



SHIVAJI UNIVERSITY, KOLHAPUR

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION

B. A. Part - III : English

Semester-5 Minor

Popular Literature

Semester-6 Minor

Literature and Cinema

(In accordance with National Education Policy 2020)
(Academic Year 2026-27 onwards)

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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 understand the unit in the right perspective. Go through the possible answers only after you write your answers. These exercises are not to be submitted to us for evaluation. They have been provided to you as study tools to keep you on the right track as you study the unit.

Dear Students,

The SLM is simply a supporting material for the study of this paper. It is also advised to see the new syllabus 2023-24 and study the reference books & other related material for the detailed study of the paper.

Module I

Introduction to Popular Literature: Concepts, Features, and Social Context

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 1.3 Key Characteristics of Popular Literature
- 1.4 Difference Between Popular and Classical Literature
- 1.5 Check Your Progress – I
- 1.6 Types and Forms of Popular Literature
- 1.7 Check Your Progress – II
- 1.8 Popular literature, Society and Readers
- 1.9 Check Your Progress – III
- 1.10 Summary
- 1.11 Glossary
- 1.12 Answers to Check Your Progress
- 1.13 Exercise
- 1.14 References for Further Study

1.0. Objectives: After studying this unit, the students will be able to,

1. Understand the concept and nature of Popular Literature.
2. Identify the major characteristics of Popular Literature such as simplicity, mass appeal, and entertainment value.
3. Recognise different genres of Popular Literature.
4. Examine the relationship between Popular Literature, society, and the market.
5. Develop the ability to critically read and interpret Popular Literature.

1.1 Introduction

Literature has always been an important medium through which human experiences, ideas, and cultural values are expressed. Among its many forms, Popular Literature holds a special place because of its wide reach and accessibility.

Unlike classical or canonical literature, which is often associated with elite readership and complex styles, Popular Literature is created for the general public and is easily understood and widely enjoyed.

Popular Literature includes a variety of genres such as romance, detective fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and adventure. These works are characterised by engaging plots, relatable themes, and simple language, making them appeal to a broad audience. It plays a significant role in shaping reading habits and bringing literature closer to everyday life.

Another important aspect of Popular Literature is its close connection with society and the market. It reflects contemporary social realities, cultural trends, and the interests of readers. At the same time, it is often influenced by commercial factors, as writers and publishers consider the preferences of a large readership.

This unit introduces learners to the concept, features, and significance of Popular Literature. It will help distance learners develop an understanding of how literature functions not only as a form of entertainment but also as a reflection of social and cultural contexts.

1.2 Presentation of Subject Matter

Section 1: Concept and Features of Popular Literature

Popular Literature refers to literary works that are created for mass readership and are characterised by simplicity, entertainment value, and wide accessibility. It is characterised by simple language, engaging narratives, and themes that appeal to common readers.

According to John Storey, Popular Literature can be understood as “literature that is widely favoured or well-liked by many people.”

It is often described as market-oriented literature, as it is produced to meet the interests and preferences of a large readership. Popular Literature includes genres such as romance, detective fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and adventure.

In simple terms, Popular Literature is literature of the people, created for entertainment as well as for reflecting everyday life and social experiences.

Nature and Scope of Popular Literature

Popular Literature is an important and dynamic branch of literary studies that reflects the tastes, interests, and cultural life of the general public. Its nature explains its essential characteristics, while its scope refers to its wide range, influence, and areas of application.

Nature of Popular Literature

The nature of Popular Literature can be understood through the following features:

i. Simplicity and Accessibility

Popular Literature uses simple, clear, and direct language, making it easy for a wide range of readers to understand. Unlike classical literature, it does not require specialised knowledge or training.

ii. Entertainment-Oriented

One of the primary purposes of Popular Literature is to entertain. It often includes:

- Engaging plots
- Suspense and excitement
- Emotional appeal

Readers are drawn to it for relaxation and enjoyment.

iii. Mass Appeal

Popular Literature is written for the general public rather than a limited elite group. It appeals to readers of different ages, backgrounds, and education levels.

iv. Market-Driven Nature

Popular Literature is closely connected to the publishing industry and market forces. Writers and publishers often consider:

- Reader preferences
- Current trends
- Commercial success

Thus, it is often described as commercial or market-oriented literature.

v. Reflective of Society

Popular Literature reflects:

- Social realities
- Cultural values
- Contemporary issues

It presents themes that are familiar and relatable to everyday life, making it socially relevant.

vi. Formulaic yet Creative

Many works of Popular Literature follow recognisable patterns or formulas (e.g., happy endings in romance, mystery resolution in detective fiction). However, writers still bring creativity and variation within these patterns.

Scope of Popular Literature

The scope of Popular Literature is vast and continuously expanding. It can be understood through the following aspects:

i Variety of Genres

Popular Literature includes a wide range of genres such as:

- Romance
- Detective fiction
- Science fiction
- Fantasy
- Adventure
- Horror

This variety ensures that it caters to different reader interests.

ii. Wide Readership

scope extends to a large and diverse audience across:

- Age groups
- Educational backgrounds
- Cultures and regions

It is one of the most widely consumed forms of literature.

iii. Multiple Media Forms

Popular Literature is not limited to printed books. It exists in:

- Magazines
- Newspapers
- Films and television adaptations
- Digital platforms (e-books, blogs, online fiction)

This increases its reach and influence.

iv. Cultural Influence

Popular Literature plays a major role in shaping:

- Popular culture
- Social attitudes
- Trends and lifestyles

It both impacts and is influenced by society.

v. Global Reach

With globalisation and digital media, Popular Literature is now read across the world, crossing linguistic and cultural boundaries.

vi. Evolving and Dynamic Nature

Popular Literature continuously changes with:

- Technological advancements
- Changing reader preferences
- Social and cultural developments

This makes it a living and evolving form of literature.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the nature of Popular Literature lies in its simplicity, entertainment value, and mass appeal. It's scope is broad, covering various genres, media, and cultural contexts. It is a powerful form of literature that connects deeply with everyday life and continues to grow in relevance in the modern world.

1.3 Key Characteristics of Popular Literature

a. Simple and Accessible Language

Popular Literature uses clear, straightforward, and easy-to-understand language. It avoids difficult vocabulary, complex sentence structures, and abstract expressions. This simplicity benefits readers from diverse educational and social backgrounds to understand the text without trouble. It makes reading a pleasant and effortless experience, especially for beginners and casual readers.

b. Mass Appeal

It is written for a wide and general audience rather than a specific or elite group. The themes and stories are designed to attract readers of different ages, professions, and cultural backgrounds. It reflects common human experiences such as love, conflict, ambition, and struggle. Because of its broad appeal, it is widely circulated through books, newspapers, magazines, films, and digital media.

c. Entertainment Value

One of the primary aims of Popular Literature is to entertain readers. It captures attention through engaging storytelling and interesting plots. It often includes elements such as:

- ♦ Suspense
- ♦ Romance
- ♦ Mystery
- ♦ Adventure
- ♦ Action

It provides enjoyment, relaxation, and a temporary escape from everyday stress and routine life.

d. Relatable Themes and Situations

The stories often deal with real-life situations, emotions, and relationships. Readers can easily identify with the characters and their experiences. Themes such as family, friendship, love, social issues, and personal struggles are commonly explored. This relatability creates a strong emotional connection between the reader and the text.

e. Fast-Paced and Engaging Narratives

Popular Literature usually has a quick-moving plot that keeps the reader interested. It avoids lengthy descriptions and focuses more on action and events. The storytelling is designed to maintain curiosity and encourage continuous reading.

f. Use of Familiar and Recognisable Characters

Characters are often simple, clear, and easy to understand. They may represent common social types such as heroes, villains, lovers, or detectives. Their behaviour and actions are usually predictable, making the story easy to follow.

g. Reflection of Society and Culture

Popular Literature reflects the values, beliefs, and trends of contemporary society. It often addresses current social issues in an indirect or entertaining way. It helps readers understand social realities while remaining engaging and accessible.

h. Influence of Market and Consumer Demand

The production of Popular Literature is often influenced by reader preferences and market trends. Writers and publishers focus on what is popular and in demand. Genres and themes may change over time depending on interest of audience

i. Wide Reach and Popularity

It reaches a large number of readers across different regions and cultures. Its availability in multiple formats (print, digital, audio, films) increases its accessibility. It plays an important role in shaping popular culture and reading habits.

Overall, the combination of simple language, wide appeal, and engaging storytelling makes Popular Literature an important and influential part of literary culture, especially in reaching and connecting with a broad audience.

1.4 Difference between Popular and Classical Literature

The distinction between Popular Literature and Classical Literature lies mainly in their purpose, style, audience, and approach to storytelling. While both are important forms of literary expression. They differ in the way they are written, read, and appreciated.

Popular Literature is primarily written for entertainment and wide readership. It uses simple and direct language so that it can be easily understood by the general public. Its stories are often fast-paced, engaging, and based on themes such as love, adventure, crime, or fantasy. The focus is on keeping the reader interested and emotionally involved.

Because of its accessibility, Popular Literature reaches a large and diverse audience and is often influenced by market demand and reader preferences.

On the other hand, Classical Literature is usually associated with serious artistic and intellectual value. It often employs complex language, rich symbolism, and deeper philosophical ideas. Such works require careful reading and interpretation, and they are generally studied in academic contexts. Classical Literature is not mainly written for entertainment but for exploring reflective human experiences, moral questions, and universal truths.

Another important difference lies in their audience and longevity. Popular Literature is meant for immediate appeal and mass consumption, whereas Classical Literature is often considered timeless and continues to be valued across generations. While Popular Literature reflects contemporary tastes and trends, Classical Literature is usually regarded as part of the literary canon and holds enduring significance.

In essence, Popular Literature connects with readers through simplicity and entertainment, while Classical Literature engages them through depth, complexity, and lasting artistic merit.

1.5 Check Your Progress-I

Que. Rewrite the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. Popular Literature is best defined as:
 - A) Literature written only for academic study
 - B) Literature with complex language and symbolism
 - C) Literature widely read and intended for a broad audience
 - D) Literature limited to classical works
2. Which of the following best explains the simplicity of Popular Literature?
 - A) It uses clear and direct language for easy understanding
 - B) It uses complex and philosophical language
 - C) It requires specialised knowledge to understand
 - D) It is written only for elite readers
3. Popular Literature is often described as market-oriented because:
 - A) It avoids reader preferences
 - B) It is produced only for critics
 - C) It is unrelated to publishing industries
 - D) It is influenced by reader interests and commercial success

4. Which of the following is NOT a medium of Popular Literature?
 - A) Films and television
 - B) Digital platforms
 - C) Newspapers and magazines
 - D) Ancient manuscripts only
5. Which statement correctly distinguishes Popular Literature from Classical Literature?
 - A) Popular Literature is complex and philosophical
 - B) Popular Literature uses simple language and has mass appeal
 - C) Classical Literature focuses only on entertainment
 - D) Classical Literature is written only for commercial success

1.6 Section 2: Types and Forms of Popular Literature

Popular Literature is remarkably diverse, encompassing a wide range of genres that appeal to different kinds of readers. Each form is shaped by its unique themes, narrative style, and emotional appeal, yet all share the common goal of engaging and entertaining a broad audience.

Romance

Romance is one of the most widely read and emotionally engaging forms of Popular Literature. At its core, romance literature focuses on love, relationships, and the emotional journey of individuals. These narratives often explore how characters meet, form connections, face conflicts, and eventually resolve their differences, leading to emotional fulfilment. The central theme is usually the development of a romantic relationship, which becomes the driving force of the story.

What makes romance particularly appealing is its deep connection to human emotions. Readers often find themselves relating to the characters' experiences of love, longing, heartbreak, and reconciliation. The language used in romance writing is generally simple and expressive, making it easy for a wide audience to connect with the story. The emotional intensity of the narrative keeps readers engaged and invested in the outcome.

Another important aspect of romance literature is its tendency to offer hopeful or satisfying endings. While conflicts and misunderstandings are common throughout the story, they are usually resolved in a way that reinforces positive emotions and relationships. This sense of closure provides comfort and enjoyment to readers, making romance a preferred choice for leisure reading.

In addition, romance literature often reflects social values and cultural norms related to relationships, gender roles, and personal identity. Through its narratives, it not only entertains but also mirrors the emotional and social realities of everyday life. This combination of relatability, emotional depth, and accessibility is what makes romance a significant and enduring form of Popular Literature.

Detective Fiction

Detective fiction, also known as crime or mystery fiction, is a popular form of literature that centres on solving a crime or uncovering a mystery. The main focus of these stories is the process of investigation, usually led by a detective, police officer, or an intelligent amateur who works through clues to arrive at the truth.

A key feature of detective fiction is its structured and logical narrative. The story typically begins with a crime most often a murder or theft which creates suspense and curiosity. As the plot unfolds, the investigator gathers evidence, interviews suspects, and analyses clues. Readers are drawn into this process and are often encouraged to think alongside the detective, trying to solve the mystery before the final revelation.

Suspense and tension play an important role in maintaining reader interest. The writer carefully controls the flow of information, revealing clues gradually while also introducing misleading details or “red herrings” to keep the outcome unpredictable. This keeps readers engaged and intellectually involved throughout the story.

Another important aspect is the final resolution, where the mystery is solved, and the truth is revealed. This moment provides satisfaction to the reader, as all the scattered clues and events come together in a logical explanation. Justice is often restored, reinforcing a sense of order and closure.

Detective fiction is appealing not only because of its suspenseful plots but also because it stimulates critical thinking and problem-solving skills. Its combination of mystery, logic, and excitement makes it one of the most enduring and widely enjoyed forms of Popular Literature.

Science Fiction

Science fiction is a major form of Popular Literature that explores imaginative ideas based on science, technology, and the future. It deals with concepts that go beyond present reality, such as space travel, advanced machines, artificial intelligence, time travel, and life on other planets. Although these ideas may seem fantastic, they are often rooted in scientific principles or possibilities.

A defining feature of science fiction is its focus on “what could happen” rather than what has already happened. Writers use this genre to imagine future societies and technological advancements, sometimes showing how these changes might affect human life, relationships, and the environment. In this way, science fiction is not only entertaining but also thought-provoking.

The settings in science fiction stories are often futuristic or set in outer space, with highly developed technologies and unfamiliar worlds. These imaginative settings allow authors to create unique plots and situations that challenge ordinary ways of thinking. At the same time, many science fiction stories reflect real-world concerns such as climate change, scientific ethics, and the consequences of technological progress.

Another important element is the sense of wonder and curiosity it inspires. Readers are drawn to the unknown and the possibility of discovering new worlds or forms of life. The genre encourages imagination while also promoting critical thinking about science and its impact on society.

In conclusion, science fiction stands out as a form of Popular Literature because it combines creativity with scientific ideas. It entertains readers with exciting and imaginative stories while also encouraging them to think about the future and the role of science in shaping human existence.

Fantasy

Fantasy is a captivating form of Popular Literature that transports readers into imaginary worlds filled with magic, supernatural elements, and mythical creatures. Unlike science fiction, which is based on scientific possibilities, fantasy relies on imagination and the existence of forces that do not follow the laws of reality.

A key feature of fantasy literature is its world-building. Authors create entirely new settings often with their own rules, cultures, languages, and histories. These worlds may include magical kingdoms, enchanted forests, or parallel universes where extraordinary events occur. Such settings allow readers to escape from everyday life and enter a realm of wonder and adventure.

Magic is central to most fantasy stories. Characters may possess special powers, encounter magical objects, or interact with creatures like dragons, fairies, and wizards. These factors enhance excitement and unpredictability to the narrative. At the same time, many fantasy stories follow a clear structure, often involving a hero's journey, where the main character faces challenges, battles evil forces, and grows through their experiences.

Fantasy literature also explores universal themes such as good versus evil, courage, friendship, and the struggle for power. Even though the settings are imaginary, these themes are deeply connected to real human experiences, making the stories meaningful as well as entertaining.

In conclusion, fantasy is a significant type of Popular Literature because it stimulates imagination and creativity. It offers readers an escape into magical worlds while still reflecting important values and ideas found in real life, making it both enjoyable and thought-provoking.

Adventure

Adventure fiction is an exciting and action-filled form of Popular Literature that focuses on journeys, exploration, and daring experiences. These stories typically involve a protagonist who sets out on a mission or quest, often facing dangerous situations, unfamiliar environments, and unexpected challenges along the way.

A central feature of adventure fiction is its fast-paced plot. The narrative is driven by action rather than deep emotional or philosophical reflection. Events such as battles, escapes, discoveries, and physical obstacles keep the story moving quickly and maintain the reader's interest. This constant movement and excitement make adventure stories highly engaging and entertaining.

The setting plays an important role in adventure fiction. Stories are often set in exotic or remote locations such as jungles, deserts, oceans, or uncharted territories. These unfamiliar environments add to the sense of danger and discovery, making the journey more thrilling for both the characters and the readers.

Another key element is the presence of a heroic character. The protagonist is usually brave, determined, and resourceful, overcoming difficulties through courage and quick thinking. Through these challenges, the character often undergoes personal growth, learning important lessons about survival, responsibility, and perseverance.

Adventure fiction also emphasises themes such as bravery, exploration, risk-taking, and the human desire to discover the unknown. While primarily meant to entertain, it also inspires readers with stories of courage and resilience.

In conclusion, adventure fiction is a vital form of Popular Literature because it offers excitement, movement, and a sense of discovery. Its thrilling narratives and heroic characters make it especially appealing to readers who enjoy action-packed and engaging stories.

In conclusion, the various types and forms of Popular Literature such as romance, detective fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and adventure highlight its wide appeal and diversity. Each genre offers a unique experience, whether through emotional depth, suspense, imaginative exploration, or thrilling action.

Despite their differences, all these forms share the common purpose of entertaining and engaging a broad audience. Their accessible language, relatable themes, and compelling narratives make Popular Literature an important and enduring part of literary culture, reflecting both the interests and aspirations of society.

1.7 Check Your Progress-II

Que. State whether the following statements are True or False.

1. Romance literature mainly focuses on love, relationships, and emotional development of characters.
2. Detective fiction usually avoids suspense and does not involve solving mysteries.

3. Science fiction deals only with past events and historical realities.
4. Fantasy literature is based on imagination, magic, and supernatural elements rather than scientific facts.
5. Adventure fiction is characterised by slow-paced narratives and deep philosophical discussions.

1.8 Section 3: Popular Literature, Society and Readers

Popular Literature shares a close and dynamic relationship with society and its readers. It reflects the values, beliefs, interests, and concerns of the time in which it is produced, making it deeply connected to everyday life. At the same time, it plays an important role in shaping readers' attitudes, emotions, and perspectives by presenting relatable characters and situations. Because of its accessible language and engaging storytelling, Popular Literature reaches a wide audience and influences popular culture in significant ways. Thus, it acts as both a mirror of society and a powerful medium that connects writers and readers through shared experiences and ideas.

Relationship with Society and Culture

Popular Literature has a strong and meaningful relationship with society and culture, as it both reflects and influences the way people think, feel, and live. It often draws its themes, characters, and settings from real-life situations, making it closely connected to the social environment in which it is created. Issues such as love, crime, social inequality, gender roles, and cultural traditions are frequently explored, allowing readers to see their own world represented in the stories they read.

At the same time, Popular Literature plays an important role in shaping cultural values and public opinion. Through its wide reach and accessibility, it can influence how people perceive relationships, morality, success, and identity. For example, romance novels may shape ideas about love and relationships, while science fiction can influence how society views technology and the future.

Popular Literature also helps in preserving and spreading cultural elements such as language, customs, beliefs, and traditions. Stories set in specific cultural contexts introduce readers to different ways of life, promoting awareness and understanding across diverse communities.

In addition, because it is easily accessible and widely consumed, Popular Literature often responds quickly to social changes and trends. It reflects current issues and evolving cultural norms more rapidly than classical literature, making it a dynamic and relevant form of expression.

In conclusion, the relationship between Popular Literature and society is interactive and influential. It not only mirrors cultural realities but also contributes to shaping them, making it an important part of social and cultural life.

Role of the Market (Commercial Aspect)

The market plays a crucial role in shaping Popular Literature, as it is largely driven by commercial success and reader demand. Unlike classical literature, which often prioritises artistic value, Popular Literature is closely tied to what sells well and appeals to a wide audience. Publishers, authors, and media industries pay careful attention to current trends, reader preferences, and market demands when producing and promoting literary works.

One of the key aspects of the commercial nature of Popular Literature is its mass production and distribution. Books are produced in large quantities and marketed through various platforms such as bookstores, online retailers, and digital media. This wide availability makes Popular Literature easily accessible and contributes to its widespread popularity.

Market forces also influence the content and style of Popular Literature. Writers often follow successful formulas such as predictable plot structures, familiar themes, and relatable characters to ensure that their works attract readers. Genres like romance, crime, and fantasy are continuously reproduced with slight variations because they have proven to be commercially successful.

Additionally, Popular Literature is closely connected to other forms of media and entertainment. Successful books are often adapted into films, television series, or digital content, further increasing their commercial value. This cross-media presence strengthens the relationship between literature and the entertainment industry.

However, the commercial aspect can sometimes lead to criticism. Some argue that the focus on profit may reduce originality and literary quality, as writers may prioritise popularity over creativity. Despite this, the market ensures that Popular Literature remains dynamic, relevant, and responsive to readers' interests.

In conclusion, the market plays a central role in the growth and sustainability of Popular Literature. It not only determines what is produced and consumed but also helps in expanding its reach, making literature a significant part of the global entertainment economy.

Reader Response and Readership

Reader response and readership are central to the success and significance of Popular Literature. Unlike classical forms of literature that may target a limited or specialised audience, Popular Literature is designed to appeal to a broad and diverse group of readers. Its simple language, engaging plots, and relatable themes make it easily accessible, allowing people from different age groups, educational backgrounds, and cultures to enjoy it.

One of the key features of Popular Literature is its strong focus on reader response. Authors often write with the audience in mind, shaping stories to meet readers' expectations, preferences, and emotional needs. Readers actively engage with the text by identifying with characters, predicting outcomes, and reacting emotionally to events. This interaction makes reading a more personal and enjoyable experience.

Popular Literature also encourages mass readership. Bestselling books, widely circulated novels, and digital formats such as e-books and online stories have expanded its reach significantly. Readers not only consume these works individually but also discuss and share them through social media, book clubs, and online communities, creating a shared cultural experience.

Additionally, reader feedback plays an important role in shaping future works. Writers and publishers often respond to audience reactions, trends, and demands, leading to the continuation of popular genres, series, or themes. This creates a dynamic relationship where readers influence what is written, and literature evolves accordingly.

In conclusion, reader response and readership are vital components of Popular Literature. They ensure its popularity, relevance, and continuous growth by creating an interactive connection between writers and audiences, making literature a shared and evolving cultural experience.

Popular Literature as a Reflection of Everyday Life

Popular Literature closely reflects everyday life, making it highly relatable and meaningful to its readers. It often draws inspiration from common human experiences such as love, relationships, work, family, social conflicts, and personal struggles. By presenting situations that readers encounter in their daily lives, it creates a strong sense of familiarity and connection.

One of the main reasons for its wide appeal is its focus on realistic themes and characters. Even in genres that include imaginative elements, the emotions, conflicts, and motivations of characters often mirror real human behaviour. Readers can easily identify with these characters, seeing their own lives, challenges, and aspirations reflected in the stories.

Popular Literature also captures the social realities of a particular time and place. It addresses contemporary issues such as changing family structures, cultural expectations, social inequalities, and modern lifestyles. In doing so, it not only entertains but also provides insight into the way people live and interact within society.

Moreover, it reflects the language and communication styles of everyday life. The use of simple, conversational language makes it accessible and realistic, allowing readers to engage with the text more naturally. This accessibility strengthens the connection between the story and the reader's own experiences.

In conclusion, Popular Literature serves as a mirror of everyday life by portraying real-world situations, emotions, and social conditions. Its ability to reflect the ordinary experiences of people is what makes it engaging, relatable, and widely appreciated across different audiences.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the relationship between Popular Literature, society, and readers is deeply interconnected and mutually influential. Popular Literature reflects social realities, cultural values, and everyday experiences while also shaping the thoughts, attitudes, and preferences of its readers. The influence of the market ensures its wide reach and adaptability, while active reader response keeps it dynamic and relevant. Through its accessibility and engagement, Popular Literature bridges the gap between literature and the general public, making it an important cultural force that both mirrors and influences modern life.

1.9 Check Your Progress-III

Que. Complete the following sentences by filling in the blanks with correct words.

1. Popular Literature acts as both a _____ of society and a medium connecting writers and readers.
2. Popular Literature often explores issues such as love, crime, and social _____.
3. The market influences Popular Literature through reader preferences and commercial _____.
4. Popular Literature is designed to appeal to a _____ and diverse group of readers.
5. Popular Literature reflects everyday life by presenting common human _____ such as relationships and personal struggles.

1.10 Summary

Popular Literature is a broad and engaging form of literature that differs from classical literature in its accessibility, simple language, and focus on entertainment and mass appeal. While classical literature emphasises artistic depth and complexity, popular literature connects easily with a wide audience through relatable themes and straightforward storytelling.

The various types and forms of Popular Literature including romance, detective fiction, science fiction, fantasy, and adventure demonstrate its diversity. Each genre offers a unique experience, whether through emotional engagement, suspense, imagination, or action. Despite these differences, all forms aim to captivate readers and provide enjoyable reading experiences.

The relationship between Popular Literature, society, and readers is dynamic and interactive. Popular Literature reflects cultural values, social realities, and everyday life, making it highly relevant and relatable. At the same time, it influences readers' thoughts and attitudes. The role of the market ensures its wide production and distribution, while reader response plays a crucial role in shaping trends and sustaining its popularity.

Overall, Popular Literature serves as both a mirror and a force within society. It entertains, informs, and connects people, making it an important and enduring part of modern literary and cultural life.

1.11 Glossary

- ♦ Popular Literature: Literary works that are widely read, easily accessible, and intended for a general audience.
- ♦ Classical Literature: Literature known for its artistic quality, complexity, and lasting value, often studied in academic contexts.
- ♦ Mass Appeal: The ability of a work to attract and be enjoyed by a large and diverse audience.
- ♦ Accessibility: The ease with which a text can be read and understood by readers from different backgrounds.
- ♦ Entertainment Value: The quality of a literary work that provides enjoyment, excitement, or emotional satisfaction to readers.
- ♦ Genre: A category or type of literature based on its themes, style, and content (e.g., romance, fantasy).
- ♦ Romance Fiction: A genre focusing on love, relationships, and emotional development between characters.
- ♦ Detective Fiction: A genre centred on solving crimes or mysteries through investigation and logical reasoning.
- ♦ Science Fiction: A genre that explores imaginative ideas based on science, technology, and the future.
- ♦ Fantasy: A genre involving magical elements, imaginary worlds, and supernatural beings.
- ♦ Adventure Fiction: A genre focused on action, exploration, and exciting journeys.
- ♦ Narrative: The structured way in which a story is told, including plot, characters, and events.
- ♦ Plot: The sequence of events that make up a story.
- ♦ Theme: The central idea or message explored in a literary work.

- ♦ Characterisation: The way in which characters are created and developed in a story.
- ♦ Market-Oriented Literature: Literature produced with consideration of reader demand and commercial success.
- ♦ Publishing Industry: The business sector involved in producing and distributing books and other reading materials.
- ♦ Reader Response: The reactions, interpretations, and emotional engagement of readers with a text.
- ♦ Readership: The group or audience of people who read a particular work or type of literature.
- ♦ Cultural Values: Shared beliefs, traditions, and practices that shape a society.
- ♦ Social Reality: The actual conditions, experiences, and issues present in society.
- ♦ Mass Production: The large-scale production of books to reach a wide audience.
- ♦ Adaptation: The transformation of a literary work into another form, such as film or television.
- ♦ Digital Literature: Literature available in electronic formats such as e-books, blogs, and online fiction.
- ♦ Popular Culture: Cultural practices, beliefs, and entertainment forms that are widely accepted by the general public.
- ♦ Formulaic Writing: A style of writing that follows predictable patterns or structures.
- ♦ Suspense: A feeling of excitement or tension about what will happen next in a story.
- ♦ World-Building: The creation of an imaginary setting with its own rules, culture, and environment.
- ♦ Protagonist: The main character in a story.
- ♦ Contemporary Issues: Current social, cultural, or political topics reflected in literature.
- ♦ Commercial Literature: Literature produced mainly for profit and wide readership.
- ♦ Globalisation: The process by which literature and culture spread across the world beyond local boundaries.
- ♦ Cultural Representation: The portrayal of cultural practices, beliefs, and identities in literature.
- ♦ Reader Engagement: The level of interest and involvement a reader has with a text.

- ♦ Literary Canon: A collection of works considered to be of high artistic or cultural importance.

1.12 Answers to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress I: 1. (C) 2. (A) 3. (D) 4. (D) 5. (B)

Check Your Progress II: 1. True 2. False 3. False 4. True 5. False

Check Your Progress III: 1. mirror 2. inequality 3. success 4. broad 5. experiences

1.13 Exercise: (Long and short type questions as would appear in the examination)

Short Type Questions:

- i. What is meant by Popular Literature?
- ii. How does Popular Literature differ from Classical Literature?
- iii. State any two key characteristics of Popular Literature.
- iv. Why is Popular Literature described as “market-oriented”?
- v. Mention any two genres of Popular Literature.
- vi. Explain the term “mass appeal” in the context of Popular Literature.
- vii. How does Popular Literature reflect society?
- viii. What role does the market play in shaping Popular Literature?
- ix. What is meant by reader response in Popular Literature?
- x. How does Popular Literature reflect everyday life?

Long Type Questions:

- i. Define Popular Literature and discuss its major characteristics in detail.
- ii. Examine the relationship between Popular Literature and society with suitable examples.
- iii. Discuss the role of the market in shaping Popular Literature.
- iv. Analyse the importance of reader response and readership in Popular Literature.
- v. Explain how Popular Literature reflects everyday life and human experiences.
- vi. Compare and contrast Popular Literature with Classical Literature.
- vii. Discuss Popular Literature as a cultural force that both reflects and influences modern society.

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Module II

MAJOR THEMES AND CONTRIBUTORS TO POPULAR FICTION

- 2.0 Objective
- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Major Themes in Popular Fiction
- 2.3 Check Your Progress – I
- 2.4 Major Contributors to Popular Fiction
- 2.5 Check Your Progress – II
- 2.6 Summing Up
- 2.7 Exercises
- 2.8 Key to Check Your Progress
- 2.9 Reference List

2.0 Objectives

Objectives of studying this unit are to :

- ♦ acquaint students with different themes in popular fiction.
- ♦ introduce students to some of the popular fiction writers in English.

2.1 Introduction

Literature is the reflection of life as it is seen by the author. It is a mirror to the society and social ups and downs in different form. It is basically a work with artistic and aesthetic qualities and it advocates the lasting values for progression of society. It conveys virtues and vices at the same time so that human beings can differentiate and follow what is good and useful for them in personal as well as social life. However, there is a whole lot of literature which often deviates from the mainstream literature appealing to sensuousness of human beings. That part of literature is often referred to as 'Popular Literature'. The word 'Popular' has its origin in the Greek word 'populus' which means people. Thus, the term 'Popular Literature' basically means the literature of people. It addresses what is demanded by the mass. Study of this chapter shall acquaint you with the themes addressed in the popular fiction along with some major contributors to the popular fiction.

2.2 Major Themes in Popular Fiction

2.3.1 Introduction

Popular fiction is a genre that includes novels that list on top among the best-sellers, the commercially successful writings which appeal to a broad audience. These are the fiction that dominate reading world and appeal to general audience. They often centre around a surprisingly small set of major themes. Unlike the literary fiction, popular fiction aims at engagement, entertainment and emotional connection of the readers. As it addresses popular social and psychological concerns just beneath its accessible surface, it appeals readers with the feeling of living with the time or slightly ahead of it. Let's discuss some of the themes commonly repeated in the popular fiction.

2.3.2 Love and Romance

Love has been one of the most common themes in popular fiction and movies across the world as it has associations with basic instincts of all the species. Love in the popular fiction is a simple emotional experience. In a popular fiction, structures of desires, conflicts, assurances, promises, wish fulfilments, break-ups, patch-ups, shifts of attraction, marriages, extramarital affairs, emotions, emotional vulnerabilities, emotional melodramas and many other aspects of love—romantic, platonic, familial, forbidden, redemptive, tragic or passionate, are presented to the readers. Most of the romance fictions revolve around the emotional transformations, conflicts and eventual reunions.

The romance is often weaved around the development of a relationship between a man and a woman. The expected resolution of this romantic relationship is positive where the lovers enter into a permanently happy relationship which is assumed to be the marriage of two minds. These novels are often narratives revolving around specific characters. While doing this, the author often applies all the possible permutations and combinations of characters, temperaments, people, issues, conflicts and natures of relationships. This is just to avoid any formula story which has been produced earlier.

The love stories often develop between characters belonging to different social, economic or political strata and develop with time bringing in several conflicting elements. The twists introduced keep the reader busy throughout the story. Some new elements and events are presented so that the reader gets new clues and new ideas, usually beyond her/his imagination or familiarity. The stories are usually multi-layered and unpeeled one after another surprisingly leading the reader to a happy or tragic ending. Sometimes, the romance continues even in sequels for love, romance and marriage are intricately interwoven throughout life.

According to Janice Radway, the romance fiction provides emotional reassurance and symbolic resolution to the reader. 'Romance reading is a way of temporarily refusing the demands of patriarchal society and focusing on the self' (Radway 1984, p. 212). Thus, it provides an emotional vent to the readers who fulfil their wish through the wish

fulfilment of the characters. This is one of the major reasons for popularity of Mills & Boon romantic fictions in English. A lot of variety of characters that move between the characteristic features of God and Devil are introduced in such novels so as to make it more and more interesting. Female protagonists turning into villain for vengeance is one of the newly introduced twist in these romance fictions.

Examples:

In Michelle Reid's novel *The Italian Boss's Mistress* is a story of a working woman clashing with her arrogant and bossy boss. She is at odds with him since beginning but finally falls in love with him and marry him to end the story. Their love begins with hatred and, with the passage of time, gradually turns into love.

The Spanish Groom, a novel by Lynne Graham, is a story of a marriage of convenience between a wealthy Spanish aristocrat and a woman bound by obligation. Misunderstandings and pride turn into fascination and attraction and finally into lifelong love relationship.

The Hating Game, a novel by Sally Thorne, is story of contemporary working people who develop romantic relationship. Lucy and Joshua are officemates and professional competitors trying to prove their mantles. Surprisingly, their closeness converts into romantic relationship that mature into marriage.

2.3.3 Moral Conflict: Good vs Evil

The conflict between the Good and the Evil has been present since civilization of human beings commenced. Civilization made converted homo sapiens into human beings. They developed the sense of the good and the evil. The good for humans is an action that benefits many while the evil is an action that troubles many. The concepts of good and evil are for the members of a society and they are determined by geographical and cultural constructs of a society. Some aspects of good and evil are instinctual and are common among human beings irrespective of their region, religion, caste, race, etc. They are common among all the people. However, recent social developments are rather uniform across the world due to technological advancements. Technology has converted the globe into a village that accommodates almost every social, political, regional, religious, cultural, etc. aspect through their familiarities through mass media and social media. Any problem anywhere in the world is a problem of every locality in the world now.

In the backdrop of the technological advancements and scientific discoveries, contemporary popular fiction adopts a large number of themes associated with science and technology. The conflict between the good and the evil is rendered to the purpose for which the technology is used. Stories serve a dual purpose. They tell us the difference between the good and the evil, and at the same time educate us about use of the technology.

In the contemporary popular fiction, the conflict between good and evil is presented through grey characters which are morally flawed and display morally questionable behaviours. They confuse us and leave us to judge who among them is correct instead of making it black and white. Stories are often presented with anti-heroes or sympathetic villains. Their guilts are presented as circumstantial which bring them under the purview of normal human beings with worldly flaws. They are very much like us and our sympathies are always with them. This ultimately mitigates the distance between good and evil. Rather the writers present good and evil as not as a binary but just an axis with continuum.

There is a large variety of fiction that complicates the difference between good and evil as it presents multiplicity of situations where the readers are guided to evaluate good and evil in the specific contexts. This blurs the difference between the good and the evil and the readers are presented with novel, often adverse interpretations. The characters and plots are often designed to highlight the social and systemic problems.

Examples:

A series of novels entitled Harry Potter by J. K. Rowling shows eternal conflict between the good and the evil. Harry Potter, right from his childhood, constantly attempts to establish superiority of the good for the sake of welfare of the society he lives in. Social Welfare and social order are the motives in his struggle. He is constantly supported by people of the similar motives.

J. R. R. Tolkien's three novels in the series of The Lord of the Rings present the theme of polar good and evil. It goes with the verbatim 'Power corrupts' and the Devil Lord attempts to trouble all others only to exercise his power. The three novels show the conflict ultimately ending in the 'poetic justice' of happy ending.

2.3.4 Crime, Mystery and Suspense

Crime, mystery and suspense is one of the most popular themes in the contemporary popular fiction. One of the reasons is entertainment with waiting and patience that makes the reader think, itch his head in attempts to predict what comes next.

Crime is a social reality. We often define crime in terms of violation of set standards or rules or a behaviour that is odd and troubles lives of others. It is a part and parcel of our social life. It reflects through conflict of classes where one class tries to be dominant and gives subjugated treatment to the other. Corruption is another issue which is crime itself and gives birth to other criminal activities that appear as interconnected chain of events. Gender violence and misuse of technology are other forms of crime. Any behaviour that violate the social standards and norms become crime. In the contemporary popular fiction, crime and criminal activities are often identified as 'Underworld'. Fictions present this from local to international level revealing nature of different types of activities such as theft, murder, drug dealing, human trafficking, weapon dealing and allied activities for the purpose of quick and unlimited money making. For Example:

Mario Puzzo's *The Godfather* series unveils a world with which normal citizens are unfamiliar. The trend setting novel presents a world parallel to the world of a common man where all types of criminal activities go on and are managed as if it a type of corporate world where companies produce certain products to sell. It is one of those businesses which provide quick returns.

Mystery and Suspense are entwined. There is a lot of variety in the nature of mystery that begins with a small theft, some hidden treasure, murder, series of murders, political mystery, divine secret or some historical mystery. It encompasses a wide canvas of objects of mystery. Usually, a mysterious story works at two levels. The first level is the discovery of object of mystery and the second level is the level which reveals the journey of discovery of mystery. This type of fiction is often packed with a variety of characters which are divided by the purpose and motive of their life—good vs evil, truth vs lie, order vs anarchy and so on.

The object of discovery is at the centre. A typical detective fiction is a crime story that revolves around the detective figure, the protagonist who may be a professional or amateur who acquires maturity with the discovery. He faces a series of events that trouble him and make him think about the situations in a novel way so as to reach the logical end. The stories provide clues, which may be useful or misleading. This makes the story interesting and exciting. Clues are often accompanied by evidences which are possibly multi-layered and multi-coloured. It provides surprising twists and lead the protagonist to a place that provides one or more cues. Sometimes, parallel investigations are initiated. Two equally powerful or one expert and one amateur clash with each other to reveal the secret. The suspense and tension in the story proceeds with logical reasoning and deductions and ends with final revelations. All the mysteries are resolved at the end.

Plot of these fictions is quite complex. It moves from one event to the other leading to a completely different set of possibilities each time. They confuse the readers surprising them with each twist binding them to the story till the end. If all the secrets and mysteries are not revealed at the end, the readers get uneasy and wait for the next part. This gives birth to sequels.

Examples:

The *Da Vinci Code* (2003) is one of the best-selling American novels written by Dan Brown. It is a novel that attempts to create an alternative religious history that explores the bloodline of Jesus Christ. There are undercover groups which do not want to uncover the bloodline which has been kept mysterious for two thousand years. Professor Robert Langdon, an expert in mythology, history, symbolism and semiotics, unveils all the codes to find out the legal heir of Jesus Christ. The novel opens with discussions on signs and symbols, and ends happily.

Gillian Flynn's novel *Gone Girl* (2011) explores deception in marriage. Amy wants to avenge her husband Nick for his infidelity and plans her abduction. Her plan goes out of control and she is forced to return home. She somehow manages to avoid punishment trapping Nick in circumstances and public pressures to stay with her. Their marriage remains disturbed yet unresolved. The story keeps the reader engrossed in the sequence of connected events which reveal Amy's plan only towards the end.

2.3.5 Identity and Self-Discovery

Identity and self-discovery have been the classic themes where certain characters explore their physical, mental and superhuman abilities so as to stand as an individual. The search for identity is irrespective of the class, gender, race, caste, social or political status. The theme heightens as ego is a natural instinct among all the human beings. Their struggle with the social issues is always accompanied by the struggle with the self which ultimately leads them to self-realization and self-discovery.

The word 'identity' refers to how an individual defines himself/ herself. Traditionally, identity was a rigid construct where individuals assumed themselves as members of a particular society governed by a particular set of cultural and religious practices. Needs of survival were limited and expectations from self and others were also low. Discoveries in the field of science and technology seriously changed the lifestyles of individuals where number of tools for survival as well as entertainment increase with leaps and bounds. Increase in the number of resources for survival also increased expectations of individuals from self. This triggered their ability to question self, their place in the cultural, social, economic, spiritual, religious, and racial context. Questioning is the beginning of identifying oneself, the beginning of self-discovery. It is more about discovering one's own self, abilities, capacities, interests, inclinations, likes and dislikes.

The first major concern in the discussion of identity is cultural and diasporic. Migration and emigration have been common in the twentieth century. They have their own advantages and disadvantages. Most of the novels deal with characters caught between cultures and cultural clashes. The novels mainly deal with accommodation and absorption of the migrants into new cultures. They also render the feelings of uprootedness, disruption and double—bind among the migrants. Like every other settled being, they also want a settled, stable life. Every novel end with a new issue and new emotion that is bound by the context.

Example: Jhumpa Lahiri's novel *Namesake* (2003) swings between India and America. It examines the nuances created due to conflicting cultures with different social, religious and ideological differences.

Education reached to all types of people irrespective of their location, class, caste, region, and religion. Education trained people and enabled them with some skills which in turn empowered them to earn money. Money brought prosperity and prosperity gave time to individuals to think about themselves, their personal aspirations, desires, their

capacities, their looks, and their individualities. Along with other aspects of identity, writers explored gender and sexuality issues. Women protagonist, particularly, focus on femininity and feminine body. Contemporary fiction explores identity through gender roles and sexuality.

Example: *The Danish Girl* (2000), a novel by David Ebershoff is a fictionalised account of the life of Lili Elbe, one of the first transgender women who has undergone sex reassignment surgery. The novel fabricates characters and inner state of mind of the characters. It presents characters speaking openly about their gender and sexuality.

Gillian Flynn's novel *Gone Girl* presents Amy, a married woman comes to know about the extramarital affairs. Her husband's infidelity forces her to plot against him to teach a lesson. However, she loses control of the plot and ends up with unhappy marriage. Amy's awareness of her identity as a loyal wife suddenly turns into a desperate wife who her husband to be loyal and to achieve the end, she is ready to take any step.

Self-realization, search for purpose and moral identity is the next important theme of contemporary popular fiction. Every individual is curious about mysteries around and always want to discover what lies behind all these natural miracles around us. This ultimately provokes them to explore their own capacities in connections with their aspirations and surroundings. In short, they try to find out purposes of their living—specific and general also. This curiosity compels them to undertake a journey. Their journey concludes either with the discovery of self or realization that they need to adopt the system instead of complaining about it.

Examples: Brazilian author Paulo Coelho's famous novel *The Alchemist* (1988) is a story of Santiago, a shepherd boy who travels from North Africa to the Egyptian pyramids to chase his dream of hidden treasure. He sells his herd of sheep and travels to the Egyptian pyramids in search of treasure. He meets people with different inclinations and purposes on his way. When he reaches the place and starts digging for the treasure, he is robbed by thieves. The leader of the thieves asks him about the reason of digging and when he comes to know about the dream, he tells Santiago about the place of the treasure. Santiago discovers the treasure where he had started from.

2.3.6 Power, Inequality and Systemic Injustice

Power has been one of the most discussed topics in the philosophical, political and social circles across the world. There are different means through which power may be exercised to control others—people, communal groups, regional groups and countries in the end. Power comes into force when two or more people come together. It is a natural instinct among us to exhibit the best of our skills, qualities, capacities, assets or possessions. Everyone wants to possess the best that is known and thought around them whether it is an object, thing, piece of land, building, person or anything.

Michel Foucault, a twentieth century thinker, states that ‘Power is everywhere: not because it embraces everything, but because it comes from everywhere’ (History of Sexuality, p. 93). It is precisely this statement which is an outcome of many different discourses in the form of political treatises, historical records, philosophical treatises and literature. Literature is the main source that provides situations. These situations give hints and provide clues for further possibilities of operation of power.

Contemporary popular fiction present three types of powers—Institutional, Interpersonal and Knowledge as Power. Institutional power exists in the form of governments, authority, corporations and organizations. Organizations are not bad but are represented by evil-minded money makers who unnecessarily trouble the common people. One person or an association of persons try to corrupt the system and trouble people by using all the power tools such as their positions, money, force, coercion, bribe and many more. The person in position creates inequality giving subordinate treatment to people from different social strata, different communities, class, race, and gender.

Examples: Suzanne Collins novel *The Hunger Games* is about how a private organization Capitol exercises absolute power over different district by means of surveillance, violence and controlling different resources. Use of coercive forces creates fear among residents by controlling their assets and sources.

Power is a tool for exercising inequality. Inequality is a treatment where an individual is deprived of his legitimate rights or someone is given privileged treatment compared to others for some reason. It may be based on economic strata, gender, caste, cultural practices and organizational positions. Class inequality is economic where there is struggle between rich and poor. Rich often get privileged treatment while poor are maltreated and exploited. Gender inequality is a very common practice across the world. However, the common stories are made uncommon by weaving systematic and mysterious plots that ultimately highlight gender inequality.

Example: Vikas Swarup’s novel *Q & A* (2005) depicts the story of Jamal, a boy from a Mumbai slum, who suffers due to his poverty. His every attempt is for survival and upliftment of his social status. It presents his attempts to improve his economic conditions while there are attempts from the elite class to suppress him.

Systemic injustice is one more power tool which is often used by people in the power position. It is a deep—rooted use of unfair means built into legal, political and social systems. With the fear of discovering illegal activities the person is involved in, he tries to use his position and exploits the whole system for his personal protection. Here the reader gets the impression that the whole system is working to exploit the sufferer. Individual is trapped in a system beyond his control. Usually this is shown through corrupt legal and political systems. Corruption and discrimination through corruption is normalised. The individual looks for justice but sometimes even the judicial system is also corrupted.

Example: Harper Lees novel *To Kill a Mocking Bird* (1960) is a classic example of systemic injustice. Tom Robinson, a falsely accused black, is charged of raping a white woman. Atticus Finch, a principled lawyer, attempts to save Tom of his false accuses fights his battle with the system. The novel is famous for its enduring social and ethical relevance.

2.3.7 Social Mobility and Success

Social mobility is a concept related to movement of individuals or groups from one social or economic position to another. Generally, this mobility is from a lower status to a higher or better status. Reasons for social mobility are better economic prospects and stable social conditions. Usually the term used for movement of the group or individual from one place to another is ‘migration’. Migration may be within country or outside it. Whether within the country or outside country, the purpose is basically economic and ultimately social.

Economic mobility is for better economic conditions. People, from areas where there is scarcity of resources for livelihood earnings, move to the areas where they can earn initially for their survival and later for their prosperity. It is a journey of characters from poverty to wealth, from margins to mainstream, from darkness to light. It is a struggle against socio-cultural practices that discriminated individuals and subordinated them in the social structure only on the basis of their economic and social status.

The contemporary popular fiction presents a blend of themes associated with the concepts of mobility success. The traditional concept of merit is challenged time and again. Merit is often accompanied by nepotism and favouritism. The one with better connections gets better opportunities and better opportunities provide better prospects. Thus, they challenge the traditional notion of merit and present stark realities of the contemporary society. Nepotism works not only in providing opportunities but also contributes to discrimination based on class, caste, race and gender which ultimately deprives someone of his lawful opportunities while favour someone something which someone else has qualified for.

The path of success is often thorny. Success demands hard work, dedication and consistency on the part of the character. The process is quite complicated. We find her anxious about the situations and in the process the person gets alienated or isolated or detached from the close ones. The person begins with no identity to reach recognition at the end. The journey is full of adventures, full of ups and downs, and full of barriers. If the person is ambitious, he may resort to any means.

In the popular fiction, we often find an underprivileged protagonist rise from poverty to comfortable and settled life through a struggle that reflects clashes with the people in power, people from upper economic strata along with the people from his own social class who never want him to progress. The characters often recourses to any means to become successful in the eyes of critics around him or her. They are presented as

ambitious one who want to rise above their current social and economic conditions to prove their mantles.

Example: Arvind Adiga has portrayed the protagonist Balram Halwai, a poor boy who becomes a successful entrepreneur through his hard work and devotion. The novel presents the idea of success in practical way which often confuses morality and moral standards to show the story differently. It complicates the plot and success story by showing that his success is stigmatised by his recourse to crime and moral compromise. It presents a critique of modern Indian society which claims to provide equal opportunities to all its citizens.

2.3.8 Adventure and Escapism

An adventure is an undertaking that involves dangers and unknown risks. It is an exciting and remarkable experience. In the popular fiction, adventures are introduced in journeys, quests or encounters with something new. It typically includes a treasure hunt, exploration of new world or territories which are new or have something new and unfamiliar to explore. Sometimes it is physical or psychological challenge which reveals some of the best qualities or some personal secrets or some suppressed feelings of the characters. Escapism, on the other hand, is a human tendency to escape from the regular routine to a purely imaginative activity or something funny that would bring change and refresh the person. This may sometimes involve risks and adventures. Most of the fiction intertwine these two by combining them and presenting them as complimentary to each other. The narratives mingle fast-paced plots, imaginary lands and adventurous characters who fulfil their desires to explore something new.

Most of these are fantasy fiction which offer a complete departure from the real world which we live in and take us to a magical world where many mythic characters—elves, nymphs, fairies, demons, animals and creatures which we cannot even imagine, are introduced. Readers are transported to a parallel world either automated or controlled by magical powers. The life in these parallel worlds is very much imbalanced and in the state of anarchy. The suffering subjects wait for some messiah who would rescue them from the exploitation of some autocrat, often surrounded by powerful culprits.

Examples: Narnia is a parallel world that existed in antiquity and has some magical and spiritual set up to help the good and challenge the evil in the series of novels by C. S. Lewis. The set of seven novels beginning with *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (1950) to *The Last Battle* (1956) presents fantasy world of magic, mythical creatures and animals that talk. It is an adventure undertaken by a group of 4 children who try to escape through a wardrobe and enter the world of Narnia. The seven novels depict various almost impossible tasks successfully accomplished by these children with the help of creatures and their new friends.

The fantasy fiction produced only for the sake of entertainment offer a complete departure from reality to the world of fantasy—usually a world of magic and magical and mythical creatures. The protagonist in this world is given herculean task. To

accomplish the task, the hero or heroine risks his life. His battle is personal at the beginning but with the passage of time, many other sufferers join him to make the task universal. The childish and superficial protagonist acquires maturity during his journey. She grows mature with each encounter and acquires skills necessary for the battle she is fighting. She gets support from some characters while there is a whole army which stands opposing her.

Examples: J. K. Rowling's famous Harry Potter series blends the world of magic and human world. Harry Potter becomes the most powerful sorcerer of the world by defeating the Dark Lord Voldemort. Her world of magic is a parallel world which only the wizards had access to. The journey of Harry from an ordinary boy to an ethically strong wizard passes through different types of adventures, life-threatening situations, supports from his friends and well-wishers, and troubles by the foe and his army. Like every other fantasy, this also has a happy ending.

Adventure fiction is often full of connected sequence of actions. The protagonist face danger, his life is endangered, he solves mysteries and accomplish the mission. The narratives are created out of stock events in a novel way and presented to us in such a way that we are absorbed into the novel. We want to finish the novel in a single sitting.

Example: Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) is was one of the bestsellers where Prof. Langdon, a Harvard professor, uncovers the mystery of the heir of Jesus Christ. The novel delineates a series of thriller actions. The protagonist is dragged into the action by to uncover certain mysteries to finally reveal the real heir of Jesus.

2.3.9 Survival and Resistance

Survival and resistance are of the widely addressed theme in the contemporary popular fiction. It is usually a political thriller full of mysterious events that makes the reader think about connections which are chained with actions and reactions. It reflects the struggle of individuals and communities against the system which is oppressive, environment which is hostile. There is a lot of internal as well as external conflict and the protagonist has to struggle with. Inequality and subordinate treatment are at the centre of these novels.

Survival is the instinct and effort to stay alive physically. Physical existence cannot be isolated. Every individual wants to be alive and accepted by the people around—physical, emotional, social and cultural. Survival is often conditioned by acceptance which is a natural tendency. Resistance is the condition of survival. When things go in our favour, we are happy and willingly accept them. However, when things go against us, it becomes necessary to mend them either by conditioning ourselves to adopt or by resisting the oppressive patterns. It is quite natural in the power structure that the one with capacities can resist. Resistance is the active opposition to control, oppression or injustice. This may be exhibited through slogans, speeches, writings, rebellion, defiance or some subtle act of dissent.

The Darwinian theory ‘Survival of the fittest’ is becoming more and more applicable in the modern human civilizations. There are around two percent people who are trying to control the whole world with their capacities and assets while others struggle to survive with honour and respect. Being alive is one thing which is no better than animals while love, respect and honour at adequate place and suitable situations are the thing demanded by every living soul. Most of the popular novels deal with this dystopian state where poor individuals try to rise above their poverty lines while elite-class people try to control these uprisers. In the power process, often the common class protagonists suffer as all the resources and persons in power position are manipulated by bribing them.

Example: Suzanne Collins *The Hunger Games* (2008) is a dystopian fiction set in the future North America. Katniss, a sixteen year old girl, participates in a televised event named ‘The Hunger Game’ in which participants are selected from surrounding districts, only to save her younger sister. Katniss with Peeta join together at the end to defy the Capitol. They jointly plan to infuriate and destroy the organizers. The novel deals with survival as the main theme around which media manipulation and inequality are other themes successfully entwined.

Physical survival has been one of the dominant survival themes addressed in the contemporary popular fiction. In these fictions, the human endurance—mental and physical—is tested. They are tested against nature and natural calamities, adventurous, life-threatening and apocalyptic situations and the likes. They are tested into the extremities.

Example: Yann Martel’s Booker Prize winning novel ‘*Life of Pi*’ presents the survival journey of Pi Patel, son of a zookeeper. Pi, on his adventure to save the animals from his zoo, finally encounters a situation where he has to travel on a life-boat with a tiger. He visits several places and finally finds his way to reach the safe costal place where the lone friend tiger leaves him. His struggle to be alive even after starvation of several days tests his will to survive.

2.3.10 Mythological Reinterpretations

Literary writing is often loaded with its own historical, philosophical and theoretical elements. These are the elements which make the writer discover, recover and refine the content in addition to pour emotions and feelings so as to strongly appeal people. These are the elements that enable people to organise their thoughts and construct their approach to their life. The society in which the writer lives leaves a strong influence on his ideological development which in turn changes his social outlook and the outlook to look at the traditions.

Mythological reinterpretation is a common way in which many contemporary writers have presented their own views. They revisit myths i.e. the Ramayana, the Mahabharata, the Greek Mythology and all other mythologies. They retell the stories from their own perspectives by reshaping the traditional narratives into the new ones immersed in the

contemporary colours. The rework may have contemporary concerns such as power, changing standards of morality, power politics, gender issues and identity issues.

The process of production of mythical fiction starts with knowledge of mythical events and characters, and individualistic point of view about the events and characters. The process that is followed here is event—mythification—demythification—remythification—presentation. Apparently, the process appears simple but has a great risk of being controversial. It is precisely for this reason that the authors undertake a serious research before commenting about the traditionally accepted views about the events and characters. They have to be rather cautious about the language used, comments passed, characters invented, or the set notions and descriptions modified to the perspective presented.

In most of the contemporary fiction, the authors are rather concerned about demythification or demythologization where the mythical events and mythical characters are reinterpreted by detaching them from the miraculous, superstitious attachments. Myth making has been a tradition since antiquity and the motives behind mythologizing have been several—to guide, to control, to exemplify and so on. It exploited the popular system of belief across all the civilizations that gods existed even before the birth of the universe and they are the ones who created the Universe using their supernatural creative instinct. The very process of mythologization entails demythologization. Demythologization is a hermeneutic approach to mythical and religious texts to extract cosmological, sociological and historic claims from philosophical, ethical and theological teachings. It is the process used to eliminate supernatural and superhuman elements from the texts to make it appear realistic and humane.

‘Total and compensatory’ (Honko, p. 42) is the second type of demythologisation where mythical tradition is completely rejected raising the questions of continuity of civilization before historical period, the period which started recording events in the development of civilizations. They provide hints about what might be taken instead of myths so as to give it some place in the culture. David Bidney in his article *Myth, Symbolism and Truth* (1955) states, ‘Myth must be taken seriously as a cultural force but it must be taken seriously precisely in order that it may be gradually superseded in the interests of the advancement of truth and the growth of human intelligence. Normative, critical, and scientific thought provides the only self-correcting means of combating the diffusion of myth, but it may do so only on condition that we retain a firm and uncompromising faith in the integrity of reason and in the transcultural validity of the scientific enterprise’ (p. 392).

The third type of mythologization stated by Honk is ‘Partial and interpretative’ where the advocates believe that ‘there is no justification for believing myths quite literally. Myths are just symbols or representations for which one needs interpreters, the ones who can explain the deep meaning lying within the symbols and representations. Interpretations vary with the interpreters which in itself is a deconstructive act and

possibilities of multiple interpretations reduce the myth to unstable semantic piece. Single interpretation is the recommended state of partial interpretative demythologisation.

In the contemporary mythical fictions, authors tend to focus a single character instead of dealing with the whole corpus of characters in the original mythical works. Focus on single character as the protagonist of the novel provides ample space to the author to explore that character, whether major or minor, to full extent. She gets space enough to imaginatively address the unrecorded issues in the life of that person.

Example: Madeline Miller, an American novelist wrote a novel entitled *Circe* (2018) which is a mythic fiction set during the Greek Heroic Age. Circe is a witch who appears in the *Odyssey* by Homer. The novel explores the story of Circe and attempts to reveal her origin, her encounters with Hermes, the Minotaur, Jason and Medea. A large part of the novel is devoted to her romance with Odysseus. Perspective of a witch was never taken into account by any other author before Madeline Miller.

On the basis of their reading, knowledge and understanding of the characters, many popular fictionists have humanised the mythical characters so as to make them realistic. These authors often present the characters that adhere to contemporary social norms such as equality before law, gender equality and other norms where all are treated equally. Some characters are invented to convey their convictions.

Example: Amish Tripathi's novel *Sita Warrior of Mithila* (2017) reinvents the character of Sita from the *Ramayana*. Traditional Sita is meek, submissive and a prey to the circumstances while Amish's Sita is rebellious, warrior with special skills and a counterpart of Rama. She is a skilled warrior and acquires skills necessary for effective administration. She is presented as short-tempered curious girl who wants to know everything, and in the vigour makes some mistakes which she attempts to amend throughout her life.

2.3.11 Science, Technology, Media and Social Changes

There has been a long tradition that runs back to Seventeenth century when Jonathan Swift produced *Gulliver's Travels* to introduce imaginative wonders of the world to the reading world. The imagination was further harnessed with scientific discoveries. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* was one of the epoch-making novels that lead a way to Margaret Cavendish, H. G. Wells, Aldous Huxley and a whole generation that adapted different themes to explain advantages and disadvantages of scientific and technological discoveries.

Each novelist visualizes a better world, a Utopia, for the betterment of society in the backdrop of a discovery. The writers choose a single discovery, study it to the core and weave a story around some central event. They develop a plot in which one link is connected to other, one event leading to another in a logically convincing way. There is a strong implementation of radical difference which is applicable to the normal world and the scientific set up. In the description scientific world, an author has to imagine

something unfamiliar but logically convincing before he produces a concept. Incomplete familiarity with the concept is the pre-condition of development of the science fiction as it may create an unreadable absurd fiction. This may kill the original purpose to sell the fictions. It becomes necessary for the author to provide clues and cues using familiar concepts before introducing an unfamiliar, rather weird technical concept. Familiarity with popular notion of a scientific concept enables reader, widens his knowledge of the existing concept and prepares him to know something unknown. The science fiction reader gets into an imaginative space in which familiar understandings of how the world works cannot be relied upon. Familiarity and differences are combined at every stage.

Some of the major concerns among the contemporary fiction writers are increasing possibility of losing human identity, ethical use of scientific inventions, use of technology for acquiring power, morality and changing moral standards in the light of technological vis-à-vis human progress.

One of the major concerns expressed in the popular fiction is loss of human identity with the rising robotic involvements in human life. Machines are acquiring more and more space in human life, most of the human activities are undertaken and successfully completed by machines, rather their performance is accurate and trustworthy. This ultimately challenges the utility and reliability of human beings. Thus, it dilutes difference between humans and machines. Recent developments in Artificial Intelligence have simplified human job further and has started challenging human existence. Human efforts and research are trying to insert human emotions in machines which would be probably ultimate stage to bring machines to the level of humans.

Example: Kazuo Ishiguro, a British writer, published a novel entitled *Klara and the Sun* (2021) which is set in the U.S.A. in the future. Klara, an artificial friend (AF) describes the story from her perspectives. It is a dystopian future when some children are genetically brought up to improved their physical and mental capacities. The schooling is entirely on-screen which reduces their opportunities of socialization. Klara is an AF chosen by Josie, a girl from Prairies. She is also a lonely child and in search of company. The plot develops from the limited views of Klara. The author highlights the possibilities of diluted boundaries between machines and humans, and their needs of socialization.

Many authors have rendered interconnection of science, power and corporate control through their works. Scientific discoveries produce new technologies and technologies make human easy by reducing efforts required for certain activities. These technologies are produced at a mass level by the corporate world, usually owned by some private owner. Certain technologies are used as power tools, or as means for earning money, or weapons for destruction of mass. This in turn become power tools. A powerful man always tries to get more power so that he can rule the world. This is precisely the theme accorded in the contemporary science fiction.

2.3 Check Your Progress I

- 1) The word 'popular' has its origin in the _____ language.
 - a) Sanskrit
 - b) German
 - c) Latin
 - d) Greek
- 2) The Greek word 'populus' means _____.
 - a) party
 - b) people
 - c) society
 - d) individual
- 3) The popular fiction appeals reader because _____.
 - a) it addresses popular social and psychological concerns just beneath its accessible surface.
 - b) it creates experience of living with the time or slightly ahead of it.
 - c) it engages readers, entertains them and emotionally connects them.
 - d) All the above.
- 4) Popular fiction presents love as _____.
 - a) a simple emotional experience
 - b) a complex in romantic experience
 - c) experience of conflicts, desires, assurance, promises, fulfilments, etc.
 - d) All the above
- 5) _____ keep the readers engaged in romantic stories.
 - a) Challenges
 - b) Twists
 - c) Songs
 - d) Music
- 6) _____ has converted the globe into a village that accommodates every socio-political, regional, religious and cultural aspect.
 - a) Technology
 - b) Politics
 - c) Philosophy
 - d) Mythology

- 7) The conflict between good and evil is presented through _____.
 a) only good characters
 b) only bad characters
 c) grey characters which are morally flawed and display morally questionable behaviours
 d) situations
- 8) Crime is _____.
 a) imaginary concept
 b) necessary for society
 c) social taboo
 d) social reality
- 9) Characters in the mystery and suspense movies are divided by _____.
 a) purpose and motive
 b) class and gender
 c) caste and religion
 d) region and religion
- 10) _____ is at the centre of a crime, mystery and suspense fiction.
 a) Hero
 b) Heroine
 c) Villain
 d) Object of discovery
- 11) Search for identity may have connections with _____.
 a) class
 b) caste
 c) gender
 d) all of these.
- 12) 'Power is everywhere because _____.'
 a) it is shared
 b) it is managed
 c) it is mastered
 d) it comes from everywhere
- 13) _____ creates inequality by giving subordinated treatment to other.
 a) Aged person
 b) Student
 c) A Person in power position
 d) Woman
- 14) The term migration is used for _____.
 a) movement of a group or individual from one place to another
 b) movement of animals in the forest
 c) movement of people in their locality
 d) movement of people in their vacation
- 15) _____ is an undertaking that involves dangers and unknown risks.
 a) Success
 b) Migration
 c) Examination
 d) Adventure

- B. Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentence.**

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- 5) Reflects the struggle of individuals and communities against the system which is oppressive and environment which is hostile.

2.4 Major Contributors to Popular Fiction

Literature has been a set of reflections on the life of humans living in different civilizations, advanced or primitive, located in different parts of the world. The primary aim of literature is entertainment through enlightenment with no restrictions on geographic locations, cultural conditions, time of action, period of historical development. It appeals due to its human concerns expressed through human universals. Whatever type of literature it may be, it has its own unique taste and flavour that keeps the reader engaged. What appeals to the reader most is the story and the way it is presented in the it. Twentieth and twenty-first centuries have given the English reading world a number of authors who are classified as popular fictionist because their fictions are widely read, adapted for cinematic representations, and precisely for these reasons their readers want the authors to write more and more. Below is a very small list of authors who have mesmerised, entertained and enlightened the readers.

1) Agatha Christie (1890-1976): Dame Agatha Mary Clarissa Mallowan, Lady Mallowan, popularly known as Agatha Christie, her first married name, was an English author. She is famous for her sixty-six detective novels and short story collections which also revolve around the theme of mystery and exposition. She is popular for her crime mysteries which are widely read even after her death in 1976.

Educated at home by her mother, Agatha started working on the detective fiction while she worked as a nurse during World War I. Her first novel *The Mysterious Affairs at Styles* (1920) introduced her famous detective protagonist Hercule Poirot, character know for his eccentric and egoistic thought process. He is the protagonist of around 25 novels written by Agatha Christie. The other character she popularised is a spinster Miss Jane Marple. Jane was introduced in the novel *The Murder of Roger Vicarage* (1930).

A majority of her books and stories are mystery stories and through them, Agatha Christie set new paradigms in the genre. Her dealings with the unknown were revealed through human or worldly dilemmas. She introduced narrative horror and terror, pseudoscientific fantasy, a crime solving story, an account of diplomatic intrigue, an affair of codes and ciphers and secret societies or enigmatic situations. Her stories surprise readers at every turn of page and force them move with cinematic lens of events presented through words.

Agatha Christie has written over 100 books. Some of her notable masterpieces are *And Then There Were Non* (1939), *The A.B.C. Murder* (1936), *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934), *Five Little Pigs* (1942), *Death on the Nile* (1937), *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* (1926), *Evil Under the Sun* (1941) and *A Murder is Announced* (1950).

2) J. K. Rowling (b. 1965): Joanne Rowling popularly known as J.K. Rowling is a British Author—novelist, script writer and screenwriter. She came into limelight with her publication of the seven volumes of Harry Potter. The idea of writing about Harry Potter came to her mind in 1990 during her journey from Manchester to London. Death of her mother and difficulties in marriage troubled her a lot. It is these days which made her struggle of life including financial difficulties. She took the toil of writing her first book Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone in 1996. The script was rejected by many publishers due to extremely fantastic elements and characters before it was accepted by Bloomsbury Publishing in 1996. The book was popular not only among children but also the fantasy lovers across English reading world. All the seven books in the Harry Potter series appeared in sequence. The sequence was so organised that the readers eagerly waited for the next volume. All her books in the series were immediately adopted into 70mm cinema.

The seven books in the series centre around Harry Potter and his friends Hermione and Ron representing goodness and love in the world while his counterpart Voldemort and his alliance represented evil, power, hatred and anarchy. Harry's journey from an ignorant and innocent child to a wizard with wisdom combined with goodness and love. Rowling's work is intricately designed, fantastic elements are presented in a logically convincing way so that readers suspend their disbelief willingly. Her ultimate message is love, love for each other is the only key to survive from encroaching evil.

3) Stephen King (b. 1947): Stephen King, popularly referred to as the 'King of Horror'. His work is a mix of different types of genre that includes fantasy, horror, supernatural fiction, science fiction and mysteries. He is one of the most commercially successful authors with over 350 million copies of his books sold worldwide.

Stephen King has written about 60 novels and more than 200 short stories. Many of his fictions have been adopted into cinema. His first novel Carrie (1974) was about a bullied girl who had telekinetic powers i.e. to move physical objects without touching them only using mind power. The concept of telekinetic ability in itself is strange but attractive as every human being imagines to have some supernatural abilities so as to rule others. His novel The Shining (1977) is a psychological horror set in a haunted hotel in Colorado. It is a story of Jack Torrance who is trying to recover through alcohol. The book focuses on the dangers of alcoholism, destruction of family and nature of evil. The novel It (1986) is a horror masterpiece in which he presents the horror of seven outcast children terrorised by a shapeshifting, ancient entity.

There are several reasons for which one should read Stephen King's novels. He revolutionised the modern horror by combining it with the scientific and technological advancements. He blends science with popular fear and designs his plot. Through his novels, he brought horror to the mainstream which was often given place of fantasy. He sets examples for novel writers through demonstration of how popular fiction can explore

serious issues like psychological and social themes. He became a popular novelist as he worked on the basic instinct of fear among people about new things around.

4) Dan Brown (b. 1964): Dan Brown is a contemporary American novelist who is famous for his mysteries and fast paced thrillers. Son of a Mathematician and a church organist, Dan was interested in codes, logic, religion and symbols which he tends to use in most of his novels. Though, he was interested in music initially, he took up job of a teacher and turned to writing. In most of his novels, he tries to explore Christianity, secret societies and unexplored histories by challenging the set belief on one hand yet not to create controversy. They inspire willingness among readers to explore such unknown secrets which are play important role in changing their opinions about the tradition and traditional versions of history.

As a novelist, Dan Brown is well-known for his fast-paced thrillers that blend history, religion, arts, science, technology and power politics. His unique style to write short chapters with a cliff-hanger ends that maintain tension among the readers making them curious and eager to read the next part. He combines facts with fantasies to convince the readers. His novels are full of puzzles encoded in things, actions, characters and almost anything he finds important. The actions are time-bound and delays are life-threatening and detrimental.

His first novel *Angels and Demons* (2000) was a best-selling novel that engages readers throughout by its intricately designed plot where Robert Langdon, a Harvard symbologist reveals the plot of Illuminati to destroy Vatican City using antimatter Bomb. His Second Novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) goes on the similar lines to identify the living heir of Jesus Christ. It is a novel that blends symbology and cryptology for the purpose of solving mystery of a murder in the Louvre Museum, and ultimately discover the heir of Jesus Christ. His next novel *Inferno* (2013) in one more time-spaced thriller mystery.

5) Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930): One of the most celebrated writers of popular fiction, the creator of iconic detective Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle is the founder of detective fiction in English. Even after almost 100 years of his death, he has been a great influence on the crime mysteries and suspense literature throughout the world. His stories are intricately designed plots with so many clues and hints placed in such a way that only a person with special ability notices and records them to solve the mystery. He is the trendsetter in the detective fiction, detective narration and resolutions.

Arthur Conan Doyle studied medicines at University of Edinburgh and practised medicines for a considerable time before he started writing detective stories and novels. He was greatly influenced by Dr. Joseph Bell, his teacher at the university due to his remarkable diagnostic and observation skills. Sherlock Holmes is an outcome of this curious and inquisitive observational skills. Being a realist doctor, Doyle introduced characters with logical abilities and willingness to collect sound evidences contradictory

to the then trend to rely on coincidence and supernatural elements. All his protagonists, Sherlock Holmes, Dr. Watson are highly inquisitive with minute observation skills and abilities to connect threads so resolve the mysteries. He is very systematic and methodical in presenting the plot, his clues are embedded in actions, dialogues and symbols as well. His twists are sudden and unexpected. However, his plot is complete in itself as he resolves all the mysteries revealing all the clues necessary to expose the mystery.

Most famous of Arthur Conan Doyle works are *The Sign of the Four* (1890), *The Hound of Baskervilles* (1902), *The Valley of Fear* (1915). His other novels are *The Lost World* (1912), *The Poison Belt* (1913), *The Land of Mist* (1926). His short story collections are *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892), *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894), *The Return of Sherlock Holmes* (1905), *His Last Bow* (1917).

6) Jeffrey Archer (b. 1940): Jeffrey Howard Archer is an English novelist and a former Member of Parliament of England. It was politics which made him almost bankrupt but he could change his economic status just through writing novels. He is among the all-time bestsellers of the world. His *Kane and Abel* (1979) remains one of the best-selling books in the world with an estimated 34 million copies sold worldwide. He was the deputy chairman of the Conservative Party from 1985 to 1986. His life has gone through many ups and downs—loss of close ones, imprisonment, litigations and many other. Yet, it was his writing which kept him in the limelight throughout. Writing earned bread and butter for him.

He wrote his first novel *Not a Penny More, Not a Penny Less* (1974) to avoid bankruptcy. His *Kane and Abel* became not only the bestseller but was made into a television mini-series by CBS in 1985. Another bestseller *First Among Equals*, which told story of four men and their quest to become prime minister, was screened as a 10-part adaptation by Granada TV. His play *Beyond Reasonable Doubt* (1987) was staged at Queen's Theatre in London and continued for one year.

Jeffrey Archer is one of the most successful authors commercially but literary critics have rarely favoured him. In one of his interviews, Archer revealed the secret of his writing. He spent a lot of time writing and re-writing each book. All his novels are rigorously self-edited. It is his hard work that has brought success to him.

7) Sidney Sheldon (1917-2007): Sidney Sheldon was one of the most popular English American authors of 20th Century. He became popular among readers due to his fast-paced suspenseful storytelling style. A multit talented personality, Sidney Sheldon is an author who worked not only on fiction but also wrote Broadway plays, Hollywood screenplays and television series. He is one the few writers who won an Academy Award, a Tony Award and an Emmy Award in his career span.

Sidney Sheldon became one of the most popular novelists in English because of introduction of fast-paced plots that do not allow the readers to rest till the end. His chapters are rather short, ends every chapter in such a way that the readers are at hold

and curious to read further, his twists are unpredictable yet convincing, and the most important all the mysteries are revealed at the end. Many of his protagonists are females with intelligence, ambition and willingness to work hard for survival and upliftment. He is a global author from the perspectives of settings of the novel as his novels are set in some exotic location anywhere in the world—at one moment you are in Europe and on the other you are in USA. His style is simple and straightforward which appeals to a wide range of readers.

His first novel *The Naked Face* (1970) was a psychological thriller which explores a murder mystery. It won the Edgar Allan Poe Award for him and he became well-known in the writing circle. His most famous work *The Other Side of Midnight* (1973) is a story of love, betrayal, hate and revenge. Woman seeking revenge was a strange yet strong theme this novel presents. His other masterpieces are *Master of Games* (1982), *If Tomorrow Comes* (1985), *Rage of Angels* (1980), *Bloodline* (1977) and *Are You Afraid of the Dark* (2004).

8) Suzanne Collins (b. 1962): Suzanne Collins is one of the most influential popular fiction writers. Born and brought up in a military family and military campus, Suzanne had a far better understanding of conflict, violence and war which seems to be grossly occupied and covered in her novels. Her storytelling skills started grooming in her childhood when she contributed to a show on networks like Nickelodeon. This finds reflections in her style, design of plot and narrative style.

Most of her novels deal with themes of survival and resistance in the age of dystopia. The State becomes a prey of whims of an autocrat and the subjects trying to live try to survive through conflicts, struggles and resistance. Political oppression prevails through a totalitarian approach which disturbs the whole social system and creates the state of anarchy, people are divided into groups, races and classes. The autocrats manipulate media to exploit people. They manufacture biases against certain persons who oppose the autocrat and somehow manage to change the adverse situations to their own favours. Suzanne is famous for her *Hunger Games* trilogy. The first of the three *The Hunger Games* was published in 2008 and became the bestseller to sell millions of copies apart from its film adaptation. The novel is set in a dystopian state of Panem. Katniss Everdeen is forced to participate in a televised fight to the death. She somehow manages to save her sister and creates threat to the autocrat. The sequels *Catching Fire* (2009) and *Mockingjay* (2010) are equally interesting novels which lead the story to the next level. *The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes* (2020) is a prequel that explores life of Coriolanus Snow, the would-be dictator of Panem.

9) J. R. R. Tolkien (1892-1973): John Ronald Reuel Tolkien is one of the most influential and popular novelists of the twentieth century. He is a trend setter in the modern fantasy literature who invented many conventions that define the genre. His childhood spent in the countryside of Warwickshire had a great impact on the vivid and beautiful descriptions

of the landscapes of the Shire in his novels. His novels are greatly influenced by his style that adopts medieval language and themes.

Tolkien's fame rests primarily on his rich imagination whereby he invents fantastic landscapes, animals, beasts, people and surroundings to suit all these. His first novel *The Hobbit* (1937) was written for children. He introduced the hobbit Bilbo Baggins and his adventures in the hills. The novel is well-known for its strong moral lesson than anything else. It sets background to his masterpiece trilogy *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-55). The three books *The Fellowship of the Ring*, *The Two Towers* and *The Return of the King* basically present struggle between good and evil. The villain Sauron is a powerful king who wants to control the whole world and rule it as per his own wishes and ambitions. Frodo, a hobbit from the Shire, along with his four friends sets on a quest to destroy the ring which was created to control the middle earth. When one is possessed by the aim of saving the whole world, it is obvious that the person gets help from everywhere.

Tolkien creates naturally abundant landscapes on the one hand and at the same time landscapes with tremendous scarcities, dwarfs who are less than 4 feet tall and giants who are around 4 feet. His envisioned supernatural abilities which are compatible to the mythical imaginations which means that he created his own mythology to uplift fantasy to the next level along with history, races. He also invented languages like Elvish, Quenya and Sindarin using his linguistic knowledge and scholarship in philology. Before Tolkien, fantasy was basically considered for children but he transformed fantasy into a serious and widely respected genre. He made the readers and critics think about fantasy as a subject of serious discussion.

10) Charles Dickens (1812-1870): That was in the time of absence of any electronic media, the time of poverty and the time of rise of working class, the time of industrialization and migration. One of them was Charles Dickens who spent his childhood in hardship after imprisonment of his father. He was forced to work in a factory. These experiences in his childhood left a strong impact on his life and his writings. Though, he had a limited formal education, he developed a passion for reading and storytelling. He started his career as journalist but gained recognition through the dark reality of the age presented in his novels.

He is one of the most celebrated and widely read novelists even after hundred and eighty years of his death. His novels are bulky but simple in tone and language which makes them easy to understand. His storytelling skills are exceptional. His novels have played a very crucial role in the social reformation of the Victorian England. His novels offered social commentary, presented memorable characters and their social plight which in turn compelled the governments to design policies and laws to improve working conditions and health of the workers. Charles Dickens was a reformer who brought reforms in the labour laws, working conditions in the industries, social-economic

conditions of the workers by commenting on these issues through his novels. His novels insist importance of education and thus education was introduced to the common class.

Dickens has written more than forty novels most of these appeared in the serialised form in different magazines. Serialisation in short episodes made him more popular as people found enough time read them and think and discuss about the issues presented. He became so popular among people that the public reading sessions by Charles Dickens himself were organised, and his reading sessions were unusually crowded, streets used to be at halt. Some of his most famous and widely read novels are *Oliver Twist* (1839), *Hard Times* (1854), *David Copperfield* (1850), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1861), *A Christmas Carol* (1843), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1839), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1841) and *Dombey and Son* (1848).

11) Chetan Bhagat (b. 1974): An author of contemporary Indian metropolitan society, Chetan Bhagat is famous for addressing different themes that are directly connected to contemporary Indian city life, work and work culture, personal relations and their influence on the society and social life. He completed his Mechanical Engineering from Indian Institute of Technology. His experiences on the campus and then in the industry have a great impact on his writings.

Chetan Bhagat is a novelist of youth and their aspirations. His protagonists are career-oriented youth who take education to get jobs and settle down in society with good economic status and stable relationships. Most his characters are young aspirants either getting education for better prospects or characters engaged in some type of assignment or work. They belong to middle class urban families which have their own problems to solve and prospects to achieve and cherish. While presenting youngsters, he deliberately comments on the education system and social issues. His youngsters follow the natural instinct which give a sufficient space to explore romantic relationships in his novels.

Chetan Bhagat is known for his simple and conversational style. His language is straightforward and easy to understand. He is humorous at one moment and rather sentimental at another. His narrative is fast-paced and engages readers with the mixing of realism with dramatic elements.

His widely read works are *Five Point Someone* (2005), *One Night@ the Call Center* (2005), *The 3 Mistakes of My Life* (2008), *2 States* (2009), *Half-Girlfriend* (2012) and *Revolution 2020* (2011) and many other. Most of his novels were among bestsellers and have been adopted into films. He is especially popular among youngsters due for presenting student life, their problems, their aspirations and issues relevant to that age of life.

12) Amish Tripathi (b. 1974): Amish Tripathi is one of the most widely read authors of Indian English fiction based on the Indian Mythology. He presents different mythological characters and events with demythologised perspectives. His characters are the characters from Indian Mythology but are surrounded with imaginary characters invented for the achieving reading effects. He combines mythology with fantasy removing all the miracles and superhuman activities. He makes them all realistic and lifelike by using contemporary social norms and standards. His novels are action driven and create a parallel world which is close to the mythical world but maintains a considerable distance from it. His trends in remythologisation have popularised Indian mythology with different perspectives. The divine mythological figures have been humanised to bring them to the understanding of people not as gods but as characters from great narratives.

The list of his famous works begins with *The Immortals of Meluha* (2010) continuing the Shiva Trilogy *The Secrets of Nagas* (2011) and *Oath of Vayuputras* (2013). The series presents Shiva, one of the Indian mythological trinities, as an ancestor to different communities in the Indian subcontinent.

His second series the Ram Chandra series begins with *The Scion of Ikshvaku* (2015) moving to *Sita: Warrior of Mithila* (2017), *Raavan: The Enemy of Aryavarta* (2019) and the last one *War of Lanka* (2022). The Ramchandra series is a retelling of the Ramayana where he takes space to explore each character at a deeper level.

13) Ashwin Sanghi (b. 1969): Ashwin Sanghi is among the highest selling English fiction authors in India. He is one of the Indian personalities listed by the Forbes India in their Celebrity 100. He is also listed by the New India Express in their Culture Power List. He is a winner of the Crossword Popular Choice award 2012 along with many other awards for his writings—fictional and non-fictional.

He has written many bestsellers in his Bharat Collection. Ashwin's first novel, *The Rozabal Line* was originally self-published in 2007 under his anagram-pseudonym Shawn Haigins. The book was subsequently published by Westland in 2008 and 2010 in India under his own name and went on to become a national bestseller. *Chanakya's Chant* is his second novel in the historical-fiction genre. The book has remained on AC Nielsen's India Bookscan Top-10 for all of 2011. It won the 2010 Crossword-Vodafone Popular Choice Award in September 2011. UTV has purchased the movie rights to the book and a film based upon the story is expected soon. Dr. Shashi Tharoor released the novel in Mumbai calling it an enthralling, delightfully-interesting and gripping read with historical research that is impressive.

His equally interesting books are *The Krishna Key* (2012), *The Sialkot Saga* (2016), *Keepers of the Kalachakra* (2018), *The Vault of Vishnu* (2020) and *The Magicians of Mazda* (2022). Each story enchants and mesmerizes the readers making them eagerly wait for his next book. With his style he has developed his own fan club. His works are often debated but they shape the contemporary popular fiction in India.

14) Durjoy Datta (b. 1987): Engineering graduation from New Delhi and studies in management allowed Durjoy Datta to spend a lot of time on campus. This has a great influence on his writings. Rather his writing greatly focuses campus and experiences of different stakeholders on the campus. This precisely is the reason that he has a lot of readership from among the youngsters want to read about their struggles in student life, and the life immediately after getting into some profession. He also presents emotional complexities of modern urban life.

Datta began his writing career at a young age and was received and celebrated by the audience. His books regularly appear on the list of bestsellers in India and outside it. Success of his novel is based on youth-oriented fiction apart from simple language and engaging handling of emotional issues in the young age. Majority of his novels deal with romantic relationship parallel to the quest of career and economic settlement. He shows relationships, breakups, emotional bonding, drama, melodrama and all other sentiments that are attached to romance and romantic relationships. He also talks about the sentiments attached to social recognition and individual identity. Most of his novels take place in cities highlighting urban issues.

He has written a number of novels and script for television shows. Some of his famous novels are *Of Course I Love You...! Till I Find Someone Better* (2008), *Our Impossible Love* (2016), *The Girl of My Dreams* (2016), *The Boy Who Loved* (2017), *The Boy with A Broken Heart* (2017), *Wish I Could Tell You* (2019) and *World's Best Girlfriend* (2023). He is a young author who successful relates love sentiments of youngsters to their circumstance and presents new perspectives on romantic relationships.

15) Ravinder Singh (b. 1982): Ravinder Singh is one of the bestselling authors in India who has written six novels and two crowd-sourced anthologies. Ravinder spent most of his childhood at Burla, a very small town in western Odisha. As Computer programmer, Ravinder Singh worked in the IT field for around a decade. He has also completed his MBA from Indian School of Business. Currently living in New Delhi, he is a fulltime writer now.

His first novel *I Too Had a Love Story* (2008) delineates his own tragic romance. His girlfriend passed away in 2007 which left a deep scar on his life. The novel reveals his own story which was accepted widely by the readers to mitigate his sorrows. Most of his novels typically deal with different themes which are results of his personal experiences dipped into what he observes around in the society. Love and romance and that particular romantic phase in everybody's life is what he captures with subtle details in his novels. Breakups and loss are common things these days. Many boys and girls are not able to recover from the loss and they need something to heal them, less physically and more mentally. His novels speak about the options available for healing from such traumas. Realism is an inseparable part of his novels.

His six novels are received by the readers enthusiastically. His novels are *Can Love Happen Twice?* (2011), *Like It Happened Yesterday* (2013), *Your Dreams Are Mine Now* (2014), *This Love That Feels Right* (2016), *Will You Still Love Me?* (2018). Ravinder is often compared with other contemporary authors like Chetan Bhagat, Preeti Shenoy, Durjoy Datta and other whose works present similar themes in different writing styles.

16) Preeti Shenoy (b. 1971): One of the most widely read novelist in English in India, Preeti Shenoy is well-known for her emotionally packed novels. Most of her novels have emotionally engaging style while exploring everyday life. She started her career as a personal blog writer with journalistic personal style. She has developed readership due to honesty and emotional depth.

Preeti Shenoy's writing style is simple, direct and conversational. She deliberately avoids the complex linguistic jargons commonly used by the contemporary Indian English writers. Her simple language and engaging style along with emotionally driven renderings have made her popular among elders and youngsters. She is rather popular among young adults and urban readers who are emotionally sensitive due to their age. Young readers find their own reflections in her stories.

Most of her novels centre around human relationships, emotions and emotional bonding and complexities in the modern life. Her famous novels are *Life is What You Make it* (2011), *The Secret Wishlist* (2012), *It Happens for a Reason* (2014), *The One You Cannot Have* (2013), *Wake Up, Life is Calling* (2019)

17) Devdutt Pattanaik (b. 1970): Devdutt Pattanaik is a revisionist mythologist who revisits mythology with a fresh perspective which analyses the mythical stories and characters on one hand and elaborate its relevance in the contemporary society. He illustrates the mythical concepts and characters to simplify them to the readers who want to know for their personal as well as professional usage. He particularly relates mythology, Indian and world mythology, to contemporary society, cultural acumens and management studies.

He has written more than fifty books that explain relevance of mythology in our life. In his opinion 'no society can exist without myths as it creates notions of right and wrong, good and bad, heaven and hell, rights and duties'. His attempt in all his books is to tell how we should look at the mythical texts, stories and characters. While presenting mythical events and characters to his readers, Devdutt takes care to distinguish between mythology and mythological fiction.

His famous books are *Shiva: An Introduction* (1997) followed by *Vishnu: An Introduction* (1999). Both these books delve deep in the concepts of Shiva and Vishnu to explore details of their lives and actions to the lives of common people. His book *Hindu Trinity: 21 Life-enhancing Secrets Revealed Through Stories and Art* (2019) further relates the concepts of Shiva and Vishnu to our lives explaining their influence

and parallels. He compares the two great epics the Ramayana and the Mahabharata in his book *Ramayana Versus Mahabharata: My Playful Comparison* (2018) and shows the readers the differences and their necessities. Some of his other books are *Myth=Mithya: A Handbook of Hindu Mythology* (2011), *Jaya* (2010), *Seven Secrets of Shiva* (2011), *Seven Secrets of Vishnu* (2011), *Sita: An Illustrated Retelling of the Ramayana* (2013), *Devas vs Asuras* (2018). He has been writing consistently.

18) Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni (b. 1956): Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is a renowned Indo-American novelist, poet and teacher. She is basically famous for exploring themes of migration, identity and the issues related to the South Asian diaspora. One of her most acclaimed novels *The Mistress of Spices* (1997) was shortlisted for the Booker Prize. It is a story of Tilo, a spice shop owner in California who is always willing to help people around. *Oleander Girl* (2013) also shares experience in post 9/11 America when every foreigner was doubted and tested for his loyalty. Her works reflect confluence of Eastern and Western culture through interactions.

Her two novels *The Palace of Illusions* (2008) and *The Forest of Enchantments* (2019) are famous feminist retellings of the Indian epics from the perspectives of the female protagonists in the Mahabharata and the Ramayana respectively. Draupadi in *The Palace of Illusions* is an absolutely humanised contemporary woman who think far beyond her limited existence in the palace while Sita in *The Forest of Enchantments* is a princess who feels infatuation for worldly pleasures.

Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni is well-known for her vivid characters. Her narrative style is unique and absorbing. In most of her novels, she addresses the complexities in womanhood—her nature, treatment given to her, her expectations, her aspirations, her capacities, woman in history, woman in society and many other.

19) Kavita Kane (b. 1966): Kavita Kane is one of the bestselling Indian authors with eight novels to her credit. She is particularly famous for her retellings of mythological female characters particularly lesser known women from the Indian Mythology. She is a master of words and weaves her stories in a convincing way. Her novels *Karna's Wife: The Outcast's Queen* (2013), *Sita's Sister* (2014), *Menaka's Choice* (2015), *Lanka's Princess* (2016), *The Fisher Queen's Dynasty* (2017), *Ahalya's Awakening* (2019), *Saraswati's Gift* (2021), *Tara's Truce* (2023) and *Bhima's Wife* (2025), all the nine novels are based on the Ramayana and the Mahabharata.

She reflects as a staunch feminist who wants the world to change their perspectives about women who have been ignored altogether by not only by the mass but also by critics. Each of these women find a very small place in the mythology but they are explored to a full length. She imagines the characters which are mentioned nowhere in the mythology so as to explore the women and justify the decisions they had taken in the original stories. She provides women's perspectives in each event and story. While revealing the minor mythical characters, she reveals minds of thousands of women who

20) Vikram Chandra (b. 1961): A major figure in the contemporary Indian English Writing, Vikram Chandra was born and brought up in New Delhi. He studied creative writing and literature at John Hopkins University and Stanford University after initial education at New Delhi. His international experience during his formal studies leaves a great impact on his writing style, language and imaginative faculty. He also makes us see India through foreign perspectives.

Vikram Chandra has witnessed India change in last thirty years. His novels reflect India in different localities with their traditional practices and belief systems on the one hand, and adaptations of these changes by people on the other. Urban life in Modern India, crime, power and politics are visible themes and find subtleties in his novels. Myth and history are indistinct part of his thematic presentations.

A. Choose the correct option from the given.

- 50

- 4) Dan Brown is deeply influenced by Mathematics and Christianity.
 - a) his father
 - b) Mathematics and Christianity
 - c) codes, logic, symbols
 - d) all the above
- 5) Arthur Conan Doyle was a _____ by profession.
 - a) Teacher
 - b) Lawyer
 - c) Engineer
 - d) Doctor
- 6) _____ was a politician turned writer from England.
 - a) Darren Gough
 - b) Nassir Hussain
 - c) Jeffrey Archer
 - d) Sidney Sheldon
- 7) Many of Sidney Sheldon's protagonists are _____ with intelligence and ambition.
 - a) men
 - b) women
 - c) gods
 - d) angels
- 8) Suzanne Collins contributed to a show on the network _____.
 - a) Nickelodeon
 - b) Nick Jr
 - c) Pogo
 - d) History
- 9) J.R. R. Tolkien's fame rests on his rich _____ whereby he invents fantastic landscapes, animals, beasts and human like races.
 - a) plot
 - b) setting
 - c) imagination
 - d) fantasy
- 10) Charles Dickens had to spend childhood in hardship because _____.
 - a) his father was imprisoned
 - b) he was imprisoned
 - c) his mother was imprisoned
 - d) his father had lots of debts to pay

2.6 Summing Up

Advancements in science and technology have made the process of creative writing vis-à-vis production of literature and its publication quite comfortable. Advertisements of each piece of literature have become easy due to availability of mass media and social media. It is the media that leads us to and provides us with special features of a particular work. It may be themes, characters, settings, language, point of view to look at certain events which mark a piece of literature different from the others. Critics and criticism provide us perspectives to see what remains out of our sight, or they provide eyesight to see and judge. However, all these are beyond expectations of popular literature which aims pure entertainment with little teachings in practical sense. The themes and

writers discussed in this chapter are limited in number as the vast canvas of themes and unending list of authors is beyond expectations. They give us introductory glimpses of what we may go for as aspirants in popular literature.

2.7 Exercises

A) Discuss the following in details (about 300 words).

- 1) “Contemporary popular fiction challenges the traditional notions of platonic love.” Discuss with examples.
- 2) “Contemporary popular fiction blurs the difference between good and evil.” Discuss with examples.
- 3) Discuss different aspects of contemporary popular crime and mystery fiction.
- 4) What is the place of ‘identity and self-discovery’ in the contemporary popular fiction? Discuss in detail.
- 5) “Presentation of reality reflects how power functions in the end.” Discuss with the help of examples.
- 6) Discuss ‘social mobility and success’ as a major theme in the contemporary popular fiction.
- 7) Discuss how adventure and escapism becomes essential for maintaining the tempo of life as it is presented in the contemporary popular fiction.
- 8) Discuss in details how resistance is an essential part of survival instinct.
- 9) “Contemporary fiction revisits the mythologies”. Discuss in details with the help of examples.
- 10) Elaborate how contemporary popular fiction makes use of science, technology and media.
- 11) Discuss in details how personal life finds space in the novels of the contemporary popular fiction writers.

B) Write short notes.

- 1) Aspects of love theme in the contemporary popular fiction
- 2) Concept of good and evil in the contemporary popular fiction
- 3) Detective Fiction
- 4) Mystery fiction
- 5) Self-discovery in the contemporary popular fiction
- 6) Identity in the contemporary popular fiction
- 7) Power as a tool for exercising inequality
- 8) Power as a medium of controlling justice
- 9) Migration and its impact on social life

- 10) Adventures in the contemporary popular fiction
- 11) Escapism in the contemporary popular fiction
- 12) Reinterpretations of mythology in the contemporary popular fiction
- 13) Retelling of mythical stories in the contemporary popular fiction
- 14) Science and technology in the contemporary popular fiction
- 15) Agatha Christie
- 16) Sidney Sheldon
- 17) Dan Brown
- 18) Stephen King
- 19) Arthur Conan Doyle
- 20) Amish Tripathi
- 21) Preeti Shenoy
- 22) Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni
- 23) Kavita Kane
- 24) Devadatta Patnaik

2.8 Key to Check Your Progress

Check Your Progress I

A. Choose the correct option from the given.

- | | | | | |
|---------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| 1- d), | 2- b), | 3-d), | 4-d), | 5-b), |
| 6- a), | 7-c), | 8-d), | 9-a), | 10- d), |
| 11- d), | 12-d), | 13-c), | 14-a), | 15-d), |
| 16- b), | 17-d), | 18-a), | 19-d), | 20-c) |

B. Answer the following questions in one word/ phrase/ sentence.

- 1) how an individual defines himself/ herself.
- 2) Power is a tool for exercising inequality.
- 3) Social Mobility is a concept related to movement of individuals or groups from one social or economic position to another.
- 4) Introduce adventures typically through a journey, quest or encounter with something new
- 5) Reflects the struggle of individuals and communities against the system which is oppressive and environment which is hostile.

Check Your Progress II

A. Choose the correct option from the given.

- | | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1-c), | 2-a), | 3-a), | 4-d), | 5-d) |
| 6-c), | 7-b), | 8-a), | 9-c), | 10-a) |

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Module III

THE ALCHEMIST

- by Paulo Coelho

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1. Introduction
- 3.2. About the author
- 3.3 About the novel
- 3.4. Plot
- 3.5. Characters
- 3.6. Major themes
- 3.7. Critical analysis
- 3.8. Check Your Progress
- 3.9. Glossary:
- 3.10. Answers to Check your progress
- 3.11. Exercises:
- 3.12 Reference for Further Study

3.0. OBJECTIVES: After studying this unit, you will be able to

1. Analyze the novel's key themes like personal dreams and destiny
2. Examine the protagonist's journey as a form of allegory
3. Discuss the role of symbolism in the story
4. Explain the importance of the story's setting to its message.

3.1. INTRODUCTION:

Paulo Coelho's 'The Alchemist' is a widely beloved allegorical novel that follows the journey of Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy who travels from Spain to the Egyptian pyramids in search of a worldly treasure. However, the story transcends a simple quest; it explores universal themes like pursuing one's 'Personal Legend,' listening to one's heart, and understanding the interconnectedness of all things. More than just an adventure, the novel serves as a philosophical guide, encouraging readers to find meaning in their own path and embrace the wisdom contained within everyday experiences.

3.2 About the author:

Paulo Coelho is most famous for his novel 'The Alchemist,' which is one of the best-selling books in the world. He's Brazilian, and after a spiritual journey, he decided to focus on writing, often blending philosophy and spirituality in his stories. Besides 'The Alchemist,' some of his other big known ones are 'The Pilgrimage,' 'Veronika Decides to Die,' 'Eleven Minutes,' and 'The Zahir.' He's also written a lot of collections of short stories and essays. His writing really focuses on themes like self-discovery, following your dreams, (which he calls 'Personal Legends,') and spirituality. He has received awards like the Hans Christian Andersen Literature Award and has been named a United Nations Messenger of Peace.

3.3 About the Novel:

The Alchemist, written by Paulo Coelho, is a thought-provoking novel that explores themes of spirituality, self-discovery, and personal transformation. Originally written in Portuguese (*O Alquimista*) and first published in 1988, it became a widely translated international bestseller. It has been translated into more than 65 languages and has sold more than 150 million copies worldwide. In 2009, Coelho was recognized by the Guinness World Records as the world's most translated living author.

3.4 PLOT:

The story follows Santiago, an Andalusian shepherd boy, who dreams of treasure at the Egyptian pyramids. After meeting Melchizedek, the king of Salem, he sells his flock and travels to Tangier. Despite being robbed, he works for a crystal merchant for a year before joining a caravan across the desert. Along the way, he meets an Englishman studying alchemy and eventually reaches the Al-Fayoum oasis. There, he falls in love with Fatima and meets the true Alchemist. The journey culminates in Santiago reaching the pyramids, only to discover that the physical treasure was back at the abandoned church in Spain where his journey began. The narrative emphasizes that the journey itself, and the wisdom gained, is the real treasure.

It starts with Santiago, that shepherd boy in Andalusia, who dreams of a treasure at the base of the pyramids. He consults a dream interpreter and then meets Melchizedek, a wise king, who tells him about his "Personal Legend" and gives him magic stones to guide him. He travels to Tangier, gets robbed, works for a crystal merchant for a while, then joins a caravan to cross the desert. During the journey, he learns about alchemy, meets an Englishman looking for a master, and hears about a 200-year-old Alchemist. Tribal wars stop the caravan at an oasis, where Santiago falls in love with Fatima and has a vision of an attack. This leads him to meet the actual Alchemist, who guides him onward. They get captured, and Santiago has to prove he can turn into wind, which he does. Eventually, he reaches the pyramids to dig, but gets robbed again. One of the robbers scoffs at his dream and mentions his own dream about treasure under a sycamore tree in Spain. Santiago realizes that's his church back home, returns, and finds the treasure. He then plans to go back to Fatima.

Part One

- ♦ **Section 1 – The Dream & the Gypsy**

Andalusian shepherd Santiago sleeps in an abandoned church, dreams of a child leading him to treasure at Egypt's pyramids. He visits a gypsy fortuneteller who, for one-tenth of the treasure, tells him to go to Egypt.

- ♦ **Section 2 – Melchizedek**

In Tarifa Santiago meets the old man Melchizedek, who calls himself King of Salem. He explains "Personal Legend," gives Santiago the stones Urim & Thummim, and urges him to follow omens. Santiago sells his flock and sets out.

- ♦ **Section 3 – Tangier Robbery**

Santiago arrives in Tangier, is tricked and robbed of all money. He faces despair but recalls the stones—chooses to keep moving.

- ♦ **Section 4 – The Crystal Merchant**

He works a year in a crystal shop, improving sales and earning enough to return home or continue. The merchant confesses he never fulfilled his own dream of pilgrimage to Mecca; Santiago learns about fear of fulfillment ("maktub").

- ♦ **Section 5 – The Caravan & the Englishman**

With savings, Santiago joins a caravan to the Sahara. He meets an Englishman studying alchemy, learns about the Soul of the World, the Emerald Tablet, and the quest for the Philosopher's Stone.

Part Two

- ♦ **Section 6 – Al-Fayoum Oasis & Fatima**

The caravan stops at the oasis. Santiago meets Fatima, falls in love, and has a vision of an attack. He warns the tribal chiefs; the oasis is saved and he's rewarded with gold.

- ♦ **Section 7 – The Alchemist**

The actual alchemist appears, tests Santiago, and agrees to guide him. He teaches that listening to one's heart and reading omens are keys to the Personal Legend.

- ♦ **Section 8 – Journey to the Pyramids & the Tribal Capture**

As they near the pyramids, soldiers capture them. The alchemist claims Santiago can turn into wind. Santiago spends three days communing with desert, wind, sun, and "the Hand that Wrote All," finally becoming a sandstorm-wind and securing their release.

- ♦ **Section 9 – The Monastery & Gold**

At a Coptic monastery the alchemist transmutes lead into gold, giving Santiago his share and sending him on alone.

- ♦ **Section 10 – The Pyramids & Realisation**

Santiago digs at the pyramids, is beaten by thieves who mock his dream. One thief reveals he once dreamed of treasure under a sycamore in an abandoned Spanish church—the very spot Santiago began. Santiago understands the treasure was back home all along and returns to Spain, finding gold buried near the tree.

Epilogue (implied)

Santiago's journey completes the circle: the outer quest leads to inner discovery, confirming that when you truly want something, the universe conspires to help you, and the real treasure is the wisdom gained en route.

3.5. CHARACTERS:

Santiago is the protagonist, the shepherd boy on the quest for the treasure. Then, major supporting characters include Melchizedek, the King of Salem, who sets him on his path, and the title character, the Alchemist, who acts as a mentor. You also have Fatima, whom he falls in love with, and the Englishman, who's also searching for wisdom about alchemy. For more minor characters, there's the Crystal Merchant who gives him a job, and the Camel Driver who shares lessons from the desert. The major characters, Santiago is the heart of the story—a young adventurer who chooses the life of a shepherd and follows his dreams to discover his 'Personal Legend.' His journey isn't just about wealth, but about self-discovery and understanding the world around him. Melchizedek, the King of Salem, is crucial because he provides the initial guidance and speaks about the importance of following omens. Then, the Alchemist himself mentors Santiago, not by teaching directly, but by challenging him to look within. And Fatima represents the idea that love doesn't have to distract from one's purpose in life, but can actually support it.

The main characters in Paulo Coelho's novel *The Alchemist*:

1. Santiago - The protagonist, a young Andalusian shepherd who embarks on a journey to Egypt to find treasure. The major characters, Santiago is the heart of the story—a young adventurer who chooses the life of a shepherd and follows his dreams to discover his 'Personal Legend.' His journey isn't just about wealth, but about self-discovery and understanding the world around him.

2. Melchizedek - The King of Salem, a mysterious old man who guides Santiago and gives him Urim and Thummim stones. Melchizedek is crucial because he provides the initial guidance and speaks about the importance of following omens.

3. The Alchemist - A wise, centuries-old alchemist who teaches Santiago about the Soul of the World and helps him understand his journey. The Alchemist himself mentors Santiago, not by teaching directly, but by challenging him to look within. Alchemist takes him on as a student, helping him understand the world and himself more deeply.

4. Fatima - A beautiful woman Santiago meets at an oasis; she represents love and stability in the desert. Fatima represents the idea that love doesn't have to distract from one's purpose in life, but can actually support it. Fatima is the woman he meets at the oasis, representing love and a reason to stay, but she also encourages him to continue his pursuit.

5. The Crystal Merchant - A shopkeeper in Tangier who employs Santiago and symbolizes fear of pursuing one's dreams.

6. The Englishman - A scholar seeking the alchemist, representing intellectual pursuit of spiritual knowledge.

7. Santiago's Parents - Mentioned briefly, they wanted him to become a priest, contrasting with his own dreams.

Minor characters include:

- ♦ The Gypsy Woman - Interprets Santiago's dream.
- ♦ The Thieves - Rob Santiago in Tangier and later at the pyramids.
- ♦ The Camel Driver - A caravan guide who shares wisdom about life.
- ♦ The Monks - Coptic monks who shelter the alchemist and Santiago.

3.6. MAJOR THEMES:

- ♦ **Dreams and Aspirations:** The novel highlights the importance of pursuing one's dreams and ambitions.
- ♦ **Spirituality:** The concept of the "Soul of the World" emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things.
- ♦ **Self-Discovery:** Santiago's journey is a metaphor for self-discovery and transformation.
- ♦ **Unity of Spirit:** The novel promotes unity and harmony among all people and things.
- ♦ **Omens:** The use of omens and signs guides Santiago on his journey ^{4 2 3}.

Symbolism:

- ♦ **Alchemy:** Represents personal transformation and spiritual growth.
- ♦ **Desert:** Symbolizes challenges and purification.
- ♦ **Pyramids:** Represent the ultimate goal and spiritual enlightenment.
- ♦ **Sheep:** Represent humility and simplicity.

Philosophical Messages:

- ♦ Follow your heart and intuition.
- ♦ Everything is interconnected.
- ♦ The journey is more important than the destination.
- ♦ Personal transformation is a lifelong process

THEMES:

The Alchemist, Paulo Coelho's modern fable, distills its sprawling spiritual philosophy into a deceptively simple narrative. At its core, the novel explores themes that resonate across mystic traditions, reimagining ancient wisdom for a contemporary audience.

1. Pursuit of the Personal Legend

Every person carries a unique destiny—a “Personal Legend”—that infuses life with purpose. Santiago's dream of pyramids is the catalyst, but Coelho broadens this: the crystal merchant buries his dream of Mecca, Melchizedek once delayed his own journey. The theme isn't just chasing dreams but recognizing that ignoring them incurs a quiet death. Santiago's restlessness contrasts with the merchant's stagnation; Coelho insists fulfilment lies in motion toward, not arrival at, one's truth.

2. Omens and Maktub (It is Written)

The universe speaks in signs—hawk flights, stones, chance encounters—that guide those attuned to them. Maktub, meaning “it is written,” frames fate as a collaborative text: the cosmos writes, the seeker interprets. Santiago's journey teaches that omens aren't magic shortcuts but invitations to awareness. When he becomes wind, he doesn't conjure; he aligns with the desert's language. This interplay of free will and destiny dissolves either/or thinking: pursue your legend as if the path is written, trusting omens to clarify the next step.

3. Unity of All Things (Soul of the World)

Coelho adapts an old Hermetic axiom: “As above, so below.” The desert, wind, stars, and Santiago's heart all pulse with the Soul of the World—a living, connective force. This pantheism argues reality is one substance expressing itself infinitely;

separation is illusion. When Santiago communes with wind/sun, he's not poetic; he's acknowledging participation in a unified field. Love for Fatima, too, fits this: she is part of the same soul Santiago must temporarily leave to fully recognize.

4. Alchemy as Inner Transformation

The literal “lead-to-gold” process mirrors Santiago’s psychological arc. He arrives a literal shepherd, leaves with spiritual gold—ability to read life. Each trial calcines (strips) him, the oasis offers solvent (dissolves ego in love), and the wind episode coagulates new self-awareness. The alchemist isn’t a magician but a reminder that transmutation is possible: fear into trust, routine into wonder, material into meaning.

5. Fear of Success vs. Comfort of the Familiar

The crystal merchant’s unfulfilled pilgrimage exposes a brutal truth: success terrifies more than failure. Santiago’s year in Tangier isn’t failure—it’s incubation. Coelho suggests people often prefer known misery to unknown triumphs; the merchant’s “someday” maintains a comfortable limbo. Santiago repeatedly faces “what if I’m wrong?” but acts anyway, proving courage isn’t absence of fear but willingness to move despite it.

6. Love as Expansion, Not Possession

Fatima is neither prize nor plot device; she embodies love that frees. Unlike the merchant’s hoarded dream, she sends Santiago forward, knowing legends entwine but don’t suffocate. Her rootedness contrasts his roaming, showing love is a compass, not a tether. Coelho implies true devotion expands space for mutual growth—her oasis sustains him even as he leaves.

7. The Journey is the Treasure

The treasure map leads home. Santiago’s gold lies under the familiar church because the real transformation was the ability to perceive the ordinary as extraordinary. Coelho subverts material quest tropes: the pyramids were never the point. Each step, loss, gain, and omen along the desert road minted the currency he needed to recognize his own worth.

Santiago is the axis. Introduced as a sixteen-year-old Andalusian shepherd, he carries three traits: restlessness, literacy (he walks with a book), and an un-jaded openness to signs. He is not heroic in a sword-and-shield sense; his courage lies in repeatedly choosing the uncertain road after Tangier’s robbery, after the merchant’s gold, after love with Fatima. His inner arc—from literal interpreter of a treasure dream to someone who understands “treasure” as self-knowledge—mirrors the alchemical process itself. By the end he listens more than he speaks, a she...

3.7. CRITICAL ANALYSIS:

The Alchemist is known for its simple, fable-like style that makes complex philosophical ideas accessible. Critics often praise its inspiring message but some note it can be simplistic. The use of symbolism- the desert as a challenge, the pyramids as a goal, and alchemy as transformation- adds depth to the narrative. The novel critiques modern society's focus on material wealth over spiritual growth. Through Santiago's journey, Coelho explores themes of spirituality, self-discovery, and the power of the human spirit.

Symbolism and Themes:

One of the most striking aspects of The Alchemist is its rich symbolism. The novel is filled with symbols, such as the desert, the pyramids, and the alchemist, which represent different aspects of the human journey. The desert, for example, represents the unknown and the challenges that one must face to achieve one's goals. The pyramids symbolize the spiritual realm and the treasure that lies within.

The novel explores several themes, including the importance of listening to one's heart and following one's dreams. Santiago's journey is a metaphor for the human quest for self-discovery and spiritual growth. Through his experiences, Coelho shows that the journey, not the destination, is the true treasure.

The Concept of Personal Legend

The concept of Personal Legend is central to The Alchemist. According to Coelho, every person has a unique purpose or dream that they are meant to fulfill, and this is their Personal Legend. Santiago's journey is a testament to the importance of following one's Personal Legend, even in the face of obstacles and uncertainty.

The Power of the Universe

Coelho's novel also explores the idea that the universe conspires to help individuals achieve their Personal Legend. The concept of the Soul of the World, which represents the interconnectedness of all things, is a key aspect of this idea. Through Santiago's journey, Coelho shows that the universe provides signs and guidance to those who are willing to listen and take risks.

Critique of Modern Society

The Alchemist also offers a critique of modern society, which often prioritizes material wealth and comfort over spiritual growth and self-discovery. The character of the crystal merchant, who is afraid to pursue his dreams, represents the fear and complacency that can prevent individuals from fulfilling their potential.

Weaknesses

While *The Alchemist* is a powerful and inspiring novel, it has some weaknesses. Some critics have argued that the novel is overly simplistic and lacks depth. The characters, particularly Santiago, are somewhat one-dimensional and lack complexity. Additionally, the novel's message, while inspiring, can be overly simplistic and formulaic.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *The Alchemist* is a thought-provoking and inspiring novel that explores themes of spirituality, self-discovery, and the power of the human spirit. While it has some weaknesses, the novel's rich symbolism, universal message, and inspiring story make it a timeless classic that continues to resonate with readers worldwide.

Analysis of Characters

Santiago, the protagonist of the novel, is a relatable and endearing character. His journey from a simple shepherd boy to a spiritual seeker is a testament to the human capacity for growth and transformation. However, Santiago's character is also somewhat lacking in complexity, and his transformation is perhaps too rapid and effortless. The alchemist, who serves as Santiago's mentor and guide, is a mysterious and intriguing character. His wisdom and knowledge are a source of inspiration and guidance for Santiago, and his character adds depth and richness to the novel.

Philosophical and Spiritual Themes

The Alchemist is a novel that explores various philosophical and spiritual themes, including the concept of Personal Legend, the power of the universe, and the importance of listening to one's heart. These themes are woven throughout the novel and are central to Santiago's journey.

The novel also explores the idea of spiritual transformation and the idea that we are all part of a larger, interconnected whole. This idea is reflected in the concept of the Soul of the World, which represents the interconnectedness of all things.

Narrative Structure

The narrative structure of *The Alchemist* is simple and straightforward, with a clear beginning, middle, and end. The novel is divided into two main parts, the first of which follows Santiago's journey from Spain to Egypt, and the second of which follows his journey in the desert.

The novel's narrative structure is effective in conveying the themes and ideas that Coelho explores. The simple and straightforward narrative allows the reader to focus on the story and its themes, rather than getting bogged down in complex plot twists or character developments.

Style and Language

Coelho's writing style is simple, clear, and concise, making the novel accessible to readers of all ages and backgrounds. The language is poetic and evocative, and the novel's themes and ideas are conveyed through simple yet powerful imagery.

The novel's use of symbolism and metaphor adds depth and richness to the narrative, and helps to convey the themes and ideas that Coelho explores.

Conclusion

In conclusion, *The Alchemist* is a powerful and inspiring novel that explores themes of spirituality, self-discovery, and the power of the human spirit. While it has some weaknesses, the novel's rich symbolism, universal message, and inspiring story make it a timeless classic that continues to resonate with readers worldwide.

3.8. Check Your Progress

D) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. What recurring dream sets Santiago on his journey?
 - A. Gold coins falling from the sky
 - B. A child leading him to treasure at the pyramids
 - C. His sheep turning into birds
 - D. A storm swallowing Tangier
2. Melchizedek gives Santiago two stones. What are they called?
 - A. Ruby & Opal
 - B. Urim & Thummim
 - C. Sun & Moon
 - D. Isa & Yusuf
3. The crystal merchant's unfulfilled Personal Legend is to:
 - A. Visit the pyramids
 - B. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca
 - C. Find a wife
 - D. Buy a bigger shop
4. Which concept means "It is Written"?
 - A. Baraka
 - B. Maktub
 - C. Fatwa
 - D. Zaouia

5. Fatima's primary quality is:
 - A. Impatience
 - B. Jealousy
 - C. Patient waiting
 - D. Greed
6. The Englishman is searching for:
 - A. Fatima
 - B. The Philosopher's Stone
 - C. A caravan route
 - D. Melchizedek
7. Where does Santiago first meet the alchemist?
 - A. Tangier
 - B. Tarifa
 - C. Al-Fayoum oasis
 - D. Seville
8. What does Santiago transform into at the climax?
 - A. Gold
 - B. Wind
 - C. Water
 - D. Light
9. The Soul of the World illustrates which theme?
 - A. Economic theory
 - B. Interconnectedness
 - C. Maritime navigation
 - D. Culinary tradition
10. How long does Santiago work in the crystal shop?
 - A. One month
 - B. One year
 - C. Three years
 - D. Ten days

11. The thieves beating Santiago at the pyramids prove:
 - A. Violence solves problems
 - B. Treasure may be distant
 - C. Real treasure was home
 - D. Dreams are worthless
12. Urim and Thummim represent:
 - A. Wealth and power
 - B. Yes/no rationality
 - C. War and peace
 - D. East & West
13. The alchemist's lesson about gold is that it symbolizes:
 - A. Trade value
 - B. Corruption
 - C. Personal transformation
 - D. Royal tax
14. Santiago's sheep mainly symbolize:
 - A. Adventure
 - B. Routine comfort
 - C. Royalty
 - D. War
15. "When you want something, the universe conspires..." is spoken by:
 - A. Fatima
 - B. The Englishman
 - C. Melchizedek
 - D. The thieves
16. The novel's narrative structure mirrors:
 - A. A court trial
 - B. Alchemical process
 - C. A sea voyage log
 - D. A marriage contract

17. Who tests Santiago's ability to turn into wind?

- A. The crystal merchant
- B. Melchizedek
- C. The alchemist ? Correct
- D. Fatima

18. Santiago's father wanted him to become:

- A. Merchant
- B. Priest
- C. Soldier
- D. Sailor

19. At the end, Santiago discovers the treasure:

- A. In Egypt
- B. At the oasis
- C. In Spain where he started
- D. In the monastery

20. Central metaphor of turning lead into gold is:

- A. Profit motive
- B. Colonisation
- C. Inner transformation
- D. Political revolution

II) Answer the questions in one-word/phrase or sentence.

1. What is the name of the shepherd boy who travels to Egypt?
2. Who gives Santiago the stones Urim and Thummim?
3. What object does Santiago repeatedly dream about finding?
4. Which city does Santiago get robbed in?
5. Who is the desert woman Santiago loves?
6. What is the Englishman looking for?
7. What natural element does Santiago become at the climax?
8. What concept means "It is Written"?
9. Where does Santiago work for a year to earn money?
10. What does the alchemist turn lead into?
11. What is Santiago's Personal Legend?
12. Who tells Santiago the universe conspires for those who pursue their legend?

13. What symbol in the novel represents interconnectedness?
14. What does Santiago's flock of sheep symbolize?
15. Where does Santiago finally find the treasure?
16. What does the alchemist teach Santiago to listen to?
17. Who works in the crystal shop and fears achieving his dream?
18. What alchemical process mirrors Santiago's journey?
19. What does Melchizedek say everyone has?
20. What central theme is shown when Santiago returns home?

III) Write short notes

1. How do omens function in Santiago's development?
2. Why is Fatima essential to Santiago's journey?
3. Explain the symbolism of Santiago's sheep.
4. What is the significance of the alchemist's desert lesson?
5. How does the ending redefine success?

Summary:

"The Alchemist" is a philosophical novel published in 1988 that's sold millions of copies worldwide. It tells the simple story of Santiago, a shepherd boy, on a quest to find treasure. Santiago has this recurring dream about treasure at the Egyptian pyramids. He decides to follow that dream, meets a mysterious king, and journeys across the desert, facing setbacks, learning about omens, and even finding love along the way. He eventually realizes that the treasure was back where he started. Finally, for the analysis: The novel explores themes of following your destiny, which it calls your "Personal Legend," the idea that the universe conspires to help you, and that the journey itself is as important as the destination. Its simple, fable-like style has made it accessible, but also criticized for offering simplistic advice.

The biggest theme is definitely the pursuit of your Personal Legend, which is the idea that everyone has a specific destiny or life purpose, and the book suggests that realizing it is your only real obligation. Tied to that is the idea of omens and signs, where the universe provides guidance to those who pay attention. Another major theme is the interconnectedness of all things, represented by the "Soul of the World," suggesting that everything is linked. And of course, there's the focus on overcoming fear, especially the fear of failure, to achieve your dreams.

3.9. GLOSSARY:

- ♦ Alchemist - A person who tries to turn base metals into gold or seeks spiritual perfection.
- ♦ Maktub - "It is written" in Arabic, meaning fate or destiny.
- ♦ Omens - Signs or events believed to predict the future.
- ♦ Personal Legend - One's true purpose or dream in life.
- ♦ Soul of the World - A spiritual connection that unites everything in the universe.
- ♦ Hermetic - Relating to ancient wisdom or mystical traditions.
- ♦ Pantheism - The belief that God is present in everything.
- ♦ Calcination - In alchemy, heating a substance to remove impurities; symbolizes stripping away ego.
- ♦ Coagulation - In alchemy, combining elements; symbolizes forming something new.
- ♦ Dissolution - Breaking down or dissolving something, often symbolizing change.
- ♦ Transmutation - Changing one thing into another, often used for turning lead into gold.
- ♦ Ephemeral - Lasting for a very short time.
- ♦ Sufism - A mystical branch of Islam focusing on spiritual growth.
- ♦ Hermetically - Sealed or protected, often used for mystical or spiritual contexts.
- ♦ Incubation - A period of development or waiting.
- ♦ Metaphor - A symbol or comparison representing something else.
- ♦ Mythic - Relating to myths or symbolic stories.
- ♦ Oasis - A fertile spot in a desert, symbolizing refuge or peace.
- ♦ Perception - The way you understand or notice things.
- ♦ Pilgrimage - A journey to a sacred place or in search of something meaningful.
- ♦ Quest - A long search for something, often with challenges.
- ♦ Redemption - Making something right or finding forgiveness.
- ♦ Sage - A wise person with deep knowledge.
- ♦ Symbolism - Using symbols to represent ideas or qualities.
- ♦ Trepidation - A feeling of fear or anxiety about something.

3.10. ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS-

I) Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative.

1. B. A child leading him to treasure at the pyramids
2. B. Urim & Thummim
3. B. Make a pilgrimage to Mecca
4. B. Maktub
5. C. Patient waiting
6. B. The Philosopher's Stone
7. C. Al-Fayoum oasis
8. B. Wind
9. B. Interconnectedness
10. C. Three years
11. C. Real treasure was home
12. B. Yes/no rationality
13. C. Personal transformation
14. B. Routine comfort
15. C. Melchizedek
16. B. Alchemical process
17. C. The alchemist
18. B. Priest
19. C. In Spain where he started
20. C. Inner transformation

II) Answer the questions in one-word/phrase or sentence.

1. Santiago
2. Melchizedek
3. Treasure at the pyramids
4. Tangier
5. Fatima
6. The Philosopher's Stone
7. Wind
8. Maktub
9. Crystal shop
10. Gold
11. To find his treasure/follow his dream

12. Melchizedek
13. The Soul of the World
14. Conformity and routine
15. Back in Spain under a tree
16. His heart
17. The crystal merchant
18. Transformation
19. A Personal Legend
20. The journey is more important than the destination

3.11. EXERCISES:

1. Discuss the role of omens and “m aktub” in Santiago’s journey.
2. Explain how alchemy serves as a metaphor for Santiago’s personal growth.
3. Analyze Fatima’s function in the narrative and her relationship to the theme of love.
4. Evaluate the significance of the ending where treasure is found under a tree in Spain.
5. Compare the themes of wise guidance in *The Alchemist* with those in *The Little Prince*

3.12 References for Further Study :

1. Gibram, Khalil. *The Prophet*, Alfred Knopf, USA, 1923, Print
2. Hesse, Herman. *Siddhartha*, S Fischer Verlag, Germany, 1922, Print



Module IV

Half Girlfriend

- Chetan Bhagat

4.0 Objectives

4.1 Introduction-

4.2 Presentation of Subject Matter

Section-I

4.3 Check your progress – I

4.4 Summary:

4.5 Glossary:

4.6 Answers to check your progress I

4.7 Answers to check your progress II

4.8 Exercise –

4.9 Reference for further study -

4.0 Objective- After studying this unit you will be able to :

1. Understand the themes of the novel Half Girlfriend.
2. Study the problems of Indian youths.
3. Explain the Man-Woman relationship.
4. Find relationship between two consecutive generations.

4.1. Introduction:

Half Girlfriend by Chetan Bhagat is a popular Indian English romantic novel. It discusses themes of love, class differences, language barriers, and personal growth. This novel is published on 1st October, 2014, by Rupa Publications. It is Bhagat's sixth novel and is dedicated to "non-English types," highlighting the struggles of Hindi or Bhojpuri speakers in so called sophisticate class or English-dominated society.

The story revolves around the concept of a "half girlfriend"—a term Bhagat coined for ambiguous relationships common in India, where one person wants more than friendship but doesn't get full commitment. This novel is revolves across rural Bihar, Delhi's St. Stephen's College, Patna, and New York, it follows Madhav Jha, a village boy from Dumraon, who gains admission to the prestigious college through basketball despite his poor English communication skills. There, he meets Riya Somani, a wealthy, English fluent girl. A Delhi girl selected for sports, sparking a bond strained by social and linguistic divides. Madhav as Chetan Bhagat visits Riya's journals, claiming she

died of cancer, and recounts their story to make sense of it. The novel uses the flashback technique. The details of basketball-fueled friendship is elaborated by the author. The whole atmosphere is delineated in a romantic manner. Riya's refuses for a full relationship with Madhav. It leads to conflict, her marriage to abusive ex Rohan Chandak. She disappears after helping Madhav's mother's school at village. Revelations from the journals expose deceptions, leading Madhav on a quest to New York, where they reconcile, marry, and build a family while revitalizing the Dumraon Royal School.

4.2 Presentation of Subject Matter:

Half Girlfriend is an interesting novel written by Chetan Bhagat. It portrays Madhav Jha a rural Bihari boy. He navigates love and cultural divides at St. Stephen's College in Delhi with Riya Somani, a wealthy English-speaking girl. Their relation starts as a "half girlfriend" arrangement—more than friends but not fully romantic—due to class, language, and social differences. The word itself conveys the incompleteness of relationship. There are so many reasons of this incompleteness. However they accept it and move ahead. It underlines the significance of the aspects like class, language, social differences and other barriers for assimilation of two cultures.

Main Characters

- **Madhav Jha:** Protagonist from Bihar, poor English speaker, basketball player; falls deeply for Riya and pursues her relentlessly across India and New York.
- **Riya Somani:** Rich Delhi girl, fluent in English, also a basketball athlete; offers Madhav a "half girlfriend" status but marries ex Rohan Chandak, later fakes cancer, and reunites with Madhav.
- **Rani Sahiba:** Madhav's supportive mother, runs Dumraon Royal School; encourages his education and later helps with the school.

Minor Characters

- **Rohan Chandak:** Riya's childhood friend and ex-husband. Their abusive marriage drives her away.
- **Shailesh:** Madhav's college friend at St. Stephen's.
- **Ghanshyam Ashu:** Madhav's friend from Darbhanga, Bihar.
- **Chetan Bhagat:** Appears as himself, meets Madhav and reads Riya's journals.
- **Shyam:** Madhav and Riya's son at the story's end.

Relationship Details

Madhav and Riya meet due to their common interest of basketball. They develop a relationship of love but with certain reservations. Actually, Riya has small interest in Madhav. However because of his consistent efforts she becomes agree to be his “Half girlfriend.” She marries Rohan after her education. But due to differences she divorces due to abusive treatment from her life partner. But when she comes in contact with Madhav she is cured by his words of warmth. She recollects Madhav’s school speech. Madhav tracks her to New York, they reconcile fully, marry, and run the Dumraon school together with son Shyam. Rani Sahiba acts as Madhav's emotional anchor, while Rohan represents Riya's failed past.

Themes of the Novel:

Love and Relationships

The theme of Love and Relationships in Half Girlfriend is layered and deeply tied to the emotional struggles of its characters. Unlike traditional romances, the novel presents love as something uncertain, fragile, and often undefined. Madhav Jha’s feelings for Riya Somani are intense and unwavering, but Riya’s hesitation to commit fully reflects the complexities of modern relationships where emotional intimacy doesn’t always translate into clear labels. The term “half girlfriend” itself becomes symbolic — it captures the in-between space of affection and companionship that is more than friendship but less than a conventional romance.

Bhagat uses this theme to explore how love can be both empowering and painful. Madhav’s pursuit of Riya pushes him to grow, yet it also exposes his vulnerabilities and insecurities. Riya’s reluctance stems from her own personal traumas and desire for independence, showing that relationships are shaped not just by attraction but by individual histories and emotional boundaries. Their dynamic highlights the tension between desire and restraint, illustrating how love often requires patience, compromise, and resilience.

Ultimately, the novel suggests that relationships are not always about perfect compatibility but about navigating imperfections together. The “half” in their bond reflects the reality that love can exist in fragments, and even incomplete relationships can profoundly shape one’s identity and emotional journey.

Class Divide

Madhav and Riya’s relationship is constantly tested by their contrasting social backgrounds. Madhav, from rural Bihar, feels out of place in Riya’s elite Delhi world. This difference creates insecurity and tension, as Madhav worries that his love may never be enough to bridge the gap between their lifestyles. Bhagat uses their romance to show how class divides can act as invisible barriers, making love feel conditional and fragile. The novel suggests that while affection can cross boundaries, society often reinforces divisions that complicate relationships.

Love vs. Language Barriers

Language becomes another obstacle in Madhav and Riya's bond. Madhav's limited English proficiency makes him feel inferior, especially in Riya's cosmopolitan circles. His struggle with language is not just about communication but about self-worth — he fears that his inability to speak fluent English makes him undeserving of Riya's love. Bhagat highlights how language, often seen as a marker of status in India, can distort relationships by creating feelings of inadequacy. Love here is shown as vulnerable to external pressures, where even words can become walls.

Love and Ambition

Madhav's love for Riya motivates him to improve himself — academically, socially, and personally. His ambition to rise above his limitations is fueled by his desire to be worthy of her. This intertwining of love and ambition shows how relationships can inspire growth, but also how they can become burdens when self-improvement is pursued only for validation. Bhagat portrays love as both a driving force and a test of resilience, where ambition becomes a way to prove devotion.

Love and Identity

The relationship between Madhav and Riya also forces both characters to confront their identities. For Madhav, love becomes a journey of self-respect — learning that his worth is not defined by class or language. For Riya, love is complicated by her need for independence and her struggle with personal trauma. Their bond reflects how relationships are not just about romance but about self-discovery, where love can be both a mirror and a catalyst for change.

In *Half Girlfriend*, love is never isolated — it is constantly shaped by class, language, ambition, and identity. Bhagat shows that relationships in modern India are fragile ecosystems, influenced by social structures and personal insecurities. The novel ultimately suggests that true love requires not just emotional connection but the courage to overcome external and internal barriers.

Language Barriers

The theme of Language Barriers in *Half Girlfriend* is one of the most striking elements of the novel, as it reflects both personal insecurity and broader social realities in India. Madhav Jha, the protagonist, comes from rural Bihar and struggles with English, which is portrayed as a marker of prestige and success in urban society. His inability to speak fluent English makes him feel inferior, especially in the elite environment of St. Stephen's College, where Riya Somani and others move with ease. This barrier is not just about communication — it becomes symbolic of exclusion, highlighting how language can divide people into categories of “worthy” and “unworthy.”

Bhagat uses Madhav's struggle to show how language proficiency often dictates opportunities in education, career, and even relationships. Madhav's love for Riya is

overshadowed by his fear that his broken English makes him less desirable or respectable in her world. The novel captures the psychological weight of this insecurity, illustrating how language can shape identity and self-esteem. At the same time, it emphasizes the resilience required to overcome such barriers, as Madhav works hard to improve himself and prove that love and ambition are not limited by linguistic ability.

In this way, the theme of language barriers is deeply intertwined with the themes of class divide and ambition. It shows how English, often seen as the “passport” to modern success, can create invisible walls between people, making relationships and self-worth more complicated than they should be.

Ambition and Self-Improvement

Madhav’s journey is not only about winning Riya’s love but also about proving himself in a world that undervalues his background. His determination to improve his English, succeed academically, and uplift his community reflects the power of ambition. Bhagat suggests that perseverance and self-growth can bridge divides of class and culture, making ambition a transformative force in both personal and social contexts.

Identity and Self-Discovery

Madhav’s journey in *Half Girlfriend* shows how the theme of Language Barriers is directly tied to his path of self-improvement. His limited English is not just a practical obstacle but a source of deep insecurity, especially when he compares himself to Riya and her polished, urban world. This insecurity makes him feel unworthy of her affection and fuels his determination to change. Bhagat portrays English as a symbol of modern success in India, and Madhav’s struggle reflects the reality of countless students from small towns who find themselves disadvantaged in elite institutions.

Instead of giving up, Madhav channels his love for Riya into motivation. He works hard to improve his English, not only to impress her but also to prove to himself that he can rise above the limitations imposed by his rural background. His efforts highlight the transformative power of ambition — showing that love can inspire growth, but also that self-improvement must ultimately be for one’s own dignity and confidence. By overcoming his linguistic insecurities, Madhav learns that true worth is not measured by fluency in English but by resilience, sincerity, and determination.

This connection between language and self-improvement makes the novel especially relatable to young readers in India, where English often acts as a gatekeeper to opportunity. Bhagat uses Madhav’s journey to suggest that while language can divide, perseverance can bridge the gap, turning personal weakness into strength.

Modern Indian Youth

Madhav's journey of self-improvement in *Half Girlfriend* is not limited to overcoming his personal insecurities about English; it extends into a broader sense of social responsibility. His determination to master the language and prove himself academically is deeply connected to his desire to uplift his community in rural Bihar. Bhagat portrays Madhav as someone who doesn't just want success for himself — he wants to use his growth to bring change to others, particularly through education.

The language barrier becomes symbolic of the larger divide between rural and urban India. By working to overcome it, Madhav shows that self-improvement can ripple outward, inspiring others in his village to believe in progress and opportunity. His efforts to secure funding for his school highlight how ambition, when tied to social responsibility, transforms into something greater than personal achievement. Love for Riya may have sparked his drive, but his ultimate growth lies in realizing that his journey matters most when it benefits those around him.

This theme ties together the novel's exploration of love, class divide, and language barriers. Madhav's personal struggles mirror the struggles of countless young Indians who face systemic disadvantages, and his triumph becomes a message of hope: that self-improvement, when combined with responsibility, can bridge divides and create lasting impact.

Plot of the Novel:

Here's an event-wise breakdown of the plot of *Half Girlfriend*:

1. **Madhav's Admission** – Madhav Jha, a boy from Bihar with weak English skills, secures admission to St. Stephen's College, Delhi, through the basketball sports quota.
2. **Meeting Riya** – He meets Riya Somani, a rich Delhi girl, also admitted via the sports quota. They bond over basketball and become close friends.
3. **Half Girlfriend Proposal** – Madhav falls in love, but Riya hesitates. She proposes being his "half girlfriend," a compromise between friendship and romance.
4. **Conflict and Breakup** – Pressured by his friends, Madhav tries to force intimacy, which deeply hurts Riya. She leaves college and later marries her childhood friend Rohan in London.
5. **Madhav Returns Home** – Heartbroken, Madhav goes back to Dumraon, Bihar, and helps his mother run her school, which struggles with poor facilities.
6. **School Renovation Efforts** – Madhav works to improve the school, especially to secure toilets for girls, and seeks help from politicians and donors.
7. **Reunion with Riya** – Madhav unexpectedly meets Riya again. She reveals her marriage failed and she is now pursuing her passion for singing.
8. **Love Rekindled** – Through emotional conversations and shared goals, Madhav and Riya reconcile, finally embracing a full relationship.

This event-wise flow shows how the story moves from college romance to heartbreak, self-growth, and eventual reunion.

Characters:

Madhav:

Madhav is a young man from Dumraon, Bihar. He comes from a humble, rural background and is raised by his mother, Rani Sahiba, who runs a local school. His upbringing instills in him simplicity and strong values. He is innocent, straightforward, and sometimes naive. His lack of fluency in English makes him insecure in elite circles, but he remains determined and hardworking. Madhav is deeply passionate about basketball, which earns him admission to St. Stephen's College in Delhi. His love for the sport reflects his discipline and resilience. His love for Riya Somani is selfless and unconditional. Even when she rejects him, he continues to care for her without bitterness, showing his empathetic nature. After heartbreak, Madhav channels his energy into improving his mother's school, especially focusing on girls' education and facilities. This highlights his sense of responsibility and social commitment. Determined, resilient, empathetic, and selfless. However, his innocence sometimes leads to misunderstandings and mistakes, making him a realistic and relatable character.

Riya Somani:

Riya comes from a wealthy, aristocratic family in Delhi. Her privileged upbringing contrasts sharply with Madhav's rural background, highlighting the novel's theme of class divide. She is sophisticated, independent, and emotionally layered. Despite her modern outlook, she often struggles with societal expectations and family pressures. Riya dreams of becoming a singer, which symbolizes her desire for freedom and self-expression beyond the constraints of her conservative family. Her bond with Madhav is complex. She values his sincerity but hesitates to commit fully, offering the "half girlfriend" compromise. Her failed marriage later brings her closer to him again. Riya faces patriarchal domination and conservative family expectations. Though she resists these pressures, her autonomy is often undermined by circumstances. Elegant, independent, empathetic, yet vulnerable. She embodies both strength and fragility, making her a nuanced character who reflects the challenges of modern Indian womanhood. Together, Madhav and Riya's character sketches show how their contrasting worlds—rural simplicity and urban sophistication—intertwine to create the emotional core of the novel.

Rani Sahiba:

Rani Sahiba is Madhav Jha's mother, a traditional and religious woman living in Dumraon, Bihar. She belongs to a royal lineage but lives a modest life, managing the family's only school in the village. She plays a pivotal role in shaping Madhav's values and sense of responsibility. Her dedication to running the school reflects her commitment to education and community service. Rani Sahiba is strict, disciplined, and deeply rooted in cultural traditions. At the same time, she is caring and supportive of Madhav, guiding him through his struggles. Her insistence on improving the school inspires Madhav to work hard for its development, especially in securing better facilities for girls. She symbolizes resilience and the importance of social responsibility. Traditional, religious, disciplined, nurturing, and socially committed. She represents the strength of rural women who balance family, tradition, and community welfare.

Shailesh:

Shailesh is Madhav Jha's close friend and confidant during his college years at St. Stephen's. He comes from a more urban and polished background compared to Madhav. He acts as Madhav's advisor and motivator, often pushing him to pursue Riya more aggressively. His influence sometimes leads Madhav into mistakes, such as pressuring Riya for intimacy. Shailesh is outspoken, practical, and worldly. He represents the typical college friend who gives advice based on social norms rather than sensitivity. While he genuinely cares for Madhav, his advice is not always wise. His encouragement to "go further" with Riya creates conflict and contributes to their breakup. Loyal, supportive, but impulsive and sometimes insensitive. He embodies the role of a friend who means well but doesn't always understand the emotional depth of situations.

Rohan Chandak:

Rohan is Riya Somani's childhood friend from Delhi, belonging to the same wealthy social circle. His privileged background makes him a suitable match in the eyes of Riya's family. He becomes Riya's husband after she leaves college and distances herself from Madhav. His presence creates a major turning point in the story, as it symbolizes Riya's attempt to conform to societal expectations. Rohan is portrayed as confident, polished, and socially compatible with Riya's family. However, his relationship with Riya lacks emotional depth and understanding. Their marriage eventually fails, as Riya feels suffocated and unfulfilled. This failure highlights the difference between societal approval and personal happiness. Sophisticated, socially acceptable, but emotionally distant. He represents the kind of partner chosen for status rather than love.

Complete Character Visual Map:



Timeline plot of Half Girlfriend

College Phase

- **Madhav's Admission:** Madhav Jha, a boy from Bihar, joins St. Stephen's College in Delhi through the basketball quota.
- **Meeting Riya:** He meets Riya Somani, a rich Delhi girl, and they bond over basketball.
- **Half Girlfriend Proposal:** Madhav confesses his love; Riya hesitates and proposes to be his "half girlfriend."
- **Conflict:** Madhav's friends pressure him, leading to a misunderstanding that drives Riya away.

Separation Phase

- **Riya's Marriage:** Riya marries her childhood friend Rohan Chandak and moves to London.
- **Madhav's Return:** Heartbroken, Madhav returns to Dumraon, Bihar, and helps his mother run her school.

Transformation Phase

- School Development: Madhav works to improve the school's infrastructure, especially for girls.
- Fundraising Challenge: He prepares to meet Bill Gates for funding, improving his English and confidence.

Reunion Phase

- Riya's Return: Riya reappears, revealing her failed marriage and pursuit of music.
- Reconnection: She helps Madhav with his project, rekindling their emotional bond.

Resolution Phase

- Riya's Disappearance: She leaves again, claiming she is terminally ill.
- Madhav's Discovery: Later, Madhav finds her performing in New York, alive and well.
- Reunion: They finally unite, completing their journey from "half" to "whole" love. This timeline captures the emotional evolution of the story — from youthful confusion to mature understanding and fulfillment.

College Phase

- Madhav's Admission: Madhav Jha, a boy from Bihar, joins St. Stephen's College in Delhi through the basketball quota.
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- Half Girlfriend Proposal: Madhav confesses his love; Riya hesitates and proposes to be his "half girlfriend."
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4.3 Check your progress – 1

A) Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.

1. Chetan Bhagat's 'Half Girlfriend' isnovel.
A. Gothic
B. Romantic
C. Tragic
D. Comic
2. Madhav is a young man from
A. Dumraon
B. Kolkata
C. Jaipur
D. Delhi
3. Madhav is deeply passionate about
A. Cricket
B. Football
C. Chess
D. Basketball
4. Rani Sahiba symbolizes resilience and the importance ofresponsibility.
A. Political
B. Religious
C. Ethical
D. Social
5. Shailesh is Madhav's advisor and
A. Motivator
B. Teacher
C. Colleague
D. Enemy

B) Check your progress –2

A. Answer the following questions in one word/sentence of phrase each.

1. Who is Rohan Chandak?
2. What does the relationship of Rohan and Riya lack?
3. Which quota Madhav uses to join St. Stephen's College in Delhi?
4. Where does Riya move after her marriage?
5. What does Madhav do after his breakup with Riya?

4.4 Summary:

Madhav Jha, a boy from Bihar, joins St. Stephen's College in Delhi through the basketball quota. He meets Riya Somani, a rich Delhi girl, and they bond over basketball. Madhav falls in love, but Riya hesitates and offers to be his "half girlfriend." Madhav, influenced by his friend Shailesh, pressures Riya for intimacy. Hurt and disappointed, Riya distances herself and eventually marries her childhood friend Rohan Chandak. Madhav is left heartbroken and returns to Dumraon, Bihar. Back home, Madhav helps his mother, Rani Sahiba, run their struggling school. He focuses on improving facilities, especially toilets for girls, to encourage education. He prepares to meet Bill Gates for funding, working hard to improve his English and confidence. Madhav unexpectedly meets Riya again. She reveals her marriage failed and she is pursuing her passion for singing. They reconnect emotionally, and Riya helps Madhav with his school project. Riya disappears once more, claiming she is terminally ill. Later, Madhav discovers her alive in New York, performing as a singer. They finally reunite, completing their journey from "half" to "whole" love.

4.5 Glossary:

ambiguous	:	Confusing
reconcile	:	Adjust
consistent	:	Continuous
companionship	:	friendship
reluctance	:	lack of attention
Intertwine	:	interlink
elite	:	high class
transformative	:	modifiable
Insecurity	:	uncertainty
empathetic	:	concerned

4.6 Answers to check your progress I

Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.

1. Chetan Bhagat's 'Half Girlfriend' isnovel.
A. Gothic B. Romantic
C. Tragic D. Comic
2. Madhav is a young man from
A. Dumraon B. Kolkata
C. Jaipur D. Delhi
3. Madhav is deeply passionate about
A. Cricket B. Football
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4. Rani Sahiba symbolizes resilience and the importance ofresponsibility.
A. Political B. Religious
C. Ethical D. Social
5. Shailesh is Madhav's advisor and
A. Motivator B. Teacher
C. Colleague D. Enemy

4.7 Check your Progress II

1. Who is Rohan Chandak? Riya Soman's childhood friend/ Riya's husband
2. What does the relationship of Rohan and Riya lack? Emotional depth
3. Which quota Madhav uses to join St. Stephen's College in Delhi? basketball quota
4. Where does Riya move after her marriage? London
5. What does Madhav do after his breakup with Riya? Helps mother to run her school

4.8 Exercise –

1. Discuss the themes of the novel Half Girlfriend.
2. Elaborate and Comment on the plot structure of Half Girlfriend.
3. Explain intricacies of relations in the novel Half Girlfriend

Write Short Notes:

1. Rohan Chandak
2. Shailesh
3. Shyam
4. Biographical elements in Half Girlfriend

4.9 Reference for further study –

- Language Politics in Half Girlfriend IJELL (Indian Journal of English Language and Literature) – Examines Madhav’s struggle with English as symbolic of India’s class divide.
- Class and Regional Identity International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research – Discusses Bihar vs. Delhi cultural contrast and small-town aspirations.
- Gender Roles and Romance Tropes International Journal of English and Literature Studies – Critiques Riya’s character and the “half girlfriend” concept as a compromise in modern relationships.
- Popular Fiction and Mass Appeal Contemporary Indian Writing in English (edited volume) – Situates Bhagat’s novel within Indian mass-market fiction, debating literary merit vs. accessibility.
- Film Adaptation Studies Cinema and Cultural Studies Journals – Analyzes the 2017 Bollywood adaptation, focusing on narrative changes and audience reception.



Semester - VI (Minor) Literature and Cinema
Module I
INTRODUCTION TO CONCEPT OF
ADAPTION

Contents:

- 1.0 Objectives
- 1.1. Introduction
- 1.2. Presentation of Subject Matter:
 - 1.2 .1 Adaptation Definitions:
 - 1.2.2 Analysis of the Concept:
 - 1.2.3 Various Aspects of Adaptation
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 - 1.3.1 Check Your Progress:
- 1.4. Glossary
- 1.5. Answers to Check your Progress-
- 1.6 Exercise:
- 1.7 References for further study

1.0. Objectives- (After studying this unit you will be able to:

- 1. Understand the foundational definition of adaptation and its key concepts;
- 2. Explain the various aspects involved in the process of adaptation, from text selection to execution;
- 3. Find relationships between different approaches to adaptation and analyze how they differ.
- 4. Critically evaluate the theoretical and practical aspects of adapting literary works to cinema.

1.1 Introduction

Adaptation is a continuous process of translation and reinterpretation. It involves taking a story from one form, like a novel, and reimagining it for another, such as the screen. This transformation requires thoughtful decisions about visual representation, pacing, and character development, as each medium has its own strengths and limitations.

1.2. Presentation of Subject Matter:

Concept of adaptation

In translation studies, adaptation is a technique involving the change and modification of content to suit a target culture. Sager (1997) views it as a complex process where linguistic form, content, and purpose may undergo modifications.

Adaptation theory explores how works are transformed from one medium to another, recontextualizing and reinterpreting the original for new audiences. Thinkers like Linda Hutcheon and Gerard Genette have highlighted the complex dialogue between texts (intertextuality) and the debate between fidelity and creative freedom.

The concept of adaptation originated in Aristotle's Poetics, discussing imitation and transformation of stories. It evolved through classical literature and drama, with novel-to-play adaptations popular in the 19th century. The 20th century saw film adaptations of novels and plays, like *Pride and Prejudice*. Theorists like Gérard Genette (1982) and Linda Hutcheon (2006) shaped modern understanding, highlighting adaptation as a creative, intertextual process. Today, adaptations span cross-cultural and multimodal forms, reinterpreting classics for new audiences.

1.2 .1 Adaptation Definitions:

- ♦ Linda Hutcheon: 'An announced and extensive transposition of a work or works, a creative and interpretive act involving the recontextualization of a prior text.'
- ♦ Gérard Genette: 'A hypertext is any text derived from an earlier text... by transformation or imitation.'
- ♦ Oxford Dictionary: 'The process of adapting or adjusting something to fit a new context or purpose.'

Adaptation in the Indian Context

Indian cinema frequently adapts classic stories and epics. Notable examples include:

- ♦ Haider (2014): An adaptation of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* set in Kashmir.
- ♦ Omkara (2006): An adaptation of *Othello* set in rural Uttar Pradesh.
- ♦ Maqbool (2003): Based on *Macbeth*, set in the Mumbai underworld.
- ♦ Devdas: Adapted multiple times from Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's 1917 novel.
- ♦ *Bride and Prejudice* (2004): A Bollywood-style adaptation of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.

1.2.2 Analysis of the Concept:

- ♦ **Transformation:** Adaptation involves changing the original work to suit the new medium or context, which can include changes in narrative, character, or setting.
- ♦ **Intertextuality:** Adaptations are inherently intertextual, referencing and reinterpreting the original work.
- ♦ **Fidelity vs. Creativity:** The debate surrounding adaptations often centers on fidelity to the original work versus creative freedom.
- ♦ **Recontextualization:** Adaptations recontextualize the original work, giving it new meaning and significance in a different time, place, or culture.
- ♦ **Multimodality:** Adaptations can involve multiple modes, such as visual, auditory, or textual, which can change the way the story is told and received.

Adaptation involves transforming a work from one medium to another, recontextualizing and reinterpreting the original for new audiences. This process entails changes in narrative, character, or setting, while retaining the core essence of the work. Adaptation is inherently intertextual, referencing and reinterpreting the original, and involves debates on fidelity versus creative freedom. Theorists like Linda Hutcheon and Gérard Genette highlight the complex dialogue between texts, emphasizing transformation, recontextualization, and multimodality. Ultimately, adaptation is a creative and interpretive act that gives new meaning and significance to the original work, allowing it to resonate with diverse audiences and contexts. The analysis of adaptation reveals its complex nature, involving the interplay between the original and the adapted work, and raising questions about authorship, meaning, and cultural relevance.

Adaptation is a complex process that involves transforming a work from one medium to another, requiring a delicate balance between fidelity to the original and creative freedom. This process reveals the dynamic nature of storytelling, where stories are reinterpreted and recontextualized to resonate with new audiences and contexts. Through adaptation, the original work is reimagined, and its themes and characters are reevaluated, often taking on new meanings and significance. The analysis of adaptation highlights the interplay between the original and the adapted work, raising questions about authorship, meaning, and cultural relevance, and demonstrating that a story is never fixed, but rather a fluid entity that evolves over time and across mediums.

1.2.3 Various Aspects of Adaptation

Selection of Text: Choosing a work based on themes, popularity, or cultural significance. **Approach of the Adapter:** Balancing fidelity (faithfulness to the source) with creativity. **Changes in Adaptation:** Condensing or expanding the narrative and making cultural adjustments. **Challenges:** Navigating fan expectations and medium-specific constraints (e.g., turning internal monologues into visuals).

1. Selection of Text: Choosing a work based on themes, popularity, or cultural significance.

Choosing the original work: The adapter selects a text that resonates with them, often due to its themes, characters, or cultural significance.

2. Approach of the Adapter: Balancing fidelity (faithfulness to the source) with creativity.

Fidelity vs. Creativity: Adapters balance staying true to the original with introducing new elements to appeal to a new audience. The adapter's vision shapes the adaptation, influencing character portrayals, themes, and tone.

Medium-specific considerations: Adapters adjust the story for the new medium, like turning internal monologues into dialogue for film. For example different adapters have taken varied approaches, from the 1940 film with Greer Garson to the 2005 film with Keira Knightley, each bringing their interpretation to the characters and setting. Devdas (Hindi, 1935, 1955, 2002): Multiple adaptations show different interpretations of the original novel. Kal Ho Naa Ho (Hindi, 2003): Inspired by Love Story (1970), with a unique Indian context Golmaal (Marathi, 2015): Comedy adaptation of The Play That Goes Wrong, showcasing a different tone

3. Changes in Adaptation; Condensing or expanding the narrative and making cultural adjustments.

Condensing or expanding the narrative: Adapters often streamline or elaborate on the original story. Setting and cultural adjustments: The story's setting or cultural context might be shifted to resonate with the target audience. For example some adaptations focus on the romance, while others emphasize social commentary or character development. Maqbool (Hindi, 2003): Based on William Shakespeare's Macbeth, set in a Mumbai crime world Bride and Prejudice (2004): A Bollywood-style adaptation of Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice Karthik Calling Karthik (Hindi, 2010): Based on The Number 23 (2007), with changes to fit Indian context

4. Challenges in Adaptation: Navigating fan expectations and medium-specific constraints (e.g., turning internal monologues into visuals).

Balancing old and new: Adapters navigate the expectations of fans of the original work while introducing the story to newcomers.

Medium limitations: Each medium has its strengths and constraints, requiring adapters to be creative. For example, adapters must balance Austen's satire and wit with the demands of the chosen medium. A Wednesday! (Hindi, 2008): Inspired by Dirty Harry (1971), tackling complex themes in an Indian context Gulzar's Angrezi Binaan (Hindi, 1982): Adapting The Merchant of Venice to an Indian setting, balancing cultural nuances.

Copyright and rights: Adapters must secure permissions or ensure the work is in the public domain. For example Austen's novel is a classic choice for adaptation due to its enduring themes and characters. *Mughal-e-Azam* (Hindi, 1960): Inspired by William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* (classic story with universal themes) *Haider* (Hindi, 2014): An adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Hamlet* (timeless themes and characters) *Omkara* (Hindi, 2006): An adaptation of William Shakespeare's *Othello* (complex characters and themes)

What are the challenges and opportunities of adapting literary works to the screen? Film and television adaptations embark on the intricate journey of translating the written word into a visual and auditory spectacle. This transformation often involves condensing complex narratives, adapting dialogue for the screen, and making creative choices about character portrayals, settings, and plotlines.

1.2.4 Challenges:

Challenges include condensing long narratives into a 2-hour film, staying true to the spirit of the author's vision, and visualizing the atmosphere of the text. Opportunities include reaching wider audiences, utilizing visual storytelling (cinematography and VFX), and leveraging 'star power' to attract viewers to classic literature.

- ♦ **Condensing the narrative:** Long novels or sprawling sagas often require significant condensing to fit within the time constraints of a film or TV series. Striking a balance between preserving the essence of the story and maintaining a compelling pace can be a daunting task.
- ♦ **Staying true to the source material:** While adaptations need to appeal to a broad audience, staying faithful to the spirit and themes of the original work is essential for satisfying fans and honoring the author's vision.
- ♦ **Capturing the essence of characters:** Translating complex characters and their internal motivations from page to screen requires nuanced performances and careful attention to detail.
- ♦ **Visualizing the setting and atmosphere:** Creating a visually captivating and immersive world that reflects the tone and atmosphere of the original work is crucial for transporting the audience into the story.

1.2.5 Opportunities:

- ♦ **Reaching a wider audience:** Film and television adaptations have the potential to introduce beloved stories to a new generation of viewers, fostering a love for literature and expanding its reach.

- ♦ **Visual storytelling:** The visual medium offers a unique platform for dynamic storytelling, utilizing cinematography, visual effects, and production design to create unforgettable experiences.
- ♦ **Star power:** Casting popular actors can generate significant buzz and attract a larger audience to the adaptation, potentially introducing them to the original work.
- ♦ **Technological advancements:** CGI and other visual effects have revolutionized the way stories are told on screen, enabling filmmakers to bring fantastical worlds and creatures to life with breathtaking realism.

1.3. Summary: This unit introduces you to the concept of adaptation as the dynamic process of transforming a story from one medium, like literature, into another, such as film. We've explored how this transformation requires thoughtful creative decisions about visual storytelling, pacing, and character development, rather than simply copying the plot.

Furthermore, we've discussed how adaptations contribute to our understanding of culture and storytelling, raising important questions about fidelity to source material and the role of the audience. By studying them, you gain a deeper appreciation for the creative possibilities within adaptation studies.

In literature, adaptation is when you take a story or concept from one medium—like a book and turn it into something else—like a movie, a play, or even a video game. It's about telling the same story in a different way. In the Indian context, adaptation is really about taking classic stories or epics and bringing them to new audiences through films or television. A huge example would be the TV series of the Ramayana and Mahabharata, or films like 'Devdas,' which was adapted from a novel by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay's 1917 Bengali novel Devdas. The concept is simply transforming from one medium to another, and analysis would look at how the story changes for the new format—like adding visuals, music, and cultural references. Does that make sense?

The definition of adaptation in literature is recasting a work in one medium, like a book, to fit another, like a film or TV script. Adaptation analysis is looking at the process and choices made, like how the themes are maintained or changed. And a summary of adaptation would be describing the key transformations in a specific adaptation, like how a novel on Mumbai mafia was adapted from Shakespeare.

key aspects involve fidelity—that is, how closely the new version sticks to the original story and themes. There's also the transformation of narrative, where creators might add or remove characters or events to fit the new medium, like changing descriptions into visuals. On top of that, there's the cultural aspect, where references might be updated to connect with a different audience, like shifting the setting from Scotland to Mumbai.

The selection of text is usually based on the story's popularity or relevant themes for the new version. The treatment is about how the adapter translates descriptions into visuals, maybe adding extra subplots or focusing on specific emotions. And the adapter's approach can vary—some want to be very faithful to the source, while others take more creative liberties to create something that stands on its own.

In conclusion, adaptation is like translating between artistic languages. It's about honoring the core story and its themes; while also having the creative freedom to make it thrive in a new medium. Whether it's staying very close or using the source as inspiration, the goal is to create a companion work that enhances the original and connects with people in a fresh way.

To wrap it all up, studying adaptation isn't just about comparing different versions of a story; it's a lens through which we can understand the dialogue between different creative mediums and the cultural contexts that shape them. It challenges us to appreciate the artistry in both literary and cinematic expression, ultimately expanding our perspectives on how stories are told and experienced. The true value of an adaptation lies in its ability to connect with audiences across time and cultures. Whether it's a novel amplifying silenced voices, a film reimagining a classic, a painting transforming history into universal symbols, or a musical blending past and present, adaptations invite us to rediscover the power of storytelling. They challenge us to expand our perspectives, engage with diverse viewpoints, and find new relevance in old narratives. As reception theory reveals, it is the audience's response that ultimately gives life to these works, ensuring their impact endures for generations to come.

1.3.1 Check Your Progress:

Objective Type Questions:

1. What does “adaptation” primarily refer to in literary studies?
 - a) Translating a work word-for-word
 - b) Transforming a work into another medium or form
 - c) Critiquing a published text
 - d) Publishing an original manuscript
2. Which theorist wrote *A Theory of Adaptation* (2006)?
 - a) Gérard Genette
 - b) Linda Hutcheon
 - c) Roland Barthes
 - d) Mikhail Bakhtin

3. The 2005 film *Bride & Prejudice* is an adaptation of:
 - a) *Emma*
 - b) *Pride and Prejudice*
 - c) *Wuthering Heights*
 - d) *Middlemarch*
4. In adaptation, “fidelity criticism” focuses on:
 - a) Box-office revenue
 - b) How closely the adaptation matches its source
 - c) The director’s personal style
 - d) Audience demo...
5. Who described adaptation as a “process of creation and reception” in adaptation studies?
 - a) Linda Hutcheon
 - b) Ferdinand de Saussure
 - c) Jacques Derrida
 - d) Northrop Frye
6. A “straight” adaptation aims primarily to:
 - a) Radically rewrite the ending
 - b) Preserve plot, characters, and tone of the source
 - c) Change the genre completely
 - d) Remove all references to the original
7. Haider (2014) transposes *Hamlet* to which region?
 - a) Punjab, 1947
 - b) Kashmir, 1990s
 - c) Kerala, 2000s
 - d) Rajasthan, 1980s
8. In Genette’s terms, the original work is the:
 - a) Hypertext
 - b) Paratext
 - c) Hypotext
 - d) Metatext

Answer: b) Hypotext

9. Adapted text in Genette's terms?
- a) Hypotext
 - b) Hypertext
 - c) Architext
 - d) Pretext
- Answer: b) Hypertext
10. Film that adapts Othello in an Indian setting?
- a) Haider
 - b) Maqbool
 - c) Omkara
 - d) Devdas
11. Approach that judges adaptation by faithfulness?
- a) Reception theory
 - b) Fidelity criticism
 - c) Deconstruction
 - d) Formalism
12. Year Sarat Chandra's Devdas novel was published?
- a) 1901
 - b) 1917
 - c) 1936
 - d) 1955
13. Adaptation across media (novel?film) is called?
- a) Intermedial
 - b) Intermedial
 - c) Paratextual
 - d) Literal
14. Adaptation that updates setting for new audience?
- a) Translation
 - b) Retelling
 - c) Localization
 - d) Censorship

15. Play adapted as Haider?
 - a) Macbeth
 - b) Hamlet
 - c) Othello
 - d) Lear
16. Term for works referencing other works?
 - a) Intertextuality
 - b) Monotextuality
 - c) Linearity
 - d) Closure
17. Key motive for modern adaptations?
 - a) Copying
 - b) Reinterpretation
 - c) Plagiarism
 - d) Shrinkage
18. Adaptation that stays very close to source?
 - a) Radical
 - b) Loose
 - c) Straight
 - d) Vague
19. Genette's 1982 adaptation study?
 - a) Poetics
 - b) Palimpsests
 - c) Adaptation
 - d) Ulysses
20. Novel-to-play trend peaked in?
 - a) 18th
 - b) 17th
 - c) 19th
 - d) 20th

21. Bride & Prejudice adapts which Austen novel?
- a) Emma
 - b) Mansfield Park
 - c) Pride and Prejudice
 - d) Persuasion
22. Changing medium often requires altering?
- a) Title page
 - b) Narrative technique
 - c) Copyright date
 - d) Publisher
23. Adaptation primarily reflects?
- a) Imitation
 - b) Recreation
 - c) Invention
 - d) Revision
24. Film Maqbool adapts?
- a) Hamlet
 - b) Othello
 - c) Macbeth
 - d) Julius Caesar
25. Translating a novel into a comic is an example of?
- a) Serialization
 - b) Intermedial adaptation
 - c) Paraphrase
 - d) Abridgement
26. Aristotle's concept underlying adaptation?
- a) Catharsis
 - b) Mimesis
 - c) Peripeteia
 - d) Anagnorisis

27. What is the process of adapting a work to fit a new cultural context called?
- a) Localization
 - b) Globalization
 - c) Translation
 - d) Transcreation
28. What is the primary goal of adaptation in literary studies?
- a) To copy the original work exactly
 - b) To transform the original work into a new medium or form
 - c) To critique the original work
 - d) To plagiarize the original work
29. Who is the author of the book "A Theory of Adaptation"?
- a) Gérard Genette
 - b) Linda Hutcheon
 - c) Roland Barthes
 - d) Mikhail Bakhtin
30. Which of the following is an example of a film adaptation of a Shakespearean play?
- a) The Shawshank Redemption
 - b) The Godfather
 - c) Omkara
 - d) The Matrix

1.4. Glossary

- ♦ Adaptation - Changing a story into a new format (like book to film)
- ♦ Medium - A way of presenting something (book, film, play)
- ♦ Fidelity - How close the adaptation is to the original story
- ♦ Transformation - Changing the story for a new format
- ♦ Intertextuality – The connection and dialogue between different texts (books, films)
- ♦ Recontextualization - Changing the story's context (time, place)
- ♦ Hypotext: The original work (in Genette's terms).
- ♦ Hypertext – The adapted text derived from the original
- ♦ Transposition - Moving a story to a new medium

- ♦ Reinterpretation - Seeing the story in a new way
- ♦ Visual storytelling - Telling a story with images
- ♦ Narrative - The story being told
- ♦ Character development - How characters change or grow
- ♦ Theme - The main idea of the story
- ♦ Tone - The feeling or mood of the story
- ♦ Audience - The people who experience the story
- ♦ Cultural context - The time and place of the story
- ♦ Original work - The first version of the story
- ♦ Adapted work - The new version of the story
- ♦ Creative freedom - The ability to change the story
- ♦ Expectations - What people hope to see in the adaptation
- ♦ Cultural adaptation - Changing the story for a new culture
- ♦ Multimodality - Using multiple formats (visual, audio)
- ♦ Storytelling - The art of telling a story
- ♦ Interpretive act - Making choices about the story
- ♦ Relevance - How the story connects with new audiences
- ♦ Localization: Adapting a work to fit a specific cultural context (e.g. shifting Scotland to Mumbai)

1.5. Answers to Check your Progress-

1. b) Transforming a work into another medium or form
2. b) Linda Hutcheon
3. b) Pride and Prejudice
4. b) How closely the adaptation matches its source
5. a) Linda Hutcheon
6. b) Preserve plot, characters, and tone of the source
7. b) Kashmir, 1990s
8. c) Hypotext
9. b) Hypertext
10. c) Omkara
11. b) Fidelity criticism

12. b) 1917
13. b) Intermedial
14. c) Localization
15. b) Hamlet
16. a) Intertextuality
17. b) Reinterpretation
18. c) Straight
19. b) Palimpsests
20. c) 19th
21. c) Pride and Prejudice
22. b) Narrative technique
23. b) Recreation
24. c) Macbeth
25. b) Intermedial adaptation
26. b) Mimesis
27. a) Localization
28. b) To transform the original work into a new medium or form
29. b) Linda Hutcheon
30. c) Omkara (an adaptation of Othello)

1.6 Exercise:

A) Write a short note on the following

1. What is adaptation in literary studies?
2. Who is Linda Hutcheon and what is her contribution to adaptation studies?
3. What is the difference between a hypertext and a hypotext?
4. What is fidelity criticism in adaptation studies?
5. Give an example of an Indian film adaptation of a Shakespearean play.

B) Broad Type Questions (Answer in 200-300 words)

1. Discuss the concept of adaptation as a process of transformation and reinterpretation.
2. Analyze the role of cultural context in shaping adaptations.
3. Compare and contrast the approaches of fidelity criticism and creative reinterpretation in adaptation studies.
4. Discuss the concept of intertextuality in adaptation studies.
5. Evaluate the impact of medium-specific constraints on the adaptation process.

1.7. References for further study

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Module II

Fidelity

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.2 Content

1.2.1 What is 'Fidelity'?

1.2.2 Fidelity and adaptation

2.3 History of Cinema

a) Hollywood and Bollywood

b) History of literary adaptations with examples

2.4 Check your progress

2.5 Exercises

2.6 Key Answers

2.7 References

2.0 Objectives:

The study of this unit will help you to:

- ♦ understand the concept of the term 'fidelity'.
- ♦ realize the relation between adaptation and fidelity
- ♦ know the history of cinema, history of literary adaptations with examples.

2.1 Introduction:

'Fidelity' is closely related to the world of cinema and plays. It is always discussed in terms of adaptation of literature. Literature in the form of story or novel is a narration. In case of drama, it is meant to be a presentation. When a producer or a director adapts any story, novel or a play for screen the medium changes. Similarly, if a story or a novel is transformed into a play, again the medium changes. Due to this change in medium, the director has to make various changes in the original text. She or he has to make these changes to create the film or play suitable to the screen, time and the interest of the public. Here, at this point, the concept of fidelity has to be considered. We all know the story of 'Cinderella', a poor orphan girl who has a step mother and two step sisters. They treat her wrongly; but ultimately she marries a prince and lives a happy life. The

same theme is used in many Hindi or Marathi films and serials. In adapting this theme, the setting in which the story happens is Indian. Therefore there are many changes in the story, time, characters, etc. Hence, it raises the question that how much originality remains in this adaptation. Therefore it becomes important to study the concept of 'fidelity'.

'Fidelity' is a term which means 'being loyal to someone or something'. The root of this word is from Latin— fidelitas or fidelitas which means "faithfulness" or "trustworthiness". Again it is derived from fides means "trust" or "faith". The original meaning of fidelity is the quality of being faithful, loyal or trustworthy.

Now, with understanding the meaning of this term, we will consider it in terms of adaptation. What is fidelity in relation to adaptation? If we consider its meaning as 'being loyal or faithful to something', then is it exactly as the original, following the incidents step by step as it is? In reproducing the story or the novel into the screen, how much close is it to the original text? Is it the exact copy or as we agree that some changes are necessary, then in what degree the exactness is maintained? All these questions lead to the detail discussion of this concept.

2.2 Fidelity in terms of

- ♦ Plot/Action
- ♦ Themes
- ♦ Setting
- ♦ Characters
- ♦ Moral/Message
- ♦ Aesthetics

It is commonly agreed by the scholars that in the process of adaptation, some changes are supposed to take place. We know that literature and stage or screening are two different arts. They require different treatments and techniques. In spite of that, fidelity expects the sincerity with the original text in major aspects. Fidelity is studied with how much strictly the adaptor has followed the plot; if not then which actions or incidents he selected and which he has skipped. The same is with other aspects also—theme, characters, aesthetics, etc. In case of setting, it is to be changed if the story takes place in different environment. The question of fidelity becomes more important if the adaptation is of historical action. The combination of facts and fiction is always reviewed and historical actions adapted have checked on factual basis.

The aesthetics and moral message is also supposed to be maintained. The author generally writes with some intention. Fidelity is concerned with the message reflected

in adaptation, does it reflect the same message or is it diluted or totally changed. Nowadays in cinematography, new techniques are invented which can be used for better effects. The question is in spite of the necessary changes whether the spirit of the original text is not hampered.

Fidelity- Various Approaches

Adaptation is concerned with ‘what’ is adapted and ‘how’ it is adapted. The term ‘fidelity’ enters at this mode offering the theorists an area with which they can interpret the new work. We generally find three approaches regarding fidelity.

1. Adaptation should be completely faithful to the resource:

- ♦ Linda Hutcheon, a Canadian film theorist has written A Theory of Adaptation. For her, adaptation is a re-appearance, a derivation. Chronologically it is second but not a secondary. Therefore she thinks that films would be better only when they are completely faithful to the original. This is her view that opened the discussion of fidelity.
- ♦ Another theorist Bela Balaz thinks that films are totally new creation. Therefore, he gives complete freedom to the adaptor to make all the changes he needs.
- ♦ Andre Bazin gives importance to maintain the spirit and vision of the writer. For him, adaptation is as a form of translation from one language to another.
- ♦ Dudley Andrew discusses adaptation in his book Concepts in Film. He interprets fidelity in terms of
 - i) Borrowing- the most common, adapting a well-known literary source to create a new work.
 - ii) Intersecting- preserves the originality without fully following it. Though it is a new version, the trace of the original vision is clear.
 - iii) Transformation- There is no complete copying; but it intends to translate the impact or the structure.
- ♦ The great critic, Virginia Woolf thinks that literature is original and of great value while adaptations are ‘parasites’ of it.

Adaptations which followed fidelity

It is a choice of the adaptor to be faithful to the original source or to move away from it. When the adaptation is based on some popular or classic novel or drama, there are expectations from the readers. They had certain image of that story and the characters and they wish to see it accordingly. If they find the adaptation is according to their expectations, they are satisfied. As screening includes script, acting, music, photography, etc. the original text is to be transformed. Fidelity expects the core values and the spirit /soul of the text sincerely felt and all these elements should work coherently to project the spirit. The adaptation of William Shakespeare’s comedy ‘The Comedy of Errors’

into Hindi film ‘Angoor’ is the best example of practicing fidelity. Though in Hindi film the setting is typical Indian, there are no extreme changes and the actions and the main characters maintained almost as it is with some necessary changes. There are many such adaptations based on English novels which are quite faithful to the original sources. These are some examples

Original source	Adaptations	
King Lear (Drama) - William Shakespeare	Brook’s Film in English	Natsamrat (Marathi Drama and Film)
The Pride and Prejudice (Novel) –Jane Austen	BBC Adaptation (English)	Trishna (Hindi T.V. Serial)
Wuthering Heights (Novel) –Emily Bronte	Adaptation (English) 1992/2009	Dil Diya Dard Liya (Hindi Film)
A Mayor of Casterbridge (Novel) - Thomas Hardy	BBC Adaptation (English), Film	–
Godfather (Novel) - Mario Puzo	Film Trilogy (English) Paramount Pictures	Dharmatma (Hindi Film)
Memento Mori – (Short Story) - Jonathan Nolan	Memento (American Film)	Ghajini (Tamil Film) Ghajini (Hindi Film)
Pygmalion (Drama) – George - Bernard Shaw	Pygmalion – Script by Shaw (1938) My Fair Lady–Musical and romantic version.	Ti Fulrani (Marathi) P.L.Deshpande.
The Namesake (Novel)- Jhumpa Lahiri	The Namesake (English)	–

Adaptations without observing fidelity

Films are expected to show and not to tell. They use the techniques such as camera, lighting and nowadays AI techniques also. Therefore the audience can feel the story happen realistically in front of his eyes. On the contrary, novels are supposed to tell stories with literary skills. Hence, in adaptation in the process of showing many changes take place. Moreover, the adaptor is also an artist. She or he has own creative ideas and vision. Sometimes it is transformed from comedy to tragedy or vice-versa. All screenings are not bad films if they make drastic changes. Many times they are better versions than the original. Firstly, they are successful to capture more wide audience. Comparatively, the books get limited readers. Secondly, adaptations convey the message more forcefully with focus on certain things. To attain such effect, the adaptor goes through a process of selecting, skipping and changing his material. The examples given below are really better versions of their original sources and hence can capture a great audience who appreciated these creations.

Original Source	Adaptation
Godfather (Novel) - Mario Puzo	Francis Ford Coppola's Screening (English) 1972 Considered Superior to Novel
Guide (Novel) - R.K. Narayan	Guide (Hindi)
Five Point Someone (Novel) - Chetan Bhagat	Three Idiots (Hindi Film)
Macbeth (Drama) - William Shakespeare	Maqbool (Hindi Film)
Othello (Drama) - William Shakespeare	Omkara (Hindi Film)
Sairat - (Marathi Film)	Dhadak (Hindi Film)
Falling Down - (American Film)	Dombivli Fast (Marathi Film)

The above discussion and the examples clearly express the need of the study of this concept 'fidelity' in the review and interpretation of any film adaptation. Hence, this term shows the need to study and understand in critical review and comparative study of any literary text and its adaptation.

2.3 History of Cinema

The screening of films is quite a modern development in art. We can trace the history in the late 19th century. It is very interesting to study the efforts in the beginning, the invention and the rough models of camera, developments and modifications in it and the response of the audience to this new visual art form. At the end of the 19th century, there were various experiments in this area. We can find the roots of cinema in photography, shadowgraphy and some devices like the magic lantern and zoetrope. In Berlin in 1894, Ottomar Anschutz made the screening of pictures in motion. Louis Le Prince was the earliest to shoot the surviving motion pictures in 1888. The first paid commercial public screening of ten short films by Lumiere brothers in Paris in 28th December, 1895 was considered to be the pioneer effort. Thus these efforts were taken in initial stage by Eadweard Muybridge, Ottomar Anschutz and Thomas Edison.

The well-known scientist Thomas Edison and William Dickson invented a “peep-show” device known as the Kinetoscope. This revolution created the sensation in the world of visual art. This device was an upright, with wooden cabinet having a peep-hole, a light bulb and a fast spinning shutter –equipped motor. The name ‘kinetoscope’ has Greek roots. “Kineto” means ‘movements’ and “scopos” means ‘to view’. However, as it was a “peep-show” device, it was possible only for one viewer to view at a time. In course of time, it was replaced by screen projectors such as Cinematograph.

Earlier the films were short and silent and also black and white. The sound was operated through the film ‘The Jazz Singer’ in 1927. The ‘talkies’ era started and in 1930-40 the films were presented with Technicolor. Later, in 1960-70’s practiced new techniques and the directors can make various experiments for more effects. Rapidly film industry was established with a great buzz, studios, companies and the most glamorous capitalistic industry.

A) Hollywood and Bollywood

Hollywood Industry:

Hollywood is situated in Los Angeles, California. Hollywood, now an attraction to world-wide tourists, was once a region with just a small adobe building in 1853 near Los Angeles. The visionary movie-makers considered the region of Southern California an ideal place for shooting. It is because this part was suitable having mild climate, good sunshine and availability of labour market.

Harvey Henry Wilcox, a politician and the real estate developer moved to Los Angeles with his second wife Daeida in 1883. He purchased 150 acres land at the west of Hollywood and planned to develop the business of animal husbandry. As it did not work, he subdivided the land which ultimately developed.

In the beginning of the 20th century, a banker and real estate agent H. J. Whitely purchased the 480 acres and he opened the Hollywood Hotel. Whitely is also known as the “Father of Hollywood”. Now in this “Hollywood Hotel” is the site of Dolby theatre. Here, the annual ceremony of Oscars is organized. This region was soon developed with various necessary requirements such as electricity, bank, post office, etc. Hollywood was incorporated into a municipality on 14th November, 1903 and merged with Los Angles in 1910.

Most of the major motion companies came to Los Angles upto 1910 and the first movie studio opened in Sunset Boulevard by 1915. The first film completed in Hollywood was The Count Of Monte Cristo in 1908; the film had started in Chicago. The Centaur Company established the first studio in Hollywood. There were four major companies – Paramount, Warner Bros., RKO and Columbia and they had their studies in Hollywood along with various minor companies. Hollywood was known as the fifth largest industry by the 1920s.

The ‘Hollywood Sign’ was erected in 1923 in the Hollywood Hills. It was erected by Los Angeles Times Publisher and also a real estate developer, Harry Chandler. It is very huge; each letter was originally 30 feet wide and 43 feet tall. They are decorated with four thousand light bulbs. It was renovated twice. This sign has attracted the world tourist and also featured in number of films.

Golden Age of Hollywood:

The golden age of Hollywood can be traced from 1920 to the early 1960. This era was supposed to be the time of growth, glory and experiments. There were five dominant companies known as “Big Five”- Warner Brothers, RKO, FOX, MGM, and Paramount. With these big ones smaller studios like Columbia, Universal and United Artists were also existed. The golden age started with the silent movie, transformed into sound movies and established with many musical, horror and romantic successful films. The three major aspects contributed in the growth of Hollywood Cine- Industry-Studio system, the star- system and the technological shifts. The key directors were Alfred Hitchcock- the master of horror films, Howard Hawks and Frank Capra.

The glorious history has dark side also. It is charged with drugs, casting couch, underworld currents, abuse, etc. This is the challenge that Hollywood is facing since some years.

History of Indian Cinema:

Indian cinema includes multi film industries with various languages as Hindi, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Bengali, etc. Influenced by the screening of Lumiere Brothers, the same screening was shown in Mumbai in the same year. With the devotion of Dadasaheb Phalke, the Indian Cinema spread its wings in 1913 with the release of ‘Raja Harishchandra’. This was the first movie in India without sound having English,

Marathi and Hindi intertitles. All the movies made in India from 1913 to 1931 were silent movies. The first 'talking film' i.e. sound film was 'Alam Ara' created by Ardeshir Irani. The first Indian film song was 'De do Khudake naam par' and the singer was Wazir Mohammed Khan. (Forbes 2013) This led the music to become the soul of Indian cinema. There are many films which did not get success, but the songs in these films were very popular. Moreover, in the success of some films songs contributed greatly.

The censorship was introduced in 1918. In the same year Kohinoor Film Company was set up with first film studio. The films 'Indra Sabha' and 'Devi Divyani' were marked as the first song and dance films in India. The film companies like Bombay Talkies (1934) and Prabhat Studios in Pune began their production in Marathi.

Bollywood Industry:

The Oxford English Dictionary explains the term 'Bollywood' as "a name for the Indian popular film industry, based in Bombay Origin 1970s, Blend of Bombay and Hollywood." This term is generally used to include the whole Indian Film Industry; but 'Bollywood' is actually meant for the Hindi Film Industry based in Mumbai. Nowadays Telugu Film industry known as 'Tollywood' has also emerged as the leading force. Though 'Bollywood' is Hindi film industry, it is one of the largest film production centers in India.

Cinema, being the medium to encompass and attract the masses, it has established itself as the central force of Indian culture. It is meant for entertainment, medium for promotion of ideologies, setting examples of great leaders, etc. Moreover, it has great influence on other markets as people imitate various things from cinema such as fashion, culture, festivities, etc. Hence, the journey of Indian Film Industry started in 1913 has transformed into a big empire.

There are two important streams that we find everywhere - 1. Commercial cinema or main stream cinema and 2. Art Films. In commercial films we see big budget block buster films with big star cast. They handle the popular themes like love, class conflict, social issues, comedies, melodrama, 'masala' films. These films are full of catchy dialogues, melodies, crime, action and fight scenes, family drama, etc. The concept of 'Super-star' created super-star figures of that particular time. The legacy starts from Ashok Kumar, Dilip Kumar, Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand, Rajesh Khanna, Amitabh Bachhan, Shahrukh Khan, Salman Khan and so on. Similarly, there are number of star heroines such as Devika Rani, Madhubala, Nargis, Vijayantimala, Vahida Rehman, Hemamalini, Madhuri Dixit, to name a few. There are some houses which produced such films are Yash Raj Films, Dharma Productions, Rohit Shetty Picturez, etc.

The other stream is Parallel Cinema or Art Films or New Indian Cinema. This is a movement in Indian Cinema which has been very effective. These films are mainly subtle in the satire of black realities in society. They are produced for reformative purposes, artistic and experimental reasons. They require intellectual engagement from audience. 'Arth', 'Mandi', 'Bajar', 'Jane Bhi Do Yaro' are some names of the films

which belong to this cult. The universal names of directors of 'Art' films are Satyajit Ray, Ritwik Ghatak, Govind Nihlani, Shyam Benegal, Basu Chatterji, Anurag Kashyap, etc.

B) History of literary adaptations with examples:

In the beginning of cinema, there were strong adaptations of classical fictions and plays from English literature. The films were made on universal stories like Cinderella, many of Shakespeare's plays, novels by the writers like Jane Austen, Brontë sisters, Thomas Hardy, Charles Dickens, mystery classics like Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot, etc.

Examples:

1. 'West Side Story' - an adaptation of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet
2. 'Clueless' - an adaptation of Jane Austen's Emma
3. 'Gone with the Wind' - an adaptation of the same titled novel by Margaret Mitchell
4. Peter Jackson's trilogy - an adaptation of novel The Lord of the Rings by J. R. R. Tolkien

These are the few examples and we have also discussed in terms of 'fidelity'. Hollywood Film Industry has adapted many of good literary texts which is an interesting area of study.

In Indian scenario, the Bengali, Malayalam and Hindi literature was quite influential in the beginning. At the same time some mythological and folk lore stories were also adapted.

Examples:

1. 'Pather Panchali' - an adaptation of Bibhutibhusan Bandyopadhyay's novel
2. 'Devdas' - three adaptations of the novel with same title by Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay.
3. Novels and stories by Ravindranath Tagore.
4. 'Tin Bigha Jamin' - an adaptation of Hindi novel Godan by Premchand
5. 'Guide' - an adaptation of English novel Guide by R.K. Narayan
6. '2 States' - an adaptation of The Story of My Life by Chetan Bhagat
7. 'Kai Po Che' - an adaptation of The Three Mistakes of My Life by Chetan Bhagat.
8. The Namesake - an adaptation of the same titled novel by Jhumpa Lahiri

These are some examples from Indian Film Industry and there are many more to explore.

Q.1A] Choose the correct option from the given alternative.

- is a state of remaining loyal to someone or something.
 - Filming
 - Fidelity
 - Transforming
 - Interpreting
- The root of the word 'fidelity' is from
 - Latin
 - Greek
 - India
 - Roman
- thinks that films are totally new creation.
 - Linda Hutcheon
 - Andre Bazin
 - Bela Balaz
 - Andrew Dudley
- is called as the father of Hollywood.
 - Harvey Henry Wilcox
 - H. J. Whitely
 - William Dickson
 - Lumiere brothers
- is the first movie of India.
 - Raja Harishchandra
 - Alam Ara
 - Sant Tukaram
 - Devdas

1. Who invented the kenetoscope?
2. What is important according to Linda Hutcheon in the relation of adaptation and fidelity?
3. Where does the Oscar ceremony take place every year?
4. Which is the first film completed in Hollywood?
5. Which is the first talking film in India?

I] Answer the following questions in about 250-300 words.

- II] Write short notes in about 100-150 words.**

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2.6 Key Answers

Q.1. A] 1. Fidelity

2. Latin.

3. Bela Balaz

4.) H. J. Whitely

5. Raja Harishchandra

Q.1. B] 1. Thomas Edison and William Dickson

2. Adaptation should be faithful to original.

3. In Hollywood Hotel- Dolby theatre

4. The Count of Monte

5. Alam Ara.

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Module III
**Five Point Someone (Novel) - Its
adaptation- 3 Idiots (movie)**

Contents:

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction of the novel- Five Point Someone
- 3.2 Characters in the novel
- 3.3 Theme of the novel
- 3.4 Setting of the novel
- 3.5 Story of the novel
- 3.6 Check your progress
- 3.7 Exercises
- 3.8 Key answers
- 3.9 Introduction of the film- 3 idiots
- 3.10 Theme of the film
- 3.11 Plot of the film
- 3.12 Check your progress
- 3.13 Exercises
- 3.14 Key Answers
- 3.15 Five Point Someone and its adaptation 3 Idiots
- 3.16 References

3.0 Objectives-

After studying this unit you will be able to:

1. Understand the novel 'Five Point Someone'
2. Understand the film 3 Idiots
3. Understand the changes in the film 3 Idiots
4. Understand the relation between the novel and the film

In the previous unit you have studied various theories of adaptation of the film from forms of literature. When the film is adapted from the literature, the film maker brings certain changes, modifications in his film. You have also studied the reasons behind the changes made in the film. In this unit, you will come to know how Chetan Bhagat's novel *Five Point Someone* has been adapted into the film *3 Idiots* by Rajkumar Hirani. Both the novel and its adaptation into the film became very famous.

3.1 Introduction-

Chetan Bhagat is a famous Indian novelist, whose novels brought him wide reputation and huge money. He wrote ten blockbuster novels and four successful non-fictions. He is considered as youth icon. Many of his novels have been adapted into successful bollywood films such as '*3 Idiots*', '*2 States*', '*Kai Po Che*' and '*Half Girlfriend*'. The New York times called him the biggest selling English language novelist in India's history. Time magazine listed him among 100 most influential people and Fast Company; USA ranked him among 100 creative people in the world. He is also good columnist, writing for many leading newspapers, throwing light on current social, educational issues in India. As a motivational speaker, he has delivered number of speeches in noted companies and organizations. He has also worked himself as a script writer for the film '*The Hello*' that is based on his novel '*One Night at The Call Centre*'.

Chetan Bhagat was born on 22nd April 1974 in Delhi. His father was a army officer and mother was a government employee. He completed his early education in the Army Public School, Delhi. He did his BE in mechanical engineering in IIT, Delhi and MBA in IIM Ahmadabad. He later got married to his classmate Anusha Suryanarayanan. He worked as an Investment banker in Hong Kong for eleven years. Later he quit the job and settled in Mumbai. He won the Society Young Achievers Award in 2000 and Publishers Recognition Award in 2005.

'*Five Points Someone*' is Chetan Bhagat's debut novel, published in 2004. It is adapted into famous film '*3 Idiots*'. It is the story of three engineering students- Harikumar, Alok Gupta and Ryan Oberoi who study in the prestigious Indian Institute Of Technology (IIT) in Delhi. The novel explores the challenges and pressures faced by the students in a competitive and demanding academic environment. It exposes the Indian education system that focuses more on the academic merit than the creative ideas of the students.

His literary works:

Novels-

1. Five Point Someone(2004)
2. One Night at the Call Centre(2005)
3. The Three Mistakes Of My Life(2008)
4. 2 States(2009)
5. Revolution 2020 , Corruption, Love, Ambition(2011)
6. Half Girlfriend (2014)
7. One Indian Girl(2016)
8. What Young India Wants 2012), selected essays and columns.
9. The Girl In Room 105 (2018)
10. One Arranged Murder (2020)
11. 400 days(2021)
12. 12 Years My Messed-up Love Story(2025)

Non Fiction-

1. 11 Rules of Life(2024)
2. India Positive (2019)
3. Making India Awesome (2015)
4. What Young India Wants (2012)

3.2- Characters in the novel- Five Points Someone

A) Major Characters

1) Hari Kumar-

Hari Kumar is the protagonist and narrator of the story. He is an average student in studies. His father is an army officer and his mother is a house wife. He is fat (also taunted as FATSO). He loves Neha Cheriaan.

2) Ryan Oberoi-

He was admitted in Army school, Mussoorie. He is fearless, broad minded and helping natured. He is a son of rich parents. His father has handicraft business. They send him money and letters but he neither loves them nor writes them letters. He is creative and full of innovative ideas.

3) Alok Gupta-

He is emotional and conscious about studies but constantly feels stressed. He belongs to a lower middle class family. His mother is a biology teacher and his father was

an artist but now is paralysed and bed ridden. Alok feels an immense responsibility of securing high grades to support his family.

4) Neha Cherian-

She is a student of Fashion- designing. She is daughter of Prof D. C Cherian. She loves her brother Samir, who committed suicide. She is liberal and independent. She has romantic and supportive relationship with Hari.

5) Prof D. C Cherian-

He is notoriously strict Head of the Mechanical Engineering department. He is a typical academician who has high regards for discipline. He had high merits. Due to his high expectations and imposing nature, he has lost his son, Samir. He is very much protective about his daughter, Neha.

6) Professor Veera-

He is a young professor, around 40 years old. He is sympathetic, co-operative professor. He has good academic background with five degrees.

7) Venkat-

He is studious and mugger. He is the topper, scoring more than 9.0 CGPA. He is a book-worm.

B) Minor characters-

Prof Dubey, Prof Goyal, Prof Bhatia, Prof Vohra, Dean Shastri, Director Verma and some senior students (Anurag, Baku).

3.3- Theme of the novel-

The novel, 'Five Points Someone' deals with the themes of academic pressure, friendship, love and drawbacks of Indian education system that emphasizes on the grading system.

3.4- Setting of the Novel-

The story of the novel Five Points Someone is set on IIT campus, the boys Hostel (The Kumaon), in the adjacent rooms on second floor, lecture halls, laboratories, Prof Cherian's residence, village Katwaria temple near track of railway station.

3.5 -Story of the novel

The novel, 'Five Points Someone' opens in Kumaon hostel, where three engineering students- Hari, Alok and Ryan live in adjacent rooms on the second floor. In the very first night, they are badly ragged by the seniors. They are asked to remove their clothes and to introduce themselves. Hari Kumar, Alok Gupta and Ryan Oberoi are mechanical engineering students with AIR 326, 453 and 91 respectively. Hari and Alok get terribly frightened but Ryan shows great courage to protest the ragging tradition. His aggressive

reaction of breaking coke bottles frightens the seniors. This rebellious act of Ryan brings the trio very close. Soon they become close friends.

On the first day of college, Prof. Dubey, around 40 years old starts his lecture of Manufacturing Process. He writes MACHINE in bold letters and asks students to define it. When students struggle to answer, he simplifies it saying, ‘anything that reduces human efforts’ is a machine. All students doubtlessly agree but Ryan cross-questions, ‘Sir, what about a gym machine? It doesn’t reduce human efforts, infact it increases it’. Prof. Dubey is stunned to get an unexpected challenge from a student. Instead of giving a proper solution, he diverts his lecture telling about grading patterns of ManPro course, assignments, surprise quiz etc.

Meanwhile along with their academic activities, they get acquainted with one another in a better way. Alok is from lower middle class. His father was an artist but now is paralysed. His mother is a biology teacher, a sole breadwinner. Half of her salary is expended on the medicines of the father. He has a young sister of marriageable age. So Alok feels immense responsibility to secure good GPA to support his family. Ryan Oberoi is a son of rich parents. His father had handicraft business in abroad. As he has been admitted in a boarding school, he is not intimately connected to his parents. They send him money and letters regularly but he neither loves them nor writes them back. Hari is a fat boy. He is nicknamed as ‘Fatso’. His father is an Army officer and mother is a housewife.

The trio have little interest in academic activities. They begin to bunk classes. They spend much time in eating parathas, smoke cigarettes and drink Vodka on top of building. One day, the trio suddenly plan for movie. Next day, in Prof. Dubey’s class, they perform poorly. Alok scores 7 marks, Hari scores 5 and Ryan doesn’t clear his marks because he feels that mugging is just waste of time. However, Alok tells him that to get degree at IIT Delhi, they have to cram to pass the exam so that they get good job and placement. Ryan suggests Hari rather than study whole day, he should go for walk to lose weight. Hari goes for jogging where suddenly a red maruti car comes in front of him. Hari is scared and the girl in the car apologizes him and insists on to give him a lift. They both introduce themselves. The girl’s name is Neha who is daughter of Prof. Cherian, head of mechanical engineering department. Alok and Ryan see Neha dropping Hari at hostel. Alok advises Hari to stay away from Neha as she is Prof. Cherian’s daughter.

Ryan’s parents send him a dollar cheque as Christmas gift. Ryan buys a new Voila scooter, a beautiful kinetic Honda. The trio only enjoy the ride to classes, canteen and movies. One night Alok gets a call from home, regarding his father’s serious health condition. Ryan and Alok take his father to hospital in a taxi. The next day, Alok cannot perform good in the class test. Ryan tells Alok that IIT Delhi is not good Engineering college in India as it has not invented anything till date. Alok answers him that IIT Delhi produces excellent engineers.

One day, hari sees Neha in the campus bookstore. When he greets her, she ignores him. Later she comes out of the store and calls Hari herself and tells him that the book seller knows her father. So she couldn't talk with him there. Her father is of conservative nature and is very protective about her. Both go to ice-cream parlour. Neha tells him that her driving licence has been issued. Hari looks at the licence and reads Neha Samir Cherian. Neha tells him that Samir was her elder brother who died in a railway accident on the morning of 11th May at 10 o'clock while going for walk. Both decide to meet on 11th day of every month because that is the day when Neha's parents go to the temple to pray for Samir. In one of their meets, Neha tells Hari that her brother didn't meet an accident but committed suicide on railway track. Her father wanted him to crack IIT entrance. He made three attempts but he failed. So he committed suicide. He has left a letter for Neha describing his suicide. Her brother has asked her not to disclose this fact to her father. So she keeps the letter as a secret. Hari and Neha date each other. They spend time in watching movies and enjoy at ice-cream parlour.

The trio begins to study for their final exams. When the results are out they see that the topper has achieved 10 points. While these three score five points something. It was their poor performance. The average grade in IIT is 6.5 and the five pointers are looked down. Ryan is still happy with his results. Alok is highly disappointed by his performance and in anger starts abusing Ryan. He decides to move in the topper Venkat's room. With Venkat's help Alok improves his grade to 6 pointer. Hari and Ryan enjoy their life to the fullest. They smoke cigarettes, drink Vodka together on the terrace of college building. One night Ryan overhears an argument between Alok and Venkat. The health of Alok's father gets deteriorated and he asks Venkat for some help but Venkat firmly refuses, giving importance to his grades and assignments. Ryan forwards to help Alok with no regrets in his heart. Alok moves back to Hari and Ryan's room. Once again the three friends are reconciled. Ryan plans to celebrate Alok's emotional return with 'Mice Party'. Ryan's mice theory attacks on the unfair race, created by the system of IIT but he believes that their friendship will beat the system. Then he advocates 'C2D', which stands for 'Cooperate to Dominate' that emphasizes the importance of friendship and collaboration.

To relieve Hari's anxiety to impress Neha, Ryan prepares a creative gift of 'IIT lipstick box'. Hari meets Neha in ice-cream parlour and he presents her the handmade gift of lipstick holder. She appreciates it highly and embraces it like a newborn baby. Then Ryan introduces his ambitious 'C2D' plan and gives everyone a copy of it. In the first part of the plan, Ryan calls the IIT system is unfair because 1) It suppresses talent and individual spirit. 2) It judges students with GPA system that harms relationships 3) Professors don't care for students 4) It destroys the best years in a student's life. In the second part, Ryan presents some important principles to overcome the rigid system of IIT.

- 1) All assignments to be shared
- 2) To divide the course responsibility
- 3) To share lab experiment observations
- 4) Prefer friendship to GPA
- 5) To combine their hostel rooms into one living unit
- 6) To split the cost of vodka and other things.

C2D plan proves to be fruitful for the trio. Alongwith their academic work, they enjoy their plenty of time for movies, scooter driving, eating drinking and playing. They also visit Alok's house and enjoy the home-made food prepared, by Alok's mother.

Prof. Vohra, a portly man of fifty asks students to design a car jack to lift the chasis in case of flat tires. All other students prepare traditional designs which are manually operated but Ryan creates automatic electric design with wire connected to the battery of the car. Prof. Vohra scoffs at Ryan's innovative idea and also insults him.

Neha's birthday was on December 1. Ryan suggests Hari a crazy plan to give Neha a midnight wish by entering Neha's home through window. In cold night, Hari climbs with the help of steel pipe. Hari enters Neha's room through the window and offers her sunflowers plucked from her own garden. Neha initially gets shocked and irritated towards Hari's abrupt entry but later on is delighted to know his feelings and idea of wishing as first man. They exchange the first gentle kiss. Meanwhile Prof. Cherian doubts that someone has entered his house. He shouts loudly, 'Who is it?' to which Ryan replies, 'Your father'. The trio then runs away to reach their hostel.

Neha's touching letter to her deceased brother, Samir reveals her relationship with her boyfriend, Hari who is not handsome not brilliant but his nature and approaches captivate her. She is very much anxious about her father's protective nature. She describes Hari's friends Ryan and alok. She hopes her bright future with Hari. She plans to introduce him to her father, when he gets a job.

In third year of their journey, the trio pass much of their time drinking, chatting on the rooftop of IIT campus. Ryan's ambitious lubricant project is rejected by Prof. Cherian, head of Mechanical Engineering Department. It frustrates Ryan. Hari gets psychological pressure to face his viva. Ryan advises him to consume vodka as it will boost his confidence. But Hari in actual viva feels confused and tongue tied. Prof. Cherian smells vodka from Hari's mouth. He gives Hari a big zero and asks him to leave the classroom. Alok gets pressured from unhappy family condition and delayed marriage of his sister.

The trio performed very poorly in their internal exams. They struggle and feel tremendous pressure to maintain high grade. Hari badly needs 'A' grade to impress Prof. Cherian and to win the hand of Neha. Alok has great responsibility to help his family. In this pressurized situation, they plan of Operation Pendullum to steal question paper of main exams by breaking into Prof. Cherian's office on the 6th floor. In order to

execute their plan, they decide to get duplicate keys with the help of Neha. Ryan knows that office keys are bunched with the car key of Prof. Cherian.

Hari and Neha date regularly. Neha tells Hari that her parents are not at home on 11th of every month. On that day, mother goes to temple to pray for soul of Samir who died on the same date. Her father goes to office. She asks Hari to meet at her residence on 11th April at 11.30. She is alone in the home. She tells the secret of Samir's death. He has not died in railway accident but has committed suicide when he failed thrice to qualify IIT. He wanted to be lawyer but his father's imposing nature, high expectations has ruined his life. Before his death, he has written a letter to Neha, telling the reason behind his suicide. He has also requested not to disclose this fact to his father. Hari is shocked to know the reality. After narrating the tragedy of her brother, Neha becomes emotional and bursts into cry. Hari feels sorry for Samir's loss and consoles Neha. Hari deliberately changes the subject of his Viva and vodka to change Neha's mood. Soon they feel physically attracted to each other, loosing control over their youthful passion, they cross all limits. After sexual intercourse, Neha demands a cigarette. She asks Hari to take a car and bring cigarettes. He now gets an opportunity to get duplicate keys of Cherian's office from the bunch of six keys. As Neha lazily wears his shirt, Hari has to wear Cherian's white shirt. When hari is returning to the house, surprisingly he finds Prof. Cherian on the bike returning to his home. Hari lies that the tyre got punctured when Neha was out. He tells him that Neha has gone to house and he helped her in repairing the car. When they both come home, Prof Cherian quickly notices his shirt worn by Hari. He also comes to know that he is the same boy who had drunk during his viva. He realises that he has been with Neha in his house. He warns Hari to stay away from Neha otherwise he will spoil his career. Hari now escapes having duplicate keys for operation pendulum.

The trio stealthily enter under cover of night. Prof. Cherian's office is on the sixth floor. They open the door and search the sealed brown bag. Hari and Ryan get the packet. They open it, take question paper and reseal again carefully. Alok already is disturbed by family issues. When he sees telephone in the office. He commits a mistake to call his mother from the office at midnight that leads to their capture. The telephone operator notices that someone is talking from the office of Prof. Cherian. He immediately sends guards. The trio are caught red handed. The guards lock them inside the office. Prof. Cherian, Dean Shastri, director Verma, Prof. Veera come there and find that the trio have stolen the question paper. Prof. Cherian asks to call police for arresting culprits. But Prof. Veera objects it, thinking of college's reputation and police will make the case complicated. FIR in police station will be viral in media and the news will defame the institution. It is decided to call disciplinary committee (blended as DISCO) and interrogate the guilty. The DISCO is arranged at night. Prof. Veera who has sympathetic attitude towards students asks the trio about the matter. Hari tells that they have made plan to steal question paper to maintain 'A' grade to impress Prof. Cherian and to get good placement. He had made duplicate keys, taking the original bunch from Neha,

daughter of Prof. Cherian. Prof Veera appreciates Ryan's lube project and he advises them to tell that the keys were given by Prof. Cherian's daughter, Neha. Involvement of his daughter in the case will soften Prof. Cherian. Hari is not interested to bring Neha in this matter but he is persuaded by all as last ditch survival strategy.

The meeting of Disciplinary Committee (DISCO) is called at midnight. All three culprits (Alok, Hari and Ryan) who have violated the discipline and committed crime of stealing question paper, are interrogated. Hari tells that Neha is his friend. She is upset with her father and she gave the keys of Prof. Cherian's office. All other members and Prof. Cherian are shocked by this disclosure. The reference of his daughter and connection to this crime softens Prof. Cherian. After long discussion over the matter, there are different opinions but eventually it is decided to suspend the three students for a semester.

Alok is deeply hurt by suspension decision and thinks everything is over. The academic failure, family pressure and the suspension of one semester drives Alok to commit suicide by jumping off from 9th floor of the building. He is seriously injured. He gets 11 fractures in the leg and two in the arms. His life is saved as he falls in the fountain flowing nearby the building. After getting treatment for two months in IIM hospital, Delhi, he returns to the hostel. Prof Veera welcomes Alok with his favourite sweet, Kaju burfi. He encourages the trio to work hard on Ryan's lube project. He informs that the Dean Shastri has permitted to revise and resubmit the project. The guidance and encouragement of Prof. Veera and the united efforts of the trio make finally the project of 400 pages ready.

Hari spends sleepless nights, thinking about Neha. When he calls her on 11th, she charges that he has used her. She begins to cry. They decide to meet at the ice-cream parlour. Hari softens her by telling that they had planned the Operation Pendulum to get A grade and her. Neha gives Hari Samir's suicide note to keep safe. When Hari reads the letter he is shocked to know that Samir's tragic end was caused by the immense academic pressure, imposed by his father to qualify IIT. His true desire was to become a lawyer. When Neha and Hari were discussing on Samir's letter, Prof. Cherian arrives there all of sudden. He comes there to buy ice-cream for his brother who is coming from Canada. He notices Hari and Neha in the ice-cream parlour. He becomes very angry and finds that both Hari and Neha are hiding the note. He thinks that Hari, inspite of warning has been writing love letters to Neha. He scolds him and forcibly snatches the letter from them. When Prof. Cherian reads the letter, he bursts into tears. He repents lot on himself as he is responisible for his son's death. His letter brings great change in the attitude of strict Prof. Cherian. Hari, Ryan and Alok are called by prof. Cherian. They are informed that their seventh semester will be considered as a research semester. This decision gives a great sigh of relief to the trio. As they were short of five credits to pass their IIT, Prof. Cherian asked them to work extra in laboratory on lube project in the last semester. Prof. Shastri tells them to prepare for campus interview.

In the campus interview, Alok gets a job in delhi, Hari gets placed in Mumbai but Ryan is not placed eventhough he made an amazing project. Hari is not happy with his job as he cannot meet Neha. Prof. Veera makes Ryan as Research Assistant and offers him stipend of 2000 rupees.

The trio eventually clears the final exam with five points something GPA. On the convocation day, all are ready wearing convocation robes to collect their degree certificates. Samir's suicide letter brings massive change in Prof. Cherian's heart. On the convocation day, he delivers a heartfelt message to the students. He criticises the grade obsessed education. He urges students to listen to their internal desires and rather than grades, value family, relationships and to believe in you and not take yourself too seriously. Finally he gives message that life should be enjoyed and friends should be made.

Alok and Hari join their jobs. Alok's software company sends him to US for six months. US assignment has earned him a dollar stipend. All family problems are solved and the marriage of his sister has been fixed. Alok's father has got full time nurse and mother conducts private tuitions, resigning her job. Hari goes to Bombay but he is not happy because he has been pining for Neha. She has just finished her fashion designing course and has got offer to work for local designer. Ryan has been seriously working on his project. His father has decided to invest the amount in his project. All three friends and Neha are ready to go Delhi next month for marriage ceremony of Alok's sister.

3.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I :-

Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative:

1. _____ is the narrator of 'Five Point Someone'
a. Ryan
b. Alok
c. Hari
d. Venkat
2. In his school days _____ has lived in boarding schools
a) Alok
b) Ryan
c) Hari
d) Anurag
3. Machine is anything that reduces human effort. This definition is told by Prof _____
a) Veera
b) Cherian
c) Dubey
d) shastri
4. Alok's mother was _____ teacher.
a) Biology
b) art
c) zoology
d) maths

8. Who saved the junior students from ragging?
9. In which company do Alok and Hari get placed?
10. Who is the director of IIT Delhi?
11. What is DISCO?
12. How much payment was fixed for Ryan as a research assistant?
13. What is Hari's nickname?

3.7 EXERCISE I:

Answer the following questions in about 250- 300 words each:

1. How did Ryan save juniors from ragging?
2. Why did the trio perform poorly in the exams?
3. Why did Alok shift himself in Venkat's room?
4. How did Hari celebrate Neha's birthday?
5. Why did Samir commit suicide?

Write short notes on the following:

1. Rigid grade system of IIT
2. Value of friendship
3. Love between Hari and Neha
4. Operation Pendulum
5. DISCO
6. Prof. D C Cherian
7. C2D

3.8 Keys to check your progress I:

1. c) Hari
2. b) Ryan
3. c) Prof. Dubey
4. a) biology
5. b) Venkat
6. a) handicraft
7. b) fashion designing
8. c) Prof Cherian
9. b) dean

10. a) 1st December
11. b) sixth
12. c) 11th may

Keys to check your progress II:

1. Kumaon hostel
2. Prof. Cherian
3. 6.5 GPA
4. An army officer
5. C2D means Co-operate to Dominance
6. IIT Delhi
7. Lubrication project is independent project of Ryan and is based on genuine passion and practical novelty.
8. Ryan Oberoi
9. Technosoft software company
10. Prof Verma
11. Disciplinary Committee
12. 2000 per month
13. Fatso

3.9 Introduction to the film 3 Idiots:

The film 3 Idiots is adapted from the novel 'FIVE POINT SOMEONE' by Chetan Bhagat. The film is directed by Rajkumar Hirani and produced by Vidhu Vinod Chopra. This is the story of three students who get admitted to The Imperial College of Engineering. The main characters of this film are Rancho played by Aamir Khan, Farhan played by Maadhavan, Raju played by Sharman Joshi, Pia played by Kareena Kapoor, Viru Sahastrabuddhe played by Boman Irani and Chatur Ramalingam played by Omi Vidya.

3.10 Theme of the film:

The main theme of this film is a satirical critique of the high- pressure Indian education system, advocating a shift from rote learning to creative, passion driven education. It emphasizes the importance of excellence over just merely obtaining high grades and also encourages pursuing career based on interests rather than societal pressure.

3.11 Plot of the film:

The movie opens with a scene from an airplane where Farhan Qureshi receives a call that his friend Rancho has been found and is coming to Imperial College of Engineering. As soon as he hears this he fakes a heart attack to get down the plane. He

calls Raju and tells him to meet at their college. Both reach the college and run to the terrace to find Chatur Ramalingam, a former batch-mate waiting for them. He reminds them of the bet he made with Rancho 10 years back and mocks Rancho and boasts about his successful life. When Farhan and Raju enquire about the whereabouts of Rancho, Chatur tells them that Rancho is in Shimla. While they all leave for Shimla, Farhan narrates the entire story in a flashback technique.

On the first day in hostel, the freshers are being ragged by the seniors and Farhan sees Rancho entering, who is also forced by his seniors to remove his pants and stand along with his batch-mates. Rancho retaliates and bolts in a room. One of the seniors threatens him that if he doesn't come out on the count of 10, he will urinate on the door. Rancho decides to teach him a lesson and connects a spoon to an electric wire and the senior gets electric shock by urinating on it. This incident marks the beginning of their trio.

On the first day of college, the director of ICE Prof. Viru SahastraBuddhe (who is famously been nicknamed as VIRUS by the students) enters with a basket of eggs of Koel. He says that life is a race, if you don't run, someone will crush you and move forward. He also imposes about his scholarship and the pen his professor has given him for his excellence in academics and that he is waiting to award it to someone but has not found someone worthy enough.

In the first lecture the professor of mechanical asks them to define a machine. Rancho in a very simple way explains that anything which helps us to carry out our work efficiently with less effort is a machine. He says that the zip of his pant is also a machine and demonstrates by pulling the zip up and down. The professor gets angry and orders rancho to leave the class. Meanwhile Chatur tells a sophisticated, mugged up definition which is beyond comprehension. Rancho goes out and again comes back in the class. When questioned by the professor, he tells him a scientific definition of the things he left behind. When the Professor asks him to tell in simple language he tells the professor that he was trying to do the same but was punished and sent out of the class.

There is a student called Joy Lobo, who has been working on a project of a helicopter and is on the verge of completion. He requests the director to extend the submission date but the director instead of encouraging him calls his father and tells him that Joy won't be able to graduate this semester. Joy is devastated and commits suicide. After the funeral, Rancho goes to the director's office and tells him that joy's death is not a suicide rather it's a murder.

There is debate between the director and Rancho about the teaching system and upon this Rancho is been asked to demonstrate how to teach engineering. He just writes his friends' names by adding certain prefixes and suffixes to them and asks the entire class to tell him the meaning of the words by looking into the dictionary. Everyone in the class including the director fail to tell the answer. To this Ranch replies that these

are just his friends' names. This aggravates the director's rage. The director sends letters to both Farhan and Raju's parents about quitting their friendship with Rancho. The trio visits both Farhan's and Raju's home. Farhan's father strictly asks Rancho to leave his son alone. Later they go to Raju's house where his mother constantly complains of the increasing rates of vegetables and asks Raju to study hard as he has to handle all the responsibilities of his sister's marriage and also look after the hospital expenses of his paralysed father. On hearing this Raju angrily leaves the meal but his friends continue to eat until they notice that Raju's mother scratches her ailing husband's chest with the same roti roller and they also leave the meal. While returning to the hostel they think of crashing a marriage and have their meal, but little did they know that the marriage is of the director's elder daughter Mona. Here Rancho notices Pia and her fiancé Suhas discussing over the price of an old watch Pia is wearing. Rancho approaches Pia and asks to break the engagement as her fiancé is only worried about money and also spills chutney over his shoes. Pia notices something strange and asks her father whether the trio were his guests. Her father tells her that they are his students. Pia stops her father and approaches the trio and requests Rancho to explain to her father that Suhas is not suitable for her. The trio turns around to find Prof Viru and try to bluff about the project they are working on. Prof Viru summons Raju and Farhan and asks them to change their group. Raju parts ways with Rancho and joins Chatur.

Rancho decides to teach Chatur a lesson and also wants to show Raju that mugging up doesn't help a person become an engineer. He decides to change Chatur's teacher's day speech by replacing the word "CHAMATKAR" by "BALAATKAR". Chatur is deeply insulted and challenges Rancho to meet him on the same spot after 10 years to see who will be more successful.

One fine evening, Rancho meets Pia in the market and tells her that her fiancé Suhas, is more worried about money rather than her feelings. To demonstrate this to Pia, he takes away Pia's watch and tells Suhas that Pia lost the expensive watch gifted by Suhas. On hearing this Suhas scolds Pia and asks her to stop crying and search for the watch. Pia takes the watch from Rancho and angrily hands it to Suhas. Meanwhile, Rancho gets a call from Raju's house that his father is seriously ill. On hearing this Rancho along with Pia rushes to Raju's house and Raju's mother tells Rancho that the ambulance is not available. So he carries Raju's father on Pia's scooter and admits him to the hospital. When Raju gets to the hospital he shouts at Rancho for getting his father on a scooter but is soon calmed down by the doctor who tells him that Rancho brought his father in time and saved his life. On hearing this Raju thanks Rancho and reunites with him. Then the next day they appear for their exams.

The exam results are out and Rancho has topped the exam while Raju and Farhan are on the last of the list. After the photo session, Prof Viru gives a speech and asks if anyone has any doubt. Raju raises his hand and asks if a student gets selected through campus interview and if he fails, what will be the further situation. Prof. Viru calls Raju and Farhan on stage and humiliates them in public. The trio takes to drink at night.

While drinking Raju and Farhan challenge Rancho to propose Pia and convey his feelings. They break into the director's house and Rancho goes to Pia's room and confesses his feelings but finds out that he was talking to Pia's elder sister, Mona. Meanwhile Raju and Farhan sing loudly while urinating on the director's gate. This awakens Prof. Viru and he sees Raju in the torch light. The next day director summons Raju to his office and asks Raju to type his rustication letter. Raju requests him to cancel the rustication order and forgive him. Prof. Viru asks him to change his name with Rancho's name on the letter. Raju is confused and devastated and he jumps from the office window and is seriously injured and is hospitalized. However his life is saved and he goes to the interview on wheelchair and secures a job. On the contrary Farhan confronts his father about his dream of becoming a wildlife photographer and convinces his father for the same.

The selection of Raju through campus interview enrages Prof. Viru. He decides to set a tough question paper so that Raju fails the exam. Pia overhears her father and hands over the office keys to Rancho so that they can steal the question paper. Hesitatingly Rancho takes the keys and goes to the college office to get a copy of the question paper. He searches the office but doesn't find the question paper. So, he calls Pia and asks her where it was. Prof. Viru overhears the conversation and heads to his office to find the seal of the packet in which the question paper was kept is broken. He goes to the hostel and beats Rancho with an umbrella. Rancho and Farhan steal the paper for Raju and they won't see it. Even Raju decides not to copy and throws the question paper into the dustbin. Prof. Viru on returning home confronts his daughter and asks her about the keys. Pia accepts that she had given the keys and tells her father that if she had given the keys to her brother he would have not committed suicide by jumping of the train. She hands a suicide note to her father. Prof. Viru is taken aback as he reads the note. His son wanted to study literature but was forced to pursue engineering. He could not pass the entrance exam and hence he committed suicide.

The same day there is sudden breakout of heavy rain and Mona goes into labour. No ambulance is available to carry her to the hospital as the roads are flooded by water. Rancho carries Mona to their college room and performs the delivery with Pia's assistance on video call. He suctions the baby with the help of Vacuum cleaner. Prof Viru is taken aback and thanks Rancho for saving his daughter and grandchild's life. He confers the pen of excellence to Rancho which was waiting for a genius student for the past 32 years. After the final exams Rancho silently leaves for his city without informing anyone.

In the current scenario, Raju, Farhan and Chatur reach Shimla and go to Rancho's residence but are soon shocked to see someone else claiming to be Ranchod Das. After confronting real Ranchod Das, they find out that their friend was actually the son of a gardener at Ranchod Das's house. He was called 'CHOTE'. Chote's father had died and hence he was allowed to stay at their house. He was very intelligent and being a student of sixth class was able to solve the sums of tenth class. When he was caught by a teacher at school, the teacher confronts Shamaldas, Ranchod Das's father about this.

Shamal Das tells the teacher not to disclose the secret and let Chote appear for the exams in Ranchod Das's place. He asks the teacher to make him an engineer and after getting the degree he must not meet anyone. Ranchod Das tampers photo and uploads his picture in convocation photo. Ranchod das gives them Chote's address and tells them that their friend is a teacher. On knowing this Chatur mocks Chote and they all head towards Ladakh. But while going to Ladhak they remember Pia and call her to tell about Rancho but are shocked to know that Pia is marrying Suhas in Manali. They go to Manali and take Pia along with them. They reach ladakh and find their old friend and learn his real name which is Phunsukh Wangdu who is a great scientist and has 400 patents to his work. Later Chatur is shocked to know that Rancho is Phunsukh Wangdu. The movie ends with all of them mocking Chatur for the same.

3.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS I:

Complete the following sentences by choosing the correct alternative given below:

1. The film '3 Idiots' is directed by _____
 a) Pankaj Chopra
 b) Pankaj Chandra
 c) Rajkumar Hirani
 d) Pankaj Sahani
2. _____ was called as VIRUS
 a) Chatur Ramalingam
 b) Prof. Viru Sahastrabuddhe
 c) Dr Praful Kumar
 d) Ram Saran
3. _____ is interested in wildlife photography
 a) Rancho
 b) raju
 c) Farhan
 d) Chatur
4. _____ was motto that Rancho taught his friends
 a) Life is a race if you don't run fast, you will get trampled
 b) All is well
 c) Chase success, excellence will follow
 d) Knowledge is power
5. _____ was the name of the prestigious engineering college
 a) IIT Bombay
 b) Delhi Technological University
 c) Imperial College of Engineering
 d) Birla Institute of Technology
6. The role of Pia is played by _____
 a) Kareena Kapoor
 b) Alia Bhatt
 c) Kriti Sanon
 d) Aishwarya Rai

7. Punsukh Wangadu is really _____
a) Farhan
b) Chote the gardner's son
c) Raju
d) Chatur
8. Rancho teaches Chatur a lesson by _____
a) Changing words in his written speech
b) Fighting
c) Giving a speech
d) Changing entire speech
9. _____ is name of Pia's sister
a) Sia
b) shreya
c) usha
d) mona
10. _____ is working on the project of helicopter
a) Raju
b) Joy Lobo
c) Chatur
d) rancho
11. The movie 3 Idiots begins with _____ journey
a) Train
b) bus
c) airplane
d) car
12. Prof. Viru gives his pen of excellence to _____
a) Chatur
b) Farhan
c) Raju
d) Rancho

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS II:

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

1. Who has played the role of Raju?
2. Who is the producer of 3 Idiots film?
3. Who is the director of Imperial College of Engineering?
4. Who is Pia's Fiancé?
5. How many patents does Wangdu have on his name?
6. Who returned from USA after 10 years?
7. Where does Chatur call Farhan and Raju to meet?
8. With what does Rancho perform Mona's delivery?
9. Who is the narrator of the story in 3 Idiots?
10. Where do Raju, Farhan and Chatur head to find Rancho?
11. Why does Joy Lobo commit suicide?

3.13 EXERCISE:

Answer the following in about 250- 300 words each:

1. The film 3 idiots, throws light on the education system of India. Discuss
2. Love between Pia and Rancho
3. What are the major changes in the film the '3 Idiots' from the novel 'Five Point Someone'?

Write short note in about 100- 150 words:

1. Significance of title 3 Idiots
2. Joy Lobos tragedy
3. The secret of Ranchoddas Shamaldas Chanchhad
4. The delivery scene in the film 3 Idiots
5. The Virus

3.14 Key to check your progress I:

1. c) Rajkumar Hirani
2. b) Prof. Viru Sahastrabuddhe
3. c) Farhan
4. b) All is well
5. c) Imperial College of Engineering
6. a) Kareena Kapoor
7. b) Chote the garden's son
8. a) Changing the words in his written speech
9. d) Mona
10. b) Joy Lobo
11. c) airplane
12. d) Rancho

Key to check your progress II:

1. Sharman Joshi
2. Vidhu Vinod Chopra
3. Prof. Viru SahastraBuddhe
4. Suhas
5. 400
6. Chatur Ramalingam
7. On the terrace of Imperial College of Engineering

8. Vacuum cleaner
9. Farhan Qureshi
10. Shimla
11. Extension for his helicopter project is rejected

3.15 Five Point Someone and its adaptation 3 Idiots-

The blockbuster film 3 Idiots is adapted from Chetan Bhagat's best-selling novel 'Five Points Someone'. Adaptation from novel to film has involved major creative and is modified by director Rajkumar Hirani. The novel and the film are connected because both focus on stressful academic environment of engineering institutions like IIT Delhi and Imperial College of Engineering. In both, there are three friends who struggle against pressure, expectations and grading system. In the novel, three friends are Hari, Ryan and Alok while the film presents Rancho, Farhan and Raju. In both, the friendship among the major characters forms the emotional core of the stories. The bond helps them to handle the pressures and motivate their personal growth. In spite of common things in both works, characters themselves are totally different from one another. In the novel, Ryan is intelligent and rebellious. He openly criticizes the education system and believes in creativity. Hari is the narrator and is an average student. Alok is emotional, financially weak and always feels the pressure of family responsibilities. In contrast the film transforms major characters significantly. Rancho is the central figure who represents innovation and liberty. Unlike Ryan, Rancho is shown exceptionally brilliant and inspirational. Farhan is torn between his passion for photography and father's expectation of him becoming an engineer. Raju is fearful and superstitious. The students in the novel have certain weaknesses but those of film have more dramatic and inspirational qualities.

In the novel, the students are judged by their grades and GPA. The title itself refers to the students with low academic scores as failures. The students lose their confidence because of academic pressure. Ryan always argues that the system kills creativity and in this marks matter more than learning. But the film directly attacks on mugging up and blind competition. Rancho believes that education should focus on understanding the concept rather than memorising answers. Prof Cherian in the novel is strict, disciplined but Prof Viru in the film is presented in a more dramatic and symbolic way. Hari, the narrator of the novel has romantic relation with Neha Cherian. They regularly date, enjoy ice-cream in the parlour, go for outing and eventually cross all limits. But in the film, the romance between Rancho and Pia is more dramatic. The problems faced by the characters in the novel are serious but avoid excessive emotional drama, whereas, the film addresses issues such as family pressure, depression and suicide in a much stronger way. Joy Lobo and Raju experience extreme emotional stress that make the film powerful than novel. The novel emphasizes on the importance of balancing academics with personal happiness and relationships. But the film focuses that one should follow passion rather than money and status. Rancho's philosophy of "excellence

over success” becomes the central message of the film. The film questions the traditional definition of success and suggests that happiness and passion are more important than grades and job titles. So, novel remains as a campus story, but film becomes motivational.

In the novel, Prof. Cherian has only one daughter, Neha. But in the film Prof. Viru has two daughters, Pia and Mona. Neha in the novel is a student of fashion designing, while Pia in the film is a medical student. Neha’s brother Samir commits suicide on the pressure of cracking IIT exam and he wanted to be a lawyer. But in the film, Pia’s brother in the film committed suicide because of father’s pressure to pursue engineering instead of his true passion for literature. In the novel, the trio undertake Operation Pendulum in order to steal question paper for improving their grades. They were caught by the guards and brought before DISCO and eventually get suspended for a semester. In this plan Hari steals the keys without Neha’s knowledge and duplicates them. But in the film, Pia herself supports them to save Raju from failing. But, when Rancho is unable to find the question paper, he calls Pia. Prof. Viru overhears the conversation and rushes to his office to find no one was there, but finds the packet unsealed. He then goes to Raju’s room and finds the question paper in the dustbin and beats Rancho with umbrella.

The scene of Mona’s delivery in the film, is a very important incident but is absent in the novel as Neha has no sister. In the heavy rain, Pia’s sister Mona has labour pain. She needs to be admitted quickly to the hospital. But the condition becomes worst as there is no ambulance or other vehicles and no electricity. In this critical condition, Rancho uses his skill to convert a vacuum cleaner into a low suction device and with the help of Pia through video call performs Mona’s delivery. This incident brings a drastic change in Prof. Viru’s approach towards Rancho. He highly appreciates him and presents him the pen of excellence. In the novel, Samir’s suicide note changes the approach of Prof. Cherian.

In the novel, both Alok and Hari get placed in software companies but Ryan who is creative, fails to get a job and works as a research assistant on meagre salary of 2000. In the film, Raju gets placed in a software company and Farhan chases his dream of wild life photography. Rancho, the topper, later is revealed to be a famous scientist, Phunsuk Wangdu with 400 patents to his credit.

The endings of the two works also differ greatly. The novel remains grounded in realism and does not present extra-ordinary achievements. But the film gives a more idealistic and cinematic conclusion compared to the novel’s realistic ending.

3.16 References –

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Module IV
King Lear : Natsamrat
(Adaptation Marathi Film)

- William Shakespeare

CONTENETS:

- 4.0 Objective
- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 4.3 Check your progress – I
- 4.4 Presentation of Subject Matter
- 4.5 Check your progress –II
- 4.6 Summary
- 4.7 Glossary
- 4.8 Answers to check your progress I
- 4.9 Answers to Check your Progress II
- 4.10 Exercise
- 4.11 Reference for further study

4.0 Objective- After studying this unit you will be able to :

1. Understand the difference between original play King Lear and its adaptation Natsamrat
2. Study the transformations undertaken during the film adaptation.
3. Explain the changes made as per the cultural context.
4. Find relationship between literary and cinematic style of presentation

4.1 Introduction

William Shakespeare is the indispensable writer in English Literature who wrote thirty nine plays, hundred and fifty four sonnets in his lifetime. He was also a remarkable poet who wrote beautiful sonnets. He was born on 26th April 1564 at Stratford-on-Avon. He was married to Anne Hathway in 1582 and had three children. Though a little information is available about his schooling, it is clear from the sources that he learnt Latin classics in his grammar school education. He is an unmatched talent for his creative genius who wrote four great tragedies named Hamlet, Othello, King Lear and Macbeth. He established himself as a successful actor and writer in London. He wrote

comedies, tragedies, tragicomedies. He coined more than 1700 words and phrases in English which is a great contribution to language and literature. His plays exhibit the themes like love, power, jealousy, betrayal and complexities of human nature. He was a devote dramatist whose company established Globe theatre on the bank of river Thamses. He presented number of performances in front of audience which shows his dedication to drama and the contemporary society also appreciated it. Due to the wide range of the themes and interest of the people his plays became popular during his times. He passed away on 23rd April, 1616 at the age of fifty two.

4.2 Presentation of Subject Matter

Stage in Shakespeare's days:

It was the time when Shakespeare left for London, there were very few drama performing companies. These companies did not require the stage like present times. Any elevated platform can be comfortable for them to perform the play. These one or two companies were popular among the public of London. The performers were most of the times people like vagabonds or punished by the law. They take plots and stories from the old classical writers like Plautus, Terence and Seneca. They take the old tales, romances and legends for their performance on the stage. The Globe theatre was the best structure during that time. It was circular in shape. It consists of a ground floor and two galleries. The stage was surrounded by spectators on three sides. For the purpose of location indication the boards were hung on the wall. The Shakespearean stage brought the audience and actors very close to each other. However in the modern stage they are separated by the orchestra and footlights. The thunder, the lightening or darkness were created with verbal dialogues of the characters. The stage was not that much equipped with the movable properties. During the Shakespearean era there were number of scenes and acts. There was no curtain at the end of the scene so that the dead bodies on the stage can be easily removed from the stage.

Shakespeare's works:

Though William Shakespearer was well known to the world as a great dramatist, he was also a great poet. He wrote many popular sonnets. He was also a great actor who achieved place in the court of the Queen. Dowden one of the great critics divided Shakespeare's works into four stages:

- ♦ **First Period:** Comedy of Errors: Love's Labour Lost, Two Gentlemen of Verena, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Romeo and Juliet, Titus Andronicus, Henry VI, Richard, II, Richard III
- ♦ **Second Period:** Merchant of Venice, The Taming of the Shrew, Much Ado About Nothing, As You Like It, The Merry Wives of Windsor, Twelfth Night, King John, Henry IV, Henry V

- ♦ **Third Period:** All's Well that Ends Well, Troilus and Cressida, Measure for Measure, Julius Caesar, Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus, Timon of Athens.
- ♦ **Fourth Period:** Cymbeline, The Windsor's Tale, The Tempest, Pericles, Prince of Tyre, Henry VIII

Shakespeare's conception on tragic art: William Shakespeare's some plays are produced from the historical material. It includes Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra. However in King Lear the original plot is quite different from the play. The name of the tragic character is given to the play. This character is at the center of all discussion. These characters suffer due to their flaw. They were held responsible for the wrong action they took in their life. In all the tragedies destiny plays a pivotal role. In his plays Shakespeare has conceived the fatalistic view of life where characters are destroyed by adverse external forces.

4.3 Check your progress – I

Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.

1.plays William Shakespeare wrote in his life.
 A. 36
 B. 37
 C. 38
 D. 39
2. William Shakespeare was born on
 A. 26th April 1564
 B. 27th April 1564
 C. 26th April 1565
 D. 26th April 1566
3. William Shakespeare coined more than.....words in English.
 A. 1800
 B. 1900
 C. 17000
 D. 1600
4. is the source of some of Shakespeare's plays.
 A. Ancient Books
 B. Historic Material
 C. Archeology
 D. Museums
5. Shakespeare's character suffer due their own
 A. Motivation
 B. Overconfidence
 C. Richness
 D. Flaw

4.4 Presentation of Subject Matter

Characters in the Play King Lear:

King Lear: Protagonist of the play and King of Britain. He is very old and ready to divide his kingdom into three parts, which he plans to give to his three daughters. He is deceived by two of his daughters and eventually drives to madness.

Goneril: The oldest daughter of King Lear. She is more shrewd and cruel plotter. She is plotting against Lear to remove him from power.

Regan: She is King's second daughter. She conspires with Goneril to remove their father from power. They support each other in their cunning business.

- ♦ Cordelia: Lear's youngest daughter. She is the only daughter that really loves her father, but is disinherited and banished when she won't tell him how much she loves him.
- ♦ King of France: This is one of Cordelia's suitors. He marries Cordelia and takes her to France after this her father becomes angry with her.
- ♦ Duke of Burgandy: Cordelia's other suitor. He did not show interest to marry her after she is disinherited.
- ♦ Duke of Cornwall: He is married to Regan. He is every bit as ill-intentioned and malicious as his wife.
- ♦ Duke of Albany: A through gentleman who marries with Goneril. After learning about Goneril's mistreatment of her father, he becomes very angry with her and decides to have mercy on Lear.
- ♦ Earl of Kent: This is friend to Lear. He is banished when he tries to stick up for Cordelia, but returns to aid Lear disguised as a servant.
- ♦ Earl of Gloucester: He is the father of Edgar and Edmund. He is tricked into fighting against Lear and abandoning Edgar by Edmund.
- ♦ Edgar: Son of Gloucester. Edgar runs into hiding when Edmund tricks Gloucester into thinking. Gloucester wants to kill him. Disguises himself as Poor Tom and helps his father after he is thrown out by Edmund.
- ♦ Edmund: The illegitimate son of Gloucester. He is very jealous and envious of Edgar. Through trickery, he has his brother Edgar banished and his father blinded.
- ♦ Lear's Fool: Court Jester to King Lear. He points out truths that Lear seems to miss. He ridicules Lear for banishing Cordelia.

Characters in the Play Natsamrat:

- ♦ Ganpatrao "Appa" Belwalkar (NanaPatekar)
- ♦ Kaveri Belwalkar / "Sarkar" (Medha Manjrekar)
- ♦ Rambhau (Vikram Gokhale)
- ♦ Makrand Belwalkar (Ajit Parab)
- ♦ Neha Belwalkar (Neha Pendse)
- ♦ Vidya Belwalkar / Barve (Mrunmayee Deshpande)
- ♦ Rahul Barve (Sunil Barve)
- ♦ Siddharth (Sarang Sathaye)
- ♦ Vithoba (Jaywant Wadkar)
- ♦ Raja (Nilesh Divekar)

Act I

The play opens with Kent and Gloucester discussing who they think will inherit the kingdom after King Lear steps down. King Lear comes in and announces that he is going to divide his kingdom up between his three daughters. But first his daughters must express how much they love him. Goneril and Regan quickly tell Lear how much they each love him. When Cordelia, the youngest and most liked daughter, is asked to speak, she says that she loves her father, but she cannot express the depths of her love in words. Lear is outraged and quickly disinherits her. Kent tries to tell Lear that he is being foolish, but Lear accuses him of treachery and throws him out of the kingdom as well. The Duke of Burgandy says he will not take Cordelia for a wife without a dowry. The King of France steps forward and says that he doesn't care if Cordelia has a dowry or not. He says he will marry her for her virtues. France and Cordelia then leave for Dover to prepare to depart to France. Meanwhile, Goneril and Regan have already started plotting how to take Lear's rule away. At Gloucester's castle, Edmund complains about being the illegitimate son of Gloucester. He is jealous of his brother Edgar, and reveals a plot to win his father's love by treachery. He plans to show Gloucester a forged letter which reveals that Edgar wishes to overtake Gloucester's land. Gloucester enters, sees Edmund hiding the forged letter and demands to see it. Gloucester angrily exits just before Edgar enters. Edmund tells Edgar that their father is extremely angry with Edgar, but says he does not know why. He advises Edgar not to go out unarmed. Edgar leaves and Edmund delights in what he has done. When Lear goes to visit Goneril at her castle, Goneril is outraged by her father's behavior. Lear has struck her steward, Oswald, for criticizing his fool. Lear has also brought with him a riotous group of men to stay with Goneril. Goneril commands Oswald to make her father and his men as uncomfortable as possible, so they will leave and go to Regan's where they will be treated with equal coldness. She goes off to write Regan a letter about their father. Kent

enters in disguise. He has a plan to present himself to Lear as a servant, so he can assist Lear. Lear and Kent both strike Oswald after he behaves rudely to Lear. Goneril enters, angry with Lear. She tells Lear that if he wishes to stay he must get rid of some of his men and treat her with more respect. Lear angrily leaves for Regan's household. Goneril sends Oswald with a letter to Regan to inform her of Lear's coming. Lear sends Kent with letters to Gloucester.

Act II

At Gloucester's castle, Edgar is warned by Edmund that their father Gloucester is coming. Edmund convinces Edgar to draw his sword and flee. After Edgar leaves, Edmund wounds himself and calls for Gloucester. Edmund then tells Gloucester that Edgar wounded him after he would not join Edmund in taking their father's power. Gloucester quickly sends servants out to find Edgar. Cornwall and Regan enter and explain that they have come to Gloucester's castle because she received a letter from Goneril about Lear's behavior. Oswald and Kent meet outside Gloucester's castle. Kent immediately recognizes Oswald and accuses him of taking sides with Lear's evil daughter, Goneril. Kent draws his sword but Oswald simply screams and draws the attention of Cornwall, Regan, Edmund, and Gloucester, who come to find out what has occurred. Oswald claims that Kent has had no reason to strike him or to draw a sword on him at Gloucester's castle. Kent insults Regan and Cornwall and they immediately call for the stocks. They decide to keep him in the stocks for a whole day even after Gloucester protests. After they leave him, Kent ponders a letter from Cordelia. In the letter, Cordelia expresses her appreciation for Kent, since he has disguised himself to help Lear. In the woods, Edgar explains that he has narrowly escaped being hunted by hiding in a hollow tree. He decides that he will have to disguise himself to ensure his further protection. He explains to the audience that he will go into disguise as a beggar and call himself Poor Tom. He strips his clothes and covers himself with dirt, knotting his hair and wounding himself as a disguise. After this transformation he no longer looks like himself. Lear finds Kent in the stocks at Gloucester's castle. Kent tells Lear that it was Lear's daughter Regan and her husband who gave him this terrible punishment. Lear begins to feel ill and goes to search for Regan. Upon returning, Lear is outraged that Regan and Cornwall will not speak with him. Regan and Cornwall finally show up. They try to act casual around Lear and set Kent free. Lear explains how horrible his visit with Goneril was and Regan simply tells him that he is old and should trust any advice his daughters offer him. Regan tries to get Lear to return to Goneril but Lear pleads with her to take care of him. Goneril arrives and Lear is appalled when Regan takes her by the hand. He asks who put Kent in the stocks and Cornwall takes responsibility. Regan pleads with Lear to return to Goneril's again. Instead he leaves the castle with Kent and his fool. A storm is heard approaching.

Act III

With the storm in full force, Kent rushes onstage trying to find King Lear amidst the woods. Kent meets one of Lear's gentlemen and mentions that French spies have entered the country and are almost ready to begin their invasion. Kent sends the gentlemen to Dover to report the King's poor health. He gives the gentlemen a ring and his purse to show Cordelia, if he should meet her. They both exit to look for Lear. Lear is seen raging against the storm with his Fool. The Fool begs Lear to put aside his pride and seek shelter at the castle. Lear refuses, saying that the storm is helping his daughters punish him. Kent enters and finds Lear. He mentions that he has never seen a worse storm and urges Lear to take shelter in a nearby cave. Lear agrees for the sake of his Fool and they all exit to the cave. At his castle, Gloucester complains to Edmund that Cornwall and Regan have taken over his castle. Edmund pretends to agree with his father. Gloucester then tells Edmund of a letter he received about French forces coming to aid King Lear's cause. Gloucester sends Edmund to stay with Cornwall while he goes off to aid Lear. Edmund immediately goes to Cornwall and tells him of Gloucester's plans. Back in the cave, Lear requests to be left alone. His mind is slipping from stress and sorrow. Edgar, disguised as Poor Tom, has been hiding in the same cave for shelter from the storm. He speaks in language that makes no real sense and walks about acting crazy. Lear becomes interested in Poor Tom and asks him about his life. Gloucester finds his way into the cave and urges Lear to come with him to better shelter. He does not even recognize Edgar, hidden by his disguise, as his own son. Gloucester and Kent decide it is best to invite Tom to come along with them to get Lear into better shelter. Back at the castle, Cornwall and Edmund further discuss Gloucester's treason. Edmund pretends to feel bad about exposing his father and Cornwall comforts him. Cornwall tells Edmund that Gloucester's treason is much worse than his own and not to worry. Cornwall makes Edmund the new Earl of Gloucester and demands that he find his father. Edmund notes that he hopes to find Gloucester in Lear's company to further legitimize his story. Gloucester leads the group to better shelter before heading off to find help. Lear holds a mock-trial for his daughters' treasons. He becomes enraged and suffers a great outburst during the trial. Kent tries to calm Lear down and urges him to be patient. Gloucester returns and urges Kent to keep Lear protected, as there have been death threats. He tells them that help is waiting to take the group safely to Dover. Cornwall orders Goneril to bring him the letter about the French invasion and orders his servants to seek out Gloucester. Edmund is asked to go with Goneril. Oswald enters and tells everyone that Gloucester has successfully moved Lear and his company to safety. Gloucester enters accompanied by servants and Cornwall immediately has him bound to a chair. Gloucester calls for Lear's daughters to have revenge brought upon them. In a rage, Cornwall blinds one of Gloucester's eyes. A servant tries to stand up for Gloucester but is quickly stabbed by Regan with Cornwall's sword, but not before he wounds Cornwall. Cornwall then blinds Gloucester's other eye. Gloucester calls out for Edmund only to hear Regan reply that it was Edmund who turned him in to Cornwall. Regan has Gloucester thrown out of the castle.

Act IV

Gloucester is led through the woods by an old man and laments that he wants to see his beloved Edgar once again. Soon, Edgar shows up dressed as Poor Tom and Gloucester asks Tom to escort him to Dover, where he can commit suicide. Edgar tricks Gloucester by telling him that they have reached the top of the cliff, but when Gloucester tries to jump, he only falls flat on his face. Edgar then runs up pretending to be someone else and says what a miracle it is that Gloucester did not die from the fall. Gloucester becomes depressed that he is not even allowed death. At Gloucester's castle, Oswald finds Goneril and Edmund. He warns them that Albany's attitude about everything has changed. Albany is displeased by Edmund's behavior and is happy about the French invasion. With a vow to unite as lovers and rule the kingdom, Goneril sends Edmund to find her husband Cornwall. She finds Albany very angry at her for the treatment she has given her father. Albany learns that Edmund supplied the information that got Gloucester blinded and that Cornwall died from a wound inflicted during the blinding. He promises to avenge Gloucester's blinding. Regan greets Oswald and tells him that they should have just killed Gloucester because the blinding left too much room for sympathy. She also explains that she is worried about her sister uniting with Edmund. Regan tells Oswald to remind Edmund of the promises he made to her. Kent finds the gentlemen he had sent ahead to Dover and learns that Lear and Cordelia have not yet been reunited because Lear feels ashamed at his treatment of her. Lear comes upon Edgar and Gloucester and comforts Gloucester about his blindness saying that pretence is the biggest flaw in authority. When Cordelia's gentlemen find Lear and try to bring him to Cordelia, Lear fears he is being captured and runs away. Oswald finally finds Gloucester and attempts to kill him, but Edgar steps in and kills Oswald instead. Edgar takes the letter Oswald was carrying to Edmund and reads it. He becomes enraged to learn about Goneril's wishes to kill Albany and marry Edmund. Cordelia has found Lear and ordered for him to be cared for by a doctor, who has to drug him to settle him down. Cordelia expresses her thanks to Kent for sticking by her father through all the turmoil. She expresses her anger at her sister's treatment of Lear, who wakes up a bit confused at where he is.

Act V

Regan interrogates Edmund about his relationship with Goneril. He tells Regan that she is the only sister he is intimately involved with and that the partnership with Goneril is just business. Regan says that she would rather lose the war with France than lose Edmund to her sister. Goneril and Albany talk about the importance of staying united with Regan while facing off with France. However, a disguised Edgar sneaks in and gives the letter he took from Oswald to Albany. Edgar tells Albany to send word if he needs help at any time. Edmund ponders which sister he should choose, finally deciding to stick with Goneril if she can manage to kill Albany. He expresses that all he really wants is to rule a reunited Britain. When the war begins, Lear and Cordelia lead

the French. Edgar leaves Gloucester while he goes off to fight with Lear and Cordelia. He quickly returns with the news that Lear and Cordelia have been taken prisoner by Edmund. Edmund gives a death sentence to his captain to carry through. Albany praises Edmund's valor but reminds him of his position in the state. Regan declares her partnership with Edmund and calls him an equal. This makes Goneril jealous. Albany accuses Edmund of treason and challenges him to a duel. Regan mysteriously falls ill. A disguised Edgar shows up to fight Edmund. Edmund falls but is kept alive until he can be fully incriminated. Albany reveals his knowledge of Goneril's letter and she flees in anger. Edmund admits that he is guilty and Edgar reveals himself. Edgar tells Albany how he cared for Gloucester in disguise until he died shortly after Edgar revealed his true self. He tells them that Gloucester died overwhelmed with joy and sorrow. Edgar is also met by Kent, who reveals his disguise and tells of his loyalty to Lear and of Lear's impending death. A gentleman brings in the knife that Goneril used to kill herself just after admitting that she poisoned Regan out of jealousy. Kent comes in hoping to bid Lear farewell and ask about his reunion with Cordelia, but Edmund reveals that he and Goneril ordered Cordelia to be hanged, so it would appear to be suicide. Lear enters carrying the lifeless body of his precious Cordelia. He tells them all that he killed the executioner, but was still too late. He is overcome with grief and inconsolable. They are all informed that Edmund has died. Lear then dies mourning over the body of his daughter. Albany hands shared rule of the kingdom to Kent and Edgar, but Kent says that he will soon follow the others in death. Edgar is left as the next King of Britain.

Understanding adaptation of King Lear into Natsamrat in Cultural and Literary Context:

William Shakespeare's adaptation of King Lear into V V Shirvadkar's Natsamrat is not only a translation but complete cultural trans-creation from British culture to Marathi culture. Both the plays exhibit the themes of familial ingratitude. The tragedy of an esteemed character and the pathetic condition he faces in his last part of the life. King Lear is the king of the state and he has his own identity till he was on his throne. However when he leaves the throne he loses it. The same thing happens with Appasaheb Belwalkar who was once the emperor of actors loses his identity when he retires. His madness is expressed through various dialogues in the play. The grand monologues are also remarkable in the King Lear and Natsamrat. Both the plays uncover the generation gap and different line of thinking of father generation and sibling generation.

Themes:

King Lear is not only a tragedy of the royal person but it is the fact of everyone's life. The fall of the king from his royal place to a common man makes him think his very existence. The soliloquies of King show that he number of times appeal to the God for his pathetic condition. His helplessness is expressed through the dialogue:

"Poor naked wretches, wheresoe'er you are,
That bide the pelting of this pitiless storm,
How shall your houseless heads and unfed sides,
Your loop'd and window'd raggedness, defend you
From seasons such as these? O, I have ta'en
Too little care of this! Take physic, pomp;
Expose thyself to feel what wretches feel,
That thou mayst shake the superflux to them,
And show the heavens more just."

(Act 3, Scene 4)

Adaptation of King Lear in Natsamrat

The Marathi film Natsamrat is directed by Mahesh Manjrekar in which Nana Patekar played the role of Natsamrat that is King Lear. This film is widely accepted as the adaptation of King Lear written by William Shakespeare. Though the story is presented in a Marathi cultural context, the emotional and thematic structure strongly resembles Shakespeare's tragedy. The film adapts the core ideas of aging, betrayal, family conflict, loss of identity, and human suffering. The adaptation does not copy the plot directly but uses certain strategies to reinterpret the themes for a modern Indian audience.

1. Adaptation of the Theme of Aging and Decline

One of the most important themes of King Lear is the tragedy of old age and loss of power. In Shakespeare's play, King Lear he wants to divide his kingdom among his daughters and expects love and respect in return. However, after giving away his authority, he becomes vulnerable and is mistreated. He was completely ignorant about the future change after his loss of power among his near dear ones.

Similarly, in Natsamrat, the protagonist Ganpatrao Belwalkar, a retired stage actor, faces the painful realities of aging after retirement. He has spent his life performing great Shakespearean roles, including King Lear, but after leaving the stage he gradually loses his social importance and control over his life. His children, whom he trusted and supported, fail to respect him. This parallel reflects the same tragic idea: when elderly parents lose authority and independence, they may also lose dignity and security. Thus, the film adopts Shakespeare's theme of the vulnerability of old age and shows how modern families sometimes neglect elderly parents.

2. Theme of Family Betrayal and Ingratitude

Another major theme adapted from King Lear is betrayal by one's own children. In Shakespeare's tragedy, Lear's daughters Goneril and Regan betray their father after gaining power, while Cordelia, who truly loves him, is rejected. In Natsamrat, Ganpatrao's children initially appear loving but eventually treat him and his wife as

burdens. They disrespect him, and circumstances force the elderly couple to leave their own home. This emotional betrayal reflects the same painful reality that Shakespeare portrayed: children can sometimes forget their moral responsibilities toward their parents. However, the film modifies the theme slightly. Instead of political power or a kingdom, the conflict revolves around property, domestic space, and emotional neglect, which are more relevant to modern middle-class families in India.

3. Loss of Identity and Psychological Suffering

In *King Lear*, the king experiences a mental and emotional breakdown after realizing his daughters' betrayal. His identity as a powerful ruler collapses, leading to deep psychological suffering. Similarly, in *Natsamrat*, Ganpatrao struggles with the loss of identity after retirement. As an actor who once commanded admiration and applause, he suddenly becomes insignificant in society. He frequently recites Shakespearean dialogues, especially from *King Lear*, showing how deeply theatre is connected to his personality.

This strategy of using theatrical memory connects the character's present suffering with the tragic world of Shakespeare. It emphasizes that the actor's life and the roles he played have merged, making

4. Loneliness and Human Suffering

Loneliness is a central emotional theme in both works. In *King Lear*, the king wanders in a storm, abandoned and helpless. The storm symbolizes his inner turmoil and despair. In *Natsamrat*, loneliness appears through Ganpatrao's emotional isolation after the death of his wife and separation from his family. He eventually lives in extreme poverty and emotional distress. The film shows how the absence of love, respect, and companionship can destroy a person's spirit.

This adaptation emphasizes that emotional abandonment can be as tragic as political betrayal.

5. Cultural Adaptation to the Indian Context

One important strategy used in the film is cultural localization. While Shakespeare's play takes place in a royal and political environment, *Natsamrat* shifts the setting to a middle-class Marathi family. Instead of kingship and kingdom, the story focuses on family relationships, property, and social respect.

Additionally, the film integrates Marathi theatre culture, which makes the narrative more relatable for Indian audiences. Ganpatrao's identity as a celebrated stage actor represents the cultural pride of Marathi theatre, and his tragic fall reflects the fading recognition of traditional art forms.

6. Use of Shakespearean Dialogue and Symbolism

The film also adapts Shakespeare through direct references and symbolism. Ganpatrao frequently quotes dialogues from Shakespearean plays, especially King Lear. These quotations serve two purposes:

1. They remind viewers of the connection between the film and Shakespeare's tragedy.
2. They highlight the irony that the actor who once performed tragic roles now experiences a similar tragedy in real life.

This technique strengthens the thematic adaptation while still allowing the story to remain original.

Plot:

The Marathi film Natsamrat, directed by Mahesh Manjrekar and based on the famous Marathi play written by V. V. Shirwadkar, reflects strong similarities with the tragic plot of King Lear by William Shakespeare. Although the film does not copy the story exactly, it adapts many elements of Shakespeare's plot through cultural transformation and narrative strategies. The film changes the royal setting of the original tragedy into a middle-class family environment, while preserving the emotional structure of betrayal, suffering, and tragic realization.

1. Transformation of the Royal Plot into a Domestic Story

In King Lear, the story begins when King Lear decides to divide his kingdom among his three daughters based on how much they declare their love for him. This decision leads to political and family conflict and eventually to his tragic downfall.

In Natsamrat, this royal plot is transformed into a domestic and social situation. Instead of a king dividing his kingdom, the protagonist Ganpatrao Belwalkar, a famous stage actor, distributes his property and wealth among his children after retirement. Like King Lear, he believes that his children will continue to love and respect him after receiving their inheritance.

This change from kingdom to property is a major adaptation strategy. It helps the audience relate the story to modern family issues such as inheritance, property disputes, and generational conflict.

2. Replacement of Political Power with Social Prestige

Another important strategy used in the film is replacing political authority with cultural prestige. In Shakespeare's play, Lear's power comes from his position as a king. His tragedy begins when he loses this authority.

In Natsamrat, Ganpatrao's power does not come from political rule but from his fame as a great theatre actor. During his career he was respected and admired by society. However, after retirement he gradually loses recognition and influence.

This transformation keeps the emotional structure of the original plot but adapts it to the social reality of modern India, where artistic fame and public respect can function as a form of authority.

3. Adaptation of the Conflict between Parents and Children

The central conflict in *King Lear* is between Lear and his daughters. After gaining control of the kingdom, the daughters begin to disrespect and reject their father. This betrayal pushes Lear into suffering and madness.

In *Natsamrat*, a similar conflict occurs between Ganpatrao and his children. After receiving the father's property, they slowly begin to treat him and his wife as burdens. Eventually the elderly couple is forced to leave their own home.

This plot element shows how the film adapts Shakespeare's tragic family conflict into the everyday realities of Indian family life. Instead of royal politics, the conflict takes place within the domestic space of a middle-class household.

4. Parallel Journey of the Tragic Hero

Both stories follow the journey of a tragic hero who falls from greatness to misery. In *King Lear*, the king goes from being a powerful ruler to a helpless old man wandering in the storm. His suffering leads him to a painful understanding of human nature.

In *Natsamrat*, Ganpatrao experiences a similar journey. At the beginning he is proud of his successful career and believes that his family will support him. However, after facing betrayal and personal loss, he becomes lonely and emotionally broken. The film uses this narrative strategy to mirror the tragic arc of Shakespeare's plot while keeping the story culturally grounded.

5. Use of Shakespearean References within the Plot

Another strategy used in the film is the integration of Shakespeare's language and theatrical references. Ganpatrao was famous for performing Shakespearean roles, including *King Lear*. Even in his old age he frequently recites lines from Shakespeare's plays. This technique connects the film's narrative directly with the original tragedy. The audience understands that the actor who once performed tragic roles on stage is now living a real-life tragedy similar to the characters he portrayed.

Thus, Shakespeare's presence becomes both symbolic and thematic within the plot structure.

6. Adaptation of the Tragic Ending

The ending of *King Lear* is one of the most tragic conclusions in Shakespearean drama. Lear loses everything, his kingdom, his daughters, and his mental stability—and dies in deep sorrow. In *Natsamrat*, the ending also reflects intense tragedy. After the death of his wife and the rejection by his children, Ganpatrao becomes completely isolated. His life ends in emotional suffering and despair. Although the details differ,

the emotional impact of the ending reflects the same tragic vision of human life found in Shakespeare's play.

The film *Natsamrat* successfully adapts the plot structure of *King Lear* through several strategies. It transforms the royal setting into a middle-class family environment, replaces political authority with artistic prestige, and adapts the parent-child conflict to modern social realities. The tragic journey of the protagonist and the emotional intensity of the ending closely resemble Shakespeare's original narrative. By blending Shakespearean tragedy with Marathi cultural elements and contemporary social issues, *Natsamrat* demonstrates how classical literature can be reinterpreted in a different cultural and historical context while preserving its universal themes of betrayal, suffering, and human vulnerability.

Characters:

The Marathi film *Natsamrat*, directed by Mahesh Manjrekar, shows strong influence from the tragedy *King Lear* written by William Shakespeare. While the film is not a direct retelling of the play, many characters in the story are adapted from Shakespeare's characters. The filmmakers use different adaptation strategies such as cultural transformation, character substitution, and symbolic parallels to recreate the emotional impact of Shakespeare's tragedy in a Marathi social setting.

1. King Lear and Ganpatrao Belwalkar

The most important character adaptation is between *King Lear* and Ganpatrao Belwalkar, the protagonist of *Natsamrat*. In Shakespeare's play, *King Lear* is an old ruler who decides to divide his kingdom among his daughters. After losing his power, he experiences betrayal, loneliness, and emotional suffering. In *Natsamrat*, Ganpatrao Belwalkar is a famous retired theatre actor who has spent his life performing great dramatic roles. After retirement, he distributes his property among his children, believing they will continue to respect and care for him. However, he gradually faces neglect and humiliation. The adaptation strategy here is social transformation. Instead of a king with political power, the film presents a celebrated actor with cultural prestige. Both characters experience a fall from greatness to helplessness, which forms the emotional center of the tragedy. Ganpatrao's habit of quoting Shakespearean dialogues also connects his life with the character of *King Lear*, showing how the actor's stage roles influence his real-life identity.

2. Lear's Daughters and Ganpatrao's Children

In *King Lear*, Lear has three daughters: Goneril, Regan, and Cordelia. Goneril and Regan flatter their father to gain power but later betray him. Cordelia truly loves her father but refuses to flatter him and is therefore rejected by Lear. In *Natsamrat*, the protagonist's children represent a similar structure of family relationships. Although their names and personalities are different, they reflect the same idea of filial ingratitude. After receiving their father's property, they gradually become indifferent and disrespectful

toward him and his wife. The adaptation strategy used here is character simplification and cultural adjustment. Instead of focusing on three daughters with political motives, the film portrays ordinary children in a middle-class Indian family. Their selfish behavior represents modern social issues such as property conflicts and generational gaps. Through these characters, the film recreates the emotional betrayal experienced by King Lear.

3. Cordelia and the Idea of True Love

In Shakespeare's play, Cordelia represents honesty, loyalty, and genuine love for her father. She refuses to exaggerate her feelings simply to gain inheritance. In *Natsamrat*, there is no exact character equivalent to Cordelia, but the emotional role of sincere affection appears through certain relationships, particularly through Ganpatrao's wife and loyal companions. These characters show care and emotional support even when the protagonist is abandoned by others. This adaptation reflects a strategy of symbolic representation. Instead of creating a direct character equivalent to Cordelia, the film distributes the qualities of honesty and loyalty among other characters.

4. The Fool and the Actor's Self-Reflection

In *King Lear*, the Fool is an important character who speaks truth to the king through humor and irony. He criticizes Lear's mistakes and helps reveal the king's tragic situation. In *Natsamrat*, there is no direct Fool character, but this function is partially replaced by Ganpatrao's own theatrical voice. Because he is a stage actor, he often recites dramatic dialogues and reflects on his own life in a philosophical way. His speeches act as a form of self-commentary, similar to the Fool's role in Shakespeare's play. This strategy of internalizing the Fool's role within the protagonist makes the film more psychologically focused. The character's reflections reveal his awareness of the tragic reality he is living.

5. Kent and the Character of Rambhau

In *King Lear*, the loyal nobleman Kent remains faithful to the king even after being banished. He continues to protect and support Lear throughout his suffering. In *Natsamrat*, the character Rambhau, Ganpatrao's close friend, represents a similar role of loyalty and companionship. Rambhau stands by the protagonist during difficult moments and provides emotional support when his family fails him. This adaptation strategy is character parallelism. The loyal friend replaces the loyal servant of the royal court. Through Rambhau, the film highlights the importance of friendship and moral loyalty.

6. Lear's Tragic Isolation and Ganpatrao's Final Suffering

In *King Lear*, the protagonist eventually becomes mentally unstable and emotionally shattered after experiencing betrayal and loss. His suffering leads to deep realization about human nature and the cruelty of the world. In *Natsamrat*, Ganpatrao also reaches a stage of extreme loneliness after the death of his wife and separation from his children. His emotional breakdown and final suffering mirror the tragic fate of King Lear. This

adaptation shows how Shakespeare's tragic character can be reimagined in a modern social context while maintaining the same psychological depth. The film Natsamrat adapts the characters of King Lear through several creative strategies such as social transformation, symbolic representation, and character parallelism. King Lear becomes Ganpatrao Belwalkar, a respected stage actor whose life turns tragic after losing his authority and family support. The daughters are transformed into ordinary children who represent modern family conflicts, while characters like Rambhau symbolize loyalty similar to Kent. By reshaping Shakespeare's characters within a Marathi cultural setting, Natsamrat successfully recreates the emotional power of the original tragedy while making it meaningful for contemporary audiences. The film demonstrates how universal human experiences—such as betrayal, aging, friendship, and suffering—can be expressed through different cultural and narrative forms.

4.5 Check your progress –II

A. Answer the following questions in one word/sentence of phrase each.

1. What is the major idea discussed in King Lear and Natsamrat?
2. Who betrays Lear in the story?
3. How do the children of Natsamrat treat him?
4. What did Belwalkar command in his life?
5. Which things destroy a person's spirit?

B. Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.

1. In Natsamrat, the royal plot is transformed into aand social situation.

A. Domestic	B. Political
C. Economic	D. Commercial
2. The storm symbolizes protagonist's innerand despair.

A. will power	B. turmoil
C. pathos	D. pity
3.connects Natsamrat directly with King Lear.

A. recitation of dialogues	B. flashback
C. plotting	D. climax
4. Rambhau in Natsamrat symbolizes loyalty like.....in King Lear.

A. Kent	B. Edgar
C. Edmund	D. Cordelia

5. Cordelia refuses to exaggerate her feelings simply to gain.....

A. property

B. power

C. inheritance

D. money

4.6 Summary:

Natsamrat (both the Marathi play by V. V. Shirwadkar and its later film adaptation starring Nana Patekar) is a modern Indian reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *King Lear*, transplanted from a royal court in medieval Britain to the world of Marathi theatre and the middle-class Indian family. At its core, it traces the fall of a once-revered "king of the stage," Ganpatrao Belvalkar (also called Appasaheb), whose emotional and psychological disintegration mirrors Lear's tragic arc but is reframed around the dignity, ego, and helplessness of an ageing artist.

In *King Lear*, an ageing monarch divides his kingdom among his daughters based on flattery, banishes the one who truly loves him (Cordelia), and is then betrayed and thrust into a storm-ridden wilderness. In *Natsamrat*, Ganpatrao retires at the peak of his fame as a Shakespearean-style stage actor, hands over his wealth and home to his son and daughter, and soon finds himself emotionally discarded and materially homeless, as his children grow tired of his demands and "theatrical" temperament. This shift from royal power to artistic "crown" keeps the essence of dethronement and dependence while grounding the tragedy in Indian family-life and the precarious status of the arts.

While Lear's daughters are courtly schemers in a political realm, *Natsamrat*'s children are ordinary urban middle-class adults whose conflicts arise from property, ego, and fear of social embarrassment. The third-child figure becomes a young admirer and student of theatre (Siddharth) who still respects the old actor at his core, symbolically echoing Cordelia's honest love, but without the explicit familial bond. The domestic interior, the family quarrels over money and dignity, and the final image of the old man dying in or near a theatre space turn the landscape from battlefield and storm-swept heath into a quieter, more intimate domestic tragedy.

Both works explore the tragedy of a proud father who cannot accept the loss of power or status and misreads love as performance. In *Natsamrat*, this pride is specifically tied to the actor's identity: Ganpatrao's sense of self is inseparable from applause and the stage, so losing both becomes a collapse of his entire worldview, much as Lear's madness follows the collapse of his kingdom. The adaptation also foregrounds the Indian cultural concern with filial duty and the loneliness of the elderly, making the betrayal not only emotional but also social, as the old couple are reduced to wandering and dependence among people who once worshipped them.

In short, *Natsamrat* is not a direct translation of *King Lear* but a culturally resonant adaptation that replaces kingship with theatrical "crown," replaces dynastic politics with domestic property disputes, and preserves Lear's core questions about love, pride, and the cruelty visited on the ageing father.

4.7 Glossary:

- ♦ Elevate (V) – uplift to higher position
- ♦ spectators (N) - Audience
- ♦ flaw (N) - Error
- ♦ fatalistic (Adj) –affecting the luck
- ♦ soliloquies (N) – speech made with oneself
- ♦ adaptation (N) – play or film based on novel
- ♦ abandon (V) – leave or prohibit

4.8 Answers to Check your progress – 1

Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.

1.plays William Shakespeare wrote in his life.
B. 36
C. 38
B. 37
D. 39
2. William Shakespeare was born on
A. 26th April 1564
C. 26th April 1565
B. 27th April 1564
D. 26th April 1566
3. William Shakespeare coined more than.....words in English.
A. 1800
C. 1700
B. 1900
D. 1600
4. is the source of some of Shakespeare's plays.
A. Ancient Books
C. Archeology
B. Historic Material
D. Museums
5. Shakespeare's character suffer due their own
A. Motivation
C. Richness
B. Overconfidence
D. Flaw

A. Answer the following questions in one word/sentence of phrase each.

- B. Answer the following questions by choosing the correct option given below.**

- #### 4.10 Exercise:

A. Answer the following questions.

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- E. Is Natsamrat a direct adaptation or independent work? Analyze thematic borrowings versus original contributions like old-age issues in India.

B. Write Short Notes

1. King in King Lear
2. Appsaheb Belvalkar as a Natsamrat
3. Kaveri
4. Daughters in the play and movie
5. Plot of King Lear

4.11 Reference for further study -

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