of patriotism. “Anthem for Doomed Youth” adapts the sonnet to mass death. He writes: “My subject is War, and the pity of War.” Siegfried Sassoon writes bitter satirical poems like “The General.” Isaac Rosenberg brings experimental sensibility in his poem, “Break of Day in the Trenches.”

D) Later Modernists: Auden and Others:

W.H. Auden dominated British poetry in the 1930s. He brought modernist techniques to politics. His early work uses Marxism and Freudian psychology. His “September 1, 1939” responds to political crisis. Later, his work becomes more philosophical and religious. “In Memory of W.B. Yeats” and “Musée des Beaux Arts” show his mature style. Dylan Thomas writes passionate, rhetorical verse. “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night” is his famous poem. Basil Bunting’s “Briggflatts” (1966) is a fine modernist long poem.

E) Women Poets of the Modernist Period:

Women poets also made a crucial contribution to modernism. H.D. (Hilda Doolittle) was central to Imagism. “Oread” exemplifies Imagist principles. Her later work developed a feminist modernism. Marianne Moore developed a unique style with precise observation and syllabic verse. Her poems include “Poetry” and “The Fish.” Edith Sitwell brought modernist experimentation to Britain. Her “Façade” (1922) explored the musical possibilities of language.

1.3.5 Summary:

Rise and development of poetry in The Modern Age represents one of the most extraordinary chapters in English literary history. Within period of three decades, from the first Imagist manifestos to the publication of *Four Quartets*, poetry was transformed more radically than at any time since the Romantic revolution of the 1790s. This transformation was driven by multiple factors: the exhaustion of Victorian conventions, the influence of French Symbolism and other European movements, the catastrophe of the First World War, and the emergence of new technologies and media that changed the very texture of modern life. The modern poets responded to these conditions with inventiveness, developing new techniques like fragmentation, collage, free verse, mythic structure, that enabled poetry to engage with the complexities of contemporary experience.

1.3.6 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. The The Modern Age in British poetry roughly spanned between
A) 1850-1914
B) 1890-1950
C) 1901-1945
D) 1914-1960
2. Modern poetry is predominantly in its settings and concerns.
A) urban
B) rural
C) pastoral
D) pictorial
3. is considered the “first wave” of modernism in English poetry.
A) Symbolism
B) Imagism
C) Objectivism
D) Surrealism

4. H.D. stands for
A) W.B. Yeats
B) Hilda Doolittle
C) T.E. Hulme
D) F.S. Flint
5. The Objectivist poets emerged in decade as a loose-knit group of second-generation modernists.
A) 1910s
B) 1920s
C) 1930s
D) 1940s

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

1. Who has done the heavy editing of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* before its publication?
2. Where did T.E. Hulme and F.S. Flint meet with other poets to discuss reform of contemporary poetry?
3. Which poetry magazine published Pound's "A Few Don'ts by an Imagiste" and Flint's "Imagisme" in March 1913?
4. Which term describes the poetic technique derived from cubist painting?
5. Who coined the famous modernist slogan "make it new"?

1.3.7 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. B) 1890-1950
2. A) urban
3. B) Imagism
4. B) Hilda Doolittle
5. C) 1930s

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

1. Ezra Pound
2. Eiffel Tower restaurant (or Eiffel Tower) at Soho
3. Poetry (or Poetry magazine)

4. Collage (or juxtaposition)
5. Ezra Pound

1.3.8 Exercises:

A) Answer following questions in detail:

- 1) Write a detailed note on characteristics of Modern Poetry.
- 2) Trace the origin and development of Modern Poetry.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) Imagism movement
- 2) The Objectivist poets
- 3) The War Poets
- 4) Women Poets of the Modernist Period

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1.4 The Psychological Novel :

1.4.1. Introduction to the Psychological Novel:

The psychological novel is a distinct form of narrative fiction. It represents a fundamental shift from the external world of action to the internal landscape of thought, feeling, and motivation. The thoughts, feelings, and motivations of characters are of equal or greater importance than the external action of the narrative.

This emphasis on interiority developed gradually over centuries. It reached its full potential in the twentieth century, alongside the growth of psychology as a scientific discipline. However, the psychological novel was not a direct result of Freudian psychology. The writers penetrated into human consciousness through independent artistic exploration. The stream-of-consciousness technique of James Joyce and the continuous flow of experience in Virginia Woolf were each developed independently. Together they contributed to the most remarkable literary movements in modern history.

1.4.2 Meaning and Development of the Psychological Novel:

A) Meaning of the Psychological Novel:

The psychological novel is also referred to as psychological realism. It is a narrative genre that emphasizes interior characterization and motivation to explore the spiritual, emotional, and mental lives of characters. The mode of narration examines the reasons for the behaviours of the character. It propels the plot and explains the story. Psychological realism is achieved through deep explorations of the mental states of the character's inner person, through narrative modes such as stream of consciousness and flashbacks. In the psychological novel, plot is subordinate and dependent upon depiction of characters. Events may not be presented in chronological order. They occur in the character's thought associations, memories, fantasies, reveries, contemplations, and dreams etc. This departure from linear narrative structure reflects an understanding of consciousness as fluid, associative, and non-sequential.

B) Development of the Psychological Novel:

Early Origins and Precursors:

The psychological novel has a rich past extending back centuries before its full flowering in the modern period. Early examples can be found in the fiction of Madame de Lafayette and Samuel Richardson. Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) is told from the heroine's point of view. It represents an important early experiment in first-person narration. Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759–67) goes further. It offers an introspective first-person narrative that anticipates many modernist techniques, including deliberate digressions and exploration of associative thought processes. *The Tale of Genji*, written by Lady Murasaki in eleventh-century Japan, has been also considered as the first full-length psychological novel.

The eighteenth-century sentimental novel provided another important foundation. Sentimental literature emphasized feeling and emotion. It treated the expression of sentiment as a literary virtue in itself. Sterne's work focused on complex inner activities and feelings. It incorporated disorganized chronology and illogical associations that gave literature new content: the representation of complex impressions and emotions. Richardson integrated social environment with psychological analysis, while Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise* (1761) and Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) further developed the exploration of emotional and psychological experience.

Nineteenth-Century Foundations:

The nineteenth century witnessed the emergence of the psychological novel as a recognizably modern form. Stendhal is often credited as the founder of the psychological novel. His masterpiece *The Red and the Black* (1830) demonstrates profound engagement with psychological analysis. It examines both social conditions and the intricacies of love. His representation of inner tension already possessed characteristics of modern consciousness, earning him the designation "the father of the modern novel."

Other major contributors include Jane Austen, whose *Emma* (1816) achieves extraordinary psychological subtlety through free indirect discourse; Gustave Flaubert, whose *Madame Bovary* (1857) represents a landmark in psychological analysis of romantic delusion; and George Eliot, whose *Middlemarch* (1872) explores the interplay between individual consciousness and social forces.

The most important figure of the nineteenth-century psychological novel, however, is Fyodor Dostoyevsky. He achieved the most profound and influential psychological penetration. He explored pathological states of mind leading to insanity, murder, and suicide, and examined emotions of humiliation, self-destruction, and murderous rage. His works are often called prophetic for their anticipation of later psychological theories and their exploration of ideas central to existentialism and psychoanalysis.

Twentieth-Century Flowering:

The twentieth century saw the psychological novel reach its fullest development through the modernist movement. The stream-of-consciousness technique, pioneered by Dorothy Richardson, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf, represented a radical

extension of psychological fiction's ambitions. This approach represented the continuous, flowing, and associative nature of thought.

The theoretical foundations of the Psychological novel included Henri Bergson's philosophy of duration. It emphasized the qualitative nature of time as experienced by consciousness. William James's concept of "stream of consciousness"; and Freudian psychoanalysis, explored the unconscious and repression. Henry James played a crucial transitional role by creating the modern psychological novel through his technique of limiting narration to the consciousness of a central character.

1.4.3 Characteristics of the Psychological Novel:

A) Interiority and Subjectivity:

The most fundamental characteristic of the psychological novel is its focus on interiority. External events are significant primarily for their impact on characters' inner lives. In Dostoyevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, the murder occurs early in the novel and the novel's true subject is Raskolnikov's psychological response to his crime.

B) Narrative Techniques:

Psychological novelists developed a range of techniques to represent inner experience:

i) Stream of Consciousness:

This technique represent the continuous flow of thought, including illogical associations and mixture of perception, memory, and reflection. Virginia Woolf's novel, *Mrs. Dalloway* exemplifies this approach.

ii) Interior Monologue:

It is related to stream of consciousness but it is more structured form. It presents a character's thoughts directly. James Joyce's *Ulysses* contains famous examples, which includes Molly Bloom's unpunctuated soliloquy.

iii) Free Indirect Discourse:

This technique is perfected by Flaubert. It merges the narrator's voice with that of the character. It allows narration to slip between external description and internal representation.

iv) Flashbacks and Temporal Disruption:

Psychological novels abandon chronological order in favour of memory and association. It reflects an understanding of psychological time as fundamentally different from clock time.

C) Plot Subordination:

In a psychological novel, plot is subordinate to character. Events are important not in themselves but for what they reveal about characters' inner lives. Psychological novelists typically construct relatively simple plots. They build their extended works primarily through psychological description.

D) Exploration of Unconscious Motivation:

Anticipating psychoanalytic insights, the psychological novel explores motivations beneath conscious awareness. Dostoyevsky was specialized in analysing pathological states and explored emotions of humiliation, self-destruction, and murderous rage that characters themselves do not fully understand.

1.4.4 Major Contributors and Their Key Works:

A) Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–1881)

Dostoyevsky is widely regarded as one of the greatest psychologists in literary history. His *Notes from Underground* (1864) presents a self-contradictory narrator anticipating existentialist themes. It explores irrationality and the psychology of resentment. *Crime and Punishment* (1866) focuses not on the murder itself but on Raskolnikov's inner struggle, his rationalizations, guilt, and gradual breakdown. *The Idiot* (1869) explores the psychology of epilepsy and the impossibility of pure goodness in a corrupt world. His final masterpiece, *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880), interweaves philosophical and psychological themes. Each brother represents different psychological type and response to existence.

B) Henry James (1843–1916)

Henry James created what many consider the modern psychological novel. He developed techniques for representing consciousness that profoundly influenced subsequent writers. His novel, *The Portrait of a Lady* (1881) follows Isabel Archer's gradual recognition of truth about those she trusted. This novel used narration limited to the central character's consciousness. *The Turn of the Screw* (1898) brilliantly

experiments with psychological ambiguity. It leaves unresolved whether ghosts are real or projections of the governess's neurotic imagination. *The Ambassadors* (1903) traces Lambert Strether's gradual psychological awakening.

C) James Joyce (1882–1941)

Joyce revolutionized the psychological novel through stream-of-consciousness and unprecedented representation of mental experience. He employed remarkable techniques including stream of consciousness to demonstrate how the mind responds to urban stimuli and how the most ordinary day contains the full range of human experience. His novel, *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916) traces Stephen Dedalus's psychological development from infancy, using language that evolves as his mind matures. *Ulysses* (1922) is one of the most ambitious psychological novels ever written. *Finnegans Wake* (1939) presents a dream-like narrative operating according to unconscious logic.

D) Virginia Woolf (1882–1941):

Virginia Woolf brought a lyrical sensibility and feminist consciousness to the psychological novel. Her *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925) follows Clarissa Dalloway through a single day. It weaves together consciousness of multiple characters to explore time, societal expectations, and the psychological scars of war. Her revolutionary stream-of-consciousness technique offers intimate portraits of inner lives. *To the Lighthouse* (1927) examines psychological dynamics within the Ramsay family over a decade and explores the relationship between consciousness and the external world. *The Waves* (1931) presents monologues of six characters from childhood to old age. These monologues suggest identity as fluid and relational with voices that merge and separate like waves.

E) Other Major Contributors

Marcel Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* (1913–27) explores involuntary memory and the relationship between time, consciousness, and identity. William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929) adapts stream-of-consciousness to the American South. It explores psychological effects of history and family. Franz Kafka's works externalize subjective states, creating worlds governed by dream logic. D.H. Lawrence explored psychological dimensions of sexuality. Edith Wharton examined psychological effects of social convention. Knut

Hamsun's *Hunger* (1890) anticipated modernist developments in its exploration of irrational mental states.

1.4.5 Summary:

The rise and development of the psychological novel represents one of the most significant transformations in narrative fiction. From origins in eighteenth-century sentimental literature through nineteenth-century realism to twentieth-century modernism, the psychological novel has fundamentally changed our understanding of what fiction can do and what it means to be human. This transformation was driven by multiple factors like the growing sophistication of psychological thought; the development of narrative techniques capable of representing inner experience; and the conviction that deepest truths might be found not in external action but in the recesses of consciousness.

Dostoyevsky showed that psychological extremity could achieve tragic intensity. James demonstrated that subtlest perceptions could sustain extended narrative. Joyce and Woolf proved that ordinary thought could become material for epic and lyric art. This legacy extends far beyond these works. It shaped subsequent fiction from the existentialist novel to contemporary psychological fiction. It has influenced our understanding of consciousness, providing models for thinking about identity and motivation that complement scientific psychology and it continues to offer readers self-understanding.

1.4.6 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. In a psychological novel, is of equal or greater interest than the external action of the narrative.
 - A) Historical accuracy
 - B) Thoughts, feelings, and motivations of characters
 - C) Social commentary
 - D) Descriptive detail of settings

2. Eleventh-century Japanese work, has been considered as the first full-length psychological novel.

A) The Pillow Book	B) The Tale of Genji
C) The Tale of the Heike	D) Essays in Idleness
3. is often credited as the founder of the psychological novel.

A) Gustave Flaubert	B) Honoré de Balzac
C) Stendhal	D) Victor Hugo
4.revolutionized the psychological novel through stream-of-consciousness technique.

A) Samuel Beckett	B) W.B. Yeats
C) James Joyce	D) Oscar Wilde
5. technique attempts to represent the continuous flow of thought.

A) Stream of Consciousness	B) Interior Monologue
C) Free Indirect Discourse	D) Flashbacks and Temporal Disruption

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- 1) Who brought a lyrical sensibility and feminist consciousness to the psychological novel?
- 2) Who was the most important figure of the nineteenth-century psychological novel?
- 3) Which literary movement of the twentieth century saw the psychological novel's reach to its fullest development?
- 4) What is the most fundamental characteristic of the psychological novel?
- 5) What is an Interior Monologue?

1.4.7 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

1. B) Thoughts, feelings, and motivations of characters
2. B) The Tale of Genji
3. C) Stendhal
4. C) James Joyce
5. A) Stream of Consciousness

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- 1) Virginia Woolf
- 2) Fyodor Dostoyevsky.
- 3) The modernist movement.
- 4) Its focus on interiority.
- 5) Interior Monologue is stream of consciousness structured form that presents a character's thoughts directly.

1.4.8 Exercises:

A) Answer following questions in detail:

- 1) Write a detailed note on meaning and development of the Psychological Novel
- 2) Give the characteristics of the Psychological Novel.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) Meaning of the Psychological Novel
- 2) Narrative Techniques of the Psychological Novel
- 3) Contribution of James Joyce to Psychological Novel

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1.5 Development of Drama in the Post- Modern period

1.5.1 Introduction to Drama in the Postmodern Period:

The British postmodern drama has developed through successive waves of innovation. It responded to changing social conditions while maintaining a consistent commitment to theatrical form and content. It defied easy periodization and emerged from the cultural ferment of the post-war years. The year 1956 stands as a symbolic watershed. In this year, John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* was premiered at the Royal Court Theatre. Critic Kenneth Tynan called it as "a breach in the culture through which the voice of a new generation could be heard." This moment coincided with profound political upheavals. It shook confidence in established ideologies and created conditions favourable to the questioning of all certainties.

Postmodern drama distinguishes itself through what philosopher Jean-François Lyotard described as "incredulity towards metanarratives" in his 1979 work, *The Postmodern Condition*. The modernist theatre sought new ways to represent truth. It interrogated the very possibility of stable meaning and coherent identity. The postmodernism manifested in theatre through formal innovations.

1.5.2 Background and Development:

A) The Angry Young Men and the New Wave:

The post-war British theatre was dominated by well-made plays and drawing-room comedies. The premiere of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* on May 8, 1956, at the Royal Court Theatre in London brought a watershed moment in British theatre. It brought working-class life and rebellion to the stage. Its protagonist,

Jimmy Porter, embodied a new kind of theatrical voice. He was presented as angry, articulate, and alienated from the established order. This “kitchen sink realism” opened the way for other working-class voices. Shelagh Delaney’s *A Taste of Honey* (1958), another play, brought female and regional perspectives to the stage.

B) The End of Censorship and the Fringe Theatre:

A crucial turning point arrived in 1968 with the abolition of theatre censorship by the Lord Chamberlain. Until 1968, the representation of violent and sexually improper scenes was censored. When this law was abolished, young playwrights got more freedom for their original intentions and they could show previous taboos. This legislative change helped for experimentation and frankness that defined subsequent decades.

The late 1960s also witnessed the emergence of fringe theatre. It was an alternative to mainstream commercial venues. Performances took place on small stages in suburbs and basements. It created an intimate relationship with audiences and fostered openness for experimental elements and themes. This movement proved particularly important for women playwrights. Before the fringe, the male playwrights were dominating the English drama but afterwards, dramatists like Caryl Churchill experimented with gender roles and other difficult subjects.

C) In-Yer-Face Theatre and Contemporary Developments:

The 1990s witnessed another wave of innovation with the emergence of “in-ye-face theatre.” It was a term coined by British critic Aleks Sierz which was the title of a book he published in 2001. He used it to describe the provocative, visceral drama associated with playwrights like Sarah Kane and Mark Ravenhill. These writers depicted violence, sexuality, and trauma.

The twenty-first century British drama also continued to evolve by engaging with new technologies and global anxieties. Martin Crimp experimented with deep fake technology and Complicite’s multimedia productions, a London-based international touring theatre company, experimented with theatre’s dialogue with digital culture. Contemporary playwrights addressed urgent issues like war and trauma, memory and identity, uncertainty about new technologies, problems with communication, a sense of exclusion, and fear of impending catastrophe.

1.5.3 Characteristics of Postmodern Drama:

A) Formal Characteristics:

Fragmentation and Non-Linearity:

Postmodern plays abandoned chronological narrative in favour of fragmented and discontinuous structures. Time may loop back on itself. For example, Harold Pinter's *Betrayal*, tells a story of adulterous lovers in reverse. Multiple storylines may intersect without resolution in these dramas and they may reflect a world where coherent narratives are no longer hold.

Meta-theatricality:

Postmodern drama frequently draws attention to its own theatricality. It reminds audiences that they are watching a constructed performance. This self-reflexivity blurs the boundary between art and life. Tom Stoppard's plays particularly shows this tendency. They use theatrical devices to explore philosophical questions about the reality.

Intertextuality and Pastiche:

Postmodern playwrights freely borrow earlier texts, genres, and styles. These intertextual play acknowledged that all writing exists in dialogue with what came before.

Blurring Boundaries:

Postmodern drama eliminated conventional distinctions between high and low culture, tragedy and comedy, reality and illusion. Sarah Kane's play *Blasted* (1995) combined naturalistic scenes with sudden eruptions of grotesque violence. It forced audience to confront the inadequacy of conventional theatrical categories.

B) Thematic Concerns:

Scepticism towards Metanarratives:

Following Lyotard, postmodern drama questions the grand narratives that once gave meaning to human experience. Caryl Churchill's work explicitly describes the role theatre plays in maintaining power structures. Her play, *Serious Money* (1987) is a satirical critique of 1980s financial deregulation. It focuses on themes of rampant corporate greed, ethical decay, and the dehumanizing nature of high-stakes trading. It

explores how profit-driven systems perpetuate endless corruption and truth is always constructed according to the needs of dominant power structures.

Identity as Performance:

Postmodern drama explores identity not as fixed essence. It is a performance constructed through language and social interaction. *Cloud 9* (1979) is a landmark two-act play by Caryl Churchill. It satirises rigid gender roles, sexual repression, and debunks the connection between British colonial mentality and sexual oppression.

Trauma and Memory:

Contemporary British drama frequently engages with individual and collective trauma. It explores how memory shapes our relationship to the past. Stoppard's *Leopoldstadt* (2020) and Alice Birch's *Anatomy of a Suicide* (2017) deal with war and trauma across generations.

Technology and Alienation:

Recent drama depicts impact of new technologies on human relationships and identity. Caryl Churchill's play, *A Number* (2002) explores the impact of technological advancement, specifically human cloning on identity, relationships, and the human experience.

1.5.4 Major Contributors and Their Key Works:

A) Harold Pinter (1930–2008):

Harold Pinter is known as a foundational figure in postmodern British drama. His works are characterized by menace, silence, and the failure of language. His plays deal with power dynamics, memory, and the unreliability of communication. The term, "Pinteresque" has entered critical vocabulary to describe situations where characters are threatened by vague, unspecified forces.

The Homecoming (1965) shows Pinter's depiction with family dynamics and sexual politics. The play is about Teddy, a philosophy professor. He brings his wife Ruth to meet his father, Max, and brothers, Lenny and Joey. It results in Ruth staying as a "mother/whore" figure and Teddy returns to America alone.

Betrayal (1978) tells the story of an adulterous affair in reverse chronological order. The play begins with the affair's aftermath and moves backward to its inception. The play explores how memory reshapes experience and how betrayal

ripples through time. The structure of the play itself embodies postmodern concerns with linearity and narrative construction.

B) Tom Stoppard (1937–):

Tom Stoppard brings intellectual playfulness and philosophical depth to postmodern drama. His works engage with scientific theory, philosophical questions, and literary history while maintaining theatrical wit and accessibility.

Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966) takes two minor characters from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and places them at the centre of the drama. The play explores themes of fate, free will, and existence through its protagonists' confused attempts to understand their situation. Its meta-theatrical structure, characters aware they are in a play, makes it quintessentially postmodern.

Arcadia (1993) interweaves two time periods, the early nineteenth century and the present day, in a single country house. The play explores chaos theory, landscape gardening, literary history, and the nature of knowledge. It suggests that the past can never be fully recovered. Its structure, moving between eras, embodies postmodern concerns with time and historical understanding.

Leopoldstadt (2020) is Stoppard's autobiographical and most recent major work. It represents a departure into territory. It is set in Jewish Vienna across much of the twentieth century. The play explores individual and collective memory and traces the impact of historical trauma across generations.

C) Caryl Churchill (1938–):

Caryl Churchill is the most consistent, innovative and politically engaged of British postmodern dramatists. Her career spans from the fringe theatre of the 1970s to the present day. Her each work is engaged with contemporary politics and pushes theatrical form in new directions.

Cloud Nine (1979) uses cross-gender and cross-racial casting. It explores connections between British colonial mentality and sexual oppression. Its first act is set in Victorian Africa, its second in contemporary London, but characters have aged only twenty-five years. It creates a temporal dislocation which emphasizes the persistence of colonial and patriarchal structures.

Top Girls (1982) explores the costs of women's success in a patriarchal world, asking whether individual achievement can compensate for collective oppression. Its

structure, juxtaposing different historical moments without linear connection shows postmodern approaches to time and history.

A Number (2002) deals with cloning technology and the nature of human identity. The play presents a father confronting multiple clones of his original son. It explores questions of uniqueness, authenticity, and the relationship between genetics and personhood.

Escaped Alone (2016) is a simple play about three women chatting in a garden. Their chat is punctuated by a neighbour's monologues describing apocalyptic scenarios, ecological collapse, technological disaster, and social breakdown. The contrast between dull conversation of women and catastrophic vision of the neighbour creates a powerful meditation on contemporary anxieties.

D) Sarah Kane (1971–1999):

Sarah Kane was the most controversial and influential figure of 1990s British theatre. Her work is associated with “in-yer-face theatre,” which confronted audiences with extreme violence, explicit sexuality, and unflinching depictions of mental suffering.

Blasted (1995) deals with rape, torture, and violence. This play forces audiences to confront connections between personal violence and geopolitical catastrophe. The play's refusal to maintain consistent style embodies postmodern challenges to theatrical convention.

Cleansed (1998) continues Kane's exploration of love and violence. The play is set in concentration camps and depicts characters subjected to tortures. Play's dreamlike quality and refusal of psychological realism mark it as postmodern in sensibility.

E) Other Significant Contributors:

Martin Crimp has developed a distinctive experimental voice through plays like *Attempts on Her Life* (1997). It consists of seventeen scenes offering contradictory descriptions of an absent central figure. It questions whether identity can ever be fixed. His recent work also experiments with deep fake technology.

Martin McDonagh brings a dark comic sensibility to postmodern drama. He blends violence with humour in plays like *The Pillowman* (2004) which explores the relationship between art and violence.

1.5.5 Summary:

1.5.6 Check your progress:

1. The year, is considered a symbolic watershed in British drama.
A) 1945
B) 1956
C) 1968
D) 1979
2.coined the phrase “incredulity towards metanarratives” that characterizes postmodern thought.
A) Jacques Derrida
B) Michel Foucault
C) Jean-Francois Lyotard
D) Jean Baudrillard

3. in 1968 significantly impacted the development of British postmodern drama.
 - A) The establishment of the National Theatre
 - B) The abolition of theatre censorship by the Lord Chamberlain
 - C) The introduction of government arts funding
 - D) The creation of the Royal Shakespeare Company
4. AleksSierz coined the term to describe the drama of the 1990s associated with playwrights like Sarah Kane.
 - A) Kitchen sink drama
 - B) Absurdist theatre
 - C) In-yer-face theatre
 - D) Epic theatre
5. Tom Stoppard play, takes two minor characters from Shakespeare's Hamlet and places them at the centre of their own drama.
 - A) Arcadia
 - B) The Real Thing
 - C) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead
 - D) Jumpers

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/ sentence:

1. Which type of drama brought working-class life and domestic settings to the British stage?
2. Which alternative theatrical movement emerged in the late 1960s, performed on small stages in suburbs and basements?
3. Which term has entered critical vocabulary from Harold Pinter's work?
4. Name Caryl Churchill's play that uses cross-gender and cross-racial casting?
5. What is Metatheatricality (or self-reflexivity)?

1.5.7 Answers to check your progress:

A) Rewrite following sentences by choosing the most correct alternative:

1. B) 1956

2. C) Jean-François Lyotard
3. B) The abolition of theatre censorship by the Lord Chamberlain
4. C) In-yer-face theatre
5. C) Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/ sentence:

1. Kitchen sink realism (or kitchen sink drama)
2. Fringe theatre
3. Pinteresque
4. Cloud Nine
5. A theatrical characteristic used to refer dramas that draw attention to its own constructed nature and remind audiences they are watching a performance.

1.5.8 Exercises:

A) Answer following questions in detail:

- 1) Trace Development of Drama in The Post- Modern period.
- 2) Give the characteristics of drama in the postmodern period.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- A) Metatheatricality in Post- Modern Drama
- B) Thematic Concerns of Post- Modern Drama
- C) Harold Pinter
- D) Formal Characteristics of Post- Modern Drama

1.4.9 References for Further Study:

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Module-II : Novel
Hard Times - Charles Dickens

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2.0 Objectives:

After studying this module, you will be able to:

- To understand the social criticism in the novel.
- To examine the theme of facts vs imagination.
- To study characterization and symbolic representation.
- To analyze the narrative style and structure.
- To appreciate the moral and humanistic message of the novel.

2.1 Introduction:

The novel *Hard Times* (1854) is the most famous social novel written by Charles Dickens. It is a shorter novel compared to his other novels, but it delivers a very powerful message. The story is set in an imaginary industrial city called Coketown which represents the factory towns of Victorian England. The novel is written in past tense and narrated in the third person by an omniscient narrator. The narrator often makes sarcastic comments and personal observations about the characters and events. This narrative style allows readers to understand the inner lives of characters, who themselves are emotionally detached and unable to express their feelings properly. In *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens uses a powerful and distinctive style to criticize Victorian society. He employs satire to expose social evils and creates symbolic characters that represent social types rather than merely individuals, thereby strengthening his message. His strong emotional appeal awakens sympathy for the poor and oppressed, while his vivid descriptive language highlights the ugliness and harshness of industrial towns. The novel remains important because it reveals the serious problems of industrial society, criticizes a rigid, fact-based system of education, and promotes compassion, imagination, and humanity as essential values. Even today, it remains relevant as people continue to debate the balance between logic and emotional intelligence. Through this novel, Dickens conveys the key message that life requires more than facts, machines, and material success; true happiness and meaning come from love, kindness, imagination, and emotional understanding.

2.2 Subject Matter :

2.2.1 Charles Dickens: Bio-literary Profile :

Charles Dickens was born in a little house in Landport, Portsea, England, on February 7, 1812. The second of eight children, he grew up in a family frequently beset by financial insecurity. At the age of eleven, Dickens was taken out of school and sent to work in a London blacking warehouse, where his job was to paste labels on bottles for six shillings a week. His father, John Dickens, was a warmhearted but improvident man. When he was condemned to Marshalsea Prison for unpaid debts, he unwisely agreed that Charles should stay in lodgings and continue working while the rest of the family joined him in the jail. This three-month separation caused Charles much pain; his experiences as a child alone in a huge city – cold, isolated, with barely enough to eat – haunted him for the rest of his life. These painful experiences later influenced his fiction, in which he powerfully portrayed poverty, child exploitation, social injustice, and the loss of childhood innocence.

When the family fortunes improved, Charles went back to school, after which he became an office boy, a freelance reporter, and finally an author. With *Pickwick Papers* (1837), he achieved immediate fame; in a few years he was easily the most popular and respected writer of his time. It has been estimated that one out of every ten persons in Victorian England was a Dickens reader. *Oliver Twist* (1838), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839), and *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) got huge success. *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1844) was less so, but Dickens followed it with his unforgettable *A Christmas Carol* (1843). *Bleak House* (1853), *Hard Times* (1854), and *Little Dorrit* (1857) reveal his deepening concern for the injustices of British society. *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1861) and *Our Mutual Friend* (1865) complete his major works. Beyond writing, Dickens gave public readings of his works and actively supported charitable causes, even helping to run a school for underprivileged girls.

In his personal life, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth in 1836, and they had ten children; but the marriage deteriorated, and they separated in 1858. His later association with actress Ellen Ternan attracted public controversy. In 1858, he began a series of exhausting public readings; his health gradually declined. After putting in a full day's work at his home at Gads Hill, Kent, on June 8, 1870, Dickens suffered a stroke, and he died on the following day.

Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* is a social novel set in the industrial town of Coketown. It criticizes the harsh realities of industrialization and the overemphasis on facts and logic. Thomas Gradgrind, a strict believer in facts and utilitarian thinking, raises his children, Louisa and Tom, without imagination or emotion. Louisa later marries the wealthy but much older Josiah Bounderby, a factory owner, despite lacking love for him. Meanwhile, Stephen Blackpool, an honest factory worker, struggles with poverty and an unhappy marriage. He is falsely accused of a crime and ultimately dies, highlighting the injustice faced by the working class. As the story unfolds, Gradgrind realizes that a life based only on facts is incomplete. His philosophy fails, especially when Tom turns out to be selfish and irresponsible. The novel emphasizes the importance of balancing reason with compassion and imagination, and it critiques the dehumanizing effects of industrial society. In nutshell, *Hard Times* shows how a rigid, fact-based worldview harms individuals and society, and it advocates for humanity, empathy, and emotional richness. According to Robert Donald Spector, *Hard Times* carries a uniquely powerful message, and remains one of the most widely read of Dicken's major novels. The novel is a bitter expose of capitalist exploitation during the industrial Revolution – and a fierce denunciation of the philosophy of materialism, which treatens the human imagination in all times and places.

Dickens' unhappy marital experience influenced his depiction of troubled relationships in *Hard Times*, where characters such as Stephen Blackpool and Louisa Gradgrind endure loveless marriages, reflecting the rigid and costly divorce laws of Victorian England. Although immensely popular during his lifetime, Dickens's critical reputation declined somewhat after his death, as early twentieth-century critics favored modernist writers like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. By the mid-twentieth century, however, his literary stature was firmly restored, and today he is regarded as one of the greatest novelists in English literature, often compared to William Shakespeare, admired for his vivid storytelling, memorable characters, and profound social criticism. His works continue to be widely read and studied for their deep human sympathy and strong critique of social injustice.

2.2.2 Characters in the Novel:

Major Characters:

Thomas Gradgrind:

Gradgrind is a strict and practical man who believes only in facts, logic, and reason. He runs a school where imagination is discouraged. He raises his children without love or emotional warmth. Due to it, Louisa becomes unhappy and Tom becomes irresponsible. At the end of the novel, Gradgrind realizes his mistake and understands that life needs feelings and imagination too. He represents utilitarian education and cold logic.

Louisa Gradgrind:

Louisa is a daughter of Thomas Gradgrind. She grows up without emotional understanding because of her father's rigid system. She marries Bounderby without love and lives an unhappy life. When Harthouse tries to influence her, she becomes emotionally confused but does not fall into wrongdoing. Her emotional breakdown shows the damage caused by fact-only education. She represents emotional suffering caused by lack of love.

Tom Gradgrind (Junior):

Tom is Louisa's younger brother. Unlike Louisa, he becomes selfish, lazy, and dishonest. He robs Bounderby's bank and lets Stephen Blackpool take the blame. His character shows moral weakness. At the end, he runs away and dies regretfully. He represents moral failure caused by selfish upbringing.

Josiah Bounderby:

Bounderby is a rich factory owner and banker. He constantly claims that he rose from poverty, but this is a lie. He is proud, harsh toward workers, and lacks sympathy. He treats Louisa more like a possession than a wife. He represents hypocrisy and cruelty of industrial capitalists.

Stephen Blackpool:

Stephen is a poor factory worker who is honest, hardworking, and kind. He suffers because he cannot escape his unhappy marriage and loses his job unfairly. He is wrongly blamed for a robbery. Even in suffering, he remains morally strong. His

tragic death makes him one of the most sympathetic characters. He represents the suffering but noble working class.

Sissy Jupe:

Sissy is a circus girl who is kind, imaginative, and emotional. Though she struggles with “facts,” she understands human feelings better than anyone. She brings love and comfort to the Gradgrind family. She represents imagination, compassion, and humanity.

Minor Characters:

Bitzer:

A strict student, in Mr. Gradgrind’s school, believes only in facts. He grows up to work in the bank and later tries to betray Tom Gradgrind to get a better position.

Mrs. Sparsit:

She is a proud housekeeper of Mr. Bounderby. She thinks she belongs to a high family. She becomes jealous of Louisa after Mr. Bounderby marries her.

Adam Smith Gradgrind:

He is the younger brother of Louisa and Tom Gradgrind.

Mrs. Blackpool:

She is Stephen Blackpool’s alcoholic and cruel wife. She leaves him often alone and returns only when she is sick and helpless.

Mr. E.W.B. Childers:

He is a skilled horse rider and an important member of Mr. Sleary’s circus.

Emma Gordon:

A kind circus performer who comforts Sissy Jupe when her father leaves her.

Rachael:

A gentle and good factory worker who truly loves Stephen Blackpool. She is patient, kind, and morally strong.

Mrs. Gradgrind:

Mr. Gradgrind's weak and sickly wife. She supports her husband's strict belief in facts and is the mother of Louisa and Tom.

Jane Gradgrind:

The youngest Gradgrind child. She grows up more loving and emotionally healthy because of Sissy's influence.

Malthus Gradgrind:

One of the Gradgrind children, named after the thinker Thomas Malthus, who believed poverty could not be avoided.

James Harthouse:

A rich and lazy young man who comes to Coketown and tries to attract Louisa because he feels bored with life.

Mr. Jupe:

Sissy Jupe's father and a circus clown. He leaves his daughter so she can get a better education.

Master Kidderminster:

A young circus performer who plays Cupid and likes Sissy Jupe.

Mr. M'Choakumchild:

The strict teacher in Mr. Gradgrind's school who teaches only facts and logic.

Mrs. Pegler:

An old woman who secretly watches Mr. Bounderby's house. She is actually his kind mother, whom he is ashamed of.

Slackbridge:

A boastful union leader who turns the workers against Stephen because Stephen refuses to join the union.

Mr. Sleary:

The kind owner of the circus. He helps Sissy and later protects Tom Gradgrind.

Mr. Sparsit:

Mrs. Sparsit's late husband. He wasted his money on gambling and drinking, leaving her poor but with social status.

2.2.3 Setting of the Novel: Coketown

Charles Dickens sets the story of the novel in the imaginary industrial town of Coketown, which represents a typical factory city of nineteenth-century England during the Industrial Revolution. The town is described as dark, smoky, and heavily polluted, filled with tall chimneys, large factories, and the continuous noise of machines. Its red brick buildings, blackened by soot, look dull and lifeless, and the streets and houses appear uniform, creating a sense of monotony and loss of individuality. The workers lead mechanical and exhausting lives, moving daily between factory and home without joy or hope, as if controlled by the rhythm of machines. Through this setting, Dickens criticizes the harsh effects of industrialization, showing how it reduces human beings to parts of a system focused only on profit and practicality. Coketown also reflects the rigid philosophy of facts and logic followed by characters like Gradgrind and Bounderby, where imagination and emotion are suppressed. Thus, the town is not merely a background but a powerful symbol of a materialistic and mechanical society that neglects human warmth and compassion.

2.2.4 Detailed Plot of *Hard Times*:

The novel is short, simple but carefully planned. It is divided purposefully into three books like *Sowing*, *Reaping* and *Garnering*. Each part has a symbolic title connected with farming. Dickens uses the farming idea to show that actions have consequences through these parts.

BOOK THE FIRST: SOWING

The story of the novel begins in the dark and smoky industrial town of Coketown. The town is filled with factories, machines, and black smoke. Everything in the town looks dull and lifeless. The life of people in Coketown is mechanical and joyless. They live their life without joy or imagination. Thomas Gradgrind, one of the wealthy leaders of Coketown, runs a school where curriculum is based entirely on factual knowledge. Being a strict schoolmaster, he believes that only facts are important in life. He does not like imagination, feelings, or fancy ideas. He thinks

that these things are useless. In his school, children are taught only logic, science and practical knowledge.

Gradgrind raises his own children, Louisa and Tom, without love, stories, or emotional warmth. They also attend the school alongwith other children like Sissy Jupe, a circus performer's daughter, who is not good with facts, and a boy who is known as Bitzer. One day Gradgrind asks a circus girl named Sissy Jupe to define a horse. She cannot give a scientific answer because she speaks from her heart, not from textbooks. Gradgrind criticizes her. Soon after, Mr. Gardgrind takes Sissy to his home when he finds that her father has abandoned her in hope she will get education and live a better life without hime and away from the circus. Though Sissy grows up with his children, she never fits into his "fact-only" system because she is kind, imaginative and emotional. She shares her insecurities with Louisa who sympathies her. They develop a friendly relationship although Mr. Gradgrind does not approve of it.

As Louisa and Tom grow older, the effects of this upbringing become clear. Louisa becomes quiet, serious, and emotionally confused, unable to understand her own feelings. Tom, on the other hand, grows selfish, careless, and irresponsible. We are also introduced to Josiah Bounderby, a wealthy factory owner and a close friend of Gradgrind. Bounderby often boasts that he was born in extreme poverty and became successful only through his own hard work. He is propud, self-cerntred and harsh towards his workers.

A poor but honest factory worker, Stephen Blackpool, visits Mr. Bounderby to get advice on how to divorce his wife. He lives a life of suffering because his wife is an alcoholic, and the law does not allow him to divorce her. Besides, Mr. Bounderby and his housekeeper, Mrs. Sparsit advised Stephen, he could not afford a divorce anyway. Stephen is frustrated by this advice because he is in love with a gentle and kind woman named Rachael, and now he knows that he will never be able to marry. When Stephen returns home, he finds that Rachael is taking care of his incapacitated wife; it makes his love stronger for Rachael.

After some years, Mr. Gradgrind advises Sissy to leave the school because she is a poor student. Sissy agrees and apologizes. However, Mr. Gradgrind praises her for her goodness and wants her to remain in service to his family. Meanwhile, Tom Gradgrind takes apprenticeship with Mr, Bounderby at the bank and embraces his

freedom. When Mr. Bounderby proposes marriage to Louisa, Tom pressures her to accept the proposal, but she refuses it. Although she does not love Mr. Bounderby her father Mr. Gradgrind convinces her to accept the proposal using the logical arguments instead of considering her feelings. She agrees to the marriage and sacrifices her own happiness. This decision clearly shows the emotional harm caused by Gradgrind's strict and loveless upbringing.

BOOK THE SECOND: REAPING

The results of earlier actions begin to appear in this book. The marriage of Louisa with Bounderby seems cold and unhappy. She does not love him, and feels empty and lonely. There is no emotional comfort in her marriage. At the same time, Tom Gradgrind starts working at Bounderby's bank. He is careless, lazy, and often falls into debt because he spends money foolishly. Instead of improving himself, he manipulates his sister, Louisa, and depends on her to help him financially.

Meanwhile, the factory workers in Coketown begin to form a union because they want better wages and improved working conditions. A man named Slackbridge becomes their leader and encourages them to stand together. However, Stephen Blackpool refuses to join the union because he believes in honesty, peace, and staying true to his own principles. He does not want to fight or create trouble. He tells Mr. Bounderby that he thinks neither the union can solve the deep-rooted problems of poverty and the harsh conditions of the factory; nor even factory owners can care about their workers. Bounderby becomes suspicious of him and he dismisses Stephen from his job. Before leaving the town to search for new work, Stephen promises Rachael that he will return one day. Shortly after Stephen leaves, the bank is robbed. Mr. Bounderby immediately suspects Stephen because of their quarrel, and Stephen was spotted loitering around the bank during the nights. But Louisa suspects that Tom might be behind the bank robbery.

During this time, a charming, clever and smooth-talking gentleman named James Harthouse arrives in Coketown. He becomes interested in Louisa and tries to win her love. Louisa, who has grown up without love and is emotionally starved, feels attracted to his attention. However, she does not truly love him; she is only longing for kindness and emotional understanding. One night, Louisa feels deeply troubled and confused by her inner conflict. Instead of running away with Harthouse, she goes to her father, Gradgrind, and breaks down emotionally. She tells him that

his fact-based system of education has left her unable to understand her own heart and feelings. At this moment, Gradgrind finally realizes that his strict belief in facts and logic has failed and has caused great emotional damage to his children.

BOOK THE THIRD: GARNERING

In this book, the main crisis of the story takes place. Bounderby's bank is suddenly robbed, and people quickly begin to suspect Stephen Blackpool. They doubt him because he had visited the bank earlier; he had recently lost his job and he had already left the town. Many people believe that he is guilty, but in reality, Stephen is completely innocent. The real thief is Tom Gradgrind. He committed the robbery because he was in debt and needed money. Tom cleverly used Stephen as a scapegoat, knowing that Stephen was not present to defend himself.

Sissy Jupe soon discovers that Tom is guilty. Being kind and brave, she decides to protect him. With the help of her circus friends, she hides Tom and later helps him to escape from the country. Gradgrind feels deeply shocked and heartbroken when he learns the truth about his son. He now fully understands the harmful results of his strict and emotionless upbringing.

Meanwhile, Stephen tries to return to Coketown to prove his innocence and clear his name. On his way, he accidentally falls into an abandoned mine shaft called the Old Hell Shaft. After a long search, Rachael and some others finally find him badly injured at the bottom of the pit. Before he dies, Stephen declares that he is innocent and kindly asks that Rachael be cared for. His tragic death brings out sympathy, and finally proves that Tom was the real criminal.

At the same time, Bounderby's proud story about his poor childhood is exposed as a lie. His mother appears and reveals that he did not grow up in poverty as he always claimed. His image as a "self-made man" is shown to be false. In the end, Tom escapes to another country but later dies alone, full of regret for his actions. Louisa never marries again. Instead, she dedicates her life to helping others, especially Sissy's children, showing that she has finally learned kindness, compassion, and emotional warmth. Gradgrind gives up his rigid belief in facts alone and becomes a wiser and more humane person, understanding the true importance of love and sympathy in life.

2.2.5 Structure of the Novel:

The structure of the novel *Hard Times* is simple but very carefully planned. Dickens divides the novel into three main parts, and each part has a symbolic title connected with farming. The three parts are: They are: Book One: *Sowing*, Book Two: *Reaping*, Book Three: *Garnering*. This structure shows a natural process: First, you sow seeds, then you reap what you have sown, and finally, you gather (garner) the results. Dickens uses this farming idea to show that actions have consequences. In *Sowing* part, the “seeds” are planted. The ideas of strict education, pride, selfishness, and social injustice are planted like seeds. These seeds will later grow into serious problems. In *Reaping*, characters begin to suffer because of earlier decisions. The characters begin to “reap” (face) the results of what was planted earlier. The emotional damage caused by Gradgrind’s philosophy becomes visible. In the final part *Garnering*, everything is revealed. All the consequences are gathered. Truth comes out. Moral lessons are learned. There are also some other structural features.

Hard Times is one of Dickens’ shortest novels. It is more compact and tightly organized than his longer works like *David Copperfield*. The novel was first published in weekly parts in 1854 in Dickens’ magazine *Household Words*. Because of this, the chapters are short; each chapter ends with suspense and the story moves quickly. Dickens builds the novel on contrasts such as Fact vs Imagination, Rich vs Poor, Industry vs Nature, Pride vs Humility and Selfishness vs Compassion. The novel has two main story lines related to the Gradgrind–Bounderby family story (middle-class life) and Stephen Blackpool’s story (working-class life). These two stories meet during the bank robbery. Many chapters are symbolic in the novel like: ‘*Murdering the Innocents*’, ‘*The Key-Note*’, ‘*The Starlight*’. These titles hint at deeper meanings. In a nutshell, the structure of *Hard Times* is carefully designed around the idea that ‘what we plant in life (education, values, actions etc.) will grow and return to us’. Through the three-part farming structure - *Sowing*, *Reaping*, and *Garnering*, Dickens shows that wrong ideas (like education without emotion) bring suffering, while kindness and compassion bring hope.

2.2.6 Themes in *Hard Times*:

Charles Dickens’ *Hard Times* (1854) is one of his most socially conscious novels. Set in the industrial town of Coketown, the novel explores the lives of factory

workers, the wealthy industrialists, and the children of the fact-based education system. Dickens uses the story not just to entertain but to highlight important moral, social, and human issues. He conveys several powerful themes that remain relevant even today. These include the conflict between facts and imagination, the effects of industrialization, social injustice, the importance of love and family, the dangers of pride and selfishness, and the power of compassion.

Facts vs Imagination:

Charles Dickens presents the conflict between facts and imagination as the central theme of the novel, showing that a life based only on logic and measurable facts becomes dry, unhappy, and incomplete. Through the character of Thomas Gradgrind, Dickens criticizes an education system that discourages creativity and emotions, training children to think only in practical and mechanical terms. Gradgrind raises his children according to this rigid philosophy, which results in Louisa's emotional confusion and unhappy marriage, and Tom's selfish and dishonest behavior, proves that facts alone cannot teach moral responsibility or happiness. In contrast, Sissy Jupe represents imagination, kindness, and compassion; though she struggles with technical knowledge, she possesses emotional wisdom and sympathy that bring comfort to others. The lively world of the circus further contrasts with the dull and mechanical life of Coketown, symbolizing joy and creativity. Through these oppositions, Dickens emphasizes that true education must nurture both the mind and the heart, and that a society which ignores imagination and human feelings will inevitably create suffering and "hard times."

Effects of Industrialization:

Dickens powerfully presents the harmful effects of industrialization through the setting of Coketown, a dark, smoky, and polluted city filled with factories and machines. The town appears dull and lifeless, with identical buildings and people moving mechanically through monotonous routines, symbolizing a society that values profit and productivity over human happiness and individuality. While factories create wealth for their owners, they reduce workers to mere parts of a machine, forcing them into exhausting labour, low wages, and joyless lives without hope or personal growth. Dickens shows that industrialization not only causes physical suffering but also leads to emotional and moral decline. The gap between rich and poor widens as factory owners enjoy comfort and power while labourers

struggle to survive. Through this grim portrayal, Dickens warns that material progress without compassion and justice results in dehumanization, suggesting that true advancement must respect human dignity and emotional well-being.

Social Injustice:

The novel strongly highlights the theme of social injustice by portraying a deeply unequal Victorian society where the rich enjoy comfort and legal protection while the poor suffer exploitation and neglect. Through the character of Stephen Blackpool, Dickens represents the struggles of the working class; though honest and hardworking, Stephen lives in poverty, faces harsh factory conditions, and is denied justice because the law favors the wealthy. His isolation from both the workers and the factory owners followed by his false accusation and suffering, shows how powerless the poor are in an unfair system. In contrast, Josiah Bounderby, the wealthy factory owner, lives in luxury and blames the poor for their condition, reflecting the arrogance and hypocrisy of the privileged class. Through this sharp contrast between Stephen and Bounderby, Dickens criticizes a society that protects wealth and punishes poverty, ultimately calling for compassion, justice, and social reform.

Importance of Love and Family

The novel emphasizes the vital importance of love, care, and emotional support in shaping a balanced and complete human personality. Charles Dickens criticizes a rigid upbringing that values only logic, discipline, and factual knowledge while neglecting affection and sympathy. Through Louisa Gradgrind, Dickens presents the tragic consequences of such a system. Raised under her father's strict, fact-based philosophy, Louisa grows intellectually strong but emotionally weak, unable to understand or express her feelings. Believing marriage to be a practical decision, she marries Josiah Bounderby without love, which leads to deep unhappiness and inner emptiness. Her suffering shows that a childhood without warmth and emotional guidance results in dissatisfaction in adult life. Through this portrayal, Dickens argues that true education and family life must nurture both the mind and the heart, proving that love and compassion are essential for healthy development and lasting happiness.

Pride and Selfishness lead to Destruction:

In *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens clearly shows that pride and selfishness lead to moral and personal destruction. Through Josiah Bounderby, Dickens exposes false pride and hypocrisy; Bounderby proudly claims to be a “self-made man,” but his story of extreme poverty is later proved false, revealing the emptiness behind his arrogance. His lack of compassion toward workers and obsession with status ultimately damage his reputation and isolate him. Similarly, Tom Gradgrind represents selfishness shaped by poor moral guidance. Driven by personal desire and irresponsibility, Tom commits robbery and allows the innocent Stephen to suffer for his crime, choosing escape over accountability. His eventual separation from home and burden of guilt reflect the consequences of his actions. Through the downfall of Bounderby and Tom, Dickens conveys that a life based on pride, greed, and self-interest leads to disgrace and loneliness, while humility, honesty, and moral responsibility are essential for true peace and fulfillment.

Compassion brings True Happiness:

The novel reflects compassion, kindness, and empathy are the true foundations of happiness and fulfillment. In contrast to characters driven by pride and self-interest, Dickens presents loving and generous individuals as those who achieve inner peace and meaningful lives. Sissy Jupe best represents this theme; though she does not succeed in fact-based education, she possesses deep sympathy and a caring heart that brings comfort to the Gradgrind family, especially during Louisa’s emotional crisis. Her warm nature helps to create a joyful and affectionate domestic life, showing that true contentment comes from love rather than wealth or status. Similarly, Thomas Gradgrind undergoes a moral transformation when he realizes the harm caused by his rigid philosophy, learning that feelings and compassion are essential to human well-being. Through these characters, Dickens ultimately conveys that genuine happiness arises not from material success or intellectual pride, but from love, moral integrity, and human connection.

2.2.7 Detailed Characterization of Major Characters:**Thomas Gradgrind**

Thomas Gradgrind is portrayed as a central figure who strongly believes that life should be guided only by facts and logical reasoning. He is a serious, disciplined, and practical man who rejects imagination, emotions, and creativity, considering them

useless and misleading. As a schoolmaster, he follows a strict and mechanical system of education in which children are taught only factual and practical knowledge. He discourages them from dreaming or expressing feelings, thinking that such training will prepare them to become sensible and successful adults. However, he fails to recognize that emotional care and imaginative freedom are equally important for healthy development. At home, he treats his own children, Louisa and Tom, according to the same rigid principles. He does not encourage emotional expression or affection, which leaves them emotionally neglected. As a result, Louisa grows up confused about her feelings and agrees to marry Bounderby without love, believing it to be a rational decision. Tom, lacking moral guidance and warmth, becomes irresponsible and dishonest, eventually committing a crime. Although Gradgrind's philosophy leads to suffering, he is not portrayed as a heartless man; rather, he sincerely believes he is acting in his children's best interest. His major flaw is his unshakable trust in facts alone. When Louisa finally reveals her inner pain, he is deeply shaken and begins to understand the harm caused by his strict beliefs. By the end of the novel, he undergoes a meaningful transformation, becoming more compassionate and open-minded. Through his character, Dickens highlights the limitations of an education and lifestyle based solely on facts and emphasizes the need for imagination, love, and emotional understanding in human life.

Louisa Gradgrind:

Louisa Gradgrind emerges as one of the most significant and deeply tragic figures in this novel. As the daughter of Thomas Gradgrind, she is raised in an environment where facts, discipline, and logic are valued above affection and emotional expression. This rigid upbringing shapes her into a quiet, reserved, and inwardly troubled young woman who struggles to understand her own feelings. Though naturally sensitive and thoughtful as a child, she is taught to suppress imagination and emotion, learning instead to behave with restraint and practicality. This denial of emotional freedom creates a sense of emptiness and isolation within her gradually.

Louisa's inner conflict becomes more visible when she consents to marry Josiah Bounderby despite lacking any genuine love for him. Viewing marriage as a rational arrangement rather than a bond of affection, she accepts the proposal largely because she has been conditioned to distrust her emotions. The result is a lifeless and unfulfilling relationship that deepens her unhappiness. Later, when James Harthouse

enters her life with charm and apparent sympathy, Louisa feels drawn to him, not out of passion alone but from a longing for warmth and understanding which she has never experienced. Yet she resists moral failure and, overwhelmed by confusion and distress, turns to her father in a moment of emotional collapse. This crisis becomes a decisive turning point, revealing the consequences of a philosophy that ignores the human heart.

Through Louisa's suffering, the novel illustrates that reason without compassion leads to emotional damage. She embodies the pain caused by a childhood deprived of love, imagination, and freedom of feeling. Although Louisa does not achieve romantic fulfillment, she matures into a more empathetic and reflective person. Thus, Louisa's character symbolizes the emotional cost of a world governed solely by facts, and through her journey, Dickens affirms the essential role of love, understanding, and emotional depth in human life.

Stephen Blackpool:

Stephen Blackpool stands out as one of the most deeply moving and memorable characters that represent the honest, hardworking, and suffering working class of industrial society. He is a simple factory worker in Coketown, known for his sincerity, moral strength, and quiet dignity. Despite his goodness, his life is filled with pain and hardship. He is trapped in an unhappy marriage with an alcoholic wife, yet he cannot free himself because the law allows divorce only for the rich, exposing the injustice of the legal system. Stephen truly loves Rachael, a kind and gentle woman, but social restrictions prevent their union, making his personal life tragic. His troubles increase when he refuses to join the workers' union, as he believes in peace and honesty rather than conflict. This decision isolates him, as fellow workers reject him, while the factory owner Bounderby also mistrusts him and eventually dismisses him from his job. Thus, Stephen becomes a lonely figure, rejected by both sides despite his integrity. His suffering deepens when he is falsely accused of robbing the bank, showing how easily the poor are suspected and mistreated. Before he can prove his innocence, he meets a tragic fate by falling into an abandoned mine shaft. Even in his final moments, he remains truthful and forgives others, asking only that Rachael be cared for. Stephen never loses his honesty, patience, or kindness, making him a powerful symbol of innocent suffering. Through his character, Dickens strongly criticizes a society that is unjust to the poor while protecting the wealthy, and he appeals for sympathy, fairness, and humanity towards the working class.

Sissy Jupe:

In *Hard Times* by Charles Dickens, Sissy Jupe emerges as one of the most significant and endearing characters, representing kindness, imagination, love, and emotional sensitivity in a society that values only facts and logic. As the daughter of a circus performer, Sissy comes from a world full of color, joy, and human connection, which sharply contrasts with the rigid and mechanical environment of Coketown. After her father disappears, she is taken into the home of Thomas Gradgrind, where she is raised under a strict system that discourages imagination and emotions. Although she struggles to understand Gradgrind's fact-based education and cannot define things in a purely logical or scientific manner, this does not make her unintelligent; rather, it highlights that true wisdom lies in understanding human feelings. Sissy is naturally gentle, compassionate, and selfless, and she forms a deep emotional bond with Louisa Gradgrind, offering her comfort and support during her unhappy marriage. She also plays a crucial role in helping Gradgrind realize the failure of his philosophy by responding with patience and kindness instead of resentment. One of her most notable actions is when she discovers that Tom Gradgrind has committed the bank robbery; instead of exposing him and bringing further suffering to the family, she shows loyalty and compassion by arranging his escape with the help of her circus friends. Symbolically, Sissy represents the values of the circus—imagination, warmth, and humanity—which gradually transform the cold atmosphere of Gradgrind's household. By the end of the novel, she grows into a happy and fulfilled woman, surrounded by love and family, becoming a symbol of hope and emotional richness. Thus, Sissy Jupe serves as the moral and emotional center of the novel, proving that kindness, compassion, and imagination are essential for a truly meaningful life.

2.3 Other Aspects of the Novel:

2.3.1 The Novel as a Critique of Industrial Society:

In *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens strongly criticizes the industrial society of Victorian England. Through the setting, characters, and events, he presents industrialization as harsh, mechanical, and lacking human warmth. The novel is set in Coketown, a dark factory town filled with smoke, noise, pollution, and long rows of identical buildings. Everything in the town looks dull and lifeless, symbolizing

how industrial progress has turned human life into something machine-like. Factories run endlessly, and workers are treated not as individuals with feelings but as parts of a machine. The suffering of the working class is clearly shown through Stephen Blackpool, an honest and hardworking labourer who lives a life of hardship. He works long hours for little pay and has no power to improve his condition. When he faces personal problems, such as his unhappy marriage to an alcoholic wife, the law offers him no help because divorce is possible only for the rich. This reveals how the legal system favors the wealthy and ignores the poor. Dickens also shows that workers are trapped between cruel factory owners and strict labour unions. Stephen refuses to join the union out of honesty, but both sides reject him. He loses his job and is falsely accused of robbery, and his tragic death creates deep sympathy for the working class. In contrast stands Josiah Bounderby, a rich factory owner and banker who represents selfish and heartless industrial capitalism. He proudly claims to be a “self-made man,” but his story of rising from poverty is later exposed as false. He uses this lie to blame the poor for their suffering and shows no sympathy for workers, caring only for profit and power. Through him, Dickens exposes the hypocrisy of wealthy industrialists. The novel also shows that industrial society values money more than human relationships. Families are unhappy, compassion is missing, and education focuses only on facts, preparing children to become tools of industry rather than complete human beings. The strong contrast between the comfortable lives of factory owners and the struggles of workers highlights the injustice of the system. Through these elements, Dickens calls for social justice, kindness and respect for human dignity. The novel *Hard Times* is not merely a story of individuals but a powerful social protest against the inhuman conditions created by industrialization, reminding readers that progress without humanity leads to suffering.

2.3.2 Title of the Novel:

Charles Dickens chooses a title for the novel that is deeply significant and closely connected to the central message of the novel. The title is highly apt and appropriate. The phrase “Hard Times” carries both social and emotional meanings, reflecting the various forms of suffering experienced by individuals in an industrial society. On a social level, the title refers to the harsh realities of the industrial age, where factory workers in places like Coketown endure poverty, long working hours, unhealthy conditions, and injustice. Characters such as Stephen Blackpool represent

this struggle, as they work tirelessly for low wages without security or opportunity for improvement, while wealthy factory owners like Bounderby continue to prosper. This highlights the economic inequality and exploitation present in society.

At the same time, the title has a deep emotional significance. It points to the inner suffering of characters which experience loneliness, confusion, and dissatisfaction in their personal lives. Louisa Gradgrind, for instance, faces emotional hardship due to her upbringing, which denies her love, imagination, and emotional expression. Her loveless marriage becomes another form of “hard time,” reflecting her inner emptiness. Similarly, Tom Gradgrind’s moral decline shows how emotional neglect can lead to selfishness and wrongdoing. Thus, the title suggests that life can be difficult not only in physical or economic terms but also in emotional and psychological ways.

Moreover, the title reflects the moral and educational failures of a society that values only facts, discipline, and profit while ignoring compassion and creativity. Through the rigid philosophy of Gradgrind, Dickens shows how such a system creates unhappy and morally weak individuals. These “hard times” are therefore the result of both external conditions and flawed social values.

Finally, the title has a universal relevance, as it represents the struggles of different characters and situations, making it applicable beyond the novel itself. It reminds readers that a society lacking kindness, empathy, and imagination will inevitably create suffering for all.

2.3.3 Message of the Novel:

Through *Hard Times*, Charles Dickens gives a strong moral and social message about how people should live and how society should treat human beings. The novel goes beyond being just a story about a few characters like Gradgrind, Louisa, or Stephen. Instead, it acts as a social critique of the industrial society of Victorian England. Dickens warns readers about the dangers of a life that is cold, mechanical, and based only on facts, money, and social position.

One of the key messages Dickens conveys is that human life cannot thrive on facts and logic alone. He shows this through characters like Thomas Gradgrind, who believes only in measurable knowledge and disregards feelings, imagination, or emotions. Gradgrind raises his children, Louisa and Tom, in a strict, fact-based environment, and the results are tragic. Louisa becomes emotionally confused and

unhappy, while Tom grows up selfish and morally weak. Dickens uses this to show that ignoring emotions and imagination creates inner emptiness and unhappiness.

The novel also delivers a strong message about social responsibility. Dickens highlights the harsh conditions faced by factory workers in towns like Coketown. People like Stephen Blackpool work long hours, suffer poverty, and face injustice, while the rich, like Bounderby, live in comfort and show little sympathy. Through these contrasts, Dickens emphasizes that a just society must treat all human beings with fairness and compassion, not just protect the interests of the wealthy.

Another important moral message is about love, kindness, and family. Louisa's emotional suffering demonstrates the harm caused when children grow up without care, love, and emotional guidance. Dickens suggests that human relationships, empathy, and moral guidance are essential for personal growth and happiness. Without them, even educated and intelligent people can live miserable lives.

The novel also criticizes hypocrisy and selfishness, particularly among the rich and powerful. Bounderby pretends to be a self-made man, who rose from poverty, but the truth is revealed later — he had a comfortable upbringing. This shows how pride, lies, and self-interest can harm society, while honesty and moral responsibility are virtues that benefit everyone.

In nutshell, the novel is more than a story; it is a moral and social warning. Dickens urges readers to create a life that balances knowledge with imagination, industry with humanity, and wealth with compassion. He reminds us that a world without love, sympathy, and ethical responsibility becomes a cold, mechanical place — a world of true 'hard times.'

3.4 Summary:

Hard Times by Charles Dickens is a powerful social novel set in the grim industrial town of Coketown, symbolizing the harsh realities of Victorian industrial society. Through an omniscient and often satirical narrative style, Dickens criticizes a rigid, fact-based philosophy of life and education represented by characters like Gradgrind and Bounderby, showing how it suppresses imagination, emotion, and human connection. The novel is structured into three symbolic parts—*Sowing*, *Reaping*, and *Garnering*—highlighting the idea that actions and values inevitably

lead to consequences. It portrays the emotional and moral struggles of characters such as Louisa, Tom, Stephen Blackpool, and Sissy Jupe, contrasting selfishness, pride, and materialism with compassion, honesty, and imagination. Dickens exposes social injustice, the dehumanizing effects of industrialization, and the suffering of the working class, while also emphasizing the importance of love, family, and empathy in human life. Ultimately, the novel conveys a timeless message that true happiness and fulfillment come not from facts, wealth, or power alone, but from kindness, emotional understanding, and humanity.

3.5 Check your Progress:

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

1. What does Coketown represent?
2. In which tense is the novel written?
3. What style does Dickens use to criticize society?
4. Who is Gradgrind's daughter?
5. Who is the wealthy factory owner?
6. Who is the honest worker?
7. Who represents imagination and kindness?
8. Who is the strict student of facts?
9. Who is Bounderby's housekeeper?
10. What is the name of Stephen's wife?
11. Who is the circus owner?
12. Who is falsely accused of robbery?
13. Who helps Tom to escape?
14. Where does Stephen fall?
15. What is the central theme of the novel?
16. What leads to destruction in the novel?
17. What does bring true happiness?

18. What is the key message of the novel?
19. What is more important than facts?
20. Who is the headmaster who believes in facts?
21. What is Gradgrind's philosophy?
22. Who is Sissy Jupe?
23. What does Sissy symbolize?
24. What does Bounderby falsely claim?
25. What crime does Tom commit?
26. Who tries to seduce Louisa?
27. What is the subtitle of the novel?
28. What kind of education is criticized in the novel?
29. What does Dickens emphasize over facts?
30. What does Mrs. Sparsit do?
31. Who reforms at the end of the novel?

B) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the most correct alternative:

1. The novel *Hard Times* was published in -----.
 - A) 1850
 - B) 1852
 - C) 1854
 - D) 1860
2. What narrative style is used in the novel?
 - A) First person
 - B) Third person omniscient
 - C) Second person
 - D) Stream of consciousness

3. What literary device does Dickens use to criticize society?
A) Irony
B) Satire
C) Allegory
D) Symbolism
4. ----- represents the working class?
A) Tom
B) Stephen Blackpool
C) Bitzer
D) Harthouse
5. Who represents imagination and kindness?
A) Louisa
B) Sissy Jupe
C) Mrs. Sparsit
D) Bitzer
6. Who is Stephen's beloved?
A) Louisa
B) Sissy
C) Rachael
D) Emma
7. What is the name of the circus owner?
A) Mr. Jupe
B) Mr. Sleary
C) Childers
D) Kidderminster
8. How is Coketown described?
A) Bright and colorful
B) Clean and peaceful
C) Dark and smoky
D) Beautiful and green
9. The novel divided into ----- parts.?
A) Two
B) Three
C) Four
D) Five
10. Whom does Bounderby marry with?
A) Sissy
B) Louisa
C) Emma
D) Rachael

11. Who is falsely accused of robbery?
A) Tom
B) Gradgrind
C) Stephen
D) Bitzer
12. Where does Stephen fall?
A) River
B) Factory
C) Mine shaft
D) House
13. What leads to destruction in the novel?
A) Love
B) Compassion
C) Pride and selfishness
D) Honesty
14. What is the main message of the novel?
A) Importance of wealth
B) Importance of power
C) Importance of humanity
D) Importance of education
15. According to Dickens, what is essential for happiness?
A) Money
B) Facts
C) Love and kindness
D) Power
16. What is the name of the fictional industrial town in the novel?
A) London
B) Manchester
C) Coketown
D) Preston
17. Who represents the philosophy of “facts” in the novel?
A) Mr. Bounderby
B) Thomas Gradgrind
C) Stephen Blackpool
D) James Harthouse

18. What is Thomas Gradgrind's approach to education?
- A) Imaginative learning B) Emotional development
C) Fact-based and practical D) Religious teaching
19. Who is Sissy Jupe's father?
- A) A factory worker B) A school teacher
C) A circusformer D) A banker
20. Which character represents kindness and imagination?
- A) Louisa Gradgrind B) Sissy Jupe
C) Mrs. Sparsit D) Bitzer
21. Who is Mr. Bounderby?
- A) A schoolmaster B) A factory owner and banker
C) A Politician D) A doctor
22. What does Mr. Bounderby falsely claim about his childhood?
- A) He was rich
B) He was abandoned and poor
C) He was educated abroad
D) He was an orphan prince
23. What is the name of Louisa's brother?
- A) Stephen B) Tom
C) James D) Josiah
24. Who is Stephen Blackpool?
- A) A banker B) A factory worker
C) A teacher D) A lawyer
25. Who tries to manipulate Louisa emotionally?
- A) Bitzer B) James Harthouse
C) Mr. Gradgrind D) Stephen

26. What happens to Stephen Blackpool at the end?
- A) He becomes rich B) He leaves the country
C) He dies tragically D) He becomes a teacher
27. Who exposes Tom Gradgrind's crime?
- A) Sissy Jupe B) Mr. Bounderby
C) Bitzer D) Mrs. Sparsit
28. What crime does Tom Gradgrind commit?
- A) Theft from the bank B) Murder
C) Kidnapping D) fraud
29. What does Sissy Jupe symbolize in the novel?
- A) Industrial power
B) Wealth and status
C) Compassion and imagination
D) Strict discipline
30. What is the subtitle of *Hard Times*?
- A) A Story of England B) A Tale of Two Cities
C) For These Times D) Life and Facts
31. What is the main message of the novel?
- A) Facts are more important than emotions
B) Wealth brings happiness
C) Balance between facts and human values is necessary
D) Education should be strict

3.6 Terms to Remember:

Coketown: An imaginary industrial town.

omniscient: all knowing

sarcastic: mocking, ironic

upbringing: the way a person is raised or brought up, especially during childhood

exhausting: very tiring

monotony: lack of variety, dullness

utilitarian: practical, functional, pragmatic

pseudonym: nickname

deteriorate: worsen, spoil

scapegoat: someone who is made to take blame for others

nurture: to care for

accusation: blaming

overwhelmed: stressed; feelings completely overcome by strong emotions.

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress:

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

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. Industrial town | 2. Past tense |
| 3. Satire | 4. Louisa |
| 5. Bounderby | 6. Stephen Blackpool |
| 7. Sissy Jupe | 8. Bitzer |
| 9. Mrs. Sparsit | 10. Mrs. Blackpool |
| 11. Mr. Sleary | 12. Stephen |
| 13. Sissy | 14. Mine shaft |
| 15. Facts vs imagination | 16. Pride and selfishness |
| 17. Compassion | 18. Importance of humanity |
| 19. Love and kindness | |
| 20. Thomas Gradgrind | 21. Facts and utilitarianism |

- | | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 22. Daughter of a circus performer | 23. Imagination and kindness |
| 24. He was poor and abandoned | 25. Bank robbery |
| 26. James Harthouse | 27. For These Times |
| 28. Fact-based education | 29. Human emotions |
| 30. Spies on Louisa | 31. Thomas Gradgrind |

B) Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the most correct alternative:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 1. 1854 | 2. Third person omniscient |
| 3. Satire | 4. Stephen Blackpool |
| 5. Sissy Jupe | 6. Rachael |
| 7. Mr. Sleary | 8. Dark and smoky |
| 9. Three | 10. Louisa |
| 11. Stephen | 12. Mine shaft |
| 13. Pride and selfishness | 14. Importance of humanity |
| 15. Love and kindness | 16. Coketown |
| 17. Thomas Gradgrind | 18. Fact-based and practical |
| 19. A circus performer | 20. Sissy Jupe |
| 21. A factory owner and banker | 22. He was abandoned and poor |
| 23. Tom | 24. A factory worker |
| 25. James Harthouse | 26. He dies tragically |
| 27. Bitzer | 28. Theft from the bank |
| 29. Compassion and imagination | 30. For These Times |
| 31. Balance between facts and human values is necessary | |

3.8 Exercises:

I. Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words each.

1. Discuss the major themes in *Hard Times* and explain their relevance in modern society.
2. Write a detailed note on the plot construction of the novel *Hard Times*.
3. Critically examine *Hard Times* as a social critique of Victorian industrial society.
4. Explain the central message of *Hard Times* and how Dickens conveys it through characters and events.
5. Analyze the character of Thomas Gradgrind as a representative of utilitarian philosophy and its failure.
6. Examine the character of Stephen Blackpool as a symbol of the suffering working class.
7. “Hard Times is not just a novel but a moral and social document.” Discuss.
8. Evaluate *Hard Times* as a critique of utilitarian education.

II. Write short notes in about 200 words each.

1. *Hard Times* as a social novel.
2. Louisa Gradgrind as a tragic character.
3. Sissy Jupe as a symbol of compassion and imagination.
4. Coketown as an industrial town.
5. The structure of *Hard Times*.
6. Facts vs Imagination as a theme
7. The theme of social injustice.
8. *Hard Times* as a critique of industrial society.
9. The significance of the title *Hard Times*.
10. The moral message of the novel.

1.9 References for Further Reading:

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Module- III

Poems

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3.0 Objectives:

After studying this module, students will be able to:

1. Analyse how British poets use literary devices, form, and diction.
2. Contextualize poems within their historical and cultural moments.
3. Trace the evolution of major themes across different poetic movements.
4. Cultivate a lasting appreciation for British poetry.

3.1 Introduction:

Present module deals with six famous British poems. Each poem has separate message to its reader. T.S. Eliot's "The Journey of the Magi" depicts a painful and alienating quest for a new faith that feels like a death. Ted Hughes' "Hawk

Roosting” is a dramatic monologue where a hawk embodies nature's brutal ego, calmly asserting its absolute power to kill and control its world. Dylan Thomas's poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night” is a passionate plea to his dying father to fight against death. Rupert Brooke's “The Soldier” is a patriotic sonnet that idealises death in war, where a soldier's grave purifies England. Wilfred Owen's “Exposure” depicts soldiers freezing to death, destroyed by nature, not by the enemy. W. H. Auden's “The Unknown Citizen” satirizes modern conformity by presenting a man defined entirely by statistics, not by his happiness.

3.2 The Journey of Magi – T.S. Eliot

3.2.1 Introduction to the Poet, T. S. Eliot:

T. S. Eliot (1888–1965) was one of the most influential poets of the 20th century. He was born in America and moved to England in 1914. He later became a British citizen. He was a leading figure in modernist poetry. He is known for breaking traditional forms and use of fragmented, complex styles which reflect the anxiety and disillusionment in the modern world. His famous works include *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock*, *The Waste Land*, and *Four Quartets*. He also wrote plays and literary criticism. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948.

3.2.2 Introduction to the poem, “The Journey of Magi”:

T. S. Eliot's poem, “Journey of the Magi” was published in 1927. It retells the biblical story of the three wise men traveling to witness the birth of Jesus Christ. Eliot presents it from the perspective of one aged magus. The poem vividly describes the harsh physical hardships of the journey like freezing cold, lack of shelter, and exhausted camels. It explores the inner spiritual crisis caused by the journey. The speaker of the poem realizes this birth is felt like a death. It forever alienates him from his old life and beliefs.

3.2.3 The Text:

“A cold coming we had of it,
Just the worst time of the year
For a journey, and such a long journey:

The ways deep and the weather sharp,
The very dead of winter.”
And the camels galled, sore-footed, refractory,
Lying down in the melting snow.
There were times we regretted
The summer palaces on slopes, the terraces,
And the silken girls bringing sherbet.
Then the camel men cursing and grumbling
And running away, and wanting their liquor and women,
And the night-fires going out, and the lack of shelters,
And the cities hostile and the towns unfriendly
And the villages dirty and charging high prices:
A hard time we had of it.
At the end we preferred to travel all night,
Sleeping in snatches,
With the voices singing in our ears, saying
That this was all folly.
Then at dawn we came down to a temperate valley,
Wet, below the snow line, smelling of vegetation;
With a running stream and a water-mill beating the darkness,
And three trees on the low sky,
And an old white horse galloped away in the meadow.
Then we came to a tavern with vine-leaves over the lintel,
Six hands at an open door dicing for pieces of silver,
And feet kicking the empty wine-skins.

But there was no information, and so we continued
And arrived at evening, not a moment too soon
Finding the place; it was (you may say) satisfactory.
All this was a long time ago, I remember,
And I would do it again, but set down
This set down
This: were we led all that way for
Birth or Death? There was a Birth, certainly,
We had evidence and no doubt. I had seen birth and death,
But had thought they were different; this Birth was
Hard and bitter agony for us, like Death, our death.
We returned to our places, these Kingdoms,
But no longer at ease here, in the old dispensation,
With an alien people clutching their gods.
I should be glad of another death.

3.2.4 Glossary and Notes:

Magi – The three wise men who visited baby Jesus

Galled – Sore, wounded from rubbing

Refractory – Stubborn, refusing to obey

Sherbet – A sweet cold drink

Grumbling – Complaining in a low voice

Liquor – Alcoholic drink

Snatches – Short, interrupted periods

Folly – Foolishness, a stupid idea

Temperate – Mild, pleasant weather

Vegetation – Plants and greenery

Lintel – The beam above a door

Dicing – Playing dice (gambling)

Satisfactory – Acceptable, good enough

Dispensation – System of beliefs, religious order

Alien – Foreign, strange

3.2.5 Summary of the poem, “The Journey of Magi”

The speaker of this poem is one of the three wise men, but now he is an old man looking back on the difficult journey he made to see the birth of Jesus Christ. He begins by describing the terrible winter conditions they travelled through. There was freezing cold, deep snow, and long, harsh roads. Their camels suffered, became sore and refused to move. The men often regretted leaving their luxurious lives behind. They remembered their summer palaces, gardens, and the beautiful women serving them drinks. Their camel drivers also constantly complained and cursed. They ran away, as they wanted alcohol and women. The group faced many problems. Their fires went out. They had no shelter and the cities and villages they passed through were dirty and overpriced. The villagers were unfriendly with them.

When they finally reached their destination, they entered a valley that felt peaceful and alive. It was smelling with plants and spring. They passed a stream, a mill, three trees on a hill, and an old white horse. They stopped at a tavern where people were gambling and drinking, but no one gave them directions. They continued and found the birthplace in the evening. The speaker calls the experience “satisfactory,” but not grand.

After so many years, the speaker realizes that the journey has changed him forever. He questions whether they travelled to witness a birth or a death. Although it was a birth, they felt it like a painful death. For them, it was the death of their old identities and beliefs. After returning home, they were unfit with their own people and their old gods. In the end, the speaker says he would be glad for another death. It means he is ready to leave this world to which he doesn’t belong and finds peace in the next.

3.2.6 Analysis of the Poem:

“Journey of the Magi” is one of the most remarkable poems by T. S. Eliot about spiritual transformation in English literature. He published it in the same year Eliot converted to Anglicanism in 1927. The poem uses the biblical story of the three wise men as a means to explore the psychological and emotional reality of religious conversion. What makes this poem extraordinary is its humanization of a familiar tale. In this poem Eliot gives voice to an old, tired man looking back with confusion and pain.

A) Vivid Imagery and Contrasts:

Eliot has masterfully used imagery to create two contrasting worlds. The first half of the poem deals with harsh and uncomfortable images like “cold coming,” “weather sharp,” “camels galled,” “melting snow,” “night-fires going out,” “cities hostile” etc. It gives a feeling of struggle and exhaustion. Eliot here also presents nostalgic memories of luxurious life like “summer palaces,” “terraces,” “silken girls bringing sherbet.” These contrasting images highlight what the Magi has sacrificed and the cost of journey he paid.

The middle section deals their approach towards their destination. Here the imagery becomes gentle and alive. It has description of “temperate valley,” “smelling of vegetation,” “running stream,” and “water-mill beating the darkness.” This peaceful landscape is relieving but not holy.

The birthplace is described with deliberate anti-climax. Eliot hasn’t given glorious nativity scene. He fills the valley with symbolic images like “three trees” which foreshadows the crucifixion, an “old white horse” which is possibly from Revelation, and men “dicing for pieces of silver” which suggest the soldiers gambling for Christ's clothes. These details suggest that this birth is also inseparable from death.

B) The Psychological Realism:

The poem's greatest achievement lies in its psychological realism. The speaker of the poem sounds like human, not like a saint or a hero. He is tired, regretful and confused. He knows that they are leaving their comforts. He realises that “voices

singing in our ears, saying / That this was all folly.” This reality of the poem makes it powerful.

The turning point of the poem comes in the central question: “were we led all that way for / Birth or Death?” here the Magus realises that this birth functioned as a death for him. Christ's birth meant the death of the old order, the death of pagan certainties, and also the death of the Magi's former identity. This paradox that new life requires old deaths is the heart of the poem.

C) Universal Relevance:

The poem gives description of Magi’s journey to witness the birth of Christ. It is rooted in Christian imagery. It gives description of physical and spiritual journey of Magi but the poem also speaks to anyone who has undergone profound change. It captures the experience of outgrowing one's culture, family, or beliefs and feeling permanently displaced. Eliot suggests that the journey inward is harder than any physical journey and the destination never happens as per our expectations.

D) Narrative Technique and Structure:

The poem is a dramatic monologue. Eliot has mastered this form. An elderly Magus is the speaker of the poem. Decades after the event, he speaks from memory. This journey is not presented as exciting but as it happened. It is filtered and a weary reflection of an old man trying to understand what he witnessed. The structure of poem mirrors this uncertainty. The poem moves from physical description to philosophical questioning. It also moves from outer events to inner turmoil of the speaker. The irregular line lengths and lack of rhyme scheme gives a natural, conversational tone to the poem. The presentation feels authentic and unpolished, like real memory.

F) Language and Tone

The language of the poem is simple. Eliot has avoided complex vocabulary. He has used plain speech that feels ancient and wise. The repetition of “set down / This set down / This” suggests an old man struggle to articulate something that can’t be explained.

The tone of the poem shifts from complaining, as “A hard time we had of it” to philosophical question of “Birth or Death? The concluding lines of the poem, “I should be glad of another death,” gives the speaker depth and credibility.

To conclude, “Journey of the Magi” is a masterpiece in just forty-three lines. The poem refuses easy comfort or simple faith. It gives us honest testimony from someone who sacrificed everything and found not happiness but transformation. Eliot reminds us that true change makes us strangers in our own homeland. Thus, the poem becomes essential reading even after a century of its publication.

3.2.7 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) is the speaker of the poem
 - A) One of the shepherds who visited Jesus
 - B) One of the three wise men (Magi) looking back on the journey
 - C) A camel driver who accompanied the Magi
 - D) T. S. Eliot himself
- ii) The poem is published in the year
 - A) 1922
 - B) 1927
 - C) 1930
 - D) 1948
- iii) The poem is written in form.
 - A) Sonnet
 - B) Dramatic monologue
 - C) Ballad
 - D) Ode
- iv) The “old white horse” galloping away is possibly a symbol of:
 - A) Freedom
 - B) Death or conquest (from the Book of Revelation)
 - C) A lost companion
 - D) The journey home

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) What do the Magi regret leaving behind?
- ii) How do the cities and villages treat the travellers?
- iii) How does the speaker describe the experience of the Birth?
- iv) How do the Magi feel after returning to their kingdoms?

3.2.8 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) B) One of the three wise men (Magi) looking back on the journey
- ii) B) 1927
- iii) B) Dramatic monologue
- iv) B) Death or conquest

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) Summer palaces, terraces, and silken girls bringing sherbet
- ii) They are hostile, unfriendly, dirty, and charge high prices
- iii) Hard and bitter agony, like Death
- iv) No longer at ease, with an alien people clutching their gods

3.2.9 Exercises:

A) Answer following questions in detail:

- 1) Analyse the poem "Journey of the Magi" as a dramatic monologue.
- 2) Examine the various themes reflected in the poem.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) The Theme of Alienation in "The Journey of Magi"
- 2) The Physical Hardships of the Journey
- 3) The Language and Tone of the poem

3.3 Hawk Roosting - Ted Hughes

3.3.1 Introduction to the Poet, Ted Hughes:

Ted Hughes (1930–1998) was a celebrated English poet and children's writer. He served as Poet Laureate from 1984 until his death. His work is known for its unsentimental, powerful focus on the savagery and energy of the natural world. His first collection of the poems, *The Hawk in the Rain* (1957), immediately established his reputation. His tumultuous marriage to fellow poet Sylvia Plath, who died by suicide in 1963, had a long effect on his career. He later addressed his relationship in the award-winning collection *Birthday Letters* (1998).

3.2.2 Introduction to the Poem, “Hawk Roosting”:

“Hawk Roosting” a poem by Ted Hughes, is published in his 1960 collection *Lupercal*. It is written as a dramatic monologue from the perspective of a hawk. The poem offers a glimpse into the predatory mind-set of the bird. Through the hawk's voice, Hughes explores themes of power, arrogance, and the brutal, instinctual violence of nature. The hawk is presented as the centre of the universe, holding “Creation in my foot” and killing “where I please because it is all mine”. While some interpret the hawk as a symbol of a tyrant or dictator, Hughes asserted his aim to depict “Nature thinking.”

3.2.3 The Text:

I sit in the top of the wood, my eyes closed.

Inaction, no falsifying dream

Between my hooked head and hooked feet:

Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat.

The convenience of the high trees!

The air's buoyancy and the sun's ray

Are of advantage to me;

And the earth's face upward for my inspection.

My feet are locked upon the rough bark.
It took the whole of Creation
To produce my foot, my each feather:
Now I hold Creation in my foot

Or fly up, and revolve it all slowly -
I kill where I please because it is all mine.
There is no sophistry in my body:
My manners are tearing off heads -

The allotment of death.
For the one path of my flight is direct
Through the bones of the living.
No arguments assert my right:

The sun is behind me.
Nothing has changed since I began.
My eye has permitted no change.
I am going to keep things like this.

3.2.4 Glossary and Notes:

Inaction: Doing nothing; deliberate stillness.

Falsifying: Distorting or lying; the hawk rejects false dreams.

Buoyancy: The power to float or rise; the air's supportive quality.

Sophistry: Deceptive, clever argument; the hawk needs no justification.

Allotment: A portion assigned; death is the hawk's designated role.

Rehearse: To practice mentally; the hawk envisions killing even at rest.

Inspection: Close examination; the earth lies beneath the hawk's gaze.

Revolve: To spin slowly; the hawk turns the world in its flight.

Direct: Straight, unswerving; the hawk's path to its prey.

Assert: To declare forcefully; the hawk states its right without argument.

3.2.5 Summary of the poem, “Hawk Roosting”:

The poem, “Hawk Roosting” is spoken by a hawk. The poem opens with the hawk sitting at the top of a tree in a forest. quietly with its eyes closed. It is not dreaming or imagining anything. Even in rest, it is focused on hunting and survival. The hawk's body from head to its feet is designed purely for killing. Even, its sleep is filled with thoughts of perfect attacks.

The hawk says that everything in this nature exists for its convenience. The tall trees are a perfect place to sit and observe. The air helps it fly and the sun warms it. The earth below is meant for the hawk to watch and inspect. Everything in the world seems to serve the hawk's needs.

The hawk then speaks of its own perfection. It says that all of creation worked together to produce its body, each feather, each foot and each part of it. As hawk is made so perfectly, it feels that it owns everything it sees. When it flies in the air, it looks down at the world as if it possesses it completely.

The hawk then claims its right to kill because it believes everything belongs to it. There is no guilt or hesitation to it. Killing is its nature and it does not need justify itself. Its flight is aimed straight at its prey. It controls death.

The hawk feels itself as unchanging and unstoppable and the sun supports it from behind. Nothing in the world has changed since it began its reign and it intends to keep everything exactly as it is. Its eye has allowed any change or it will allow in the future.

3.3.6 Analysis of the Poem:

“Hawk Roosting” is a poem spoken by a hawk sitting at the top of a tree. Through this poem, Hughes explores themes of power, arrogance, and the raw instinct of nature.

A. Power and Control:

The most important theme in the poem is power and control. The hawk believes it is the ruler of everything it sees. It thinks that the tall trees are made for it to sit on. The air is made to help it fly and the sun is made to warm it. The earth lies below just for the hawk to watch and control. It feels that everything in the world exists only for its benefit and purpose.

The hawk also thinks it has control over life and death. It kills other animals whenever it wants. It believes everything belongs to it. This absolute power over other things is presented as something natural. The hawk does not feel guilty or wrong for it. It simply does what it was born to do. This theme makes us think about power in our own world. The hawk is not evil. It simply follows its nature without question. But this poem also makes us think about what will happen if any creature, including humans, believes the entire world exists only for them and their desires. The hawk's absolute confidence mirrors human arrogance and the dangers of unchecked power.

B. Nature as Brutal and Violent:

Many people think of nature as peaceful and beautiful. Hughes gives other side of it. In this poem, the hawk is a killer and it does not hide this fact. It says that tearing off heads is simply its way of living. It believes that there is no cruelty or evil in its actions only instinct.

Hughes wants readers to understand that nature is not always gentle. Animals kill others to survive. Death is a daily reality in the natural world. The poem forces us to see nature without romantic ideas and fantasies. This theme reminds us that life and death are always connected and part of our daily life.

The poem also shows violence as a normal part of life. The hawk does not think twice before killing. It does not make arguments and simply acts. This theme challenges human way of thinking. We debate on whether violence is right or wrong. For the hawk, there is no debate and killing is a just thing. Poet makes us to consider that violence in nature is not evil. It is part of its cycle. But it becomes painful when humans use violence with arrogance and cruelty.

C. Arrogance and Self-Importance:

The hawk is presented as extremely arrogant. It thinks it is at the centre of the universe. Everything is created for it. Its feet, its feathers, its body are made perfectly by creation and now it owns everything. This extreme self-importance is both fascinating and scary.

Through this theme, Hughes quietly criticizes human beings. They behave as if the world revolves around them. Humans use up resources, dominate other species and change the environment without thinking about other creatures. The hawk's arrogance is thus mirrors human arrogance. It makes us think whether we are any way different from this proud bird.

D. Resistance to Change:

The hawk isn't ready for change. It wants everything to stay the same forever. It says nothing has changed since it began. It also says it will not allow any change. It wants to keep things exactly as they are with itself on top and ruling everything. But readers know that change can't be avoided. Seasons change, animals evolve and the hawk itself will eventually grow old and die.

This theme reflects a human fear of change. They want to hold onto power and comfort. They have fear losing what they owe. The hawk's desire to freeze time is impossible and impractical.

E. Perfection and Right to Rule:

The hawk believes it has the right to rule and kill, as it was made so perfectly. Every part of its body, feather, every claw etc. are created exactly perfect. It feels that it deserves to control everything.

This theme can be related to human beings. We use ideas of superiority to justify our domination over other human beings or creatures. Throughout history we see people claim superiority based on caste, creed and race. They think they are better than others because of their race, their country, their intelligence, or their culture. They use thus excuse to take power. Here in the poem, hawk's such logic exposes how dangerous this thinking can be. The poem holds up a mirror and forces us to see the predator that lives not only in the forest but also within.

3.3.7 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) I kill where I please because
 - A) I am hungry
 - B) it is all mine
 - C) I am the strongest
 - D) nature made me do it
- ii) is behind the hawk.
 - A) The forest
 - B) Other birds
 - C) The sun
 - D) The moon
- iii) The poem "Hawk Roosting" is published in the year
 - A) 1957
 - B) 1960
 - C) 1965
 - D) 1970
- iv) "The allotment of death" in the poem means
 - A) death happens by accident
 - B) death is something the hawk controls and distributes
 - C) death comes to everyone equally
 - D) death is avoided by the hawk

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) Who is the speaker of the poem?
- ii) What are the hawk's feet locked upon?
- iii) What does the hawk say it now holds?
- iv) What is the hawk doing at the beginning of the poem?

3.3.8 Answers to check your progress

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) B) it is all mine
- ii) C) The sun
- iii) B) 1960
- iv) B) Death is something the hawk controls and distributes

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) A hawk sitting at the top of a tree
- ii) The rough bark
- iii) Creation in its foot
- iv) Sitting with its eyes closed

3.3.9 Exercises:

A) Answer the following questions in details:

- 1) Critically appreciate the poem in your own words.
- 2) Write a detailed note on various themes in the poem.
- 3) Portray Hawk in your own words.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) Themes of Power and Control
- 2) Violence in Nature
- 3) Hawk as a Predator

3.4 Do not go gentle into that good night – Dylan Thomas

3.4.1 Introduction to the Poet, Dylan Thomas:

Dylan Thomas (1914-1953) was a prominent Welsh poet and writer. He is known for his powerful and lyrical style. He has produced emotionally charged works featuring rich imagery and complex rhythms. “Do not go gentle into that good

night” and “And death shall have no dominion” are his most famous poems. He also gained reputation for his radio play *Under Milk Wood*. Thomas was also celebrated for his dynamic public readings. He died during a poetry tour in New York City at the age of 39.

3.4.2 Introduction to the Poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night”:

“Do not go gentle into that good night” is written by Dylan Thomas in 1951. It is written in a villanelle form. It is one of his most famous poems addressed to his dying father. It makes a passionate appeal to his dying father to fight against death or the end of life. Through its repeating refrains, the poem describes different types of men, wise, good, wild, and grave who all rage against dying. The central theme is the poem is human instinct to fight for life. It also urges readers to “burn and rave” against the coming of death.

3.4.3 The Text:

Do not go gentle into that good night,
Old age should burn and rave at close of day;
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Though wise men at their end know dark is right,
Because their words had forked no lightning they
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Good men, the last wave by, crying how bright
Their frail deeds might have danced in a green bay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight,
And learn, too late, they grieved it on its way,
Do not go gentle into that good night.

Grave men, near death, who see with blinding sight
Blind eyes could blaze like meteors and be gay,
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

And you, my father, there on the sad height,
Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears, I pray.
Do not go gentle into that good night.
Rage, rage against the dying of the light.

3.4.4 Glossary and Notes:

Gentle: Peacefully, without resistance.

Rave: To rage, fight, or protest wildly.

Forked: Split or divided (like lightning), meaning “made a striking impact.”

Deeds: Actions or acts.

Bay: A body of water enclosed by land (symbolizing life).

Grieved: Mourned or felt sorrow for.

Grave: Serious or solemn; also a pun on “tomb.”

Blinding: So bright it impairs vision; also refers to literal blindness.

Blaze: To burn or shine brightly.

Fierce: Intense and aggressive.

3.4.5 Summary of the poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night”:

This poem is a desperate plea by a son to his dying father. It urges him to fight against death with all his strength. The speaker of the poem argues that no matter what kind of life a person has lived; they should resist the end passionately.

The poem follows a strict structure called a villanelle. It repeats two lines: “Do not go gentle into that good night” and “Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” Here, “that good night” and “the dying of the light” are metaphors used for death. The speaker rejects peaceful acceptance of death.

The speaker describes four different types of men who all refuse to die quietly. Wise men know death is natural but because they haven't achieved everything with their words so they still fight. Good men realise at the end that their kind deeds could have shone brighter so they rage against death. Wild men lived joyfully and chasing

excitement but regret how quickly life passed and they fight to hold on. Grave men gain a new clarity near death and they too resist.

After giving these examples, the speaker finally addresses his father in the last stanza. He calls to him who is at the very edge of life. He begs his father to show fierce emotion. Asks him to cry and fight, not worrying about those tears are a curse or a blessing. He doesn't want his father to surrender quietly to death. He wants him to be defiant till the last moment. Thus, the poem is a powerful cry of pain of losing someone.

3.4.6 Analysis of the Poem:

A) Major Themes of the Poem:

The poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night” written by Dylan Thomas to his dying father, explores several profound themes centred on mortality, human emotion, and the nature of existence.

The most dominant theme is **the defiance of death**. Unlike traditional poetry that often accepts death peacefully, the poet demands resistance. The repeated refrain, “Rage, rage against the dying of the light,” looks at death as an enemy that has to be fought with. This theme suggests that life is so precious. One should never surrender to death quietly, regardless of age or any circumstance. The poem can't be seen as resistance or denial of reality but as a passionate affirmation of life's value.

Closely related to above theme is the theme of **the regret of unfulfilled potential**. By the examples of four types of men, the poet explores how people face death with sorrow and what they failed to achieve and want to fulfil it. Wise men regret that their words “forked no lightning.” It means they never made a brilliant impact that they hoped for. Good men realise their kind deeds are “frail” and they could have shone brighter. Wild men feel life has passed quickly and they couldn't hold onto joy. Even grave men, with “blinding sight,” understand the intensity they could have shown. Death makes them aware about wasted opportunities.

The poem also explores **the complexity of human experience** through these four types of men. By including wise, good, wild, and grave men, the poet suggests that no single path through life makes us to accept death quietly. Intellectual achievement, moral goodness, adventurous living, and serious contemplation of all

these four types of men lead to the same final resistance. This finding of the poet strengthens the poem's message. It asks us to fight against the death.

Another significant theme is **light versus darkness**. It is developed through extended metaphor. “Light” represents life, consciousness, vitality, and all that is related to our existence. On the other hand, “Dark” and “night” symbolise death and the end of experience. This contrasting images creates the poem's central tension. At the end of the poem, the poet urges his father to cling to light, when the darkness approaches.

Final theme of the poem deals with **love and grief in the face of loss**. The last stanza of the poem reveals poet’s personal motivation behind his previous philosophical argument. He asks his father to “Curse, bless, me now with your fierce tears.” It shows that the rage against death is ultimately an expression of love. The speaker can’t see his father dying quietly. He wants him to fight, to show emotion, to remain fiercely alive until the very end. This passionate appeal transforms the poem from abstract meditation into a heartbroken plea.

B) Form of the poem:

“Do not go gentle into that good night” is written in a highly structured poetic form called the **villanelle**. This is a French verse form. It is traditionally used for pastoral poems. It consists of 19 lines divided into five tercets (three-line stanzas) followed by a final quatrain (four-line stanza).

The villanelle is also defined by its intricate pattern of repetition. The poem, “Do not go gentle into that good night” uses two repeating refrains: “Do not go gentle into that good night,” and “Rage, rage against the dying of the light.” This repetitive structure serves the poem's emotional purpose. It makes desperate plea to resist death. By choosing such a form, Thomas has demonstrated his mastery over language while conveying raw emotion.

3.4.7 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) is the poetic form of “Do not go gentle into that good night”?
 - a) Sonnet
 - b) Haiku
 - c) Villanelle
 - d) Free verse
- ii) The poem is addressed to
 - a) The speaker's mother
 - b) The speaker's dying father
 - c) The speaker's wife
 - d) The speaker himself
- iii) The speaker asks his father to both curse and bless him. This suggests:
.....
 - a) The speaker is confused
 - b) Any emotion, even anger, is better than passive acceptance
 - c) The father is angry at his son
 - d) The speaker wants punishment
- iv) The phrase “dying of the light” is a metaphor for:
 - a) Sunset
 - b) Death
 - c) Blindness
 - d) Failure

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) How many types of men does the speaker describe before addressing his father?
- ii) What year was this poem written?
- iii) Which line is repeated throughout the poem?
- iv) How does the speaker want his father to cry?

3.4.8 Answers to check your progress:

- i) c) Villanelle
- ii) b) The speaker's dying father

- iii) b) Any emotion, even anger, is better than passive acceptance
- iv) b) Death

B) Answer the following question in one word/phrase/sentence:

- i) Four (wise, good, wild, and grave men)
- ii) 1951
- iii) “Rage, rage against the dying of the light”
- iv) With fierce tears

3.4.9 Exercises:

A) Answer the following questions in detail:

- 1) Discuss the theme of regret and unfulfilled potential as presented through the four types of men in the poem.
- 2) Analyse the theme of defiance against death in “Do not go gentle into that good night.”

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) The Villanelle Form of the Poem
- 2) The Significance of Light and Darkness Imagery
- 3) Poet’s father

3.5 The Soldier- Rupert Brooke

3.5.1 Introduction to the Poet, Rupert Brooke:

Rupert Brooke (1887-1915) was an English poet. He is known for his idealistic war poetry written during the early years of World War I. He was born in Rugby. He studied at Cambridge and became part of the Bloomsbury Group literary circle. His got poetic reputation with the publication of his five “War Sonnets.” Out of these sonnets is “The Soldier” which expresses patriotic enthusiasm for battle. But Brooke never fought any combat. He died from sepsis at the age 27. He was buried on the Greek island of Skyros. Later he became a symbol of the “young romantic war poet.”

3.5.2 Introduction to the Poem, “The Soldier”:

“The Soldier” is a patriotic sonnet written by Rupert Brooke in the year, 1914 at the start of World War I. It reflects the idealistic pre-war attitude of the poet and his love for England. The poem expresses an idealized and romantic view of dying for one's country. The speaker imagines dying in a foreign land during a war and his body becoming a piece of England forever. This poem romanticises death as noble and beautiful for one's country.

3.5.3 The Text:

If I should die, think only this of me:
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam;
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.
And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

3.5.4 Glossary and Notes:

Concealed – Hidden; buried out of sight.

Dust – Poetic term for the human body after death.

Bore – Gave birth to; created.

Roam – To wander freely.

Blest – Blessed; made holy.

Pulse – Heartbeat; vital energy.

Eternal – Lasting forever.

Shed away – Removed or discarded.

Learnt – Learned; acquired.

Gentleness – Kindness and tenderness.

3.5.5 Summary of the poem, “The Soldier”:

The speaker of the poem imagines his own death in a foreign land during battle. He says in the beginning, if he dies, people should remember only one thing about him that some corner of a foreign battlefield will become “for ever England” because his body lies there. He calls to buried remains of his body as “richer dust.” According to him, they will enrich the foreign soil because he was created and shaped by England.

The speaker then describes how England gave him birth, shaped his character, made him aware of beauty. It also allowed him to love flowers and wander through its countryside. He says, his body belongs to England because breathed English air, washed by English rivers and blessed by the English sun.

In the second part of the poem, the speaker turns to his soul. He believes that after death, his heart will be purified of “all evil,” and will become part of the “eternal mind.” After death, he will give back to the universe all the wonderful things that England gave him during his life. These things include England's beautiful sights and sounds, happy dreams like daytime, laughter learned from friends, and the quality of gentleness. He believes his soul will find peace forever in “an English heaven.”

Thus, the poet portrays death in battle not as tragic, but as noble and meaningful. He idealizes both England as a perfect, peaceful land and the sacrifice of dying for one's country.

3.5.6 Analysis of the Poem:

A) Themes:

“Patriotism and Love for England” is the dominant theme of this poem. Rupert Brooke portrays England as an almost divine country and a nurturing force. The speaker's identity and body are completely shaped by England. He was “borne, shaped, made aware” by her. This deep love for his country transforms death in battle into something meaningful. The repeated use of “England” and “English,” seven times in fourteen lines, emphasizes this patriotism and Love for England.

“Immortality through Sacrifice” is another central theme of this poem. The speaker believes that his death for England will give him eternal life. He says his body will enrich the foreign soil, making it “for ever England.” His soul will return to “the eternal mind,” and will give back all the gifts that England has given him. He sees death not an end but a transformation. The soldier becomes part of something permanent and sacred for his nation.

The theme of **“Idealization of Death in War”** reflects the early WWI attitude instead of the horrors of trench warfare. The poet presents death in battle as beautiful and noble. The poem doesn't depict blood, pain, or fear but only peaceful transformation. He says the soldier's heart sheds “all evil,” which suggests dying for country purifies the soul.

The idea, **“England as Paradise”** is presented throughout the poem. The country is described through gentle, pastoral imagery of flowers, rivers, suns, sights, sounds, dreams, laughter, and gentleness. It is depicted as a land of peace and beauty. Even heaven itself becomes “English” in the final line. It suggests England's perfection is extended to the afterlife.

The theme of **“The Relationship Between Identity and Place”** explores how a person's homeland shapes their very identity and being. The speaker describes how England gave him birth, shaped his character, made him aware of beauty. He says his body belongs to England because he breathed English air, washed by English rivers and blessed by the English sun. As a result, the speaker cannot imagine himself apart from England. This thing makes dying abroad meaningful.

B) Form:

The poem, “The Soldier” is an **Italian or Petrarchan sonnet**. This sonnet form is significant because it traditionally express deep love and present poem expresses poet’s love for his country.

The poem consists of 14 lines and it is divided into an octave (first eight lines) and a sestet (final six lines). The **octave** has the rhyme scheme **ABABCD CD**. It focuses on the physical aspect of death. It develops one idea that the dead soldier's body makes the foreign field forever English because England created his body. The rhyme creates a sense of completeness and harmony. It mirrors the peaceful acceptance of death.

The **sestet** follows the rhyme scheme **EFGEFG**. Its focus shifts from the body to the soul or spirit. Here, the speaker discusses what happens after death. He imagines the heart giving back to eternity all the gifts received from England.

The poem uses **iambic pentameter**, consisting of five pairs of unstressed and stressed syllables per line. This creates a rhythmic quality that suits the poem's tone.

The **volta** or turn occurs in the poem between the octave and sestet. It is marked by the word “And.” This transition moves the poem from the body in the ground to the soul in eternity.

This structure's discipline and beauty reflect the poem's idealized vision of death in war as meaningful and even beautiful. Thus, by using sonnet form, Brooke equates love for England with the most profound personal love.

3.5.7 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) The poem, “The Soldier” is part of Collection.
 - a) Poems Before War
 - b) War Sonnets
 - c) 1914 and Other Poems
 - d) The War Poems
- ii) is the poetic form of “The Soldier.”
 - a) Villanelle
 - b) English sonnet
 - c) Italian sonnet
 - d) Free verse

- iii) The poem describes death in battle as:
 - a) Tragic and meaningless b) Painful and horrifying
 - c) Noble and beautiful d) Quick and forgotten
- iv) The poem was written in the year
 - a) 1917 b) 1914
 - c) 1918 d) 1915

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence

- i) Who wrote the poem “The Soldier”?
- ii) How many lines does the poem contain?
- iii) What does the speaker call to his buried body?
- iv) What does the speaker imagine happening to his body in a foreign field?

3.5.8 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) d) The War Poems
- ii) c) Italian sonnet
- iii) c) Noble and beautiful
- iv) b) 1914

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence

- i) Rupert Brooke
- ii) 14
- iii) richer dust
- iv) It will make that corner “for ever England.”

3.5.9 Exercises:

A) Answer the following questions in detail:

- 1) Analyse in detail the theme of patriotism reflected in the poem in “The Soldier.”
- 2) Discuss idealization of death in war as reflected in the poem in “The Soldier.”

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) The Theme of Immortality Through Sacrifice
- 2) The Form of the Poem
- 3) The Relationship Between Identity and Place

3.6 Exposure- Wilfred Owen

3.6.1 Introduction to the Poet:

Wilfred Owen (1893-1918) was one of the most significant English poets of World War I. He is known for realistic portrayals of trench warfare. Unlike earlier war poet who celebrated patriotism, Owen exposed the horror, pity, and futility of war. His most famous poems include “Dulce et Decorum Est” and “Anthem for Doomed Youth.” He was killed in action just one week before the armistice in November 1918 at the age of 25. His powerful, compassionate poetry became influential after his death. It shaped modern perceptions on war's true nature.

3.6.2 Introduction to the Poem, “Exposure”:

“Exposure” is a powerful war poem by Wilfred Owen. It was written in 1917-1918 during his service in World War I. This poem describes soldiers waiting in freezing trenches and slowly dying from the bitter cold rather than enemy action. The poem portrays nature as an enemy. It shows that the wind, frost, and snow are more deadly than bullets. Owen also shows the psychological torment of waiting and the hallucinations from exhaustion. The poem exposes the true horror of war. It shows it not as glorious battle but slow death in the merciless cold.

3.6.3 The Text:

Our brains ache, in the merciless iced east winds that knive us . . .
Wearied we keep awake because the night is silent . . .
Low drooping flares confuse our memory of the salient . . .
Worried by silence, sentries whisper, curious, nervous,
 But nothing happens.

Watching, we hear the mad gusts tugging on the wire,
Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.
Northward, incessantly, the flickering gunnery rumbles,
Far off, like a dull rumour of some other war.
 What are we doing here?

The poignant misery of dawn begins to grow . . .
We only know war lasts, rain soaks, and clouds sag stormy.
Dawn massing in the east her melancholy army
Attacks once more in ranks on shivering ranks of grey,
 But nothing happens.

Sudden successive flights of bullets streak the silence.
Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow,
With sidelong flowing flakes that flock, pause, and renew,
We watch them wandering up and down the wind's nonchalance,
 But nothing happens.

Pale flakes with fingering stealth come feeling for our faces—
We cringe in holes, back on forgotten dreams, and stare, snow-dazed,
Deep into grassier ditches. So we drowse, sun-dozed,
Littered with blossoms trickling where the blackbird fusses.
 Is it that we are dying?

Slowly our ghosts drag home: glimpsing the sunk fires, glozed
With crusted dark-red jewels; crickets jingle there;
For hours the innocent mice rejoice: the house is theirs;
Shutters and doors, all closed: on us the doors are closed,—
 We turn back to our dying.

Since we believe not otherwise can kind fires burn;
Now ever suns smile true on child, or field, or fruit.
For God's invincible spring our love is made afraid;
Therefore, not loath, we lie out here; therefore were born,
For love of God seems dying.

To-night, this frost will fasten on this mud and us,
Shrivelling many hands, and puckering foreheads crisp.
The burying-party, picks and shovels in shaking grasp,
Pause over half-known faces. All their eyes are ice,
But nothing happens.

3.6.4 Glossary and Notes:

Salient – A battlefield feature that juts out into enemy territory.

Sentries – Soldiers standing guard.

Gusts – Sudden strong rushes of wind.

Brambles – Prickly bushes or thorny shrubs.

Incessantly – Without stopping; continuously.

Gunnery – The firing of heavy guns.

Poignant – Painfully sharp; deeply moving.

Melancholy – Deep sadness or depression.

Nonchalance – Casual unconcern; indifference.

Stealth – Slow, careful, secret movement.

Cringe – To bend in fear or shrink away.

Drowse – To fall into a light sleep.

Glozed – Made to look shiny or glossy.

Shrivelling – Shrinking and wrinkling from cold.

3.6.5 Summary of the poem, “Exposure”:

The poem, “Exposure” describes the horrific experience of soldiers waiting in the freezing trenches of World War I. They are slowly dying from the bitter cold rather than enemy action.

The poem begins with soldiers suffering in the harsh east wind. They are exhausted but can’t sleep because the silent night makes them anxious. Flares light up the sky. It confuses their memory of the battlefield. Sentries whisper nervously to each other but no enemy attack happens. This idea, that “nothing happens,” repeats throughout the poem. It emphasises agony of waiting.

The soldiers listen to the wind passing through the barbed wire. It sounds likedying men caught in it. In the distance, they hear gunfire makes them feel that some other war is happening elsewhere. They begin to question why they are there at all.

The dawn also brings more misery. The soldiers realise that war lasts forever. The rain soaks them constantly and stormy clouds never clear the sky. The morning light spreads across the sky. It feels like an army of grey shadows marching toward them but no enemy appears.

Occasionally, bullets break the silence. Here Owen makes a shocking revelation that the bullets are less dangerous than the freezing air filled with snow. The snowflakes become the real enemy of them. The soldiers watch the snow drifting aimlessly in the air.

The snow creeps toward their faces quietly. The soldiers crouch in their holes. They begin hallucinating. They dream of warm summer days with grass and flowers. They become confused and wonder if they are actually dying.

Their minds drift them to homeward. They imagine warm houses with fires burning, crickets chirping around, and mice enjoying the warmth. But the doors are closed to them and they cannot return home. They have to return back to the frozen trenches and face their dying in it.

The soldiers then can no longer believe in warmth or happiness. They wonder if God’s love and the promise of spring are also dying. They lie in the cold and feel abandoned even by faith.

In the final stanza, the frost freezes the mud and their bodies. It is slowly killing them. Burial parties with shovel will later pause over faces and they will half-recognize their eyes frozen like ice. And still, nothing happens. No battle comes and no glorious death to the soldiers but only slow, unnoticed death in the merciless cold.

3.6.6 Analysis of the Poem, “Exposure”:

This poem, “Exposure,” by Wilfred Owen captures the horror of waiting in the frozen trenches of World War I. Unlike other poems of heroic charge and patriotism, it describes the soul-destroying anticipation of death, where the greatest torment is not battle but endless waiting.

The central idea of the poem revolves around **the erosion of meaning and the spiritual death** that precedes soldier’s death. They go through not only the merciless cold where winds “knife us,” but also the crushing weight of silence and uncertainty. They question their very existence and being on the battlefield with the haunting line “What are we doing here?” This mental crisis deepens when they contrast their lifeless reality with warm memories of home, and grassier ditches. It creates a painful longing for a world they have left behind. The refrain “But nothing happens” becomes a bleak mocking chorus. It shows that the anticipated battle never happens and they waiting for slow death in trench.

Owen has masterfully used **poetic devices** to convey the torment of soldiers. Powerful imagery contrasts war with peace. “flickering gunnery” contrasts against “blossoms trickling,” and the “ranks on shivering ranks of grey” against visions of “sun-dozed” fields. This contrast shows their present horror as unbearable. Personification transforms nature into an active enemy. The dawn is a “melancholy army” that “Attacks.” The snowflakes possess “fingering stealth” seeking out faces and frost will “fasten on this mud and us.” These natural things align with the war. They compound misery to soldiers than offering a comfort.

Similes connect sounds to deeper suffering of soldiers. The wind tugging wire sounds is “Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles.” It transforms an ordinary sound into a vision of torture. Far-off guns rumble “Like a dull rumour of some other war” which creates a terrifying detachment from normal life. The final image of the burying-party with “eyes... ice” staring at half-known faces, followed by the refrain “But nothing happens,” gives the ultimate verdict. The real enemy is

not the opposing army but the cold, the silence, and the terrible waiting which slowly kills the soul before the body of the soldiers.

3.6.7 Check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) The line “Like twitching agonies of men among its brambles” is an example of:
 - A) Metaphor
 - B) Simile
 - C) Personification
 - D) Hyperbole
- ii) Dawn is described as a “melancholy army” that “Attacks.” This is an example of:
 - A) Simile
 - B) Oxymoron
 - C) Personification
 - D) Alliteration
- iii) The phrase “the wind's nonchalance” suggests:
 - A) The wind is friendly
 - B) Nature is indifferent to human suffering
 - C) The wind is singing
 - D) The soldiers enjoy the breeze
- iv) According to the poem, what is “Less deadly than the air that shudders black with snow”?
 - A) The enemy bullets
 - B) The silence of the night
 - C) The memories of home
 - D) The distant gunnery

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence

- i) What is the predominant setting of the poem?
- ii) Which phrase is repeated throughout the poem to emphasize futility?
- iii) What do the soldiers question in the line “What are we doing here?”
- iv) What will the frost do “To-night” according to the poem?

3.6.8 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) B) Simile
- ii) C) Personification
- iii) B) Nature is indifferent to human suffering
- iv) A) The enemy bullets

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence

- i) A frozen trench in winter
- ii) “But nothing happens”
- iii) The purpose and meaning of their presence
- iv) “fasten on this mud and us”

3.6.9 Exercises:

A) Answer the following questions in detail:

- 1) Examine the poet's use of nature imagery in the poem.
- 2) Discuss the theme of spiritual crisis and psychological deterioration in the poem.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) The Profound Existential Horror of Waiting
- 2) Poetic Devices
- 3) Futility Was as Reflected in The Poem

3.7 "The Unknown Citizen" – W. H. Auden

3.7.1 Introduction to the Poet, W. H. Auden:

Born in York, England, Wystan Hugh Auden (1907-1973) was one of the most influential poets of the twentieth century. He emerged as a leading literary voice in the 1930s. He is known for his intellectual depth, technical mastery, and engagement with political and moral issues. His early work reflects left-wing concerns and psychological insight and the later poetry explores Christian themes and personal relationships. His versatility spanned verse forms, from lyrical poems to longer works like "The Age of Anxiety." He in collaboration with Christopher Isherwood, wrote plays and famous poems including "Funeral Blues" and "Musée des Beaux Arts." In 1946, he became an American citizen.

3.7.2 Introduction to the Poem, "The Unknown Citizen":

"The Unknown Citizen" (1939) is a satirical poem by W. H. Auden. It criticises modern society's obsession with conformity, statistics, and bureaucratic definitions of human worth. It is an observation of an ordinary man whose entire existence is meant only for government records, census data, and social metrics. The poem celebrates this ordinary man as a model citizen because he has met all social expectations. He worked properly and never caused any trouble but he is happy or truly lived his life is never considered. Thus the poem offers a powerful commentary on dehumanization in modern society.

3.7.3 The Text:

He was found by the Bureau of Statistics to be
One against whom there was no official complaint,
And all the reports on his conduct agree
That, in the modern sense of an old-fashioned word, he was a saint,
For in everything he did he served the Greater Community.
Except for the War till the day he retired
He worked in a factory and never got fired,
But satisfied his employers, Fudge Motors Inc.

Yet he wasn't a scab or odd in his views,
For his Union reports that he paid his dues,
(Our report on his Union shows it was sound)
And our Social Psychology workers found
That he was popular with his mates and liked a drink.
The Press are convinced that he bought a paper every day
And that his reactions to advertisements were normal in every way.
Policies taken out in his name prove that he was fully insured,
And his Health-card shows he was once in hospital but left it cured.
Both Producers Research and High-Grade Living declare
He was fully sensible to the advantages of the Instalment Plan
And had everything necessary to the Modern Man,
A phonograph, a radio, a car and a frigidaire.
Our researchers into Public Opinion are content
That he held the proper opinions for the time of year;
When there was peace, he was for peace: when there was war, he went.
He was married and added five children to the population,
Which our Eugenist says was the right number for a parent of his generation.
And our teachers report that he never interfered with their education.
Was he free? Was he happy? The question is absurd:
Had anything been wrong, we should certainly have heard.

3.7.4 Glossary and Notes:

Bureau - A government department or office that collects information

Statistics - Facts and data expressed in numbers

Official - Approved or coming from an authority

Complaint - An expression of dissatisfaction or problem

Conduct - A person's behaviour or actions

Saint - A very good and virtuous person

Community - A group of people living together in society

Psychology - The study of the human mind

Policies - Insurance contracts or official plans

Instalment Plan - A system of paying for goods in regular small payments

Eugenist - A person who studies improving the human population through controlled breeding

Absurd - Completely ridiculous or unreasonable

3.7.5 Summary of the poem, “The Unknown Citizen”:

This poem presents the life story of an ordinary man. It is told entirely through official records and reports from various government departments and organizations. The speaker of the poem is not a person but the collective voice of society's institutions like the state, businesses, research organizations, and public opinion experts etc.

The man lived a completely ordinary life. He worked at the same job from the time he finished military service till he retired. His employers were always satisfied with him. He was not a troublemaker. He was friendly person with his co-workers. He followed all the rules. He paid his membership fees to his labour union and behaved as per their expectation.

Other various agencies also confirmed that he was a normal consumer. He bought a newspaper daily. He responded to advertisements in a desired way. He had all the modern possessions like a record player, a radio, a car, and a refrigerator. He bought all those things on instalments which showed he was well aware of modern ways of purchase. He also maintained good health and had taken insurance coverage.

His opinions matched with popular ones. He supported peace when the country was at peace. He accepted the war when it came. He married and had five children. It

is the right number of children for someone of his background. He did not interfere with his children's schooling and never objected to the teachers.

But the end of the poem raises two simple but important questions: “Was this man free? Was he happy?” But the speaker at same time dismisses these questions and says if anything had been wrong with his life, the various monitoring agencies would certainly have reported it.

3.7.6 Analysis of the Poem:

W. H. Auden's “The Unknown Citizen” is a powerful satirical poem. It criticizes how modern society values people only through statistics and official records. The poem presents the life of an ordinary man as seen entirely through the eyes of various government departments, businesses, and research organizations. The speaker of the poem is not a grieving friend or family member but the collective voice of all these agencies who value the person.

According to every agency or institution that monitored him, the man was perfect. Government records show no complaints were against him. His employers at Fudge Motors Inc. were completely happy with his work till his retirement. His union also confirms he paid his dues and fees regularly. Social psychologists also found he was popular with his co-workers. He enjoyed an occasional drink like a normal person. The press noted he bought a newspaper daily and responded to advertisements in a normal way. He had proper insurance policy and good health records. He owned all required the modern possessions of his time like phonograph, radio, car, and refrigerator. His opinions also matched the times. He supported peace during peacetime and war when war came. He married and had five children, the correct number of children for someone of his generation. He was a model citizen by every measurable standard.

However, the poem's true power and satire lie in what it does not say to us. We are unaware about the man's name, his personal thoughts, his dreams, his fears, or his happiness. We do not know whether he loved his wife or enjoyed his children's company. We also don't know about his life at his work. The man remains completely unknown as a human being to us. He is known or defined only through files, forms, and statistics. The list of his modern possessions like radio, car, and

refrigerator, defines his success. It tells about his material success but says nothing about his inner life.

The final criticises his existence. The speaker raises two questions “Was he free? Was he happy?” He also says that if anything had been wrong the authorities would have reported it. This thing reveals that society does not consider freedom and happiness as important measures of a good life. What is important that a person should follow rules and never any cause trouble. Thus the poem suggests that modern society has gone away from what truly makes one’s life meaningful.

Through this poem, Auden warns against a world which measures human worth only by external achievements. Thus the poem, “Unknown Citizen” represents millions of people who live quiet, conforming lives but remain invisible as individuals. The title of the poem suggests same thing about the person who is never fully known to us and remained an Unknown Citizen in official records. The poem reminds us true humanity cannot be captured in any government report or statistical record.

3.7.7 Check your progress

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

- i) According to Social Psychology workers, the citizen was:
 - A) Lonely and disliked
 - B) Popular with his mates and liked a drink
 - C) Always arguing with co-workers
 - D) A troublemaker
- ii) Which of the following possessions did the citizen not own according to the poem?
 - A) A phonograph
 - B) A radio
 - C) A car
 - D) A television

iii) What two questions are asked at the end of the poem?

A) “Did he work hard? Did he save money?”

B) “Was he loved? Did he love in return?”

C) “Was he free? Was he happy?”

D) “Did he suffer? Did he complain?”

iv) What does his Health-card show?

A) He was never sick

B) He was once in hospital but left it cured

C) He died in the hospital

D) He avoided doctors

B) Answer the following questions in one word/phrase/sentence

i) According to the Bureau of Statistics, what was true about the citizen?

ii) Where did the citizen work until he retired?

iii) What do the insurance policies taken out in his name prove?

iv) How many children did the citizen add to the population?

3.7.8 Answers to check your progress:

A) Choose the correct answer from the options given below each question:

i) B) Popular with his mates and liked a drink

ii) D) A television

iii) C) “Was he free? Was he happy?”

iv) B) He was once in hospital but left it cured

B) Answer the following question in one word/phrase/sentence

i) There was no official complaint against him

ii) A factory called Fudge Motors Inc.

iii) He was fully insured

iv) Five

3.7.9 Exercises

A) Answer the following questions in detail:

- 1) Analyse the use of irony and satire in the poem.
- 2) Examine the role of institutions and authority in the poem.

B) Write short notes on the following:

- 1) The significance of the poem's final lines: "Was he free? Was he happy?"
- 2) The Ideal Citizen by Official Standards

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Module- IV : Drama

Look Back In Anger- John Osborne

Contents

4.0 Objectives:

After studying this Module you will be able to understand:

1. The Political and social scenario in England after the Second World War and how it influenced British drama.
2. To find the reflection of political and social scenario in John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger*
3. The Angry Young Man Movement and John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger*
4. The plot, structure, themes and characters in John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger*.

4.1 Introduction:

4.2 A brief history of British Drama

4.3 A brief account of John Osborne

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4.1 Introduction

The significance and reception of John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* was first performed on 8th May, 1956 at the Royal Court Theatre in London. The play became an important turning point in the history of modern British drama. Its appearance marked a clear change from the traditional and comfortable plays that were popular on the British stage at that time.

The play presented the life of Jimmy Porter, a young, educated but frustrated man. Jimmy was angry with society, politics, class differences and the dullness of everyday life. His anger represented the dissatisfaction of many young people in post-war Britain. Osborne gave a voice to a generation that felt disappointed with the social and political conditions of the country.

The language of the play was also different from the polite language generally used on the stage. Jimmy used strong, direct and sometimes rude language. His conversations with Alison, Cliff and Helena were full of anger, humour, pain and emotional conflict. The play therefore appeared more realistic and closer to ordinary life.

The early reception of the play was mixed but highly significant. Some critics disliked its aggressive language, unpleasant characters and lack of a traditional heroic figure. They felt that Jimmy was rude, selfish and difficult to admire. However, many young theatre-goers and critics welcomed the play because it expressed feelings that were common among young people of that time.

The success of *Look Back in Anger* also helped to establish John Osborne as an important new dramatist. Osborne and other writers of his generation came to be associated with the “Angry Young Men” movement. The play also helped the Royal Court Theatre become an important center for new and experimental British drama.

Thus, *Look Back in Anger* was significant not simply because it was successful, but because it changed the subject, language and tone of British theatre. It brought ordinary people, social frustration, class conflict and personal anger to the center of the stage. Its first production is therefore regarded as an important landmark in the development of modern British drama.

4.2 A brief history of British drama

The history of English drama began in the medieval period. The medieval period is from 10th century to 15th century. English drama has roots in Church rituals. It began primarily with religious plays. The religious plays like mystery plays, miracle and morality plays were performed in the churches and at market places. In the Elizabethan period,(16th century) English drama found its solid and proper shape under the influence of Greek drama .It is beyond doubt that English drama flourished in Elizabethan times and it was the golden period of English drama. William Shakespeare, the master of dramatic craft, truly left his permanent mark as greatest dramatist of all time. Christopher Marlow and William Shakespeare wrote tragedy, comedy and historical plays which were supported by the groundlings. The public theatre became very popular among the people. In the Jacobean period (17th century) drama became darker and more complicated. Ben Johnson and John Webster wrote popular satirical and revenge plays. In the Restoration period, after 1660 theaters were opened by King Charles II. The comedy of manners became very popular. It dealt with the behavior, relationships and social life of the upper classes. William Congreve wrote about fashionable society with wit and fashion. In the 18th century drama became more moral and realistic. The sentimental comedy and domestic tragedy became more important. In the 19th century Oscar Wilde was an important dramatist who wrote witty comedies. Bernard Shaw introduced intellectual and social drama. In the early 20th century twentieth century drama reflects realism and modernism. The class conflict, and social issues were at the center and it is important to see the exploration of psychology in the plays. John Osborne with his *Look Back*

in Anger changed the post-war British drama. It expresses the frustration of the young generation and gave rise to the term Angry Young Men. The contemporary drama deals with a great variety of subjects which mainly includes identity, race, gender politics, class, migration, family relationships and social injustice. With the advent of technology, modern dramatists are using experimental forms, multimedia and innovative dramatic techniques.

4.3 A brief account of John Osborne

John Osborne was born in 1929 in the suburb of London. His father, Godfrey Osborne, was a commercial artist and his mother, Nellie Beatrice, was a bar-maid. His father died when he was 12 years old and the death of father had a profound impact on him. He lived with his mother in London. His childhood was difficult and troublesome. He was sent to boarding school in the west of England and he was not happy there. He was expelled from school for his misbehavior with the headmaster and that was the end of his education in 1949.

John Osborne wrote many plays which received appreciation and applause. He got considerable popularity as a dramatist. With *Look Back in Anger* and other plays, John Osborne became famous as an angry young man. The first night of *Look Back in Anger* at the Royal Court Theater was a turning point in the English Theatre. John Osborne made a profound impact on his generation. This also helped other dramatists to produce the works. Osborne received many awards and recognition from different bodies. He also made his impact on films as a writer of film scripts. Many of his plays were brought to the screen as films.

He married five times. His first marriage with actress Pamela Elizabeth in 1951 was dissolved in 1957. Then he married another actress, Mary Ure. They separated in 1963 and he again married Penelope Gillett, actress, Jill Bennet and finally Helen Dawson. He became famous for his strong temper, and rebellious nature. His private life was always dramatic and controversial. In later years he withdrew from the London theatrical life and he died in 1994.

4.4 Social and political Background of *Look Back in Anger*

In England around 1950 the critics and the public were ready for something new on the stage. When *Look Back in Anger* was produced in 1956 it was thought that a dramatist had appeared who could challenge American playwrights like Arthur Miller and Tennessee William. With this play was born the Angry –Young- Man Movement. *Look Back In Anger* was regarded as representing the satisfaction with the society reflected in the novels of young writers like John when Kingsley abused John brain etc. Jimmy Porter was thought to symbolize the anger of post war the young generation that felt itself betrayed and ruined by elders. Jimmy Porter, a cultural University graduate, supports himself by selling the candy at a stall. The oldest generation had made a complete mess of the things and there was nothing new that the new generation could do except to find refuge in the occupations of nursing its resentment..

It is necessary to look into the history of England to understand the political, economic and social condition of England when *Look Back in Anger* was staged. The young people were frustrated. The young people were educated taking advantage of the government's free education policy. For the first time, children of poor workers could go to university for higher education. The young people graduated but they realized the country was still run by rich, upper-class people. It was experienced by the young graduated people that they are not getting jobs. The jobs were available only to a high-society family background or a degree from elite universities like Oxford or Cambridge. The young graduated people could not get high-paying government and corporate jobs as they were closed to them. Even after graduation the young people could not get respect or jobs. Young graduates could not find jobs matching their qualifications. Many were forced to take low-paying, basic jobs just to survive. So it created a kind of social problem. The age-old class barrier continued. The young graduated people realized that the country was still run by rich, upper-class people. With higher education, the younger generation became smart. Young people were smarter and more educated than their parents. It resulted in friction at home. Society treated them like second-class citizens. After War: World War II Britain's economy was destroyed. Life was tough, food was limited, and daily necessities were hard to find. The young people were jobless and they were not getting jobs and inflation was increasing. It was a very hard time for the young generation. We find that Jimmy Porter has a university degree, but his only job is

selling candy at a small street stall. This showed the sad reality of millions of educated, jobless youths in England.

It was the end of the empire of England. England was a weak country without any dream. Before the 1950s, Britain ruled over many countries (including India). But by 1956, Britain lost its colonies, lost its wealth, and was no longer a world superpower.

The British government promised a "welfare state" with free healthcare and basic security, but life became dull and gray. And adding to the problems, there was constant fear of cold war and nuclear bomb.

The "Young Mind" in 1956 (The Angry Young Man)

The young graduates in the audience in 1956 watching *Look Back in Anger* could instantly connect with the main character, Jimmy Porter. The young graduates felt that they were cheated. They worked very hard to get their degrees but it was futile as they could not get proper jobs or respect from society.

The older generation fought in big events like World War II. The 1950s youth felt they had "no good causes left to fight for"—no big revolutionary ideas or noble wars, just a boring daily struggle. The young generation hated the polite, fake silence of the rich elders who pretended everything was fine. Jimmy Porter's loud screaming on stage was basically the voice of youth breaking the silence. In the play, Jimmy represents the working-class while Alison represents the rich-class. Jimmy constantly shouts at her. This represented the deep anger poor students felt toward the unearned privilege of the rich.

Look Back in Anger was a big hit because it showed the real pain of educated, middle-class youth who felt jobless, helpless, and angry in a society that preferred rich families over talent.

4.5 Check your Progress

Question 1 .A)

Complete the following sentences by selecting the correct option given below.

1. Look Back in Anger was first on
a) 8th May, 1957 b) 1st ,June ,1666
c) 7th May, 1956 d) 8th May, 1956
2. The play presented the life of ,..... a young, educated man.
a) John Osborne b) Peter Smith
c) Mr. Cliff d) Jimmy Porter
3. Look Back in Anger was a big hit because it showed the real pain of educated, youth.
a) upper -class b) middle -class
c) poor - class d) christen -class
4. There was constant fear of war and nuclear bombs.
a) hot b) America and England
c) Germany and England d) cold
5. Alison represents
a) rich-class b) middle-class
c) poor –class d) educated-class

Q.1 B) Identify true or false

1. The older generation fought in big events like World War II .
2. The young graduates felt that they were cheated.
3. John Osborne was born in the rich-class.
4. The jobs were available for middle class young men,
5. Jimmy Porter, a cultural University graduate supports himself by selling the candy at a stall.

4.5 Key to check your answers

1. A) 1 - D 2 - D 3 - B 4 - D 5-A
1. B) 1- True 2- - True 3- False 4- False 5- True

4.6 Act-wise summary of *Look Back in Anger*

John Osborne's famous 1956 play, *Look Back in Anger* shows the anger and frustration of young people in post-World War II Britain through the main character, Jimmy Porter.

Characters

Jimmy Porter: A well-educated university graduate young man from a working-class background. He runs a small candy shop and is constantly angry at society and the upper class.

Alison Porter: Jimmy's quiet, upper-class wife. Jimmy constantly insults her and her family.

Cliff Lewis: Jimmy's friendly roommate who lives with the couple. He acts as a peacemaker and is very caring toward Alison.

Helena Charles: Alison's fashionable upper-class friend, who hates how Jimmy treats Alison.

Colonel Redfern : Alison's father, a retired military officer from the wealthy class.

Mrs. Tanner : Hugh's mother who helped Jimmy to establish his sweet-stall business .

Hugh Tanner : Jimmy's former friend and business associate who does not appear on the stage.

ACT - I

The Porter household and Jimmy's anger

The play opens on a Sunday afternoon in April in a small attic flat in the English Midlands. The flat is shabby and uncomfortable. Alison is ironing clothes, while Jimmy Porter and Cliff Lewis are sitting in chairs reading newspapers. The opening immediately establishes the dullness and frustration of their domestic life.

Jimmy is dissatisfied with almost everything around him. He complains about the newspapers, society, politics, religion and the behavior of the middle class. Jimmy particularly attacks Alison. She belongs to an upper-middle-class military family, while Jimmy comes from a working-class background. Their marriage therefore represents a clash between two social classes. Jimmy believes that Alison is passive and unemotional. He wants her to react to things passionately. He thinks that she has become so comfortable that she has lost the ability to feel deeply. He also attacks her family. He feels that Alison's parents looked down upon him because he was a working-class man. Jimmy believes that he had to fight against the entire social establishment to marry Alison. His anger is therefore not simply personal. It represents his dissatisfaction with British class society and post-war social conditions.

Jimmy and Cliff

Jimmy also teases and criticizes Cliff, but there is an important difference between his relationship with Cliff and his relationship with Alison. Jimmy genuinely likes Cliff. Cliff is sympathetic and patient. He does not challenge Jimmy's anger. He often acts as a buffer between Jimmy and Alison. The friendship between Jimmy and Cliff also shows Jimmy's need for companionship. Beneath his anger, Jimmy is emotionally lonely.

Jimmy's memories of suffering

Jimmy repeatedly talks about suffering and death. His attitude has been shaped by his childhood experience of watching his father suffer and die after being wounded in the Spanish Civil War. This experience makes Jimmy believe that people who have never suffered deeply cannot understand life. For Jimmy, suffering gives emotional intensity to human existence.

The ironing-board incident

Jimmy's verbal attacks gradually become more aggressive. During horseplay with Cliff, the ironing board is knocked over and Alison burns her arm. Jimmy does not deliberately burn Alison, but the incident symbolically demonstrates the destructive nature of his anger. Jimmy leaves the room. Alison tells Cliff that she is pregnant. After Jimmy leaves, Alison talks privately with Cliff. She reveals that she is pregnant. However, she has not told Jimmy. She is frightened that Jimmy may react badly or feel trapped by the responsibility of having a child. Cliff tries to reassure her. He understands that Jimmy actually loves Alison despite his cruel behaviour.

Alison's relationship with Jimmy

Alison explains that she married Jimmy despite her parents' opposition. Her marriage was partly an act of rebellion against her privileged upbringing. She was attracted to Jimmy because he seemed passionate, courageous and different from the people around her. However, marriage has gradually become difficult.

Helena Charles arrives

Alison receives a telephone call from her friend Helena Charles, an actress. Alison tells Jimmy that Helena is going to stay with them. Jimmy strongly dislikes Helena. He sees her as another representative of the upper-class world that he hates. His anger becomes extreme. Jimmy's cruel statement about Alison's pregnancy is one of the most shocking moments of the play. Jimmy says that he would like Alison to have a child and then lose it. The statement is deliberately cruel. Jimmy believes that Alison has never experienced real suffering and therefore cannot understand him. This speech reveals how Jimmy's anger has moved beyond social criticism and become emotional cruelty. Alison is deeply hurt.

Act I ends with the marriage in serious emotional crisis.

ACT II, SCENE I

Helena and Alison discuss Jimmy and the marriage

Act II begins on another Sunday. This time, Helena is staying with Jimmy and Alison. Alison and Helena are engaged in household activities, particularly cooking and ironing. The atmosphere is quieter than in Act I. Alison tells Helena about her

marriage Alison explains to Helena how she met Jimmy and why she married him. Her parents strongly opposed the marriage. Jimmy was educated but belonged to the working class. Alison's family considered him unsuitable for her. For Alison, marrying Jimmy was partly an act of rebellion against her parents. She was attracted to Jimmy's energy and his passionate criticism of society.

Life with Jimmy

Alison describes the difficult early period of her marriage. She lived in Jimmy's world and became separated from the comfortable upper-class environment in which she had grown up. She experienced poverty and discomfort. Yet she continued to love Jimmy. This is important because Alison is not simply a victim who never loved Jimmy. She genuinely admired him and once shared some of his rebellious spirit.

Helena's attitude

Helena dislikes Jimmy's treatment of Alison. She believes that Jimmy is cruel and emotionally destructive. She therefore decides that Alison should leave him. Helena contacts Alison's father, Colonel Redfern and arranges for him to come and take Alison home.

Colonel Redfern arrives

Colonel Redfern arrives at the flat. He is an older man belonging to the pre-war/Edwardian generation. He represents the old British social order. However, unlike Jimmy's description of the upper class, Colonel Redfern is not presented as completely cruel. He is a sympathetic but outdated man. He recognizes that he and his wife made a mistake by opposing Alison's marriage.

Alison leaves Jimmy

Alison decides to leave. She is going back to her parents. Her departure is emotionally painful because she still loves Jimmy. Before leaving, she gives Cliff a letter for Jimmy. The letter explains her decision.

Jimmy returns

Jimmy returns and discovers that Alison has left. He is furious. He is particularly irritated by the polite and restrained language of Alison's letter. He would prefer an emotional confrontation rather than polite words.

Helena tells Jimmy about the pregnancy. Helena tells Jimmy that Alison is pregnant. Jimmy is momentarily shocked. For a brief moment, his anger disappears. However, instead of responding with tenderness, he returns to attacking Helena. He claims that he is not deeply moved by the news. This is partly a defensive reaction because he is hurt by Alison's departure.

Helena slaps Jimmy

Jimmy's cruelty becomes unbearable. Helena slaps Jimmy. The slap changes the emotional atmosphere. Jimmy's aggressive exterior breaks down, and his vulnerability becomes visible.

Helena and Jimmy become lovers

Unexpectedly, Helena kisses Jimmy passionately. The scene ends with Jimmy and Helena falling onto the bed together. This is a major turning point in the play. Jimmy, who has been married to Alison, now becomes involved with her closest friend. The act therefore ends with a dramatic reversal:

ACT II, SCENE II

The consequences of Alison's departure

The second part of Act II develops the consequences of Alison's decision to leave. Alison has gone away with her father. Jimmy is emotionally disturbed by her departure, although he does not openly admit how deeply hurt he is. Helena has now become emotionally involved with Jimmy. The relationship between Jimmy and Helena demonstrates the complicated nature of Jimmy's personality.

He attacks people whom he considers representatives of the upper class, yet he is attracted to Helena, who herself comes from the upper class. Similarly, Helena criticizes Jimmy's behaviour but becomes attracted to his passion and intensity. The relationship therefore continues the play's central conflict between:

The act ends with Jimmy and Helena beginning their new relationship.

ACT III, SCENE I

Several months later

Several months have passed. The setting looks almost exactly like the setting of Act I. This repetition is deliberate. But there is one major difference: Helena is now

living with Jimmy and is doing the household work that Alison used to do. She is even wearing Jimmy's red shirt and standing at the ironing board. Thus, the opening of Act III mirrors the opening of Act I.

Jimmy appears happier

Jimmy now seems much more relaxed with Helena. He jokes with her and with Cliff. The atmosphere initially appears more peaceful. This is significant because Jimmy had previously complained constantly about Alison's lack of emotional involvement. Helena, in contrast, appears more responsive to Jimmy's humour and energy.

Jimmy and Cliff's friendship

Jimmy and Cliff continue their playful relationship. They joke, argue and engage in mock fighting. Their friendship remains one of the few stable relationships in Jimmy's life.

The music-hall routine

Jimmy, Cliff and Helena perform a playful music-hall-style routine. This creates an atmosphere of artificial happiness. For a short time, the household appears almost normal. But beneath the humour, Jimmy's emotional instability remains.

Cliff decides to leave

Cliff announces that he intends to leave Jimmy's business and establish a life of his own. He wants independence. He also suggests that he may find a woman and settle down. Jimmy is unhappy about losing Cliff because Cliff has been his closest friend and emotional support. Jimmy even admits, indirectly, that he values Cliff's friendship deeply.

Jimmy's views about women

Jimmy again begins to attack women. He argues that women have the power to control and hurt men. His bitterness toward women reflects his complicated relationship with Alison and Helena. He loves women but also fears their emotional power over him.

Jimmy and Helena

Jimmy and Helena have now become emotionally close. Jimmy asks Helena not to leave him. This is important because it reveals the vulnerable side of Jimmy. The aggressive, angry man is actually afraid of abandonment.

Alison returns

Suddenly, Alison appears at the door. Jimmy is shocked. He leaves the room without properly confronting her. This creates the final major emotional crisis of the play.

ACT III, SCENE II

Alison's return and Helena's decision

The final scene brings together all the emotional conflicts of the play. Alison has changed. Alison is no longer the same woman we saw in Act. She appears physically and emotionally exhausted. The most important reason is that she has lost her baby. The child she was carrying has died. This is especially painful because Jimmy had earlier cruelly said that he wished she would have a child and lose it. Now the tragedy he imagined has actually happened.

Alison and Helena meet

Helena and Alison have an emotional conversation. Initially, Helena feels guilty because she has taken Alison's husband. Alison, however, does not attack Helena. Instead, she understands the complicated situation. This meeting changes Helena's attitude.

Helena realizes her mistake

Helena understands that she has committed a moral wrong by becoming involved with a married man. Although she loves Jimmy, she realizes that she cannot continue living with him. She decides to leave. This is a crucial moment because Helena, who initially criticized Jimmy's behaviour, has herself become part of the same destructive situation.

Jimmy's anger returns

When Helena tells Jimmy that she is leaving, Jimmy becomes sarcastic. He tries to hide his pain through anger and humour. But underneath the anger is fear and loneliness. He is once again losing someone he loves. Alison and Jimmy confront each other

Jimmy and Alison are finally reunited.

However, the reconciliation is not a simple happy ending. Both have suffered. Jimmy has lost Helena. Alison has lost her child. Their marriage has been badly damaged. Yet they still have an emotional bond.

The bear-and-squirrel game

At the end of the play, Jimmy and Alison return to an old game they used to play. Jimmy becomes the bear, and Alison becomes the squirrel. The game allows them to escape temporarily from the harsh realities of adult life. They enter an imaginary world in which they can love one another without discussing class, marriage, guilt or suffering.

The ending therefore provides a temporary reconciliation, rather than a complete solution to their problems.

The progression of the play is shown below;

ACT I

Jimmy + Alison



Conflict, anger and class tension



Alison becomes pregnant



Helena arrives



Jimmy cruelly attacks Alison

ACT II

Alison leaves Jimmy



Helena stays



Helena tells Jimmy about the pregnancy



Helena and Jimmy become lovers

ACT III

Helena lives with Jimmy



Cliff decides to leave



Alison returns



Alison has lost her baby



Helena feels guilty and leaves



Jimmy and Alison reunite

Central Meaning of the Three Acts

The three acts show the rise, destruction and partial restoration of Jimmy and Alison's relationship.

Act I — Anger

Jimmy is angry with: Alison Alison's family, the upper class, British society, religion, politics the loss of Britain's former greatness, the emotional emptiness of modern life

Act II — Separation and betrayal

The marriage breaks down, Alison leaves Jimmy, and Helena becomes his lover.

Act III — Loss and reconciliation

Alison returns after losing her child. Helena recognizes her mistake and leaves. Jimmy and Alison finally come together again, using the bear-and-squirrel game as a way of escaping reality.

4.7. Check your Progress

Question 1 A)

Complete the following sentences by selecting correct option given below.

1. The play opens on a Sunday afternoon in April in a small flat in the English Midlands.
 - a) luxurious
 - b) poor
 - c) rented
 - d) attic
2. Jimmy and Cliff continue their relationship.
 - a) playful
 - b) hateful
 - c) historical
 - d) loving
3. slaps Jimmy
 - a) Cliff
 - b) Alison's father
 - c) Alison
 - d) Helena
4. Helena feels because she has taken Alison's husband.
 - a) happy
 - b) guilty
 - c) lucky
 - d) unlucky
5. Alison experienced poverty and
 - a) discomfort
 - b) luxury
 - c) misery
 - d) unhappiness

Q.1 B) Identify true or false

1. Helena dislikes Jimmy's treatment of Alison.
2. Alison's father, a retired administrative officer from the wealthy class.
3. The ironing board is knocked over and Alison burns her head.
4. Helena tells Jimmy about the pregnancy.
5. Alison explains that she married Jimmy despite her parents' opposition.

4.5 Key to check your answers

1. A) 1 - D 2 - A 3 - D 4 - B 5-A
1. B) 1- True 2- - False 3- False 4- True 5- True

4.8 Characters in *Look Back in Anger*

Jimmy Porter

Angry young man

Jimmy Porter is the main character and hero of John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger*. He is a young man from a working-class background. He is intelligent, strong-minded and full of energy. At the same time, he is angry, rude and unhappy. Through Jimmy, Osborne presents the anger and frustration of the young generation of post-war Britain. Jimmy is called an "Angry Young Man." He is not happy with the society in which he lives. He feels that the older generation has failed to make life better for young people. He does not like people who accept everything without protest. He wants people to have strong feelings and strong beliefs. Jimmy is also angry because of class differences. He comes from a working-class background, while his wife Alison belongs to an upper-middle-class family. Jimmy often criticizes Alison's family and the upper class. His marriage with Alison therefore becomes a conflict between two different social backgrounds.

Outspoken person and sensitive

Jimmy is a very outspoken person. He says whatever he thinks. He uses strong and sometimes cruel words. He often insults Alison and makes her unhappy. He also

argues with Helena. His behaviour can be selfish and aggressive. Therefore, Jimmy cannot be called a perfect hero. However, Jimmy has a sensitive side. He is deeply affected by suffering and loneliness. His memories of his father's illness and death show that he has strong feelings. He wants love and understanding from the people around him. The bear-and-squirrel game with Alison shows his softer and more loving side. Jimmy is also a symbol of frustration and rebellion. He wants to fight against the dullness and unfairness of society. But he does not have a clear plan for changing society. His anger is often stronger than his ability to take positive action.

Jimmy's relationship with Alison

Jimmy's relationship with Alison is central to the play. He loves her, but he often hurts her through his words and behaviour. Their unhappy marriage shows Jimmy's difficulty in controlling his anger and expressing love in a healthy way. Jimmy Porter is a complex and realistic hero. He is angry, aggressive and sometimes cruel, but he is also intelligent, sensitive and lonely. He represents the frustration of young people who are unhappy with society and want change. Therefore, Jimmy is not a traditional hero. He is an anti-hero or modern hero whose weaknesses are as important as his strengths. His anger, pain and search for meaning make him one of the most memorable characters in modern English drama.

Alison Porter

Alison Porter's background

Alison Porter is an important character in John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger*. She is the wife of Jimmy Porter. She plays an important role in the play because her relationship with Jimmy shows problems of love, marriage, class difference and suffering. Alison comes from a rich and respectable family. Her father is a Colonel in the British Army. She belongs to the upper-middle class. Jimmy, however, comes from a working-class family. He does not like Alison's family and often speaks badly about them. Therefore, there is a difference between Alison and Jimmy because they come from different social classes.

Alison's nature

A quiet and patient woman

Alison is a quiet and patient woman. She does not speak much. Jimmy is angry and often speaks to her in a rude way. He also criticizes her family. Alison usually

does not fight back. She silently suffers because of Jimmy's behaviour. Even though Jimmy hurts her, Alison still loves him. She knows that Jimmy is not only an angry man. He is also lonely and unhappy. She tries to understand him. The bear-and-squirrel game is an important part of their relationship. In this game, Jimmy and Alison imagine themselves as a bear and a squirrel. It gives them a happy private world. It shows that they still love and care for each other, even though their marriage is unhappy.

Alison's understanding

Alison's pregnancy is also important in the play. Sadly, she loses her baby. This causes her great pain. After this tragedy, she understands Jimmy better. She becomes more emotionally mature and realizes how much she cares for him. Alison also shows the position of women in a traditional marriage. She is expected to be patient and adjust to her husband. She suffers because Jimmy is often rude and aggressive. However, she has inner strength and does not give up easily. Alison is very different from Jimmy. Jimmy is angry, loud and outspoken, while Alison is quiet, calm and patient. Their different personalities create many problems in their marriage.

Alison is sensitive person

Alison is a loving, patient, quiet and sensitive woman. She suffers because of Jimmy's anger but continues to love him. Her character helps us understand the problems of marriage and class difference. She also shows the suffering and strength of women. Therefore, Alison is one of the most important characters in *Look Back in Anger*.

Cliff Lewis

A bridge between Jimmy and Alison

Cliff Lewis is an important character in John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger*. He is Jimmy Porter's close friend and lives with Jimmy and Alison in their small flat. Cliff is a Welshman and comes from a working-class background. He is simple, kind-hearted and friendly. Unlike Jimmy, he is calm and does not like unnecessary arguments. Cliff acts as a bridge between Jimmy and Alison. Jimmy often speaks harshly to Alison and makes her unhappy. Cliff understands Alison's feelings and tries to comfort her. He is one of the few people who can remain

friendly with both of them. He also tries to reduce the tension in the house when Jimmy and Alison quarrel.

His patience

One of Cliff's most important qualities is his patience. He listens to Jimmy's complaints without becoming angry. Jimmy often insults or teases him, but Cliff does not take these things seriously. His peaceful nature is a strong contrast to Jimmy's aggressive and angry personality. Through Cliff, we see how different people react to the difficulties of life. Cliff also has a warm and caring relationship with Alison. He treats her with respect and sympathy. He becomes emotionally close to her, but he does not try to take advantage of her situation. His behaviour shows that he is a decent and understanding person.

Simple working class person

Cliff represents the ordinary working-class man who wants a peaceful and meaningful life. He does not share Jimmy's constant anger against society. However, he understands Jimmy better than most other characters. Cliff Lewis is a simple, loyal and kind character. Though he is not the central character of the play, he plays an important role in maintaining balance between Jimmy and Alison. His calm nature provides a clear contrast to Jimmy's anger and frustration.

Colonel Redfern

Alison's father

Colonel Redfern is a minor but important character in John Osborne's play *Look Back in Anger*. He is Alison's father. He represents the older generation, the British upper-middle class and the old social values. Colonel Redfern is a retired army officer. He has spent many years in India during the British rule. He is a traditional and disciplined man. He believes in the values of the old British society. He finds it difficult to understand the new generation and its changing ideas. Colonel Redfern comes to visit Alison and Jimmy. He is worried about Alison because he knows that her marriage with Jimmy is unhappy. He does not like Jimmy's behaviour towards his daughter. However, he does not openly fight with Jimmy. He is a quiet and polite man.

His nostalgia

An important feature of Colonel Redfern's character is his nostalgia for the past. He remembers the time when he lived in India. He feels that life in India was more comfortable and peaceful. He finds the present life in Britain dull and difficult. His memories show the feelings of people who cannot easily accept social change. Colonel Redfern is very different from Jimmy Porter. Jimmy is young, angry and rebellious, while Colonel Redfern is old, calm and traditional. Jimmy strongly dislikes the social class represented by Colonel Redfern. He sees him as a symbol of the old British establishment. However, Osborne does not present Colonel Redfern as a completely bad person. He is a loving father who is genuinely concerned about Alison. He understands that Alison is unhappy and feels sorry for her. His character therefore has a human and sympathetic side. Colonel Redfern also represents the end of an old way of life. The world in which he lived is changing, and he cannot completely adjust to the new world.

Symbol of old generation

Colonel Redfern is a symbol of the old generation and the old British social order. He is traditional, disciplined, quiet and nostalgic. His contrast with Jimmy helps Osborne present the conflict between the old and new generations. Though he is a minor character, he is important for understanding the social and generational conflicts in *Look Back in Anger*.

4.9 Structure and Plot Construction of Look Back in Anger

A simple but effective plot structure

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* has a simple but effective plot structure. The play has three acts. The action mainly takes place in a small flat in the Midlands. The limited setting helps Osborne to focus on the personal conflicts and emotional problems of the characters. The plot is mainly concerned with Jimmy Porter, his wife Alison, and their relationships with Cliff, Helena and Colonel Redfern.

Act I

Act One introduces the main characters and the central conflict. Jimmy Porter is an intelligent but angry young man. He is dissatisfied with his married life and with society. He frequently attacks Alison, her family and the older generation. Cliff is

Jimmy's friend and lives with Jimmy and Alison. Alison is quiet and patient. Colonel Redfern, Alison's father, represents the older generation. Through conversations and arguments, Osborne slowly reveals the problems in Jimmy and Alison's marriage. Thus, Act One establishes the main situation and conflict.

Act II

Act Two develops the conflict. Helena Charles, Alison's friend, comes to stay with Jimmy and Alison. Jimmy's relationship with Alison becomes more difficult. Alison finally tells Helena about her pregnancy and her unhappy married life. Later, Alison leaves Jimmy after learning that her father has come to take her away. Jimmy feels hurt and angry. Helena, however, stays with Jimmy and gradually develops a relationship with him. This creates a new complication in the plot.

Act III

Act Three brings the story towards its conclusion. Alison returns after the death of her baby. She is physically and emotionally broken. Helena leaves Jimmy because she realizes that she has taken Alison's place unfairly. Jimmy and Alison meet again. Their relationship is still difficult, but they understand that they need each other. At the end, they return to their private world of playing games and pretending to be animals. The ending is not a completely happy one, but it shows their emotional dependence on each other.

The basis plot

The plot is therefore based more on character conflict and emotional tension than on physical action. There are arguments, departures, returns and changes in relationships. Osborne uses these events to show the anger, loneliness and frustration of modern young people. Thus, the plot construction of *Look Back in Anger* is simple, realistic and closely connected with character development. The three-act structure gives the play a clear beginning, development and conclusion. It also helps Osborne present the problems of marriage, class, generation gap, love and loneliness in a powerful way.

4.10 Critical Assessment of *Look Back in Anger*

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* is one of the most important plays of modern English drama. It was first performed in 1956. The play created a strong

impact on the British theatre because it presented the anger, frustration and dissatisfaction of the younger generation. Jimmy Porter, the central character, became a symbol of the “Angry Young Man” of the 1950s.

A Play of Anger and Frustration

The most important feature of the play is Jimmy’s anger. Jimmy is unhappy with his personal life and with society. He feels that society is unfair and meaningless. He constantly criticizes politicians, the upper class, the older generation and people who accept life without questioning it. However, Jimmy's anger is not always reasonable. He often hurts Alison and other people through his cruel words. Therefore, Osborne presents both the strength and weakness of anger.

Jimmy Porter as an Angry Young Man.

Jimmy Porter is the central character of the play. He is intelligent, sensitive and passionate, but he is also aggressive and difficult. He wants people to have strong feelings and strong beliefs. He hates what he considers to be the dull and comfortable life of the post-war generation. Jimmy represents the young people who were dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions of Britain after the Second World War. However, Jimmy is not a perfect hero. He complains about society, but he does not offer a clear solution to its problems. This makes his character complex and realistic.

Social and Class Conflict

One of the major strengths of the play is its treatment of class differences. Jimmy comes from a working-class background, whereas Alison belongs to an upper-middle-class family. Their marriage brings these two different worlds together. Jimmy dislikes Alison's family because he sees them as representatives of the privileged class. He feels that people like them have enjoyed social advantages that were not available to people like him. The play therefore shows how class differences can affect personal relationships.

Criticism of British Society

Osborne uses Jimmy to criticize British society of the 1950s. Jimmy feels that the old social system has failed the younger generation. He is disappointed by the lack of political enthusiasm and social idealism. The play does not present society as completely evil. Instead, it shows a society that is changing but still influenced by

old traditions and class divisions. In this way, Osborne gives a realistic picture of post-war Britain.

Marriage as a Source of Conflict

The marriage between Jimmy and Alison is another important aspect of the play. Jimmy and Alison love each other, but they cannot understand each other properly. Jimmy is emotional and aggressive, while Alison is quiet and patient. Their marriage becomes a battlefield where their class differences, personalities and expectations come into conflict. The play therefore presents marriage realistically. Love does not automatically guarantee happiness. Understanding, respect and communication are also necessary.

The Character of Alison

Alison is an important contrast to Jimmy. She is quiet, patient and controlled. She generally avoids direct confrontation with Jimmy. However, her silence does not mean that she has no feelings. Her suffering becomes particularly important after she loses her child. This experience changes her emotionally and makes her understand Jimmy's pain more deeply. Alison's character shows the difficulties faced by women who are expected to adjust and remain patient within marriage.

Cliff as a Balancing Character

Cliff is one of the most sympathetic characters in the play. He is Jimmy's friend and lives with Jimmy and Alison. He understands both of them and often tries to reduce their conflicts. Unlike Jimmy, Cliff is calm and practical. Through Cliff, Osborne shows the importance of friendship, sympathy and emotional support. Cliff also provides a balance between Jimmy's aggression and Alison's silence.

Helena and Her Role

Helena Charles represents another kind of personality. She belongs to Alison's social world and initially appears to understand Alison's problems. She encourages Alison to leave Jimmy. Later, however, Helena becomes Jimmy's lover. Her relationship with Jimmy creates another layer of conflict in the play. Helena's character also shows that human relationships are complicated and that people sometimes act against their own moral expectations.

Language and Dialogue

The language of the play is one of its greatest strengths. Osborne uses ordinary, direct and sometimes aggressive language instead of the highly artificial language traditionally associated with serious drama. Jimmy's long speeches are full of sarcasm, criticism, humour and anger. The dialogue sounds natural and helps to reveal the personalities of the characters. This realistic use of everyday speech was one reason why the play had such a strong impact on modern British theatre.

Realism

Look Back in Anger is a realistic play. The setting is not a palace or a grand historical location. Much of the action takes place in a small flat. The characters face ordinary problems such as marriage, money, work, love and loneliness. Osborne brings the problems of ordinary people to the stage. This was an important change in English drama because the play moved away from conventional romantic and upper-class subjects.

Symbolism

The play also contains some important symbols. The bear-and-squirrel game played by Jimmy and Alison is particularly significant. It provides them with a private world where they can escape from the difficulties of real life. The ironing board is another important part of the setting. Alison is often shown ironing while Jimmy talks. It suggests the ordinary domestic life in which Alison is trapped. The room itself can be seen as a symbol of emotional confinement. The characters live together but often feel isolated from one another.

The Theme of Loneliness

Although Jimmy is constantly talking, he is deeply lonely. He wants someone to understand his feelings and share his anger. Alison is also lonely because she cannot openly express her emotions. This makes the play more than a simple story of social protest. It is also a study of human loneliness and the need for emotional connection.

Strengths of the Play

The major strengths of *Look Back in Anger* are:

- Its realistic characters.
- Its powerful and natural dialogue.

- Its treatment of class conflict.
- Its presentation of the problems of marriage.
- Its criticism of post-war society.
- Its representation of the younger generation.
- Its mixture of humour, anger and sadness.
- Its psychologically complex central character, Jimmy Porter.
- The play brought a new energy to English drama.

Limitations of the Play

A critical assessment should also consider the weaknesses of the play.

Jimmy sometimes appears too aggressive and repetitive. He complains about many things but does not clearly explain what kind of social change he wants. Some critics also feel that the women characters are not given the same depth as Jimmy. The play is also strongly connected with the social conditions of 1950s Britain. Therefore, some of its political and social references may be less meaningful to modern students. However, these limitations do not reduce the importance of the play as a landmark in modern drama.

Importance in Modern English Drama

The greatest importance of *Look Back in Anger* is that it changed the direction of British theatre. Before Osborne, many successful plays were concerned with upper-class life, sophisticated conversation and conventional dramatic situations. Osborne brought ordinary people, social frustration and working-class anger to the center of the stage. The success of the play contributed to the development of the “Angry Young Men” movement and helped establish a new kind of realistic British drama.

A powerful and realistic play

Look Back in Anger is a powerful and realistic play about an angry young man living in a changing society. It deals with class conflict, generation gap, marriage, love, loneliness, social dissatisfaction and the search for meaning. Jimmy Porter is neither a completely good hero nor a completely bad person. He is an intelligent but frustrated human being. His anger comes from genuine dissatisfaction, but his

aggressive behaviour also causes suffering to others. The lasting importance of the play lies in its realistic presentation of ordinary human problems. Osborne gives a voice to people who feel frustrated, ignored and dissatisfied with society. For this reason, *Look Back in Anger* remains an important landmark in modern English drama and an excellent example of realism and social criticism.

4.11 Important Themes of the play

Class Conflict

The most important social conflict is between Jimmy's working-class background and Alison's upper-middle-class background. Jimmy feels that Alison's family represents the old privileged establishment. But Jimmy is deprived of the same.

The "Angry Young Man"

Jimmy represents the "Angry Young Man" of post-war Britain. He is educated but frustrated. He has intelligence and energy but lacks a meaningful social position. His anger is directed at the society around him.

Marital Conflict

Jimmy and Alison love each other, but they cannot communicate properly. Jimmy demands emotional intensity, while Alison responds with silence and patience. Their marriage therefore becomes a battlefield.

Suffering

Jimmy believes that suffering makes people emotionally alive. His own childhood experience of watching his father die has shaped this belief. This explains why he continually demands emotional responses from Alison.

Alienation and Loneliness

Jimmy is surrounded by people but remains emotionally lonely. His anger often hides his fear of being abandoned. This becomes especially clear when he begs Helena not to leave him.

Gender Conflict

Jimmy repeatedly criticizes women and believes that men are vulnerable to women's emotional power. However, his own behaviour shows that he is emotionally dependent on women.

Past versus Present

Colonel Redfern represents the old Edwardian world, whereas Jimmy represents a younger generation dissatisfied with that world. The play therefore reflects Britain's transition after the Second World War.

Love and Reconciliation

Despite all the cruelty, Jimmy and Alison remain emotionally connected. The final bear-and-squirrel game suggests that their love survives, although their problems are not completely solved.

The significance of the title

The title *Look Back in Anger* is highly appropriate. "Look Back" suggests looking at the past—personal history, lost opportunities, old social values and Britain's declining power.

"Anger" represents Jimmy's dominant emotional condition. Jimmy looks at his personal and social past with anger, frustration and disappointment. Thus, the title refers both to Jimmy's personal anger and to the wider frustration of a generation in post-war Britain.

4.12 Critical Assessment of *Look Back in Anger*

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* is one of the most important plays of modern English drama. It was first performed in 1956. The play created a strong impact on the British theatre because it presented the anger, frustration and dissatisfaction of the younger generation. Jimmy Porter, the central character, became a symbol of the "Angry Young Man" of the 1950s.

A Play of Anger and Frustration

The most important feature of the play is Jimmy's anger. Jimmy is unhappy with his personal life and with society. He feels that society is unfair and

meaningless. He constantly criticizes politicians, the upper class, the older generation and people who accept life without questioning it. However, Jimmy's anger is not always reasonable. He often hurts Alison and other people through his cruel words. Therefore, Osborne presents both the strength and weakness of anger.

Jimmy Porter as an Angry Young Man.

Jimmy Porter is the central character of the play. He is intelligent, sensitive and passionate, but he is also aggressive and difficult. He wants people to have strong feelings and strong beliefs. He hates what he considers to be the dull and comfortable life of the post-war generation. Jimmy represents the young people who were dissatisfied with the social and economic conditions of Britain after the Second World War. However, Jimmy is not a perfect hero. He complains about society, but he does not offer a clear solution to its problems. This makes his character complex and realistic.

Social and Class Conflict

One of the major strengths of the play is its treatment of class differences. Jimmy comes from a working-class background, whereas Alison belongs to an upper-middle-class family. Their marriage brings these two different worlds together. Jimmy dislikes Alison's family because he sees them as representatives of the privileged class. He feels that people like them have enjoyed social advantages that were not available to people like him. The play therefore shows how class differences can affect personal relationships.

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Osborne uses Jimmy to criticize British society of the 1950s. Jimmy feels that the old social system has failed the younger generation. He is disappointed by the lack of political enthusiasm and social idealism. The play does not present society as completely evil. Instead, it shows a society that is changing but still influenced by old traditions and class divisions. In this way, Osborne gives a realistic picture of post-war Britain.

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The marriage between Jimmy and Alison is another important aspect of the play. Jimmy and Alison love each other, but they cannot understand each other properly. Jimmy is emotional and aggressive, while Alison is quiet and patient. Their marriage

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The play also contains some important symbols. The bear-and-squirrel game played by Jimmy and Alison is particularly significant. It provides them with a private world where they can escape from the difficulties of real life. The ironing board is another important part of the setting. Alison is often shown ironing while Jimmy talks. It suggests the ordinary domestic life in which Alison is trapped. The room itself can be seen as a symbol of emotional confinement. The characters live together but often feel isolated from one another.

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Strengths of the Play

- The major strengths of *Look Back in Anger* are:
- Its realistic characters.
- Its powerful and natural dialogue.
- Its treatment of class conflict.
- Its presentation of the problems of marriage.
- Its criticism of post-war society.
- Its representation of the younger generation.
- Its mixture of humour, anger and sadness.

- Its psychologically complex central character, Jimmy Porter.
- The play brought a new energy to English drama.

Limitations of the Play

A critical assessment should also consider the weaknesses of the play.

Jimmy sometimes appears too aggressive and repetitive. He complains about many things but does not clearly explain what kind of social change he wants. Some critics also feel that the women characters are not given the same depth as Jimmy. The play is also strongly connected with the social conditions of 1950s Britain. Therefore, some of its political and social references may be less meaningful to modern students. However, these limitations do not reduce the importance of the play as a landmark in modern drama.

Importance in Modern English Drama

The greatest importance of *Look Back in Anger* is that it changed the direction of British theatre. Before Osborne, many successful plays were concerned with upper-class life, sophisticated conversation and conventional dramatic situations. Osborne brought ordinary people, social frustration and working-class anger to the center of the stage. The success of the play contributed to the development of the “Angry Young Men” movement and helped establish a new kind of realistic British drama.

A realistic presentation of ordinary human problems

Look Back in Anger is a powerful and realistic play about an angry young man living in a changing society. It deals with class conflict, generation gap, marriage, love, loneliness, social dissatisfaction and the search for meaning. Jimmy Porter is neither a completely good hero nor a completely bad person. He is an intelligent but frustrated human being. His anger comes from genuine dissatisfaction, but his aggressive behaviour also causes suffering to others. The lasting importance of the play lies in its realistic presentation of ordinary human problems. Osborne gives a voice to people who feel frustrated, ignored and dissatisfied with society. For this reason, *Look Back in Anger* remains an important landmark in modern English drama and an excellent example of realism and social criticism.

4.13 Does *Look Back in Anger* reflect the mood and temper of the post-war England?

The subject matter of the play and the times

The subject matter of the play is in close relation to the times when the play was first time brought on to the stage. The hero, Jimmy Porter, is more like voice of the society or spokesperson of the post-war England. Immediately after the appearance of the play the hero of the play became like a folk hero for young generation. The young generation was very confused because of Hungarian revolution and very unhappy about the England's last imperialist fling at Suez. The young generation was against the hydrogen bomb and about all kinds of political and social questions. The play became the center of lot of serious theorizing about the angry young man and his place in the society.

The greatest impact of the play was the immediacy of the play's subject matter. Osborne showed his feeling for the contemporary scene and the temper of the post-war youth because of his awareness about the contemporary scene and the temper of the post-war youth in England. Osborne's awareness of the contemporary idiom and his sharp comments on the matters like from posh Sunday newspapers and 'white tile' universities bishops and the hydrogen bomb.

Look Back in Anger related at the time to social and political discontent and frustration of English society in the backwash of Suez war. Jimmy Porter became the spokesperson of a working class. The newly educated class of the people felt that opportunities are denied to them which were enjoyed by the precious old generation. In fact *Look Back in Anger* became to be regarded as the central and most immediately influential expression of the mood of its time and the mood of the angry young man.

Look Back in Anger truly reflected the mood and the temper of the post-war England, England after the Second World War. It showed the people's dissatisfaction in spite of the fact that the Labour Government had introduced the reforms. English soldiers celebrated the victory of the Labour party in the 1945 election. These soldiers believed that it was a start of new era. The soldiers anticipated socialist paradise. Labour Government introduced all the reforms to build up but the dreams of the people never translated into realities. The country thought that everything should be well but they felt that all was not well. In 1951 the English people

celebrated their new artistic and technological achievements at the festival of Britain. In the general election Labour party was defeated and Conservative party came into power but people saw that there was hardly any difference between the governments of Labour party and Conservative party. The people thought that there was no difference between the political parties with regard to their aims and objectives. Jimmy Porter says in one of his dialogues that the people of his generations were not able to die for good causes any longer. In fact the hero of the play was ideally constituted to be the all-purpose hero of the dissatisfied young people.

Jimmy Porter as spokesperson

Jimmy Porter regards himself as the spokesperson for the post-war young generation who looked around themselves and thought that nothing was right in the world. People thought that Jimmy is representing a whole generation. The people who thought like this were in their middle thirties in 1956. These young people were labeled as angry young men. Jimmy is in short, was a very embodiment of disillusionment and rebelliousness. In the beginning of the play we find that Jimmy is not happy with Sunday newspapers, his wife Alison newspapers, and with friend Cliff. He says that his wife goes to sleep when he begins to talk. He thinks that Cliff is ignorant. The posh Sunday papers are full of full of gossip and publish the opinion that Shakespeare changed his sex when he was writing *Tempest*. He makes fun of Bishop of Bromley and the woman who was kicked in the head at religious ceremony. He thinks that his wife and his friend lack even ordinary human enthusiasm.

Jimmy at war with class distinction

Jimmy belongs to working class. His wife comes from affluent middle class. Alison's parents were against the marriage of Alison with Jimmy and Jimmy could not forget this even after four years. He criticizes both Alison and her parents. He criticizes Alison's father for living in the past. He also criticizes Alison's brother and calls him as a straight-backed, chinless and vague and lazy. He very bitterly calls his mother-in-law as bitch and after death if worms eat her flesh, the worms will get indigestion.

Jimmy throughout the play shows his anger against things, persons, and institutions. The very sound of the church bells annoys him because he is against the religion and its rituals. He does not like his wife going to church. Jimmy's

disillusionment makes him very cynical and criticizes the entire female sex for being so noisy and blood-thirsty. He accuses women for trying to bleed men to death. His frustration and disillusionment is seen in the song he composes referring to booze and whoring. He doesn't want to go to cinema because the kind of the people who occupy the front seats. He doesn't like the economic philosophy of the person like Helen who looks forward to the past. He thinks that everybody wants to escape from the pain of being alive and from the pain of love. He does not want to live spiritual life but a life of a sensual human being. He cares only for virtues like fidelity and solidarity which he finds in Cliff.

Aimless university graduate

Jimmy holds university degree but he is not able to settle in his life. He tried his hands at journalism, advertisement even vacuum-cleaner for a few weeks. He organized jazz band and sweet selling. But he does not know what exactly he will do. He represents the uncertainty and drifts which is typical of youth of post-war England. Jimmy's boredom with life is again feature of post-war youth. He finds Sunday routine of tea, reading newspapers etc. very depressing. Church going offers no solace or comfort to him. He tries to escape boredom by playing his trumpet.

4.14 How John Osborne has projected himself in the character of Jimmy Porter

Autobiographical element

John Osborne has projected many aspects of his own personality, feelings, and experiences in the character of Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger*. Jimmy is not exactly a copy of Osborne, but there are many similarities between the playwright and his central character. Through Jimmy, Osborne expresses the anger, disappointment, frustration and dissatisfaction of the young generation of post-war Britain.

Mouthpiece for Osborne's personal ideas

Jimmy is an intelligent and educated young man. He is interested in literature, politics and social problems. He strongly criticizes the society in which he lives. Osborne himself was a young writer who was unhappy with the social and cultural conditions of Britain. Like Jimmy, he did not easily accept the traditional values of the older generation. Therefore, Jimmy becomes a mouthpiece for many of Osborne's

personal ideas. One important similarity between Osborne and Jimmy is their anger against society. Jimmy feels that society has lost its energy and idealism. He attacks the older generation because he thinks that they have failed to create a better world. Osborne also belonged to a generation that felt disappointed with the post-war situation. Through Jimmy's powerful speeches, Osborne gives expression to this dissatisfaction.

Rebel nature

Jimmy is also a rebel. He refuses to behave according to accepted social rules. He questions marriage, class differences, politics and relationships between men and women. Osborne was also known for challenging the conventions of traditional English drama. Thus, Jimmy's rebellious nature reflects Osborne's own artistic and social rebellion.

Another important quality of Jimmy is his sensitivity. Although he appears rude, aggressive and cruel, he is deeply emotional. He wants love, understanding and affection. His anger often hides his loneliness and insecurity. Osborne also presents the inner problems of a young man who feels misunderstood by the people around him.

Marriage relationship

Jimmy's relationship with Alison also reflects Osborne's interest in the difficulties of modern marriage and human relationships. Jimmy loves Alison but cannot express his love in a healthy way. His emotional conflict makes him a complex character. Thus, Jimmy Porter can be considered partly a self-portrait of John Osborne. Through Jimmy, Osborne expresses his anger against society, his rebellion against old values, his disappointment with the older generation, and his desire for a more meaningful life. Jimmy is therefore not only the hero of the play but also an important voice of Osborne himself and of the angry young generation of the 1950s.

Significance of the Bears and Squirrels Game in *Look Back in Anger*

An important symbol

The game of "Bears and Squirrels" is an important symbol in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger*. Jimmy and Alison play this imaginary game at different points in the play. On the surface, it appears to be a simple and childish game. However, it

has a deeper meaning. It helps us understand the love, loneliness, insecurity and emotional dependence of Jimmy and Alison. Jimmy imagines himself as a bear and Alison as a squirrel. The bear is strong, rough and powerful, while the squirrel is small, gentle and delicate. These images reflect the personalities of Jimmy and Alison. Jimmy is aggressive and powerful in his speech and behaviour, whereas Alison is quiet, patient and sensitive.

A private world

The game is also a private world created by Jimmy and Alison. Their real married life is full of arguments, anger and unhappiness. They find it difficult to communicate with each other normally. Through the game, however, they escape from their painful reality. For a short time, they forget their problems and become emotionally close. The game also shows that Jimmy has a deep emotional attachment to Alison. Although he often insults and hurts her, he does not really want to lose her. The game becomes a way through which he expresses his need for love and companionship. Jimmy's aggressive behaviour therefore hides a softer and more vulnerable side of his personality. The game is also connected with childhood and innocence. Jimmy and Alison use childish names and pretend to be animals. Their adult life is difficult, but in the game they can return to a simpler and safer emotional world. It gives them comfort when their real relationship becomes painful.

A symbol of emotional bond

The importance of the game becomes especially clear at the end of the play. After Alison returns, Jimmy and Alison again talk about being bears and squirrels. This suggests that, despite their suffering and separation, they still have an emotional bond. The game becomes a symbol of their private relationship and their dependence on each other. Thus, the “Bears and Squirrels” game is much more than a childish activity. It represents love, escape, emotional insecurity, childhood innocence and the complicated relationship between Jimmy and Alison. Through this game, Osborne shows that even people who quarrel and hurt each other may deeply need one another.

4.15 How the characters in John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* are presented as credible and convincing

The characters are ordinary human beings

John Osborne's *Look Back in Anger* is a realistic play. The characters are presented as ordinary human beings with real feelings, weaknesses, conflicts and desires. They are not perfect heroes or villains. This makes them credible and convincing to the audience. Osborne presents their personalities mainly through their speech, actions, relationships and conflicts.

Jimmy Porter

Jimmy Porter is the central character of the play. He is intelligent, educated and sensitive, but he is also angry, impatient and sometimes cruel. He frequently criticizes society and the older generation. He also hurts Alison with his harsh words. However, behind his anger there is loneliness and a desire for love and understanding. His mixture of good and bad qualities makes him a realistic human character.

Alison Porter

Alison Porter is also presented realistically. She is quiet, patient and gentle, but she is not completely without feelings. She suffers because of Jimmy's behaviour but continues to live with him. Her pregnancy and the loss of her baby deeply affect her. When she returns to Jimmy, she shows that human relationships are complicated. Her emotional reactions make her a convincing character.

Cliff Lewis

Cliff Lewis is perhaps the most balanced character in the play. He is friendly, simple and sympathetic. He tries to maintain peace between Jimmy and Alison. Unlike Jimmy, he does not constantly complain about life. His natural behaviour and simple language make him appear like an ordinary working-class person. He also understands both Jimmy and Alison.

Helena Charles

Helena Charles is practical, confident and independent. At first, she supports Alison and dislikes Jimmy's behaviour. Later, she becomes involved with Jimmy.

This change makes her character complex and human. She finally leaves Jimmy when Alison returns, showing that she has a sense of morality.

Colonel Redfern

Colonel Redfern represents the older generation. He is polite, gentle and traditional. He cannot fully understand Jimmy's anger. However, Osborne does not present him as a bad man. He is also lonely and feels that his generation has lost its importance. This makes him a sympathetic and realistic character. Thus, Osborne makes his characters credible by giving them both strengths and weaknesses. Their language is natural, their problems are believable, and their relationships are full of emotional conflict. They represent different classes and generations but remain individual human beings. Therefore, the characters of *Look Back in Anger* appear real and convincing rather than artificial or exaggerated.

4.16 Exercise

Q.1 A. Answer the following questions.

- a. Character- sketch of Jimmy Porter
- b. Plot –construction of *Look Back in Anger*
- c. Significance of The bear-and-squirrel game
- d. Why *Look Back in Anger* was a big hit in England ?

Q.1 B. Write short note on the following.

- a. Character- sketch of Alison
- b. Class conflict in the play
- c. The Angry Young Man movement
- d. Character- sketch of Cliff Lewis
- e. The significance of the title *Look Back in Anger*

4.17 Reference Books:

1. *Look Back in Anger: A Selection of critical essays*: Edited by John Russell Taylor
2. *The plays of John Osborne* : By Simon Trussler
3. *British Theatre (1950-1970)* : By Arnold Hinchliffe

4.18 Recommended Reading

1. *The Theater of Protest and Paradox*: By George E. Wellworth
2. *Modern British Dramatists*: Edited by John Russell
3. *Contemporary Playwrights: John Osborne*: By Ronald Haymen
4. *Drama from Ibsen to Brecht*: By Raymond Williams

