

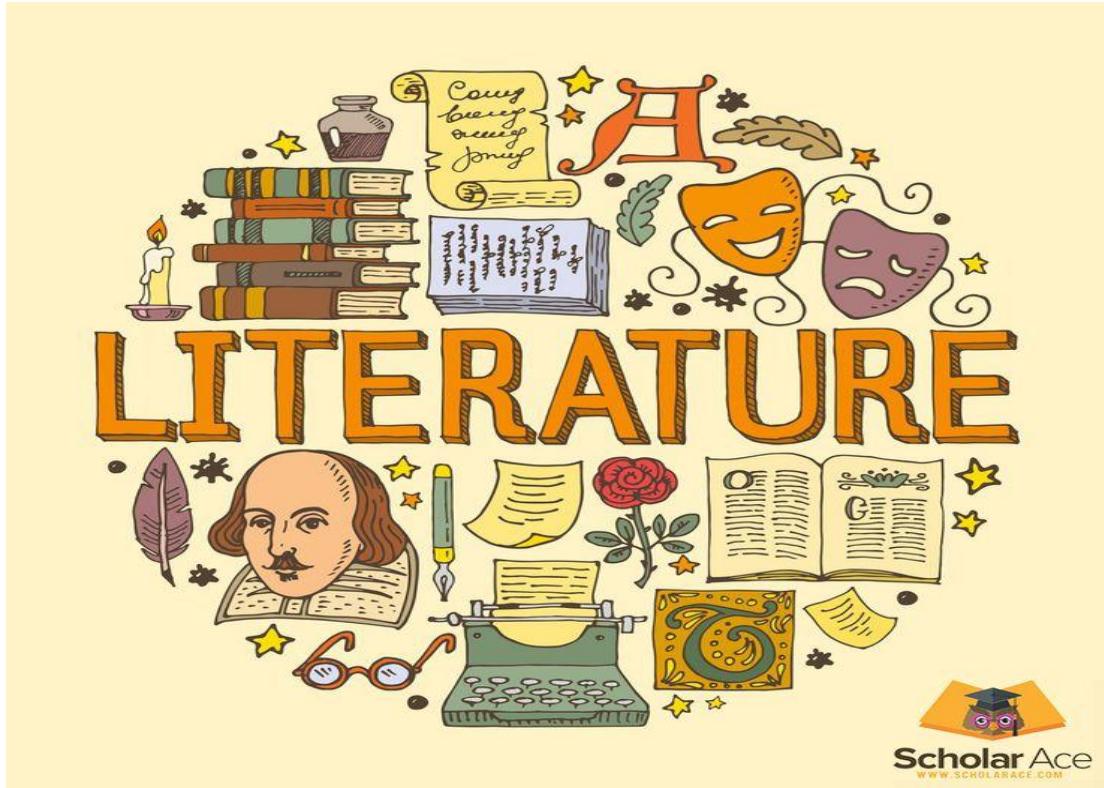
People's Democratic Republic of Algeria  
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research  
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Faculty of Letters and Languages  
Department of English Language and Literature



*Study of Literary Text*  
*Lectures for First Year LMD Undergraduate Students*

Level: First Year LMD  
Designed by Dr. Boubaker MOHREM

Academic Year: 2025/2026



## General Course Information

**Course Title:** Study Of Literary Texts

**Teaching Unit:** Fundamental

**Target Audience:** 1<sup>st</sup> year LMD students of English

**Coefficient:** 1

**Credits:** 2

**Average Teaching Weeks:** (15 Weeks)

**Number of Sessions per Week:** 1 session (one hour and a half per week)

**Course Delivery Modality:** TD

**Follow-up and Evaluation Modality:** 50% continuous assessment and 50% exam.

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## Course Objectives

Students will be able to:

1. Understand what literature is and how it works by the end of this course
2. Explain what literature is as a unique form of art.
3. Tell the difference between literary discourse and other types of discourse, like science or technical writing, journalism, or debate.
4. Name and explain the main types of literature
5. Know the differences between poetry, prose story (fiction and non-fiction), and drama in terms of structure and theme.
6. Look into the subgenres and stylistic elements that make up each major literature genre.
7. Learn about and think about different types of poetry
8. Name the different types of poetry, such as odes, sonnets, elegies, songs, and epics.
9. Learn how to use prosody, rhyme schemes, and rhythmic patterns when writing poetry.
10. Figures of speech and literary devices should be understood and used.
11. Explain what metaphors, similes, alliteration, and hyperbole are used for in creative works.
12. Use analytical tools to figure out what poetic words and images mean.
13. Come up with ways to analyse poetry and other literary genres
14. Read and understand a lot of different types of poetry and writing by analysing their structure, themes, and settings.
15. Show that you know how to read closely, make notes, and compare and contrast works of literature.
16. Follow how English literature has changed over time.
17. List the most important times in the history of English literature, from Old English to the Victorian age.

18. Learn how literary styles, themes, and worries have changed over time and how they relate to historical and cultural events.
19. Look at the most important literary works and authors.
20. Read important works like ***Beowulf, The Canterbury Tales, Hamlet, and Robinson Crusoe*** and think about how they were written, what they say, and how they affected culture.
21. Talk about what important people like Chaucer, Shakespeare, and Defoe did to help English writing grow.
22. Help students learn how to think critically and do good research.
23. Read a lot of different critical and scholarly interpretations of books.
24. Make oral and written arguments that make sense and are backed up by textual proof and academic sources.
25. Get people to value literary ethics and aesthetics
26. Learn to recognise the beauty and moral questions that come up in literary works.
27. Think about how literature shapes our lives, our beliefs, and who we are.

## Course Description

This course offers a thorough and methodical examination of literary expression within the English tradition, encompassing its underlying principles, canonical works, and historical developments. It commences by examining the essence of literature, contrasting literary discourse with other forms of communication, and building the conceptual frameworks essential for critical analysis. Students will analyse the structural and thematic characteristics of the primary literary genres: poetry, prose narrative (both fictional and non-fictional), and drama, together with their various subgenres. Focus will be directed towards the formal attributes of poetic creation, encompassing meter, rhyme, rhythm, and figurative language, alongside the implementation of interpretive tools vital for literary analysis. By means of meticulous reading, theoretical exploration, and academic research, students will develop the analytical skills essential for sophisticated literary analysis. The course seeks to cultivate intellectual complexity, interpretive accuracy, and a refined understanding of the literary imagination as a means for cultural, ethical, and historical contemplation.

## **The First Semester**

# Lecture One: What is Literature?

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Literature as Aesthetic Language and Art Form**

**Literature as Cultural and Social Expression**

**Literature, the Canon, and Institutional Authority**

**Literature and Human Experience**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define literature and establish its significance as a field of academic study.
- To analyse how literary language, form, and style (e.g., metaphor, narrative structure) create artistic meaning and effect.
- To understand how literature reflects, critiques, and shapes the cultural values, social norms, and historical contexts from which it emerges.
- To examine the concept of the "literary canon," the processes of its formation, and the role of institutions (like academia and publishing) in determining cultural value.
- To explore how literature provides insight into universal human experiences, emotions, and the complexities of the human condition.

**Introduction**

The term "literature" denotes a complicated and diverse notion that defies straightforward explanation. It is conventionally considered to encompass written works of artistic value, such as poetry, fiction, drama, and specific non-fiction forms, which employ language creatively and expressively (Abrams 136). Literature is widely acknowledged as a reflection of human experience, emotion, and cognition; nonetheless, its accurate definition necessitates the consideration of cultural, historical, and theoretical viewpoints (Cuddon 404).

Terry Eagleton asserts that "there is no 'essence' of literature whatsoever"—its definition fluctuates according to ideology and context (Eagleton 1).

From a formalist perspective, literature is characterized by its linguistic attributes: figurative language, narrative structure, meter, symbolism, and rhetorical techniques (Brooks 12). Structuralists and semioticians, including Roland Barthes, contend that literature constitutes a system of signs open to interpretation rather than simply reflecting reality (Barthes 3). Conversely, Marxist critics, such as Raymond Williams, perceive literature as a cultural artefact shaped by material and ideological circumstances (Williams 45). The varying viewpoints highlight that literature cannot be comprehended exclusively through its textual attributes; it must also be analysed about its function, audience, and cultural context (Wellek and Warren 20).

### 1. Literature as Aesthetic Language and Art Form

The beauty of writing has been used as a way to understand it for a long time. In his book *Poetics*, Aristotle said that literature, especially tragedy, is a style that tries to make people feel better by imitating real life (Aristotle 10). Literature often uses language in an artistic way, like through allusion, rhythm, imagery, and metaphor, to create pleasure and greater meaning (Abrams 210). Cleanth Brooks says that a literary work is like a "well-wrought urn," where each part fits together to make a whole (Brooks 18).

This focus on beauty was a big part of the New Criticism movement in the middle of the 20th century, which stressed close reading and the unity of the text (Ransom 29). New Critics thought that literature could be understood on its own, based on its structure and language, rather than the author's intentions or the time period in which it was written (Wimsatt and Beardsley 21). But later critics disagree with this point of view. They say that context is more important than analysis, and they see literature as a conversational place that is affected by its time and culture (Bakhtin 84).

Roman Jakobson said that literary language is different from everyday language because it focuses on the "poetic function"—the intentional use of language that draws attention to its form (Jakobson 32). In poetry, for instance, the way sounds and words are put together often means as much as or more than the literal meaning. This shows how creative language can be (Richards 47).

### 2. Literature as Cultural and Social Expression

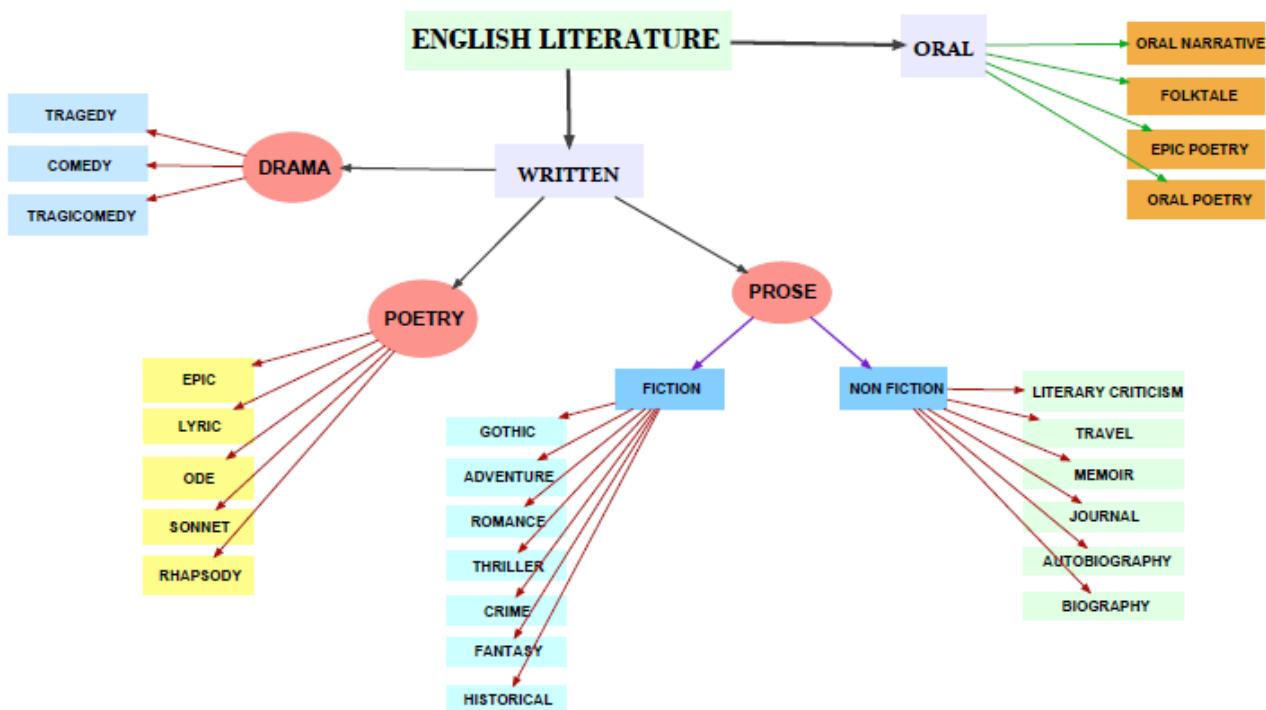
Literature is a form of artistic language, but it is also deeply rooted in culture and ideas. Literature both shows and changes the rules, ideals, and tensions in society. Literature is often "a mirror held up to nature" or society, says M.H. Abrams (Abrams 49). Whether it's through *The Tragedy of Antigone* by Sophocles, the satire of *Gulliver's Travels* by Swift, or the reality of Oliver Twist by Dickens, literature makes the

world more interesting and critical (Eagleton 34).

Feminist critics, such as Elaine Showalter, have talked a lot about how literature reflects gender ideologies and how women's views have been historically left out of the literary canon (Showalter 13). On the other hand, Postcolonial thinkers like Edward Said also talk about how literature is involved in imperial discourse and how it can be used to fight back (Said 29). Literature is not just a passive reflection; it is also an active part of building and tearing down national identities (Spivak 78).

Stanley Fish and other reader-response theorists say that meaning is not just in the text, but in how the reader interacts with the text (Fish 17). This changes the way we think about literature as a social practice that is shaped by how people understand it, how institutions talk about it, and how history changes it (Culler 51). In this way, literature is a part of what Raymond Williams means by "structures of feeling"—the lived experience of a society that is changing (Williams 132).

**The following picture shows the division of English Literature.**



### 3. Literature, the Canon, and Institutional Authority

Universities, publishers, and critics have generally shaped the literary canon, which is the list of works that people think are important enough to study. In the past, this canon has favoured white male Western writers and often left out voices from underrepresented groups (Guillory 7). Postcolonial and feminist scholars have argued against the canon's exclusivity and for a more diverse and open literary practice (Showalter 24;

Morrison 5).

Power, taste, and belief all play a role in making the canon. John Guillory says that "creating canons is less about literary merit and more about institutional needs" (Guillory 10). The growing interest in literary studies, which now includes oral histories, popular fiction, and digital literature, shows that people are becoming more aware of literature's many forms and purposes (Barry 190).

Interpretations change over time, even in works that are considered classics. People used to read Shakespeare's *The Tempest* as a story about forgiveness, but now post-colonialists see it as also a story about European invasion and the displacement of native people (Said 76). Thus, literature and how we value it are not fixed, but are always being negotiated and reinterpreted within a culture (Wellek and Warren 70).

#### 4. Literature and Human Experience

Ultimately, writing shows and describes how complicated life is for people. Love, loss, identity, power, death, and transcendence are some of the universal themes that are brought to life through the characters, story, and voice (Cuddon 510). Literature gives us a look into our minds and our inner selves, whether it's through the existential crisis in Dostoevsky's Notes from Underground or the postmodern split in Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (Culler 75).

Reading also makes you more empathetic and morally aware. Martha Nussbaum says that reading literary fiction helps people improve their moral imagination by letting them see things from other points of view (Nussbaum 89). Literature is important for cultural heritage, social life, and emotional intelligence (Booth 47) because it helps people connect with each other.

Literature gives us a place to think deeply and slowly in a world that is changing quickly and using technology more and more. It doesn't give us easy answers and wants us to get to know ourselves and our world better (Eagleton 76). Northrop Frye said it is not just a way to talk, but a "language of the imagination" that can be used anywhere and at any time (Frye 113).

#### Conclusion

In conclusion, writing is a complicated piece of culture that has a form, a meaning, and a social purpose. Its meaning changes over time as theory, history, and popular debate shape it. Literature is still an important part of how people express themselves and understand the world, whether it's seen as art, theory, discourse, or imagination. We not only read books when we study it, but we also take part in a conversation about identity, ethics, and meaning that goes on all the time.

**Task**

What makes defining literature such a challenge?

## Lecture Two: Literary Genres – Overview of Poetry, Prose Narrative, and Drama

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Poetry: Language Condensed and Evocative**

**Prose Narrative: Fiction and Non-Fiction**

**Drama: Theatrical Performance and Literary Art**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define the three major literary genres and establish the framework for comparative analysis.
- To identify and analyse the use of poetic devices (like imagery, rhythm, and metaphor) to create concentrated meaning and emotional impact.
- To understand the core elements of narrative (e.g., plot, character, point of view) and differentiate between the techniques and purposes of fictional and non-fictional prose.
- To analyse drama both as a written text (focusing on dialogue, stage directions, and structure) and as a blueprint for live performance.

**Introduction**

Literary genres are the basic groups that divide writing into groups based on style, plot, and method. Poetry, prose narrative (both fiction and non-fiction), and drama make up the standard three categories. Each has grown through different historical and stylistic paths (Cuddon 316). It's important to know about these types of literature because they each have their own ways of showing meaning, feeling, and experience (Abrams 85). Genres change over time and often mix, but the main things that make them unique are still important to understand and enjoy writing (Wellek and Warren 226).

### 1. Poetry: Language Condensed and Evocative

Some say that poetry is the longest and most focused form of writing. Poetry turns feelings and experiences into a structured form through the use of meter, rhyme, images, and figurative language (Preminger 978).

From Homer's epics to Sylvia Plath's confessional poems, the style, voice, and goal of this type of writing are very different (Kermode 213). Poetry often draws attention to the beautiful parts of language, like sound, flow, and the way words can carry meaning (Jakobson 350).

Poetry comes in many different styles, such as the sonnet, the ode, the ballad, and free verse. For example, a Shakespearean sonnet is made up of three quatrains and a final couplet that are all written in iambic pentameter and generally rhyme with ABAB CDCD EFEF GG (Vendler 104). Free verse, on the other hand, does not use regular meter or rhyme, which gives poets more freedom to choose their voice and theme (Perkins 674). Even though poetry has different forms, they all have one thing in common: they can condense meaning and make people feel very strongly (Brooks 6).

Poetry is not just pretty words; it has deep psychological meanings. Percy Bysshe Shelley said, "Poets are the unacknowledged legislators of the world." This means that poetry can change society by changing how people see things (Shelley 70). It has a lot of cultural meaning, from spoken word and African oral traditions to new experimental forms like spoken word and visual poems (Ngũgĩ 42; Bernstein 288).

## 2. Prose Narrative: Fiction and Non-Fiction

Prose is the most adaptable form because it can include both fictional and non-fiction stories. The main difference between it and poetry is that it has normal grammar and no meter (Cuddon 704). Types of fiction prose include novels, short stories, and novellas. Types of non-fiction prose include biographies, memoirs, travel writing, and essays (Lodge 39). The narrative mode lets you learn a lot about the characters, the plot, and the theme over time and place (Forster 27).

Since the 18th century, the novel has been the most popular type of fiction. It uses story methods along with psychological realism and social commentary. From Austen's detailed descriptions of manners to Woolf's new ideas in stream-of-consciousness, the novel has shown itself to be a flexible and powerful way to tell stories (Watt 10; McHale 118). Authors of fictional writing often use irony, foreshadowing, and symbolism to create worlds that are either like real life or not like it (Chatman 91).

Non-fiction writing, on the other hand, is based on telling the truth. Non-fiction books like *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou and *In Patagonia* by Bruce Chatwin show how non-fiction can be used to tell a story (Angelou 32; Chatwin 14). Non-fiction is committed to telling the truth, but it also uses literary methods to shape its story. This shows how the lines between fiction and factual writing are often blurred (Couser 56).

Fiction and non-fiction prose both play a big role in shaping national and personal identities by letting

readers experience different points of view and historical facts (Bruner 40). Toni Morrison says that stories are a way to "bear witness" and bring back memories that have been silenced (Morrison 65).

### 3. Drama: Theatrical Performance and Literary Art

Drama, on the other hand, is mostly meant to be performed, mixing written dialogue with visual and auditory elements. Drama has a long history that goes back to religious events in ancient Greece and continues to grow into experimental theatre today (Brockett 3). Things that make it unique are the conversation, stage directions, acts and scenes, and performance cues, all of which help the actors work together (Pfister 73).

Tragedies, comedies, tragicomedies, farces, and absurdist theatre are all types of drama. Aristotle said that a classical tragedy has a good main character who is destroyed by a fatal flaw or fate (Aristotle 13). This type of writing is best shown by Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, which looks at ambition, blame, and fate (Greenblatt 295). On the other hand, comedy is often about mistakes, making up, and fixing things, like in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (McEvoy 211).

Form and subject have become more flexible in modern drama. The Theatre of the Absurd, which includes works by Samuel Beckett and Eugene Ionesco, does not believe in linear stories and instead focuses on philosophical issues (Esslín 24). Colonialism and national identity are looked at in Wole Soyinka's "*Death and the King's Horseman*" which is an example of postcolonial drama (Gilbert and Tompkins 87). So, drama is not just a way to pass the time; it's also a place where people can talk about culture, politics, and philosophy.

Drama is performed, so it is shaped by the director's vision, how the actors interpret it, how the crowd reacts, and how the stage is set up. But the story is still a work of literature that can be read carefully and analysed. Elam says that drama works on two levels: as writing and as an event, and that's how it should be understood (Elam 92).

### Conclusion

Poetry, prose narrative, and theatre are all types of writing that have their own formal rules and ways of expressing ideas. The structure and style of these forms are still different, but they often mix and affect each other. Stories can be in a poem, dialogue can be in a book, and poetic monologues can be used in a play. Literary genres help readers and scholars understand the technical skill, thematic depth, and cultural importance that are present in various types of writing.

## Task

What is the difference between the literary text and the non-literary text?

In a table, compare the three different literary genres.

# Lecture Three: Poetic Types

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**The Sonnet: A Compact Form of Passion and Reason**

**The Ode: A Formal Expression of Praise**

**The Elegy: Mourning and Reflection**

**The Epic: Heroism and Nationhood in Verse**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define poetic form and its role in shaping meaning, introducing the major forms to be studied.
- To analyse how the strict, compact structure of the sonnet is used to explore intense emotions, complex arguments, and intellectual paradoxes.
- To identify the characteristics of the ode as a formal, elevated lyric, often expressing deep feeling and addressing a subject of praise or celebration.
- To understand the elegy as a meditative form of poetry that moves from expressions of grief and loss toward consolation and reflection.
- To recognise the epic as a long, narrative poem that defines a culture's values through its depiction of heroic deeds, grand scope, and national or mythological themes.

## Introduction

Poetry is a type of writing that uses words, rhythm, and feeling in a very strong way. Over hundreds of years, different kinds or forms of poetry have grown, each shaped by its own cultural, historical, and aesthetic setting. The sonnet, ode, elegy, epic, song, and free verse are all different types of poetry because of how they are put together, how they sound, and what they are about (Cuddon 691). By learning these forms inside and out, you can see how writers break the rules to talk about personal, philosophical, or

political issues (Abrams 133). This talk covers all the main types of poetry, showing what makes them unique and how important they are in the past of literature.

### 1. The Sonnet: A Compact Form of Passion and Reason

A sonnet is a fourteen-line poem that is usually written in iambic pentameter. It talks about things like love, death, and beauty. The sonnet was first used by Petrarch in Italy. During the Renaissance, it made its way to English writing, where poets like Shakespeare and Spenser changed it. The Petrarchan sonnet is split into an octave (abbaabba) and a sestet (cdecde or cdcdcd), with a problem being introduced and then an answer given (Baldick 304). On the other hand, a Shakespearean sonnet has three quatrains and a final rhyming couplet (abab cdcd efef gg). The couplet is often used to give a punchy resolution or ironic twist (Vendler 13).

Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare, which asks, "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?", celebrates love through poetry and says that beauty can be kept alive in writing (Greenblatt 1040). The sonnet form was also used by metaphysical writers like John Donne to write about spiritual worries and divine love, as seen in Holy Sonnet XIV (Gardner 108). Modern writers like Edna St. Vincent Millay and Claude McKay still love the sonnet form. They changed it to write about gender, race, and modern disillusionment (Miller 89; Nelson 71).

### 2. The Ode: A Formal Expression of Praise

A formal, often ceremonial lyric song called an ode talks about or praises a person, thing, or idea that is not concrete. The Pindaric ode is based on Greek custom and has three parts: the strophe, the antistrophe, and the epode. The Horatian ode, on the other hand, is more reflective and has a more uniform stanzaic form (Fussell 215). The English Romantic poets created the irregular ode, which gave artists more freedom in choosing the rhythm and stanza (Stillinger 188).

The famous line from John Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, "Beauty is truth, truth beauty," sums up the Romantic ode's ability to combine sensory detail with intellectual thought. In the same way, *Ode to the West Wind* by Percy Shelley uses nature as a metaphor for creative motivation and political renewal (Shelley 156). Many modern poets, like Pablo Neruda, have used odes to everyday things, like Ode to Salt and Ode to a Lemon (Neruda 57), to inspire and calm people down.

### 3. The Elegy: Mourning and Reflection

An elegy is a sad, sombre, or wailing song that is usually written to remember the dead. The elegy is usually linked with grief, but it can also be used to explore existential issues and the healing process (Sacks 37).

Classic elegies like *Lycidas* by Milton and *In Memoriam* by Tennyson use death as a way to think about religion and philosophy (Bloom 201).

Modern elegists have made the genre more varied. Both "**Daddy**" by Sylvia Plath and "**In Memory** of W. B. Yeats" by W. H. Auden ask questions about personal loss and traditional ways of expressing sadness (Kendall 144). Elegies usually follow certain patterns, like using images from nature, calling on the muse, and ending with comfort or resolution. However, some modern versions may not accept closure at all (Ramazani 102).

### 4. The Epic: Heroism and Nationhood in Verse

The epic is a long poem that tells a story. It usually involves heroic acts, long journeys, or the most important myths in a society. Classical epics, such as Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and Virgil's *Aeneid*, are built on dactylic hexameter and begin with a call to the gods (Nagy 212). Epics like *Beowulf* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* are important works of English literature. They use poetic devices like epic similes, invocations, and lists of fighters (Greenblatt 42; Fry 96).

Epics often show how people feel about things like bravery, loyalty, and God's will. Milton uses both Biblical stories and classical forms in *Paradise Lost* to look at free will, obedience, and redemption (Lewalski 104). Postcolonial epics, like *Omeros* by Derek Walcott, change the classical tradition to represent life in the Caribbean during and after colonization (Bhabha 211).

### 5. The Ballad: Oral Tradition and Narrative Simplicity

A ballad is a short poem that tells a dramatic story in simple words. It is usually sung or read aloud. Ballads are songs that have been passed down orally for a long time, especially in Scotland and northern England. They often have conversation, repetition, and refrains (Atkinson 17). Like in *The Unquiet Grave* or *Barbara Allen*, the stories often deal with love, death, betrayal, and the supernatural.

Romantic writers like Coleridge and Wordsworth brought back the ballad form with works like "**The Rime of the Ancient Mariner**," which looked at changes in morality and religion (Stillinger 166). The way the story is told in a ballad still has an impact on current literature, spoken word poetry, and protest songs (Gioia 88).

## 6. Free Verse and Experimental Forms

Free verse poetry doesn't use a set meter or rhyme system. Instead, it relies on rhythm, imagery, and different ways of putting words together. Free verse, favoured by writers like Walt Whitman and T. S. Eliot, shows how modernists wanted to break free from traditional rules and show how broken up the modern world is (Perloff 93). *Leaves of Grass* by Whitman is a classic example of how to use long, moving lines that sound like natural speech (Whitman 7).

Forms like visual poetry, concrete poetry, and digital verse have become more creative in the 20th and 21st centuries. Some poets, like E. E. Cummings, changed the way people read and understood poems by changing the fonts and syntax used (Lehman 112). Slam poetry and spoken word are also new ways of performing that focus on rhythm, voice, and contact with the audience (Somers-Willett 64).

## Conclusion

Different types of poetry show how people share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in different ways. Each type of poetry gives us a different way to look at the world, whether it's limited by tight rules or free to try new things. Poetry is still a strong and versatile art form, from the focused thought of the stanza to the broad vision of the epic.

**Task**, Consider the following sonnet

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

*Sonnet 18 by William Shakespeare*

# Lecture Four: Prosody, Rhyme, and Rhythm

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Understanding Prosody: Meter and Scansion**

**The Art of Rhyme**

**Rhythm: The Pulse of Poetry**

**The Function and Impact of Prosodic Elements**

**Conclusion**

**Course Objectives**

- To define prosody as the study of poetic meter, rhythm, and sound, and its role in creating musical and emotional effects.
- To identify common metrical patterns (e.g., iambic pentameter) and apply the technique of scansion to analyse a poem's metrical structure.
- To classify different types of rhyme (e.g., perfect, slant, internal) and analyse how rhyme schemes contribute to a poem's structure and meaning.
- To distinguish rhythm from meter and understand how variations in rhythm create pace, tone, and emphasis.

## Introduction

The main sounds in poems are prosody, rhyme, and rhythm, which create the mood, pace, and structure of the writing. Prosody is the way that stress and intonation are used in language, especially in verse. It includes things like meter, pace, and intonation (Cuddon 540). Together with prosody, rhyme, rhythm, and meter give a song a musical quality that helps people remember it. These parts are not just decorations; they have value, draw attention to certain parts, and help with interpretation (Attridge 21). This talk looks at the main ideas and types of prosody, rhyme schemes, and rhythmic patterns. It also talks about how these things affect the meaning of poetry.

### 1. Understanding Prosody: Meter and Scansion

The study of a poem's metrical structure, or the marking of stressed (') and unstressed (˘) words in lines of verse, is called prosody. The iamb is the most common metrical unit in English verse. It is a foot made up of a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable, like in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* line "To be, or not to be." Iambic pentameter, which is made up of five iambs, was the main meter in English writing during the Renaissance and the Neoclassical period (Hollander 47).

The trochee (˘ ´), the anapest (˘ ˘ ´), the dactyl (˘ ˘ ˘), and the spondee (˘ ˘) are some other metrical feet. Each gives a different beat and tone (Baldick 260). Poets often use metrical variation, which is small changes in pattern, to show how emotions change or how complicated a theme is. Figuring out these patterns helps readers understand the formal thinking behind writing poetry (Fussell 78).

### 2. The Art of Rhyme

Rhyme helps poems stay together and make sense. Most of the time, it means repeating vowel and consonant sounds at the end of lines, like "night" and "light." Perfect rhyme uses end sounds that are the same, while slant rhyme (or half rhyme) uses sounds that are almost the same, like "worm" and "swarm" (Abrams 280). Eye rhyme, like the rhyme between "love" and "move," is based on how the words look rather than how they sound.

Rhyme schemes group these patterns into clear structures, like couplet (aa), alternate rhyme (abab), or enclosed rhyme (abba). Each shapes the poem's flow in terms of style (Burrow and Wallace 135). For example, in Shakespearean sonnets, the abab cdcd efef gg construction lets the theme grow and the rhymed couplet come to a close (Vendler 31). Romantic writers like Keats and Shelley used rhyme to make people feel things or to show how beautiful nature is (Stillinger 119).

### 3. Rhythm: The Pulse of Poetry

When you write poems, rhythm is the flow of sound made by stressed and unstressed syllables. It is linked to meter, but it's more fluid and includes more changes, pauses (called caesura), and line breaks (called enjambment). The pace of a poem can reflect how the body moves, how the mind is feeling, or how speech flows (Attridge 39). Changing beats show how broken up modern life is in T. S. Eliot's *"The Waste Land"* (Eliot 18).

Free verse doesn't use set meters, so the rhythms are more natural than in traditional metrical verse. They

depend on internal cadence, syntax, and image patterns instead (Perloff 66). *Song of Myself* (Whitman 10) by Walt Whitman shows how rhythmic repetition and parallelism can make a poem intense even if it does not rhyme or have meter. So, rhythm, whether it is controlled or not, is still an important part of poetry.

#### 4. The Function and Impact of Prosodic Elements

Prosodic factors not only affect how a poem sounds, but also how it is put together, what it means, and how it makes you feel. Disruptions in meter can show stress, disagreement, or new ideas (Leech 95). Regular metrical patterns often evoke a feeling of order, tradition, or harmony. Some examples are Wilfred Owen's war poems, where the strange rhythms show how horrible and chaotic battle is (Kendall 43).

Poets also use metrical irony, which is when the form is different from the content. For example, they might use a light, lyrical pace to talk about sad things (Hollander 109). Form and meaning should always go hand in hand; a poem's sound should be deeply connected to its meaning. Poets who are good at prosody can interest the reader's mind and ears at the same time.

#### Conclusion

Poetic expression is based on prosody, rhyme, and rhythm, which turn everyday words into art. These elements are not just rules; they are living, changing tools that can be used to shape experience and feeling. Poets use prosody to connect deeply with readers and listeners, whether they use the beautiful meter of iambic pentameter or the free beats of modern verse. To have a meaningful experience with poetry, you need to understand these factors.

#### Task

Go back to the previous task and extract the musical devices from the poem.

# Lecture Five: Figures of Speech

**Time Frame:** Two sessions

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Types of Figures of Speech**

**Role in Literature**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define "figure of speech" and establish its importance as a foundational tool for literary expression.
- To identify, classify, and differentiate between key figures of speech (e.g., metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole).
- To analyse how figures of speech are used to create imagery, convey complex ideas, evoke emotion, and enhance the aesthetic impact of a literary text.

**Introduction**

Figures of speech are important tools for both writing and speaking. These literary techniques give both poetry and prose more depth, nuance, and beauty. Figures of speech are not just extras; they shape meaning, conjure images, and change how readers understand what they read. They "allow the writer to convey meaning in vivid and imaginative ways," as Cuddon says (Cuddon 305). Metaphors, similes, personification, and exaggeration are all important ways to understand how literature affects us intellectually and emotionally.

## 1. Types of Figures of Speech

A **metaphor** is a straight comparison that does not use "like" or "as." It's one of the most common figures of speech. It makes an unspoken link between different ideas, like in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*: "All the

world's a stage" (2.7.139), which means that life is like a play (Kennedy and Gioia 729). A **simile**, on the other hand, makes the comparison clear, like "My love is like a red, red rose" (Burns 1). **Personification** gives nonhuman things human traits. It is often used to give nature or abstract ideas life, like in John Donne's poem "***Death be not proud***" (Donne 1).

Other important devices are **oxymoron** (a phrase that contradicts itself, like "deafening silence"), **apostrophe** (which refers to things that aren't there or are vague), and **synecdoche** (which uses a part to describe the whole, like "all hands on deck") (Baldick 133). There are a lot of these methods in different types and times of literature, and they often show cultural, historical, and emotional contexts.

## 2. Role in Literature

Use of figures of speech makes English more expressive. In poetry, they add depth to ideas and make people feel things. They explain or bring to life ideas in prose. For example, allegory is used as a long metaphor for Soviet authoritarianism in ***Animal Farm*** by George Orwell (Orwell 23). Emily Dickinson used metaphors and paradoxes a lot in her writing to show her inner struggle and existential themes (Vendler 158).

McMahan says that these numbers are not just fancy words; they are "gateways to interpretation" (McMahan 162). Readers can better understand how complicated a text is and how well the author wrote it if they can spot and analyse them.

## Conclusion

Figurative language is important to understand if you want to really study writing. These things are not only ways to make things look nice, but they are also ways to make meaning. They make the viewer more interested, give them more ways to understand the text, and improve their overall experience with it.

## Task

Please check Appendix No. 4 on page 57.

# Lecture Six: Method of Poem Analysis

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Steps in Poem Analysis**

**Interpretation and Contextualization**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To establish a systematic approach for analysing poetry, moving from observation to interpretation.
- To identify and apply a sequence of analytical steps (e.g., examining speaker, situation, imagery, diction, form, and sound devices) to understand a poem's literal meaning and structural techniques.

**Introduction**

To be good at poem analysis, you need to be aware of language, form, and topic. Students can read poetry with confidence when they use a structured technique that encourages close reading and critical thinking.

According to Hawthorn, "poetry demands active engagement with both meaning and form" (Hawthorn 55). This talk talks about a structured way to look at poems that includes looking at the language, structure, theme, tone, and historical background.

## 1. Steps in Poem Analysis

First, students should read the poem more than once, paying attention to different parts each time, such as the meaning on the surface, the language, the tone, and the sound. To understand the background, it is important to know who is speaking, who is listening, and what the situation is (Gioia and Kennedy 219).

Next, look at the poem's structure and style. Check to see if it's a sonnet, an ode, an elegy, or free verse.

Form and theme often go hand in hand. For example, the stiff structure of a Petrarchan sonnet shows how limited emotions can be.

Figurative language, symbols, and visuals can be used to show how meaning is built on top of itself. In William Blake's "*The Tyger*" for example, the tiger is the main picture and stands for both beauty and terror, which challenges religious ideas (Blake 1). Paying attention to sound devices like alliteration, assonance, rhyme, and rhythm adds another level of understanding (Leech 88).

## 2. Interpretation and Contextualization

Both internal factors (like language, tone, and meter) and external factors (like the author's past and the time period in question) should be taken into account when interpreting. Like, Sylvia Plath's *Daddy* needs to be read in the context of her life story and American feminism after World War II (Gill 129). Reading literary criticism can make reading even more enjoyable by giving you new points of view and academic background (Barry 76).

To do a full reading, you also need to be able to read with your emotions: how does the poem make you feel? What questions does it bring up about philosophy, religion, or the meaning of life? These questions make analysis into a conversation between the reader and the text.

## Conclusion

There needs to be a mix between using a structured method and coming up with your own ideas when analysing poetry. Students can gain a deeper understanding of poetry's depth and emotional power by following a structured process and staying open to different meanings.

## Task

Please check Appendix No. 4 on page 58.

# **Lecture Seven: A Brief History of the English Novel**

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Part I, The history of the English novel**

**Anglo-Saxon Era often known as Old English**

**The Middle English Era (1066-1485)**

**The Renaissance Period (1550-1660)**

**The 18<sup>th</sup> Century**

**The 19<sup>th</sup> Century**

**The 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

**Components of Fiction**

**Course Objectives**

- To trace the evolution of the English novel as a literary form, identifying key periods and their defining characteristics.
- To recognise the epic poetry and prose romances that served as precursors to the novel.
- To understand the development of prose fiction (e.g., Elizabethan prose) leading toward the novel's emergence.
- To identify the rise of the modern novel, focusing on realism, social observation, and the development of narrative form.
- To analyse the expansion of the novel, including the rise of Romanticism, the social novel, and psychological realism.
- To explore modernist and postmodernist innovations in narrative technique, form, and subject matter.

## Introduction

Narration, or simply telling a story, is relating an incident from one's life or creating a story with a beginning, middle, and finish. Fiction, in contrast to narrative forms like films and dramas, depends only on words to convey meaning to the audience. Fictional narrations serve as a mimetic medium that mimics human speech, actions, and ideas to tell stories about made-up people, places, and things.

## Part I, The history of the English novel

The work in question is a work of prose fiction. The novel stands out from other literary forms because it is a long story with multiple characters and settings.

Throughout history, the novel has evolved much like literature. The very first novels appeared in print in the 18th century. People used to recite stories aloud or write them down in verse before this date. Some have hypothesized that Homer's epics, such as *The Iliad*\* and *The Odyssey*\* (written in the eighth century B.C.), which feature heroic quests and fantastical creatures, are the inspiration for the modern novel.

### 1. The Anglo-Saxon era, often known as the Old English era

During the Anglo-Saxon period, Latin was the language of choice for literary texts, particularly prose. But when King Alfred arrived in the 9th century, he sought to elevate the level of education among his subjects by promoting the translation of Latin works into Old English, particularly the vernacular. During this time, didactic and informative writing predominated in literary works like The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles\*, which chronicles events beginning with King Alfred's reign and continuing for three centuries after his death. Law and religion became more prominent themes in prose literature during the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Aethelwold, bishop of Winchester, translated the Rule of St. Benedict, which is considered a foundational text for English law. Catholic Homilies\* and the Lives of Saints\*, detailing the history and doctrine of the church, were written by his disciple Aelfric. His homilies, which included a manual for teaching Latin and translations of Latin grammar into English, demonstrated Aelfric's interest in language and grammar.

## 2. The Middle English Era (1066- 1485)

In 1066, the Normans conquered the British Isles, marking the beginning of the Middle Ages. When the French arrived in England, they brought their language with them. Soon, Latin, French, and English were the three most prominent languages in the literary world. The most popular languages were French and Latin, notwithstanding the constant flow of Latin to English translations. This was due in large part to the fact that the religious and ruling classes both spoke these languages. The Midlands, on the other hand, saw the persistence of Old English in prose, particularly literature aimed at female readers. *Ancrene Riwle\** (Rule for Anchoresses) and similar writings that instruct women on proper attire and conduct gained popularity in the thirteenth century. The innovative manner and complex metaphorical language of these holy texts have earned them recognition.

Literary and linguistic pursuits persisted in the fourteenth century despite social upheaval (the Wars of the Roses and the Hundred Years' War), religious strife, and the Black Death (1374–1341). Fiction began to gradually use prose by the mid-14th century. *The Canterbury Tales\** (c. 1387-1400) by Geoffrey Chaucer is a work of narrative poetry since it is a collection of stories told through verse and prose, has fully realized characters and plots, and is based on actual occurrences. English was first utilized in religious prose by John Wycliffe, who succeeded in translating the Bible from Latin to English for the first time; Chaucer was another writer who used English in his works. As the fifteenth century began, and particularly with William Caxton's invention of printing in 1476, English prose gained a more respectable audience. As an example, one of the earliest books printed and published by Caxton in 1485 was *The Death of Arthur\** (*Le Morte D'Arthur*), by the famous Thomas Malory, which recounts the rise and fall of King Arthur.

## 3. The Renaissance Period (1550 1660)

Europe transitioned from the Middle Ages to the Modern Era during the Renaissance, a time marked by profound social, political, and religious upheaval. New ideas in science, theology, and humanism—which advocated for education—demolished mediaeval beliefs in the first part of the 16th century.

Literature thrived throughout the Elizabethan Era (1558–1603), while the Renaissance encompasses all three of England's ages—the Elizabethan, the Jacobean (Stuarts), and the Commonwealth. During this time, England was seen as a European power, and the Tudors, who were in power from 1485 until 1603, wanted to create a new educated aristocracy. Elizabethan literature's employment of devices like sonnets and epic poetry reflects the educational system's reliance on classical literature from Greek and Latin civilizations to accomplish this aim. The writers of this era were perplexed about whether to employ Latin translations or newly generated phrases due to their reliance on other European languages. Among the literary

works such as Richard Hakluyt's *Principal Navigations, Voyages, and Discoveries of the English Nation*\* (1589) were primarily nonfictional and took the form of pamphlets and treatises. *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*\* (1578), a work of fiction by John Lyly, is more akin to a play than prose because of the abundance of rhetorical terms throughout. However, Elizabethan fiction placed greater emphasis on vivid vocabulary and style than on narrative economy.

The social situation was tense throughout the Tudor era, despite the fact that literature flourished during their control. With the persistent calls for the English church to be reformed, the seeds of religious strife began to sprout. Early Stuart prose works were influenced by the religious movement known as Puritanism. The Puritans held the view that literature should serve a religious rather than a secular purpose. Researchers who wished to convey their ideas clearly and concisely, free of metaphor and simile, embraced the austere Puritan style. The critical essay emerged as a result of this transition in writing style, which allowed for the incorporation of philosophical disputes into literary works like Francis Bacon's *Essays*\* (1597), in which he critiques a range of public and private matters from diverse perspectives.

#### 4. The Restoration Period

During the Restoration, which lasted from 1649 to 1660 and was presided over by Oliver Cromwell, the English returned to royal power. As Puritanism and its religious doctrines declined, works of literature from this era responded. John Milton, in *Paradise Lost*\* (1667), for instance, depicts the fall of the English religious movement through the metaphors of paradise and hell, God and Satan. When composing his religious allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*\* (1678), John Bunyan opted for prose rather than Milton's verse. Bunyan laid the groundwork for the contemporary novel the following century with his detailed character descriptions, insightful dialogue, and well-defined plot. As a response to Puritanism's decline, religious writing predominated during the Restoration. However, philosophical works like John Locke's, chronicles, and diaries began to emerge as well, discussing politics, history, and various interests from an individual's perspective.

#### 5. The 18<sup>th</sup> Century

The novel became a defining feature of 18th-century prose writing. Instead of writing about made-up stories, journalists and magazine writers might hone in on actual issues. The contemporary novel owes its origins to the heightened social consciousness that this era's political works instilled in its authors. Some authors, like Daniel Defoe, transitioned from journalism to narrative after beginning their careers in journalism. Defoe's mature prose emerged during the period when Britain was both establishing itself and expanding her colonies. This history is laid bare in his earliest modern English fiction, *Robinson Crusoe*\*.

(1719), an autobiographical work. This literary work by Defoe is an early example of realism because to its usage of the first-person narrative, as well as its reliance on historical reports and trip diaries. Other authors were able to expand their imaginations via Defoe's examination of the problematic social shifts of the time and his doubts about man's place in society. In the 18th century, Samuel Richardson was another writer whose work, *Pamela\** (1740), helped shape the contemporary novel.

The following picture shows Defoe whose work was the first in English Literature



## 6. The 19<sup>th</sup> Century

The literary form of the novel underwent a number of transformations between the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Such progress was mostly governed by the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the British Industrial Revolution. According to Bennett and Royle (2004), Romanticism was a reaction to the Enlightenment because it emphasised scientific reasoning while simultaneously reviving the centrality of the

self/individual, emotions, and imagination. Poets sought solace in nature, but writers persisted in drawing connections between fiction and politics, which, in the wake of the atrocities committed during the French Revolution, gave rise to the Gothic novel. Although the goal of Gothic literature is to evoke dread in the reader,

dealt with weighty political and psychological themes, as seen in works like Frankenstein and The Modern Prometheus (1818).

What about Mary Shelley's

Novelists in the late 18th and early 19th centuries brought attention to societal injustice through the employment of Romantic tactics, such as imaginative and daring storytelling. The key figures who made significant contributions to this debate are female writers. While Jane Austen's novels centre on female protagonists and their journeys towards self-discovery and societal significance, Mary Wollstonecraft, who was the mother of Mary Shelley, penned *Maria; or, The Wrongs of Woman*\* (1798), which critiqued patriarchy in the British community.

Writing in the Victorian period maintained its preoccupation with the person and their "self-consciousness," as described by John Stuart Mill. Since Britain gained notoriety for its industrialization and urbanization during this time, it is considered to have been post-Romantic. As the British Empire expanded across the world, it brought about fast social change and a rise in intellectual interest, particularly among the middle class, which contributed to the kingdom's prosperity. But classicism and the widening gap between the middle class and the working class were exposed by this industrial riches in Britain. Works by Charles Dickens, such as *Great Expectations*\* (1860–1861) and *Our Mutual Friend*\* (1864–1865), shed light on the Victorian era's societal ills, including working-class poverty and the use of child labor.

## 7. The 20<sup>th</sup> Century (1900- 1945)

Doubt and uncertainty were hallmarks of the Realist movement that emerged in the late 19th and early 20th centuries and persisted until the early 1900s. A feeling of loss and isolation was already present at the start of the twentieth century, and it was intensified by the First and Second World Wars, the beginning of the British Empire's decline, and other events. Charles Darwin's theory of evolution prompted writers to explore other worlds and cultures, particularly those of former colonies in Asia and Africa, in an effort to find answers to questions about human originality, as in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*\* (1902). Another benefit of writing in the twentieth century was the freedom it gave authors to question authority figures and

the established religious, political, and social norms. Stream of consciousness, first used by writers like James Joyce and Virginia Woolf, emerged as a result of writers' growing interest in psychoanalysis after Sigmund Freud's writings encouraged them to isolate their characters' minds from the outside world.

## Part II: Component of Fiction

### 1. Plot

Asking "what happened in the story?" helps readers figure out what happens in a story. Put simply, the story's plot is the web of events that weaves the narrative together. In a typical story, one event occurs first, which sets the stage for the subsequent events, and so on (cause-effect order). On the other hand, authors of crime and science fiction frequently employ anachronism, which includes flashbacks (analepsis) and prolepsis, which are flashforwards. Here, the story jumps around in time, either to the past to set the stage for what's to come or to the future to speculate on how things could play out. In longer literary works, these strategies can lead to the creation of subplots that may not be as important as the primary plot.

#### *Plot Structure*

- Exposition: First part of the plot where the author introduces basic information about the story.
- Rising Action: The stage of complications in the story that leads to the main conflict and creates tension.
- Climax / Turning Point: The point of highest tension in the story. The conflict at the climax level of the plot results in a change in the state of things, such with the character's personality.
- Falling Action: The end of the conflict caused during the climax and the complications are solved.
- Resolution / Conclusion: Or denouement, which means the closure of the story. In this stage, the writer tends to showcase the new changes in the characters compared to the beginning of the story.

### 2. Characters

Anything that has human qualities, like emotions, can be a character in a story, whether it's a person, an animal, or an inanimate object. Names or anonymity can be chosen for characters as well. The reader is meant to relate to the characters through their connections to society, even when the characters themselves are fictitious. Flat or spherical characters can exist in literature.

- **Central (main) Figure:** The novel revolves around a round character because the author paints a detailed picture of their (difficult) personality, history, wants, and dreams. The central figure, or "protagonist," is the driving force behind the plot. The hero represents virtue in the story, whereas the antagonist, often known as the villain, acts in opposition to them.

There is typically more than one minor, flat character in a work of literature. The plot barely gives minor characters a one- or two-sentence description and doesn't give them any screen time. Flat characters are often used by writers to emphasize the round character's characteristics or to aid them in accomplishing their objective.

### 3. Narrative Voice, Point of View

Who is narrating the story and what is their position and point of view are revealed by narrative voice or point of view. Contrary to popular belief, contemporary fiction often employs multiple narrative voices rather than just one.

- The most common kind of narration is third-person, which uses the pronouns she, he, and they. With a third-person point of view, the narrator stands outside the story and has no involvement with the characters or plot. The narrator in third person can be either an all-knowing omniscient who knows everything about the story and its characters or a limited narrator who knows only what the protagonist thinks.

First-person narratives utilize the pronoun "I" to describe the narrator, who is an internal figure in the story (not always the protagonist). Despite its subjective nature, first-person narrative gives the reader insight into the thoughts and feelings of the character or narrator.

### 4. Setting

Two components, place and time, make up a story's setting, which informs the reader of when and where the story's events are happening.

- Place: The plot's location, which could be one or more locales.

An important part of every story is the passage of time, which establishes whether events are occurring in the past, the future, or at a certain date (author time).

### 5. Theme

A story's subject is its overarching concept and the major message the author wishes to transmit to the audience. On the other hand, themes might stand in for a set of principles that readers can learn from.

#### Task

In a mind map, write down elements of fiction and apply them to a short story.

# **Lecture Eight: Romantic Poetry – A Study of Selected Poems from the English Romantic Movement**

**Time Frame:** One session

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Central Themes and Techniques**

**Forms of Romantic Poetry**

**Conclusion**

**Course Objectives**

- To define the Romantic period and its core philosophical principles, such as the emphasis on emotion, imagination, and the individual.
- To identify and analyse key Romantic themes (e.g., nature, the sublime, the ordinary, the self) and the literary techniques used to express them.
- To recognise the characteristic forms of Romantic poetry, including the lyric, the ode, the ballad, and the conversational poem, and understand how these forms suited the movement's expressive goals.

**Introduction**

From the late 18th century to the early 19th century, the Romantic age saw a huge change in English literature. Romantic writers pushed feeling, individualism, nature, and imagination as a response to the rationalism of the Enlightenment and the mechanization of the Industrial Revolution. Romanticism is all about "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," according to Abrams (Abrams 76). This talk looks at important works by John Keats, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, William Wordsworth, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

## 1. Central Themes and Techniques

In romantic poems, the natural world is seen as a source of spiritual truth and comfort. In *Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey* by Wordsworth, nature is both a moral teacher and a place to find comfort (Wordsworth 134). In *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* by Coleridge, supernatural elements are mixed with moral metaphor, and the natural order is used as a moral standard (Coleridge 58).

In Shelley's *Ode to the West Wind*, the wind is transformed into a revolutionary force by emotion and fantasy. Keats's *Ode on a Grecian Urn*, on the other hand, thinks about the permanence of art versus the transience of people (Keats 91). *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage* by Byron presents the Byronic hero, who is a figure of sadness, rebellion, and reflection (Byron 105).

## 2. Forms of Romantic Poetry

Romantic poets used a lot of different types of poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge brought blank verse and lyric poems back to life by focusing on the individual. These types of poems, called Horatian odes and Pindaric odes, were written by Keats and Shelley. They had long lines and deep ideas (Stillinger 119). Byron's use of ottava rima, an Italian verse form with eight lines of iambic pentameter (abababcc), shows how dynamic his stories are (Bloom 62).

Romantic language also sounds very different from that of the neoclassical era. Wordsworth believed that poems should use "language really used by men" to be more democratic and emotionally true (Wordsworth 146). One ongoing effect of Romanticism is this change in language.

## Conclusion

The English Romantic movement changed the way poetry was written by focusing on the strength of nature, the imagination, and the human spirit. Romantic poets wrote works that have emotional depth, vivid imagery, and new ways of putting words together. These works are still enjoyed today, across time and countries.

## Task

Read the following poetry and extract the 19th-century elements

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
When all at once I saw a crowd,

A host, of golden daffodils;  
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

**The Second Semester**

# Lecture Nine: Old English Literature – *Beowulf*

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**A Brief Look at *Beowulf***

**Themes, style, and importance in history**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To situate *Beowulf* within the Anglo-Saxon/Old English period and establish its significance as a foundational epic.
- To summarise the plot, key characters (Beowulf, Grendel, the Dragon), and the cultural world of the poem (comitatus, heroism).
- To analyse its major themes (good vs. evil, mortality, fame); identify key stylistic features (alliteration, kennings, caesura); and understand its importance as a historical document and a work of enduring literary value.

**Introduction**

The first works of Old English literature, which is also called Anglo-Saxon literature, were written between the 7th and 11th centuries. It shows a society that was based on heroes and warriors and was greatly influenced by oral history, Germanic mythology, and early Christian values. *Beowulf*, an epic poem with more than 3,000 lines written in Old English, is the most important and long-lasting work from this time. It has themes of bravery, loyalty, fate, and the conflict between the Christian and pagan worldviews (Greenfield 45).

## 1. A Brief Look at *Beowulf*

**Beowulf** is a poem about a Geatish warrior named **Beowulf** who saves King Hrothgar of the Danes by killing the monster Grendel and then Grendel's angry mother. Years later, when **Beowulf** is king of the Geats, he fights and kills a dragon. "It harrowed him / to hear the din of the loud banquet / every day in the hall, the harp being struck / and the clear song of a skilled poet" (*Beowulf*, ll. 87–90) is the first line of the poem. The mead hall of Hrothgar is a symbol of royal power and community delight.

Anglo-Saxon culture was based on tales and performances, like this early scene. Music and stories were used to teach morals and have fun (Fulk and Cain 102).

The character of **Beowulf** is the perfect hero: brave, loyal, and honest. Even though his last fight with the dragon ended in death, it made him famous. **Beowulf**, lines 3180–3182, says, "He was the man most gracious and fair-minded, / kindest to his people and keenest to win fame."

## 2. Themes, style, and importance in history

There are parts of Germanic oral tradition in **Beowulf**, like alliteration, caesura, and kennings, that are mixed with Christian moral commentary that was probably added by later writers (Shippey 68). The theme of wyrd (fate) that comes up over and over again suggests a worldview that was different from Christian one, but there are Christian ideas in the text, like references to God's care (Liuzza 89). The unknown poet writes about fate but comes to the conclusion that God rules everything. This shows how theology at the time was changing.

The poem also talks about family and loyalty, and how the relationship between a fighter and a lord defines social bonds. "They said that of all the kings of the earth, he was the mildest of men and the gentlest, kindest to his people" (*Beowulf*, ll. 3180–3182). The grief of Beowulf's men at his burial pyre shows how loyal he was.

Old English poetry uses kennings, which are compound metaphors like "whale-road" for "sea" or "bone-house" for "body." These add to the vivid images (Cameron 56). Variation, which means repeating ideas with different words, also gives the writing rhythm and focus (Magoun 62).

## Conclusion

**Beowulf** is one of the most important works of English literature. Its mix of myth, moral reflection, and heroic ideals tells us a lot about Anglo-Saxon society and how English narrative poetry got its start. **Beowulf**

is still an important part of studying Old English literature because it is both a work of writing and a record of culture.

### Task

You are invited to read the themes and summary of *Beowulf* for the next session so that we can discuss them together in the classroom.

## Lecture Ten: Middle English Literature

**Time Frame: One session**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**The language and literary elements in the Middle English era**

**Types and themes**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To identify the Middle English era (c. 1066-1485) and the major historical and cultural forces that shaped its literature, especially the Norman Conquest.
- To recognise the evolution of the English language and key literary developments, including the rise of a secular tradition, romance, and allegory.
- To categorise major genres (e.g., Romance, Arthurian Legend, Religious Allegory, Fabliau) and analyse their central themes, such as chivalry, courtly love, and Christian morality.

### Introduction

The Middle English era lasted from 1100 to 1500 and was marked by changes in the language after the Norman Conquest in 1066 and a lot of writing that was influenced by feudalism, Christianity, and courtly culture. During this time, vernacular writing and famous people like the Pearl Poet, William Langland, and

Geoffrey Chaucer came into being. At that time, literature showed different social classes, spiritual metaphor, and the start of secular stories (Treharne 117).

### 1. The language and literary elements

Middle English developed from Old English with help from Norman French, mostly in terms of language and grammar. This change made books available to people other than the clergy and the wealthy. Allegory and dream vision are used in works like *Piers Plowman* by William Langland. In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, the *Pearl* author combines religious and philosophical themes (Borroff 12).

In *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, ll. 276 and 278, there is a famous line that says, "And now I am come to your court, I crave in your hall / A Christmas game."

This line shows how the artist uses chivalric themes to test the bravery of the knight with moral and spiritual results.

### 2. Types and themes

The conflict between body and spirit, social criticism, and moral teaching are some of the main ideas in Middle English writing. For example, *Piers Plowman* criticizes corruption in the Church and the elite, which is similar to worries during the Reformation (Schmidt 58). During this time, secular romance and courtly love become more popular, especially in the works of Chrétien de Troyes and anonymous Middle English tales like *Havelok the Dane*.

There was a lot of religious theatre in the form of morality and mystery plays, which acted out biblical events or moral struggles. For example, to teach salvation, the *Everyman* play gives abstract ideas like Fellowship and Good Deeds personalities (Bevington 243).

### Conclusion

Literary works written in Middle English connect the religious heaviness of the Middle Ages to the growing individuality and vernacular wealth that would define the Renaissance. Because of the wide range of languages and themes, this time is very important for knowing how English literature has changed over time.

### Task

You are invited to read the themes and summary of Geofry Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* for the next session so that we can discuss them together in the classroom.

## Lecture Eleven: Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*

**Time Frame:** One session

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**The structure and themes of the story**

**Writing Methods and Legacy**

**Conclusion**

**Course Objectives**

- Identify the Middle English era (c. 1066-1485) and the major historical and cultural forces that shaped its literature, especially the Norman Conquest.
- To recognise the evolution of the English language and key literary developments, including the rise of a secular tradition, romance, and allegory.
- To categorise major genres (e.g., Romance, Arthurian Legend, Religious Allegory, Fabliau) and analyse their central themes, such as chivalry, courtly love, and Christian morality.

### Introduction

A lot of people call Geoffrey Chaucer, who lived from about 1343 to 1400, the "Father of English Literature" because he was one of the first writers to use everyday Middle English and put together humour, criticism, and social commentary so well. *The Canterbury Tales*, his most famous work, is a frame story

about a group of travellers who are going to Canterbury. Their beliefs, class, and worldview are shown through the stories they tell (Pearsall 106).

### 1. The structure and themes of the story

The structure of *The Canterbury Tales* is similar to Boccaccio's *Decameron*. The frame story lets different types of stories—romance, fabliau, allegory, and saint's tale—exist together. The stories start in the "General Prologue," which has Chaucer's colourful descriptions of the pilgrims as a miniature of English society in the 1400s. Chaucer says this about the Knight: "He was a very fine, good-natured knight" (Canterbury Tales, l. 72).

The Miller's Tale is a raunchy farce, while The Knight's Tale is a love epic. This careful pairing shows how Chaucer felt about class and pretense (Benson 128). "Experience, though none authority / Were in this world, is right enough for me" (Wife of Bath's Prologue, ll. 1–2). This is an early feminist speech about marriage and power.

### 2. Writing Methods and Legacy

Chaucer used iambic pentameter and rhymed couplets, which helped make English poetry more consistent. His new ways of using irony, character development, and social realism inspired writers like Shakespeare and Dryden who came after him (Fisher 97). His ability to show different points of view in one piece of writing shows that he has a complicated, pluralistic view of the world.

Chaucer had a huge impact, not just because of his technical brilliance but also because of how he showed broken, changing people. Donaldson says, "Chaucer speaks to us with an immediacy that is rare in medieval literature" (Donaldson 12).

### Conclusion

*The Canterbury Tales* is a major work of English literature that combines new writing styles with social commentary and different types of stories. Chaucer captures the contradictions of his time with humour and intelligence, giving us a view of people and society that will never go out of style.

## Lecture Twelve: William Shakespeare's Selected Works – A Critical Focus on Hamlet

**Time Frame: Three sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**A Brief Look at Shakespearean Criticism**

***The tragedy of Hamlet* is one of delay, madness, and meaning**

**Language, Death, and the Question of What It All Means**

**Conclusion**

**Course Objectives**

- To understand the major critical approaches to Shakespeare's work and how interpretations of *Hamlet* have evolved over time.
- analyse the play's central critical problems: the reason for Hamlet's delay, the nature of his madness (feigned or real?), and how these elements drive the tragic plot.
- To explore how Shakespeare uses language, the theme of death, and existential questioning to investigate fundamental issues of human existence, action, and morality.

**Introduction**

William Shakespeare is still the most famous author in English writing. He left behind plays, poems, and

important ideas for critical thinking. A huge amount of research, interpretation, and artistic adaptation has been done on his plays and sonnets. Even though writers like Marlowe and Jonson were also important at the time, Shakespeare is still known all over the world. Because he was able to show all of human feeling and moral complexity, his work is not only timeless but also open to many different interpretations (Bloom 3).

## 1. A Brief Look at Shakespearean Criticism

There have been many different stages of criticism of Shakespeare's work. Writers like John Dryden and Samuel Johnson praised Shakespeare's "natural genius" and "understanding of human nature" in the 17th and 18th centuries, but they also said he lacked classical unity and used bad language sometimes (Johnson 25). During the Romantic time, which was led by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Hazlitt, Shakespeare's creative power, psychological depth, and moral insight were praised (Coleridge 67). In the 20th century, there were many critical schools that looked at Shakespeare through different views, such as structuralism, feminism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, and postcolonial theory. For example, Stephen Greenblatt was one of the first reviewers to use New Historicism, a way of reading Shakespeare's works that looks at them in the context of Elizabethan politics and power structures (Greenblatt 78). Feminist readings have looked at figures like Lady Macbeth, Ophelia, and Desdemona in new ways, showing how patriarchy is flawed and harmful (Callaghan 102). Postcolonial critics have also looked at plays like *"The Tempest"* to see how they show race and power (Loomba 145).

In this way, Shakespearean criticism shows how literary theory is always changing, as new generations rethink his work based on their own cultural, political, and aesthetic concerns.

## 2. *The tragedy of Hamlet is one of delay, madness, and meaning.*

Many people think that Hamlet is Shakespeare's most deep and mysterious tragedy. *Hamlet* was written around 1600. It's about Prince Hamlet of Denmark, whose father's ghost tells him to kill his uncle, King Claudius, to get revenge for his death. The play makes you think about death, anger, right and wrong, and how the self is broken up. T. S. Eliot called it "an artistic failure" because it was so hard to understand, but he also said it made him feel very sad (Eliot 124).

Delay has been at the centre of critical debates. Different interpretations have tried to explain why Hamlet does not want to kill his father. Ernest Jones and other Freudians believe that Hamlet's delay is caused by unconscious Oedipal guilt—Claudius has carried out Hamlet's own repressed desires (Jones 93).

Existentialists like Jan Kott see **Hamlet** as a symbol of modern disillusionment because he is stuck in a world where there is no moral clarity (Kott 211). Formalist critics, on the other hand, see the delay as a structural technique that helps Shakespeare build suspense and explore character psychology.

The theme of crazy, both real and fake, runs through the whole play. **Hamlet's** act of being crazy lets him criticize other people without getting in trouble, but it also makes it hard to tell the difference between being normal and being crazy. Shakespeare's famous soliloquy, "To be, or not to be: that is the question," is a deep look at the meaning of life and the fear of the unknown in death (Hamlet 3.1.56). Harold Bloom and other critics say that Hamlet's inner monologues add to the modern idea of selfhood as broken up and internalized (Bloom 41).

As a subject of feminist study, Ophelia has been very important. Her decline into madness and final death show how men limit women's freedom of choice and speech. Elaine Showalter says that Ophelia is both a place of "resistance" and "pathology," because her madness is a reaction to how women were silenced in early modern society (Showalter 222). The conflict between how she acts in public and how she feels privately in her scenes is a lot like Hamlet's own inner struggle.

### 3. Language, Death, and the Question of What It All Means

Hamlet thinks a lot about words and what it can and can't do. There are a lot of metaphors, jokes, and rhetorical figures in the play, and they often make meaning less clear than it is clear. Some critics, like Jonathan Dollimore, say that Hamlet shows a deep doubt about the power of words to communicate truth in a corrupt world (Dollimore 150). The play is political and self-aware as theatre (Hamlet 2.2.606–607). Its focus on spying, performance, and surveillance (e.g., "The play's the thing / Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king") makes this point clear.

Death rules the play, both physically and figuratively. In the scene in the graveyard where Hamlet holds Yorick's skull, he has to face the reality and absurdity of death. Throughout the text, the phrase "something is rotten in the state of Denmark" is used to show how both the body and the state are corrupt (1.4.90). In the last scene, almost all of the main characters die, which fits with the tragedy's dark themes of revenge, hopelessness, and repeating history.

### Conclusion

Because it doesn't give simple answers, Shakespeare's **Hamlet** continues to be interpreted in complex and changing ways. Through **Hamlet**, Shakespeare looks at what it means to do things, think about things,

struggle, and wonder where you belong in the world. As both a written work and a living document, *Hamlet* is still very important to people who study Shakespeare and to people who are interested in exploring human consciousness and societal meaning.

## **Lecture Thirteen: The Rise of the English Novel – Aspects and Major Figures**

**Time Frame:** One session

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**The novel's historical and cultural background**

**Important early novelists and what they did**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define the novel as a new literary form in the 18th century and distinguish it from earlier prose narratives.
- To connect the rise of the novel to contemporary social forces, such as the growth of the middle class, individualism, print culture, and realism.
- To identify the foundational contributions of key authors (e.g., Defoe, Richardson, Fielding, and Austen) to the development of plot, character, and narrative form.

## Introduction

Fiction novels didn't really take off until the 18th century, making them a relatively new type of writing in English. It was a big change from the epic and dramatic traditions of the past. Instead of focusing on big ideas, it focused on individual experience, psychological realism, and social criticism. The novel did not just appear out of nowhere; it grew out of different types of written stories, like travelogues, diaries, romances, and religious allegories, that came together to form a new genre (McKeon 26).

### 1. The novel's historical and cultural background

The book grew in response to more people being able to read and write, the growth of the commercial print market, and the rise of the middle class in Britain. People looked for stories that mirrored their lives, problems, and values as society became more individualistic and people could move around economically (Watt 60). In contrast to poetry or drama, the book showed characters dealing with social and personal problems in a realistic, well-thought-out setting. This new style was adaptable and roomy, providing a large area for satire, teaching morals, and fun (Hunter 91).

Ian Watt's groundbreaking book *The Rise of the Novel* claimed that realism was a key part of the form's rise. Watt (10) said that the novel was different from earlier prose because it focused on "individual experience" and the passage of time. In early books, the main characters were usually regular people, not aristocratic heroes. They had to make choices that were shaped by gender, class, and society.

### 2. Important early novelists and what they did

Daniel Defoe, who is often thought to have written the first English book, made fiction more like journalism. His novel *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) was about survival, faith, and being financially independent. These were all themes that were popular at the time, especially among Protestants and capitalists (Richetti 44). His use of first-person narration and great attention to detail rooted the book in the real and imagined worlds.

Samuel Richardson wrote the first epistolary novel, *Pamela* (1740), which was about virtue and morals in the middle class. His characters who thought a lot about themselves looked at inner emotional turmoil, especially through the lens of gender (Doody 58). *Tom Jones* (1749), on the other hand, by Henry Fielding was funny, made fun of society, and told from an omniscient point of view. It was a parody of Richardson's morality while still being part of the realist project (Battestin 72).

Laurence Sterne and Tristram Shandy (1759–1767) broke formal rules by using asides, metafiction, and unstructured storytelling, which made the idea of a story that makes sense seem impossible. His experimental style was a forerunner of postmodern methods to writing fiction (New 38).

The rise of the English novel is also linked to the writing of women. Many people think that Aphra Behn was the first professional woman writer in England. Her book *Oroonoko* (1688), which mixed romance and early abolitionist criticism, paved the way. Later, Fanny Burney and Ann Radcliffe added more dark and emotional details to the genre, which had an impact on writers like Jane Austen and the Brontë sisters.

### Conclusion

The book became popular because of changes in the economy, culture, and literature. Its change from journalistic reality to psychological and formal experimentation shows how literature and society are always changing together. As we read later novels like *Robinson Crusoe*, we can see how the first novels affected national identity, morals, and the way stories were told.

### Task

Read the summary of *Robinson Crusoe* and focus on the themes

## Lecture Fourteen: Daniel Defoe's The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**Narrative realism and observation of reality**

**Themes of religion and spiritual awakening**

**Business and the Spirit of Capitalism**

**Colonialism and the Controlling of Others**

**The Legacy of Literature and How Critics Reviewed It**

**Conclusion**

**Course Objectives**

- To analyse how early novels used precise, detailed realism to create a convincing illusion of observing true life and individual experience.

- To examine the central role of spiritual autobiography, personal faith, and the quest for salvation within the narrative.
- To explore how literature reflected and shaped the emerging capitalist ethos, portraying themes of trade, economic individualism, and social mobility.
- To critically assess how early English literature depicted and often justified colonial expansion, imperialism, and the subjugation of foreign lands and peoples.
- To evaluate the lasting impact of these early novels on the literary tradition and understand the contemporary critical debates they sparked regarding their moral and artistic value.

## Introduction

The *Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719), written by Daniel Defoe, is one of the most important novels in English literature. The book tells the story of a shipwrecked man who survives on an empty island for twenty-eight years. It is a mix of factual and fictional stories. On the other hand, this adventure story hides a complicated web of religious allegory, capitalist ideology, imperial invasion, and the rise of individualism. In this way, *Robinson Crusoe* is both a personal journey and a political symbol for the time it was written (McKeon 102). When it came out in four editions in its first year, it proved that novels were popular and paved the way for modern narrative realism.

### 1. Narrative realism and observation of reality

*Robinson Crusoe* by Defoe is known for having a storyline that reads like a newspaper article. It looks like a spiritual autobiography because it is written in the first person, which makes it seem like a real story. In great depth, the main character writes about everything that happens to him, from building his shelter to training animals and growing crops (Watt 87). Empiricism was a major intellectual trend during the Enlightenment, and this realist method emphasises it. It also links literature with scientific observation and logical order (Hunter 141).

This careful reality also supports Defoe's Protestant beliefs. Crusoe isn't just staying alive; he's also building a small society based on hard work, discipline, and luck. The way he treats his surroundings shows that he believes people can control chaos and make order through logic and hard work (Backscheider 233). The detailed listings, lists, and well-thought-out plans that are all over the text are not only useful, but they also serve as a metaphor for human control over the world (Downie 99).

### 2. Themes of religion and spiritual awakening

Crusoe goes through a deep faith change, even though he is rebellious and self-centred at first. Early in his

time on the island, he gets sick and thinks his life is in danger. Then he has a spiritual rebirth and realises that his exile is God's punishment for disobeying God and being bad (Rogers 65). He starts to pray every day, read the Bible every day, and see things through a Christian lens. He sees his survival as proof of God's mercy (Defoe 112).

This spiritual aspect fits with the way Puritan and Protestant conversion stories are told, in which being alone and going through pain leads to insight. This means that Crusoe's island is both a physical and a spiritual test—a deserted place where faith is built (Downie 93). His journey is like the story of the Prodigal Son in the Bible. He turned back to the spiritual road after wasting his early life on rebellion and pride (Novak 148).

### 3. Business and the Spirit of Capitalism

One thing that people talk about a lot when they talk about Robinson Crusoe is how it relates to early business. As the main character, the island is like property to him, and he uses the natural resources to make things more comfortable and make money (Watt 69). He even imagines that he is the "king" and "governor" of the island, which supports the idea of private property and rule by rank (Defoe 141).

Marxist critics have said that Crusoe was the perfect example of a bourgeois economic man because he was alone, depended on himself, and was ambitious. Individualism and the capitalist ideal of work as a moral good are both present in him (Moretti 91). His careful record-keeping and smart choices point to the rise of the modern capitalist subject who takes control and output personally (McKeon 105).

Also, the book's ending, with Crusoe going back to Brazil to claim the money he made on his farm, shows how global trade, colonization, and mercantile success can win. So, his time on the island is a metaphor for imperial growth and taking over other countries' economies (Hulme 52).

### 4. Colonialism and the Controlling of Others

The way the book deals with race and invasion is one of its most troubling and telling parts. Crusoe doesn't just stay alive on the island; he makes it his home. He gives people and places names, decides who owns them, and takes control of them. The most important example of this is his friendship with Friday, the native man he "saves" from being eaten by cannibals (Loomba 124).

Crusoe acts like a parent right away, teaching Friday English, turning him to Christianity, and giving him a name. Friday is the quiet, dependable servant who represents Crusoe's goal to bring people together. Some people, like Edward Said, have said that this situation is a perfect example of Western imperialism because it makes the local subject voiceless and subordinate (Said 92).

Postcolonial scholars like Gayatri Spivak and Ania Loomba see Friday's portrayal as a way to silence the

conquered Other in the story. His identity is erased by Crusoe's language and culture, which shows how native voices were ignored in colonial writing (Spivak 251; Loomba 127). But small things in the book, like Friday's silent pushback or random questions, show that subaltern agency is present, even if it isn't fully expressed (Aravamudan 72).

### 5. The Legacy of Literature and How Critics Reviewed It

Robinson Crusoe left a lasting impression on people. It was one of the most copied and widely read books in the world, and many movies and TV shows were based on it. Its structure—lone hero, conflict with nature, and moral reflection—made adventure fiction and the castaway genre what they are today (Keymer 31).

The book has been read critically in many ways over the years, such as a spiritual allegory, a capitalist manifesto, a colonial record, and even a psychological case study of identity and isolation. At first, Defoe was seen more as a journalist and pamphleteer than a writer. However, modern research puts him among the founders of the English novel (Richetti 104).

Modern retellings like J. M. Coetzee's *Foe* look at the Crusoe story from Friday's point of view and criticize Defoe's text's race and narrative assumptions (Coetzee 89). These new readings show that the book is still important to talk about when we talk about empire, language, and power.

### Conclusion

There is a lot of faith, economics, empire, and fiction in Daniel Defoe's "*The Life and Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*" It started a new type of story and dealt with the ideological tensions of the time through its realistic details and moral thoughts. It is still an important work, not just because of its historical importance, but also because it continues to spark debates about colonisation, individualism, and the authority of stories.

# **Lecture Fifteen: The Romantic Movement – Contexts and Key Figures**

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**The philosophical and historical background**

**William Wordsworth and What Everyday People Say**

**Coleridge and the Idea of the Supernatural**

**Byron, Shelley, and the Ideas of the French Revolution**

**John Keats and the Ideal of Beauty**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define the Romantic movement as a reaction against Neoclassicism and the Enlightenment, emphasising emotion, imagination, and nature.

- To connect Romanticism to the revolutionary spirit of the age, particularly the ideals of the American and French Revolutions, and new philosophical ideas about the self and the sublime.
- To analyse Wordsworth's focus on ordinary life, common language, and the way poetry can reveal the extraordinary in the everyday.
- To explore how Coleridge used supernatural elements to create psychological depth and make the unfamiliar feel believable and meaningful.
- To identify how the Revolutionary ideals of liberty and individualism are expressed in the rebellious, passionate, and often politically radical works of Byron and Shelley.
- To understand Keats's philosophy of "Negative Capability" and his pursuit of beauty and truth through sensuous imagery and classical themes.

## Introduction

English writing changed a lot during the Romantic Movement, which lasted from the late 1700s to the early 1900s. As a response to the Enlightenment's focus on reason and scientific objectivity, it praised emotion, individualism, nature, and the mind. Romanticism grew out of political and economic revolutions that changed how people interacted with each other and with nature. People like William Wordsworth, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and John Keats were very important to the movement. They all changed the way people wrote (Curran 3).

### 1. The philosophical and historical background

Romanticism grew during a time of huge change: the Industrial Revolution, the French Revolution (1789), and the American Revolution (1776) all changed society and politics. Because of this, Romantic writers often stressed the worth of each person and the need for emotional honesty, rejecting neoclassical order and logic (Blanning 2021). Romantic literature was greatly affected by Jean-Jacques Rousseau's ideas, especially his view that people are good by nature but become bad because of society (Rousseau 71). Romantic writers opposed industrialization in cities, which they saw as dehumanizing, by praising life in the country and nature that had not been changed (Bate 104).

## 2. William Wordsworth and What Everyday People Say

Wordsworth tried to make poems more real. He is often called the "father of English Romanticism." In *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), which he wrote with Coleridge, he argued for using everyday language and using everyday events to show deep emotions. In the introduction to the second version (1802), he explains his groundbreaking ideas about poetry: "Poetry is the spontaneous outflow of strong feelings... recollected in tranquillity" (Wordsworth 263). Wordsworth writes deeply personal poems like "*Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey*" that are full of thought and feeling. These poems are about memory, nature, and personal growth.

## 3. Coleridge and the Idea of the Supernatural

Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote about the supernatural and the magical to go with Wordsworth's naturalism. Coleridge mixes Christian allegory with Gothic horror in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. He shows guilt and salvation through vivid imagery and masterful rhythm (Abrams 197). He thought there was a creative power called the "secondary imagination" that could change reality and bring spiritual facts to the surface (Coleridge 314). His philosophical and psychological ideas helped to build the Romantic tradition of literary critique (Lead 47).

## 4. Byron, Shelley, and the Ideas of the French Revolution

Romanticism's unruly spirit was summed up by Lord Byron. His works like Childe Harold's Pilgrimage and Don Juan show the Byronic hero as passionate, cynical, and unwilling to follow social rules (Bone 188). Byron's own scandalous life and absence made him even more of a myth. On the other hand, Percy Shelley's protest was more intellectual and based on ideals. In "Ode to the West Wind," he asks nature to bring about revolutionary change: "Roll my dead thoughts over the universe/Like withered leaves to speed up a new birth!" (Shelley 340). Shelley's writing, which was influenced by radical Enlightenment ideas, combines political vision with lyrical beauty (O'Neill 116).

## 5. John Keats and the Ideal of Beauty

It's clear that John Keats cared deeply about the sensual and spiritual power of art. In contrast to Shelley and Byron, Keats wrote about beauty, death, and the passing of time. His odes, especially "*Ode to a Nightingale*" and "*Ode on a Grecian Urn*" look at how art can keep times that are fleeting alive. His ideas about beauty are summed up in the line "Beauty is truth, truth beauty—that is all you know on earth, and all you need to know" (Keats 236). In Romanticism, mystery and emotional complexity were valued. Keats's

idea of "negative capability," or the ability to live in doubt without needing facts or logic, shows this (Keats 212).

### Conclusion

English writing was changed by the Romantic Movement, which rejected the rationalism of the Enlightenment in favour of imagination, emotion, and personal experience. Romantic poets created a very important view of what writing should do through nature, personal reflection, rebellion, and beauty. Not only do their works live on in the tradition, but people still value self-expression and the power of feeling.

### Task

The following poem is written by William Wordsworth, entitled as I wandered lonely as a cloud . Read it closely reading and extract the themes and key words related to the Romantic Movement

I wandered lonely as a cloud  
 That floats on high o'er vales and hills,  
 When all at once I saw a crowd,  
 A host, of golden daffodils;  
 Beside the lake, beneath the trees,  
 Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine  
 And twinkle on the milky way,  
 They stretched in never-ending line  
 Along the margin of a bay:  
 Ten thousand saw I at a glance,  
 Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced; but they  
 Out-did the sparkling waves in glee:  
 A poet could not but be gay,  
 In such a jocund company:  
 I gazed—and gazed—but little thought  
 What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie  
 In vacant or in pensive mood,  
 They flash upon that inward eye  
 Which is the bliss of solitude;  
 And then my heart with pleasure fills,  
 And dances with the daffodils.

# **Lecture Sixteen: The Victorian Era – Realism and Social Reform in Literature**

**Time Frame: Two sessions**

**Course Outline:**

**Introduction**

**In the Social Novel and Realism**

**Roles for men and women and the "woman question"**

**Science, Faith, and Doubt**

**Empire and Self**

**Conclusion**

**Task**

**Course Objectives**

- To define the Social Novel and Literary Realism as dominant 19th-century movements focused on depicting contemporary society with accuracy and a reformist impulse.
- To analyse how novels of this era exposed social problems (e.g., industrialisation, class conflict, poverty) and portrayed the lives of ordinary people.

- To examine how literature explored and challenged rigid gender roles, the "separate spheres" ideology, and the burgeoning debate over women's rights and place in society.
- To investigate the literary response to scientific advancements (like Darwinism) and the ensuing crisis of religious faith, exploring themes of scepticism and moral uncertainty.
- To explore the relationship between the British Empire and the individual, analysing how novels reflected imperial ideologies, encounters with the "Other," and the effects of empire on the national and personal identity.

## Introduction

The Victorian age lasted from 1837 to 1901, during the reign of Queen Victoria. It was a time of rapid industrialization, urbanization, scientific progress, and moral conservatism in Britain. During this exciting time, the realistic novel came into being. These books tried to show life with moral clarity and social purpose. To deal with the complicated issues of class, gender, empire, and reform, literature became a mirror of modern life. During this time, writers like Charles Dickens, Elizabeth Gaskell, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy helped shape the literary environment by writing about important social issues with moral depth (Altick 116).

### 1. In the Social Novel and Realism

Victorian realism tried to show the world as it really was by focusing on character growth, moral conflict, and the social setting. The realist book usually had complicated plots, realistic settings, and characters from a wide range of social classes. This style let writers criticize institutions like the government, the workplace, and schools (Leavis 84). The never-ending Jarndyce case in Charles Dickens's *Bleak House*, for example, shows how corrupt and ineffective the British judicial system is.

North and South by Elizabeth Gaskell shows the class differences between industrial capitalists and workers and how hard it is to get along with each other during a time of change (Gaskell 203). The way she portrayed the working class with sympathy showed that she was a Unitarian and believed in social justice and change (Uglow 97). So, realist fiction wasn't just about describing things; it also told people how to act morally in the social world (Langland 65).

### 2. Roles for men and women and the "woman question"

During the Victorian era, there was a lot of writing about women's roles in society. Women's schooling, jobs, and the right to vote were at the centre of the "woman question" in the works of Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning (Poovey 172). Brontë's Jane Eyre is about a character who fights for respect, love, and equality, which shows how independent and strong women can be (Brontë 214).

Middlemarch by George Eliot looks at the mental and emotional struggles of women, especially through Dorothea Brooke, whose ideals are thwarted by the rules set by men (Eliot 179). These stories didn't always support radical feminism. Rather, they often praised women's moral and intellectual strengths and criticized a society that didn't give them similar chances (Showalter 103).

### 3. Science, Faith, and Doubt

Victorian writing also showed how uncertain people were about religion at the time. When Charles Darwin's book *On the Origin of Species* came out in 1859, it challenged standard Christian cosmology and raised existential questions that had a huge impact on writers (Darwin 195). In his poem "*Dover Beach*" Matthew Arnold shows how people lose their religious faith when the "sea of faith" goes away, leaving behind doubt and confusion (Arnold 129).

Some writers, like Thomas Hardy, had a sad view of life and thought that the world might not care about or be hostile to human goals. Hardy shows Tess as a victim of strict morals and fate in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, which suggests a world without gods and where justice is hard to find (Hardy 274). These conflicts between religion, science, and fate became very important to Victorians (Beer 148).

### 4. Empire and Self

Literature reacted to Britain's growth by both praising and criticizing it. Some of Rudyard Kipling's poems, like "The White Man's Burden," supported imperialism by saying it was Britain's job to bring civilization to the "savage" world (Kipling 321). Still, some writers were less sure. In *Great Expectations*, Dickens criticizes colonial wealth by making Magwitch, an Australian prisoner, the source of Pip's wealth. This calls into question the morals of empire (Flint 119).

So, the Victorian book showed Britain's troubled conscience: it praised national pride and progress while also showing how killing people can hurt people. Literature was a place where people fought over morals, national identity, and royal power (Brantlinger 88).

## Conclusion

Victorian writing paints a complicated, multifaceted picture of a country that was changing. Realist ideas helped people deal with the moral issues of modern life, and writers wrote about the era's social, spiritual, and national problems. These works of literature not only entertained, but they also taught, motivated, and sparked change. This shows that literature has always had the power to reflect and change society.

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## Appendix one: Final Exam First semester

### ACTIVITY ONE : Find out the appropriate term .(06pts)

1-Where and when the events take place in the story refer to .....

2-The literary term that refers to the sequence of events in the story is.....

3-.....is term that refers to an object , place or animal that stands for something larger than itself.

4-The writer of verse is called.....

5-The living elements of the world of fiction are .....

6-The figure of speech in which the whole is replaced by the part is .....

### ACTIVITY TWO: Correct the wrong statements and write true next to the correct ones.(06pts)

1-Onomatopoeia is one important example of figurative language.....

2.The sentence “ My mother is the candle of the house” contains a simile.....

- 3- Lyrical Ballads is a famous book that was written by George Orwell.....
- 4-The repetition of the same sound, usually a consonant, at the beginning of words in close proximity is called assonance.....
- 5-Literary works have no contribution in changing history.....
- 6-One of the major themes of the Daffodils is women's place in society.....

**ACTIVITY THREE : Read carefully the following poem , then answer the questions. (08pts)**

**FIRST POEM**

**NOTHING GOLD CAN STAY BY ROBERT FROST**

-Nature's first green is gold,

-Her hardest hue to hold.

Her early leaf's a flower;

But only so an hour.

Then leaf subsides to leaf.

So Eden sank to grief,

So dawn goes down to day.

Nothing gold can stay.

**Explanation of the poem**

- In early spring, the fresh buds on the trees are gold. This color is the quickest to disappear from the natural world, however. The fresh blossoms on the trees are flowers, but these flowers disappear quickly too. They turn into leaves that fall to the ground, just as humankind fell from the paradise of the Garden of Eden, and just as the promising early light of morning gives way to daytime. Nothing beautiful, fresh, or pure can last forever.

- STUDENTS CAN EXTRACT EXAMPLES OF :

**A metaphor:**

**Personification:**

**Symbol:**

**Alliteration:**

**Musical Sound Device:**

**Theme:**

## **Appendix two: Final Exam, Second semester**

### **ACTIVITY ONE: Correct the wrong statements and write true next to the correct ones.(07pts)**

- 1-Macbeth is a famous play that was written by Charles Dickens.....
- 2-One of the famous themes of Robinson Crusoe is jealousy.....
- 3-The first part of the Middle Ages is called the Dark Ages.....
- 7-In Old English literature , Evil is symbolized by monsters and good is promoted through heroes.....
- 5-The famous literary work The Canterbury Tales belong to the Elizabethan Age.....
- 6-One of the of feature of Renaissance is an interest on Magic.....
- 4-The Middle English Period is divided into three major periods.....

### **ACTIVITY TWO : Find out the appropriate term .(07pts)**

- 1-It is a rhymed poem of 14 lines that appeared during the Elizabethan Age  
.....
- 2-..... causes Crusoe to end up on the island.
- 3-It is a kind of play that is intentionally funny either in its characters or its action.....
- 4-The Golden Age is another name that is given to.....

- 5-..... is the place where Crusoe spends most of the story.
- 6-.....is The heroic poem that is considered as the highest achievement of Old English .....
- 7-It is a narrative of a book length typically characterized by its complexity of plot, depth of character, development and exploration of themes and ideas.....

**ACTIVITY THREE : Read carefully the following extract , then answer the questions. (06pts)**

I cast my eye to the stranded vessel, when, the breach and froth of the sea being so big, I could hardly see it, it lay so far of; and considered, Lord! how was it possible I could get on shore

After I had solaced my mind with the comfortable part of my condition, I began to look round me, to see what kind of place I was in, and what was next to be done; and I soon found my comforts abate, and that, in a word, I had a dreadful deliverance; for I was wet, had no clothes to shift me, nor anything either to eat or drink to comfort me; neither did I see any prospect before me but that of perishing with hunger or being devoured by wild beasts; and that which was particularly afflicting to me was, that I had no weapon, either to hunt and kill any creature for my sustenance, or to defend myself against any other creature that might desire to kill me for theirs. In a word, I had nothing about me but a knife, a tobacco-pipe, and a little tobacco in a box. This was all my provisions; and this threw me into such terrible agonies of mind, that for a while I ran about like a madman. Night coming upon me, I began with a heavy heart to consider what would be my lot if there were any ravenous beasts in that country, as at night they always come abroad for their prey.

All the remedy that offered to my thoughts at that time was to get up into a thick bushy tree like a fir, but thorny, which grew near me, and where I resolved to sit all night, and consider the next day what death I should die, for as yet I saw no prospect of life. I walked about a furlong from the shore, to see if I could find any fresh water to drink, which I did, to my great joy; and having drank, and put a little tobacco into my mouth to prevent hunger, I went to the tree, and getting up into it, endeavoured to place myself so that if I should sleep I might not fall. And having cut me a short stick, like a truncheon, for my defence, I took up my lodging; and having been excessively fatigued, I fell fast asleep, and slept as comfortably as, I believe, few could have done in my condition, and found myself more refreshed with it than, I think, I ever was on such an occasion.

Daniel Defoe

1-What do you know about the writer's novel ? Explain briefly

.....

.....

.....

.....

2-Where is the story set (place) ? Prove from the text

.....

.....

.....

3-Why did the character get frightened at night ?

.....

4--Extract the major theme in this passage and explain it

.....

.....

.....

.....

**BEST WISHES**

### **Appendix Three: Fiction: Reading Task**

\*Read the following short story and identify the studied components of fiction used in it.

#### The Tale of Johnny Town-Mouse (1918) by Beatrix Potter

Johnny Town-mouse was born in a cupboard. Timmy Willie was born in a garden. Timmy Willie was a little country mouse who went to town by mistake in a hamper. The gardener sent vegetables to town once a week by carrier; he packed them in a big hamper.

The gardener left the hamper by the garden gate, so that the carrier could pick it up when he passed. Timmy Willie crept in through a hole in the wicker-work, and after eating some peas—Timmy Willie fell fast asleep.

He awoke in a fright, while the hamper was being lifted into the carrier's cart. Then there was a jolting, and a clattering of horse's feet; other packages were thrown in; for miles and miles—jolt—jolt—jolt! and Timmy Willie trembled amongst the jumbled-up vegetables.

At last the cart stopped at a house, where the hamper was taken out, carried in, and set down. The cook gave the carrier sixpence; the back door banged, and the cart rumbled away. But there was no quiet; there seemed to be hundreds of carts passing. Dogs barked; boys whistled in the street; the cook laughed, the

parlour maid ran up and down-stairs; and a canary sang like a steam engine.

Timmy Willie, who had lived all his life in a garden, was almost frightened to death. Presently the cook opened the hamper and began to unpack the vegetables. Out sprang the terrified Timmy Willie.

Up jumped the cook on a chair, exclaiming "A mouse! a mouse! Call the cat! Fetch me the poker, Sarah!" Timmy Willie did not wait for Sarah with the poker; he rushed along the skirting board till he came to a little hole, and in he popped.

He dropped half a foot, and crashed into the middle of a mouse dinner party, breaking three glasses.—“Who in the world is this?” inquired Johnny Town-mouse. But after the first exclamation of surprise he instantly recovered his manners.

With the utmost politeness he introduced Timmy Willie to nine other mice, all with long tails and white neckties. Timmy Willie’s own tail was insignificant. Johnny Town-mouse and his friends noticed it; but they were too well bred to make personal remarks; only one of them asked Timmy Willie if he had ever been in a trap?

The dinner was of eight courses; not much of anything, but truly elegant. All the dishes were unknown to Timmy Willie, who would have been a little afraid of tasting them; only he was very hungry, and very anxious to behave with company manners. The continual noise upstairs made him so nervous, that he dropped a plate. “Never mind, they don’t belong to us,” said Johnny.

“Why don’t those youngsters come back with the dessert?” It should be explained that two young mice, who were waiting on the others, went skirmishing upstairs to the kitchen between courses. Several times they had come tumbling in, squeaking and laughing; Timmy Willie learnt with horror that they were being chased by the cat. His appetite failed, he felt faint. “Try some jelly?” said Johnny Town-mouse.

“No? Would you rather go to bed? I will show you a most comfortable sofa pillow.”

The sofa pillow had a hole in it. Johnny Town-mouse quite honestly recommended it as the best bed, kept exclusively for visitors. But the sofa smelt of cat. Timmy Willie preferred to spend a miserable night under the fender.

It was just the same next day. An excellent breakfast was provided—for mice accustomed to eat bacon; but Timmy Willie had been reared on roots and salad. Johnny Town-mouse and his friends racketted about under the floors, and came boldly out all over the house in the evening. One particularly loud crash had been caused by Sarah tumbling downstairs with the tea-tray; there were crumbs and sugar and smears of jam to be collected, in spite of the cat.

Timmy Willie longed to be at home in his peaceful nest in a sunny bank. The food disagreed with him; the noise prevented him from sleeping. In a few days he grew so thin that Johnny Town-mouse noticed it, and questioned him. He listened to Timmy Willie’s story and inquired about the garden. “It sounds rather a dull place? What do you do when it rains?”

“When it rains, I sit in my little sandy burrow and shell corn and seeds from my Autumn store. I peep out at the thristles and blackbirds on the lawn, and my friend Cock Robin. And when the sun comes out again, you should see my garden and the flowers—roses and pinks and pansies—no noise except the birds and bees, and the lambs in the meadows.”

“There goes that cat again!” exclaimed Johnny Town-mouse. When they had taken refuge in the coal-cellar he resumed the conversation; “I confess I am a little disappointed; we have endeavoured to entertain you, Timothy William.”

“Oh yes, yes, you have been most kind; but I do feel so ill,” said Timmy Willie.

“It may be that your teeth and digestion are unaccustomed to our food; perhaps it might be wiser for you to return in the hamper.”

“Oh? Oh!” cried Timmy Willie.

“Why of course for the matter of that we could have sent you back last week,” said Johnny rather huffily—“did you not know that the hamper goes back empty on Saturdays?”

So Timmy Willie said good-bye to his new friends, and hid in the hamper with a crumb of cake and a withered cabbage leaf; and after much jolting, he was set down safely in his own garden.

Sometimes on Saturdays he went to look at the hamper lying by the gate, but he knew better than to get in again. And nobody got out, though Johnny Town-mouse had half promised a visit.

The winter passed; the sun came out again; Timmy Willie sat by his burrow warming his little fur coat and sniffing the smell of violets and spring grass. He had nearly forgotten his visit to town. When up the sandy path all spick and span with a brown leather bag came Johnny Town-mouse!

Timmy Willie received him with open arms. “You have come at the best of all the year, we will have herb pudding and sit in the sun.”

“H’m’m! it is a little damp,” said Johnny Town-mouse, who was carrying his tail under his arm, out of the mud.

“What is that fearful noise?” he started violently.

“That?” said Timmy Willie, “that is only a cow; I will beg a little milk, they are quite harmless, unless they happen to lie down upon you. How are all our friends?”

Johnny's account was rather middling. He explained why he was paying his visit so early in the season; the family had gone to the sea-side for Easter; the cook was doing spring cleaning, on board wages, with particular instructions to clear out the mice. There were four kittens, and the cat had killed the canary.

"They say we did it; but I know better," said Johnny Town-mouse. "Whatever is that fearful racket?"

"That is only the lawn-mower; I will fetch some of the grass clippings presently to make your bed. I am sure you had better settle in the country, Johnny."

"H'm'm—we shall see by Tuesday week; the hamper is stopped while they are at the sea-side." "I am sure you will never want to live in town again," said Timmy Willie.

But he did. He went back in the very next hamper of vegetables; he said it was too quiet!!

One place suits one person, another place suits another person. For my part I prefer to live in the country, like Timmy Willie.

## Appendix Four: Poetry: Reading Task

Extract from the poems' figures of speech

### 1- Pied Beauty by Gerard Manley Hopkins

All things counter, original, spare, strange;  
 Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)  
     With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;  
     He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change:  
         Praise him.

### 2- The Bells by Edgar Allan Poe

How they clang, and clash, and roar!  
     What a horror they outpour  
     On the bosom of the palpitating air!  
         Yet the ear, it fully knows,  
             By the twanging,  
             And the clangling,

### 3- The Tyger by William Blake

Tyger Tyger, burning bright,  
     In the forests of the night;  
     What immortal hand or eye,

Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

#### 4- Measure for Measure by William Shakespeare

Most strange, but yet most truly will I speak.  
 That Angelo's forsworn, is it not strange?  
 That Angelo's a murderer, is 't not strange?  
 That Angelo is an adulterous thief,

#### 5- John Donne's Death, Be Not Proud

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee  
 Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;

#### 6- Edgar Allan Poe's For Annie

Thank Heaven! the crisis,  
 The danger, is past,  
 And the lingering illness  
 Is over at last—  
 And the fever called "Living"  
 Is conquered at last.

#### 7- Lewis Carroll's The Walrus and the Carpenter

The sun was shining on the sea,  
 Shining with all his might:  
 He did his very best to make  
 The billows smooth and bright —  
 And this was odd, because it was  
 The middle of the night.

#### 8- Lori McBride's A Broken Family Tree

I am one of many  
 Small branches of a broken tree,  
 Always looking to the ones above  
 For guidance, strength and security.