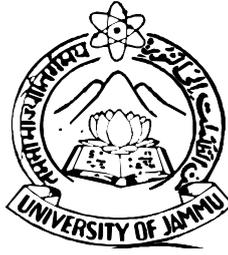


**Directorate of Distance Education
University of Jammu
Jammu**



**SELF LEARNING MATERIAL
FOR
B.A. SEMESTER- III**

SUBJECT : ENGLISH LITERATURE

UNIT : I-IV

COURSE NO. EL 301

Lesson No. 1 to 16

DR. HINA S. ABROL
COURSE CO-ORDINATOR

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B. A. SEMESTER - III
ENGLISH LITERATURE

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ENGLISH LITERATURE

B.A. SEMESTER-III

Syllabus for the Examination to be held in Dec. 2017, 2018, 2019 & 2020

Course No. EL 301 (Theory)

Title-English Literature

Duration of Exam: 3 hrs.

Total Marks: 100

Semester End Examination: 80

Internal Assessment: 20

Objective: The objective of this paper is to acquaint the students with the English milieu and literature written during seventeenth century with special reference to prose, drama and cavalier, puritan and metaphysical poetry. Through the in-depth study of Macbeth the students will be able to understand Shakespearean tragedy. They will also study poetry from 1600 to 1660 with special reference to the prominent poets like John Donne, Andrew Marvel, John Milton and John Suckling.

UNIT I

LITERARY TERMS

Aestheticism, Alazon, Agon, Eiron, Black Comedy, Pastoral, Pathetic Fallacy, Fable, Picaresque, Metonymy, Slipslop, Meiosis, Parable.

UNIT II

HISTORY

Lesson 3 & 4 Development of Tragedy till Shakespeare.

Lesson 5 Literature in the age of Charles I (Prose, Drama, cavalier and Metaphysical Poetry)

- Lesson 6 The Puritan Prose.
Lesson 7 The Puritan Poetry.

UNIT III

Drama

William Shakespeare: Macbeth (Detailed) References.

UNIT IV

Poetry

John Donne: The Flea

Andrew Marvell: To His Coy Mistress

John Milton: On His Blindness

John Suckling: A Ballad Upon a Wedding

Mode of Examination

The Paper will be divided into Sections A, B & C

Section-A: Multiple Choice Questions

Section A will have 12 MCQs covering all the units. Students will write the correct answers of any 8 in the answer sheets. (8x1=8 Marks)

Section-B: Short answer type questions

Section B will have short answer questions from Unit I to Unit V. Four out of Five will have to be attempted by the students. (4x4=16 Marks)

Section-C: Long Answer type questions

Section C will have four long answer type questions from Unit II to Unit V with internal choice from the same unit. Candidate will be required to attempt all in about 250-300 words. (14x4=56 Marks)

SUGGESTED READING

- 1) A Glossary of Literary terms Eleventh Edition by M.H. Abrams, Geoffrey Harpham. Cengage Learning.
- 2) History of English Literature by N. Jayapalan. Atlantic Publishers.
- 3) A Compendious History of English Literature by R.D. Trivedi. Vikas Publication house.
- 4) A literary History of England: The Restoration and Eighteenth Century (1660-1789) by G. Sherburne and D.F. Bond. Albert Croll Baugh.
- 5) William Shakespeares Macbeth: A source book Ed. Alexander Leggatt. Routledge Guides to Literature.
- 6) John Donne The Flea and Andrew Marvell To His Coy Mistress by Daniela Schulze. Grin Publishers.
- 7) John Milton: A Short Introduction by Roy Flannagan. Blackwell Publication.
- 8) The Facts on File Companion to British Poetry: 17th and 18th Centuries by Virginia Brackett. Infobase publication.

B.A. ENGLISH LITERATURE
SEMESTER-III
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INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY TERMS

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Objectives
- 1.3 Literary Terms
- 1.4 Glossary
- 1.5 SAQ/ Possible Answers
- 1.6 Examination Oriented Questions
- 1.7 Suggested Readings
- 1.8 References

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Literary terms are words used in discussions, classification, criticism and analysis of poetry, novels, and other works of literature.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is:

- To introduce the learners to the literary terms.
- To help learners differentiate various forms of writing and literary devices.

1.3 LITERARY TERMS

1.3.1 Aestheticism

Aestheticism also known as the Aesthetic Movement is an intellectual and art movement supporting the emphasis of aesthetic values more than socio-political themes for literature, fine art, music and other arts. It can be defined broadly as the elevation of taste and the pursuit of beauty as chief principles in art and in life. This meant that Art during this particular movement focused more on being beautiful rather than having a deeper meaning - 'Art for Art's sake'. In the context of British literature there is considerable controversy about when and where aestheticism occurs; but a line can be traced from the art criticism of John Ruskin in the 1850s, through the artists and writers of the Pre-Raphaelite movement and the writings of Walter Pater, to the works of Oscar Wilde and the flowering of decadent poetry of the 1890s. The movement drew upon the formula of "l'art pour l'art"—art for art's sake—articulated most memorably by the French novelist Théophile Gautier in his 1836 preface to *Mademoiselle de Maupin*. Gautier was one of a number of French writers and artists of the period who argued that art should be evaluated with reference to its own criteria. In aestheticism the subjective view of beauty becomes the primary means of judging value: when considering whether a poem or a painting is good, aestheticism merely asks if it is beautiful or meaningful as a work of art in itself. This forms a stark contrast to the long-standing custom of judging art and literature either on the basis of the moral lessons it might teach to readers or viewers (its social usefulness) or in terms of its correspondence to real life (its realism). It is this refusal to acknowledge the primacy of morality within art that made aestheticism such a controversial movement from the mid 19th century onward: its proponents were the subjects of vituperative attacks from mainstream writers and critics and were consistently satirized throughout this period. The category of aestheticism is a notoriously slippery one and can overlap with and encompass the categories of Pre-Raphaelitism, decadence, symbolism,

and early modernism. In the 19th century, it was related to other movements such as symbolism or decadence represented in France, or decadentismo represented in Italy, and may be considered the British version of the same style.

The artists and writers of Aesthetic style tended to profess that the Arts should provide refined sensuous pleasure, rather than convey moral or sentimental messages. As a consequence, they did not accept John Ruskin, Matthew Arnold, and George MacDonald's conception of art as something moral or useful, "Art for truth's sake". Instead, they believed that Art did not have any didactic purpose; it only needed to be beautiful. The Aesthetes developed a cult of beauty, which they considered the basic factor of art. Life should copy Art, they asserted. They considered nature as crude and lacking in design when compared to art. The main characteristics of the style were: suggestion rather than statement, sensuality, great use of symbols, and synaesthetic/Ideasthetic effects—that is, correspondence between words, colours and music. Music was used to establish mood.

Predecessors of the Aesthetics included John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley, and some of the Pre-Raphaelites. In Britain the best representatives were Oscar Wilde and Algernon Charles Swinburne, both influenced by the French Symbolists, and James McNeill Whistler and Dante Gabriel Rossetti.

1.3.2 Alazon

Alazon is one of the three stock characters in comedy of the theatre in ancient Greece. A character characterized by arrogance, misplaced self-confidence, and a failure to recognize irony. He is a stupid braggart who is easily tricked by the clever Erion. He is the opponent of Erion. The Alazon is an imposter that sees himself as greater than he actually is. The Senexiratus (the angry father) and the miles gloriosus (the gloriolus soldier) are two types of alazon.

‘Miles Gloriosus’ (meaning braggart soldier in Latin) is a stock character of a boastful soldier from the comic theatre of ancient Rome, and variations on this character have appeared in drama and fiction ever since.

1.3.3 Agon

Agon is an ancient Greek term for a struggle or contest. This could be a contest in athletics, in chariot or horse racing , or in music or literature at a public festival in ancient Greece. Agon is the word forming element in ‘agony’, explaining the concept of agon(y) in tragedy by its fundamental characters, the protagonist and antagonist.

In literary context Harold Bloom uses the term in ‘The Western Canon’ to refer to the attempt by a writer to resolve an intellectual conflict between his ideas and the ideas of an influential predecessor in which ‘the larger swallows the smaller’.

1.3.4 Eiron

In the theatre of ancient Greece, the Eiron was one of three stock characters in comedy. The Eiron usually succeeded in bringing down his braggart opponent by understating his own abilities. The Eiron developed in Greek Old Comedy and can be found in many of Aristophanes’ plays.

The philosopher Aristotle names the Eiron in his Nicomachean Ethics, where he says: “In the form of understatement, self-deprecation, and its possessor the self-deprecation”. In this passage, Aristotle establishes the Eiron as one of the main characters of comedy, along with the Alazon. The modern term ‘irony’ is derived from the Eiron of the classical Greek theatre. Irony entails opposition between the actual meaning and the apparent meaning of something.

1.3.5 Black Comedy

Black comedy or dark comedy is a comic style that makes light of subject matter that is generally considered taboo. Literary critics have associated black comedy and black humour with authors as early as the ancient

Greeks with Aristophanes. It is a writing that juxtaposes morbid or ghastly elements with comical ones that underscore the senselessness or futility of life. Black humour often uses farce and low comedy to make clear that individuals are helpless victims of fate and character. Black comedy corresponds to the earlier concept of gallows humour. The term Black Humour was coined by the surrealist theorist Andre Breton in 1935 while interpreting the writings of Jonathan Swift. Breton's preference was to identify some of Swift's writings as a subgenre of comedy and satire in which laughter arises from cynicism and scepticism often relying on topics such as death. Breton coined the term for his book "Anthology of Black Humour" in which he credited Jonathan Swift as the originator of black humour and gallows humour.

The term black comedy or dark comedy has been later derived as alternatives to Breton's term. In black humour, topics and events that are usually regarded as taboo are treated in an unusually humorous or satirical manner while retaining their seriousness; the intent of black comedy, therefore, is often for the audience to experience both laughter and discomfort.

The purpose of black comedy is to make light of serious and often taboo subject matter; some comedians use it as a tool for exploring vulgar issues, thus provoking discomfort and serious thought as well as amusement in their audience. Popular themes of the genre include violence (murder, abuse, domestic violence, rape, torture, war, genocide, terrorism, corruption), discrimination (chauvinism, racism, sexism, homophobia), religion and barbarism.

1.3.6 Pastoral

A deliberately conventional poem expressing an urban poet's nostalgic image of the supposed peace and simplicity of the life of shepherds and other rural folk in an idealised natural setting. The conventions that hundreds of later poets imitated from Virgil's imitations of Theocritus

include a shepherd reclining under a spreading beech tree and meditating on the rural muse, or piping as though he would never grow old, or engaging in a friendly singing contest, or expressing his good or bad fortune in a love affair, or grieving over the death of a fellow shepherd. From this last type developed the 'pastoral elegy', which persisted long after the other traditional types had lost their popularity. Other terms often used synonymously with pastoral are idyll, from the Title of Theocritus' pastorals; 'eclogue' meaning 'selection' from the title of Virgil's pastorals; and 'bucolic' poetry, from the Greek word for 'herdsman'. Classical poets often described the pastoral life as possessing features of the mythical golden age. Christian pastoralists conjoined the golden age of pagan fable with the Garden of Eden in the Bible and also exploited the religious symbolism of 'shepherd' to give pastoral poems a Christian range of reference. In the Renaissance, the traditional pastoral was also adapted to diverse satirical and allegorical uses. Edmund Spenser's 'Shepherd's Calendar' 1579, which popularized the mode in English poetry, included most of the varieties of pastoral poems current in that period.

Such was the attraction of the pastoral dream that Renaissance writers incorporated it into various other literary forms. Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia' 1581-84 was a long pastoral romance written in an elaborately artful prose.

The last important series of traditional pastorals, and an extreme instance of their calculated and graceful display of high artifice, was Alexander Pope's 'Pastorals' 1709. Five years later John Gay, in his 'Shepherd's week', wrote a parody of the type by applying its elegant formulas to the crudity of actual rustic manners and language; by doing so, he inadvertently showed later poets the way to the seriously realistic treatment of rural life.

In 'Some Versions of Pastoral' 1935, William Empson identified as pastoral any work that opposes simple to complicated life, to the

advantage of the former: the simple life may be that of the shepherd, the child, or the working man. In Empson's view this literary mode serves as an oblique way to criticize the values and hierarchical class structure of the society of its time. Empson accordingly applies the term to works ranging from Andrew Marvell's 17th century poem 'The Garden' to Lewis Carroll's 'Alice in Wonderland' and the modern

1.3.7 Pathetic Fallacy

The term pathetic fallacy is a literary term for the attributing of human emotion and conduct to all aspects within nature. It is a kind of personification that is found in poetic writing when, for example, clouds seem sullen, when leaves dance, or when rocks seem indifferent. The British cultural critic John Ruskin coined this term in his book "Modern Painters". Ruskin coined the term to attack the sentimentality that was common to the poetry of the late 18th century, and which was rampant among poets including Burns, Blake, Wordsworth, Shelley, and Keats. As used by Ruskin-for whom "truth" was a primary criterion of art- the term was derogatory; for, he claimed, such descriptions do not represent the "true appearances of things to us" but "the extraordinary, or false appearances, when we are under the influence of emotion, or contemplative fancy." Pathetic fallacy is now used mainly as natural objects in a way that is less formal and more indirect than in the figure called 'personification'.

Wordsworth supported this use of personification based on emotion by claiming that "objects....derive their influence not from properties inherent in them....but from such as are bestowed upon them by the minds of those who are conversant with or affected by these objects".

The meaning of the term has changed significantly from the idea Ruskin had in mind. Ruskin's original definition is "emotional falseness", or the falseness that occurs to one's perceptions when influenced by violent or heightened emotion. For example, when a person is unhinged by grief,

the clouds might seem darker than they are, or perhaps mournful or even uncaring. There have been other changes to Ruskin's phrase since he coined it: The particular definition that Ruskin used for the word "fallacy" nowadays is defined as an example of a flawed logic, but for Ruskin and writers of the 19th century and earlier, "fallacy" could be used to mean simply "falseness". In the same way, for Ruskin the word "pathetic" simply meant 'emotional' or 'pertaining to emotion'.

1.4 GLOSSARY

1. Criticism- a critical observation or remark.
2. Stark- very obvious, very plain and easily seen.
3. Proponent- a person who argues for or supports something.
4. Vituperative- uttering or given to censure: characterized by verbal abuse.
5. Notorious- well known or famous especially for something bad.
6. Decadence- behaviour that shows low morals and a great love of pleasure, money, fame, etc.
7. Cult- a small group of very devoted supporters or fans.
8. Synaesthesia- a subjective sensation or image of a sense.
9. Juxtapose- to place together two different things in order to create an interesting effect or to show how they are different.
10. Morbid- relating to unpleasant subjects such as death.
11. Ghastly- very bad, shocking or horrible.
12. Farce- caricature or mockery.
13. Cynicism- having a belief that people are generally selfish and dishonest.
14. Scepticism- an attitude of doubting the truth of something.
15. Inadvertent- not intended or planned.
16. Rampant- growing quickly and in a way that is difficult to control.

17. Contemplative- : involving or allowing deep thought,
: devoted to religious thought and prayer.

1.5 SAQ/POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Q1. What do you mean by Pastoral?

Ans. _____

Q2. Define Aestheticism.

Ans. _____

Q3. What is 'black comedy'?

Ans. _____

1.6. EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

1.6.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Q1. A literary work that has to do with shepherds and rustic settings

- a. Point of view, c. pun,
- b. personification, d. pastoral

- Q2. A term that suggests a struggle or a contest is
- a. Alazon
 - b. Erion
 - c. Agon
 - d. Fable
- Q3. The attribution of human feelings and responses to inanimate things or animals is called
- a. Metonymy
 - b. Pathetic Fallacy
 - c. Agon
 - d. Aestheticism
- Q4. A term that is concerned with beauty or the appreciation of beauty is
- a. Black comedy
 - b. Aestheticism
 - c. Parable
 - d. Pastoral

Key

- 1. Pastoral
- 2. Agon
- 3. Pathetic Fallacy
- 4. Aestheticism

1.6.2 Short Answer type Questions

- Q1. Define Pathetic Fallacy?
- Q2. What is 'Agon'?
- Q3. Who was 'Alazon'?

1.6.3 Long Answer Type Questions

- Q1. Discuss Pathetic Fallacy?
- Q2. Discuss and compare Alazon and Erion.

1.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory by J. A Cuddon.
2. A Glossary of Literary Terms by M. H Abrams.

1.8 REFERENCES

1. Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory by J. A Cuddon.
2. A Glossary of Literary Terms by M. H Abrams.

Internet Source

INTRODUCTION TO LITERARY TERMS

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Objectives
- 2.3 Literary Terms
- 2.4 Glossary
- 2.5 SAQ/ Possible Answers
- 2.6 Examination Oriented Questions
- 2.7 Suggested Readings
- 2.8 References
- 2.9 Model Test Paper

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Literary terms are words used in discussions, classification, criticism and analysis of poetry, novels, and other works of literature.

2.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this unit is:

- To introduce the learners to the literary terms.
- To help learners differentiate various forms of writing and literary devices.

2.3.1 Fable

Fable is a literary genre: a succinct fictional story, in prose or verse that features animals, legendary creatures, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature that are anthropomorphized and that illustrates or leads to a particular moral lesson which may at the end be added explicitly as a pithy maxim. The word fable is derived from a Latin word "fibula" which means a story that is a derivative of a word "fari" which means to speak. Fable is a literary device which can be defined as concise and brief story intended to provide a moral lesson at the end in the form of an epigram.

In literature, it is described as a didactic lesson given through some sort of animal story. In prose and verse, a fable is described through plants, animals, forces of nature and inanimate objects by giving them human attributes wherein they demonstrate a moral lesson at the end.

A fable differs from a parable in that the latter excludes animals, plants, inanimate objects, and forces of nature as actors that assume speech or other powers of humankind. The fable is one of the most enduring forms of folk literature, spread abroad and it can be found in the literature of almost every country.

India has a rich tradition of fabulous novels, mostly explained by the fact that the culture derives traditions and learns qualities from natural elements. Most of the gods are some form of animals with ideal qualities. Also hundreds of fables were composed in ancient India during the first millennium BC, often as stories within frame stories. Indian fables have a mixed cast of humans and animals. The dialogues are often longer than in fables of Aesop and often witty as the animals try to outwit one another by trickery and deceit. In Indian fables, man is not superior to the animals. The best examples of the fable in India are the Panchatantra and the Jataka tales.

In the familiar fable of the fox and the grapes, the fox -after exerting all his wiles to get the grapes hanging beyond his reach, but in vain- concludes

that they are probably sour anyway: the express moral is that human beings belittle what they cannot get. The fables in Western cultures derive mainly from the stories that were, probably mistakenly, attributed to Aesop, a Greek slave of the sixth century a Frenchman, Jean de la Fontaine, wrote a set of witty fables in verse, which are the classics of this literary kind. Chaucer's "The Nun's Priest's Tale," the story of the cock and the fox, is a beast fable.

2.3.2 Picaresque

An early form of novel, usually a first person narrative, related to the adventures of rouge or a lowborn adventurer as he travels from one place to another and from one social milieu to another in his effort to survive. The structure of the Picaresque novel resembles the long, rambling romances of medieval chivalry. Unlike the idealistic knight the picaro is a cynical and amoral rascal who, if given half a chance would rather live by his wits than by honourable work. The picaro wanders about and has adventures among people from all social classes and professions, often just barely escaping punishment for his own lying, cheating and stealing. He is a casteless outsider who feels inwardly unrestrained by prevailing social codes, and he conforms outwardly to them only when it serves his own ends. The picaro's narrative becomes in effect an ironic or satirical survey of the hypocrisies and corruptions of society, while also offering the reader a rich information concerning people in low or humble walks of life.

The Picaresque novel originated in Spain with "Lazarillo de Tormes" 1554 which is doubtfully attributed to Diego Hurtado de Mendoza in which the poor boy Lazaro describes his services under seven successive lay and clerical masters, each of whose dubious character is hidden under a mask of hypocrisy.

In the mid 18th century the growth of the realistic novel with its tighter, more-elaborated plot and its greater development of character led to the

final decline of the picaresque novel, which came to be considered somewhat inferior in artistry. But the opportunities for satire provided by the picaresque novel's mingling of characters from all walks of life, its vivid descriptions of industries and professions, its realistic language and detail, and above all its ironic and detached survey of manners and morals helped to enrich the realistic novel and contributed to that form's development in the 18th and 19th centuries. Elements of the picaresque novel reappeared in such mature realistic novels as Charles Dickens's "The Pickwick Papers" 1836-37, Mark Twain's "Huckleberry Finn" etc.

2.3.3 Metonymy

Metonymy is a figure of speech that replaces the name of a thing with the name of something else with which it is closely associated. We can come across examples of metonymy both from literature and in everyday life. The words metonymy and metonym come from the Greek "metonymia" meaning a change of name. Metonymy is often confused with another figure of speech called 'synecdoche'. They resemble each other but are not the same. Synecdoche refers to a thing by the name of one of its parts. For example, calling a car i.e. "a wheel" is a synecdoche. A part of a car i.e "a wheel" stands for the whole car. In a Metonymy, on the other hand, the word we use to describe another thing is closely linked to that particular thing, but is not a part of it. For example, "Crown" which means power or authority is a metonymy.

Though both Metonymy and Metaphor involve the substitution of one term for another but still both are different. In metaphor, this substitution is based on some specific analogy between two things, whereas in metonymy the substitution is based on some understood association. In addition to its use in everyday speech, metonymy is a figure of speech in some poetry and in much rhetoric. Greek and Latin scholars of rhetoric made significant contributions to the study of metonymy. Metonymy and related figures of speech are common in everyday speech and writing

2.3.4. Slipslop

This term is being used in literature after Mrs Slipslop, a character in Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews*. She had a habit of misusing words in a ridiculous way: delemy for dilemma; confidous for confident; indicted to wenching for addicted to wenching. This is better known as a Malapropism.

2.3.5. Meiosis

The word meiosis originated from the Greek word 'meioo' that means 'to diminish' or 'to make smaller'. Meiosis can be defined as a witty understatement that belittles or dismisses something or somebody, particularly by making use of terms that gives impression that something is less important than it is or it should be. Meiosis examples are sometimes also used in the sense of a synonym of litotes.

In literature, however, meiosis describes the use of understatement to highlight a point or explain a situation or to understate a response used to enhance the effect of a dramatic moment. In rhetoric, meiosis is a euphemistic figure of speech that intentionally understates something or implies that it is lesser in significance or size that it really is. Meiosis is the opposite of auxesis, and also sometimes as synonym for litotes. Understatement involves any minimization of something, and can be used for humorous purposes, to comfort people, to be humble, and many other purposes. Both litotes and meiosis are forms of understatement, and thus have more specialized uses and forms.

Meiosis differs from other forms of understatement due to its use of euphemism. Euphemism allows people to skirt around unpleasant things while they talk or write, and minimize the discomfort of talking about it. Meiosis employs this, though there are also examples of meiosis in which a word connoting something small is substituted for a large thing.

Authors use meiosis for the same reasons that we use it in ordinary conversation. Sometimes we try to avoid talking about taboo and difficult

subjects by speaking in euphemism; by diminishing the way we talk about something, the problem might feel smaller as well.

2.3.6. Parable

A parable is a succinct, didactic story, in prose or verse, which illustrates one or more instructive lessons or principles. It differs from a fable in that fables employ animals, plants, inanimate objects, or forces of nature as characters, whereas parables have human characters. A parable is meant to teach a moral or principle. It uses human characters in believable situations so that the reader or listeners are able to relate to it. There are many examples of parables in religious texts such as the Bible and the Quran. The word parable comes from the Greek word 'Parabole' which means 'a comparison' or 'an analogy'.

The definition of parable is very similar to that of fable and that of allegory in different ways. Both parable examples and fables are used to teach a lesson through a short story; however, parables use humans as the character, whereas the main characters in fables are animals, plants, forces of nature, and other inanimate objects. It is a very short narrative about human beings presented so as to stress the tacit analogy, or parallel, with a general thesis or lesson that the narrator is trying to bring home to his audience. The parable was one of Jesus' favourite devices as a teacher; examples are his parables of the Good Samaritan and of the prodigal son.

2.4 GLOSSARY

1. Pithy- using few words in a clever and effective way.
2. Maxim- a well-known phrase that expresses a general truth about life or a rule about behaviour.
3. Didactic- designed or intended to teach.
4. Wiles- a trick intended to ensnare or deceive.
5. Vivid- very clear, bright or detailed.

6. Rhetoric- the art or skill of speaking or writing formally and effectively to persuade or influence people.
7. Succinct- using few words to state or express an idea.

2.5 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Q1. What is a Fable?

Possible Answer: The word Fable is derived from a Latin word 'Fibula' which means a story that is a derivative of a word 'Fari' which means to speak. Fable is a literary device which can be defined as a concise and brief story intended to provide a moral lesson at the end. In literature, it is described as a didactic lesson given through some sort of animal story.

Q2. Differentiate between a Fable and a Parable?

Ans. _____

Q3. Define Meiosis.

Ans. _____

2.6 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

2.6.1 Multiple Choice Questions

Q1. A figure of speech in which a word represents something else which it suggests.

2.7 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory by J. A Cuddon.
2. A Glossary of Literary Terms by M. H Abrams.

2.8 REFERENCES

1. Dictionary of Literary Terms & Literary Theory by J. A Cuddon.
2. A Glossary of Literary Terms by M. H Abrams.
3. Internet Source.

***DEVELOPMENT OF TRAGEDY
BEFORE SHAKESPEARE***

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Objectives
- 3.3 Gorboduc: Earliest English Tragedy
 - 3.3.1 Chief characters of Gorboduc
 - 3.3.2 Plot of Gorboduc
- 3.4 Locrine
 - 3.4.1 Structure
 - 3.4.2 Summary in short
- 3.5 Thomas Kyd
 - 3.5.1 The Spanish Tragedy
 - 3.5.2 Thomas Kyd as a trendsetter of tragedies
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- 3.6 Summary / Conclusion/ Let us sum it up
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- 3.8 Short answer questions
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3.9 Lesson end exercise

3.9. Suggested readings

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3.1 INTRODUCTION

Tragedy bears its genesis in the theatres of Greece approximately 2500 years back. The foremost Greek tragedies, of which only a fraction survives (works of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripedes) were staged in the amphitheatres as trilogies. Athenian tragedies are the oldest tragedies. Staged as a dance-drama, it was a significant part of the theatrical culture of those times. Exclusively for the men as women folk were not allowed inside. The Greeks of Attica, the ancient state whose chief city was Athens, first used the word in the 5th century BC to describe a specific kind of play, which was presented at festivals in Greece. Dionnysia, a city of Greece, was the locale for staging tragedies, a goat was sacrificed to god Dionysus (god of wine, fertility, and crops). Based on the belief that the goat sacrifice would rid the city of all sins. The concept is parallel to Judeo-Christian concept of scapegoat, that prevailed in later times. Tragedy was designed to have a cleansing effect on the onlookers. The origin of the word tragedy is from the Greek word 'tragoidia' which means a goat song. Tragos in Greek means a goat and aeidein means to sing. Why a goat? Perhaps goat could have been the coveted prize of the winner dramatist or the costume of the actors was in goat skin or the goat was sacrificed as a part of the ritual during the Greek festivals when the tragedies were staged for mass scale viewing. Beyond doubt tragedies originated in Greece but Romans were the pioneers to allow women to act in plays. In English dramas especially staging of Shakespeare bears ample evidence of cross dressing. Women were allowed on English stage after the Restoration in 1660.

Oscar Brockett in his book, History of Theatre, mentions that Satyr plays were the parents of tragedy and comedy. Satyr plays were indecent satires or burlesques exhibiting performers with large strap-on penises- as phallus

symbolized fertility, virility and is linked with god Dionysus. The only complete satyr play which survived till date was written by the great tragedian Euripides and is titled as Cyclops.

This genre continued to grow in the fifth century BC and spread throughout Greece. Luminaries of philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Voltaire, Hume, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Freud, Benjamin, Camus, Lacan and Deleuze have critiqued the genre.

Aristotle, around 335 BC, gave a scholarly insight on tragedy in his Poetics. Aristotle continued to influence drama of the Roman Empire, tragedies written in Western Europe during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In Poetics, Aristotle defined tragedy as, "an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions". Aristotle states that a tragedy has six main elements i.e. plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle (scenic effect), and song (music), of which the first two are most prominent. Aristotle says that a tragedy is marked by seriousness and revolves around a great person who undergoes a reversal of fortune (termed as Peripetia). Though this change of fortune can be from bad to good as in Eumenides or good to bad as in the case of Oedipus Rex. The later form of fortune is preferred as it induces pity and fear among the readers/spectators. Tragedy results into purgation / emotional cleansing through catharsis. Spectators/ audience respond to the sufferings of the characters by experiencing pity and fear. The reversal of fortune is caused by hamartia which means a tragic flaw in the character, for example - in King Lear it was error of judgement (his hamartia) that caused Lear's suffering and downfall.

Studies have revealed that prominent tragedies were staged in four periods and areas:-

1. Athens in Greece in 5th century BC
2. England in the times of Elizabeth I and James I (1558-1625)
3. France in 17th century

4. Europe and America in second half of 19th century and first half of 20th century

In modern era, around mid 19th century, idea of tragedy manifested in another collateral form i.e. the novel. Usually a tragedy has a tragic hero (a man) who is tempted to perform a feat (frequently, though not always, a murder) after it his destiny starts descending and ends with his death. The Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen, created the tragic heroine of the modern theatre through his eponymous play Hedda Gabler in 1890. More recently in 1949, US playwright Arthur Miller made a revolutionary move by creating an ordinary salesman as a central figure in the tragic play Death of a Salesman. Prior to this tragic heroes were exceptional men (kings and princes). This was considered to be an inappropriate character for a tragedy by the critics of the time. Responding to the adverse reviews of the critics, Miller, in his seminal essay, 'Tragedy and the Common Man' justified the idea of having an ordinary person as the protagonist of a tragic play.

3.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this unit are:-

1. To acquaint the scholar with the historical facts of the genre of tragedy.
2. To introduce the scholar with various concepts/terms related to tragedy from its inception in Greece to modern day trends.
3. To trace the development of English tragedy till Shakespeare.
4. To prepare the scholar to respond to the various concepts, trends and stages in the development of tragedy from its inception to English tragedies such as Gorboduc, Locrine.
5. Introduce great playwrights like Kyd and Marlowe to the scholar.
6. Written assignments for practice with key so that the students can do self evaluation.
7. Suggesting list of books for further reading.

3.3 GORBODUC: EARLIEST ENGLISH TRAGEDY

Gorboduc is the first verse drama in English using blank verse , its full form is The Tragedie of Gorboduc, also titled as Ferrex and Porrex ; the first English tragedy in blank verse. Thomas Sackville and Thomas Norton together wrote the play. Thomas Norton wrote the first three acts and Thomas Sackville wrote the last two acts. Aristotle's classical unities of time and place were omitted but other classical principles like the Chorus and the Messenger were retained. They extensively used non-classical elements like pantomimes/ dumb shows before each act. Gorboduc, was first performed in 1561 and published by William Griffith in 1565. The subject matter of the play is political dispute i.e. kingdom of Gorboduc is disputed between his sons Ferrex and Porrex. The development of the play is on the lines of morality play and Senecan tragedy with certain modifications The play was a trendsetter for later playwrights, as is evident from later trends followed in the plays Titus Andronicus and King Lear. King Lear too has same subject matter of dispute for property between parent and children. The source of the play is from Geoffery of Monmouth's History of the Kings of Britain (1138).

3.3.1 Chief characters of Gorboduc

1. Gorboduc, King of Great Britain
2. Videna, Queen and wife to King Gorboduc
3. Ferrex, Elder Son to King Gorboduc
4. Porrex, Younger Son to King
5. Clotyn, Duke of Cornwall
6. Fergus, Duke of Albany
7. Mandud, Duke of Leagre
8. Gwenard, Duke of Cumberland
9. Eubulus, Secretary to the king Gorboduc

10. Arostus, A Counsellour of king Gorboduc
11. Dordan, A Counsellour assigned by the king to his Eldest Son Ferrex
12. Philander, A Counsellour assigned by the king to his younger Son Porrex
13. Hermon, A Parasite of Ferrex and Fergus's slave
14. Tyndar, A Parasite of Porrex
15. Nuntius, A Messenger of Ferrex's death
16. Nuntius, A Messenger of Duke Fergus rising
17. Marcella, A Lady of the Queen's privy Chamber
18. Chorus, Four ancient and sage men of Britain

3.3.2 :- Plot of Gorboduc

Gorboduc is a king who gives away his realm to his two sons, Ferrex and Porrex. Sons are unsatisfied and they quarrel, the younger one Porrex kills Ferrex, the elder brother. The queen .Videna, also the mother of the two avenges the death of her favourite child by murdering Porrex. Gorboduc and Videna are also killed by their shocked erstwhile subjects.

3.4 LOCRINE

Famously referred as Lochrine, the actual full title is The Lamentable Tragedy of Lochrine, the Eldest Son of King Brutus, discoursing the wars of the Britons and Huns, with their discomfiture, the Britons' victory with their accidents, and the death of Albanact. Maxwell found this full title long and inadequate (1).

Lochrine is an Elizabethan play, portraying the Trojan founders of England and Troynovant (London). It is believed to be published in 1595 in a quarto by the printer Thomas Creede. There are controversies for its date of composition and its authorship. If Charles Tilney was the playwright, it must date prior to

Tilney's death in 1586. Many traditionalists spurn the other elaborate attribution theories that assign *Lochrine* to Marlowe, Kyd, Peele, or Greene, and simply see the play as likely the "output of the youthful Shakespeare himself" (Brooke xviii). Some commentators have accepted the possibility that Shakespeare might have performed a revision - while others have rejected the idea. The authorship of the original play has been assigned to several dramatists of the era, with George Peele and Robert Greene being the two most common candidates. However independent scholars have pointed out different dates for composition of the play according to their findings. The play was entered at the Stationers' Register in July 1594 and thirteen quarto copies exist for the 1595 publication,

3.4.1 : Structure

Prologues in *Lochrine*: Following the Senecan model of revenge tragedy ,the play is divided into five acts. In the beginning of every act, there is a Prologue featuring the ancient goddess of folly and ruin i.e. goddess Ate. Goddess Ate introduces and explicates the five dumb shows in the play featuring symbolic figures, animals and personages of classical mythology. Ate returns in the conclusion in her sixth appearance of the play. The plot in short the five acts of the play:-

S.No.	Acts	Theme of dumb shows in Prologues
1.	I	Killing of a lion by an archer
2.	II	Appearance of Perseus & Andromeda
3.	III	Snake stings a crocodile
4.	IV	Appearance of Hercules & Omphale
5.	V	Medea murdering Jason Glauce

3.4.2 Summary in short

Old Brutus is the leader of Trojans in Britain. He has three sons- Lochrine, Camber and Albanact. As Brutus is aware of his approaching death, he orders for marriage of Lochrine with Guendoline, loyal general Corineus's

daughter. Brutus dies and the marriage is solemnized. Scythians, under the kingship of Humber with wife Estrild and son Hubba, invade the British Isles. Trojan prince, Albanact commits suicide as the Trojans are on the verge of a defeat. In the rest of the play, Albanact's ghost appears calling for revenge. But finally the Trojan's emerge victorious. Estrild, the Scythian queen is captured and Lochrine desires to marry her, warned by Corineus, Lochrine keeps his affair a secret till Corineus dies. When the affair comes in public, Thrasimachus, Guendoline's brother vows to avenge Lochrine. Defeated Humber has been leading a life in hiding for seven years and eventually commits suicide. Ghost of Albanact is rejoiced at this gesture. Guendoline and Thrasimachus invade Lochrine. Corineus's ghost appears to witness Lochrine's fate. Lochrine is defeated and he along with Estrild commits suicide. Their daughter Sabren drowns herself. Guendoline gives a royal burial to lochrine but an unknown grave to Estrild.

Three clownish characters namely Strumbo, Trompart, and Dorothy, provide a comic relief to the tragedy

3.5 THOMAS KYD (1558?-1594)

An English playwright, author of *The Spanish Tragedy*, was an important writer in the growth of Elizabethan drama. Kyd received good education at Merchant Taylor's School, where Edmund Spenser and Thomas Lodge were his fellow students. The curriculum included Greek, Latin, music and drama. There is no evidence of his university education.

3.5.1: The Spanish Tragedy

The Spanish Tragedy or *The Spanish Tragedie* was probably written in mid 1580s. The earliest surviving edition as on today is dated 1592. The complete title goes as *The Spanish Tragedie, Containing the lamentable end of Don Horatio, and Bel-imperia: with the pittifull death of olde Hieronimo*. The long title was also referred as *Hieronimo* named after the protagonist of the play. Critics have regarded this play as the most popular play of the 'age of Shakespeare'. Kyd also wrote poetry, translations,

plays but most of his work is unidentified or may have been lost. Kyd's fame spread to Europe and was remembered for *The Spanish Tragedy* by many generations.

3.5.2 Thomas Kyd as a trendsetter of tragedies

As pointed out earlier in this section, tragedy developed and grew in Attica (region around Athens) but tragedy had a long hiatus in the western literary scene where it was virtually absent except for a few Roman attempts to copy the Greek playwrights. Instead of tragedies, it were morality and miracle plays that were dominant in the Christian drama, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The aim of these plays was to foster morals among the people.

The tragedy regained its position in the Elizabethan age, making *The Spanish Tragedy* a seminal work. Kyd followed the Roman writer Seneca instead of the ancient Greek tragedians. Seneca's plots were always based on gory tales of the downfall of royal families. The Senecan model was so appealing to Kyd that he created a separate sub-genre known as revenge tragedies. Studies have shown that Kyd was the first playwright to write about Hamlet (the prince of Denmark) but his version was not as popular as that of Shakespeare's Hamlet. Shakespeare's Hamlet became the most conspicuous example of revenge tragedy.

3.6 MARLOWE

Christopher Marlowe, alias Kit Marlowe (1564-1593), Shakespeare's contemporary, was an important tragedian, playwright, poet and translator from the Elizabethan period. Marlowe wrote plays in blank verse. He used early modern English language and was associated with English Renaissance theatre. His alma mater was Corpus Christie College, Cambridge.

3.6.1 Works of Marlowe

- *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, was performed by a company of boy actors called 'Children of the Chapel' between 1587 -1593 but was first published in 1594.

- Tamburlaine the Great in two parts were published in 1590, the protagonist is Tamburlaine, a conqueror who rises from shepherd to warlord.
- The following works of Marlowe were published posthumously :-
- The Jew of Malta first published as The Famous Tragedy of the Rich Jew of Malta the earliest surviving printed edition is from
- Edward the Second , an English history play about the deposition of King Edward II by the barons and the Queen.
- The Massacre at Paris, is considered the most dangerous play as it shows a reticent English agent who is autobiographical and seems to replicate Marlowe himself. Its full title was The Massacre at Paris: With the Death of the Duke of Guise.
- Doctor Faustus or The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus
- Marlowe also wrote poems, some famous poems are 'Hero and Leander' and 'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love'.

3.6.2 Summary / Conclusion/ Let us sum it up

- Tragedy originated in the theatres of Greece approximately 2500 years back. Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides were some great Greek tragedians and some of their works are available even today.
- The word tragedy was first used in the 5th century BC to describe a specific kind of play. The origin of the word tragedy is from the Greek word 'tragoidia' which means a goat song. Tragos in Greek means a goat and aeidein means to sing.
- Aristotle, around 335 BC, in Poetics (a treatise), discusses tragedy. Aristotle states that a tragedy has six main elements i.e. plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle (scenic effect), and song (music), of which the first two are most prominent.

- Aristotle continued to influence drama of the Roman Empire, tragedies written in Western Europe during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- Studies have revealed that prominent tragedies were staged in four periods and areas:-
 - (i) Athens in Greece in 5th century BC
 - (ii) England in the times of Elizabeth I and James I (1558-1625)
 - (iii) France in 17th century
 - (iv) Europe and America in second half of 19th century and first half of 20th century
- Tragedy had a long hiatus in the western literary scene where it was virtually absent except for a few Roman attempts to copy the Greek playwrights. Instead of tragedies, it were morality and miracle plays that were dominant in the Christian drama, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The aim of these plays was to foster morals among the people.
- Gorboduc, also known as The Tragedie of Gorboduc, or Ferrex and Porrex was the first English tragedy and verse drama in blank verse. Locrine, another Elizabethan play, the authorship of this play has been unknown but George Peele and Robert Greene were the two most prominent writers who were thought to be its author.
- The Spanish Tragedy a seminal work in the growth of Elizabethan drama.
- Christopher Marlowe, Shakespeare's contemporary, was an important tragedian, and playwright from the Elizabethan period. Associated with English Renaissance theatre, he wrote in blank verse and used early modern English language. Tamburlaine and Doctor Faustus are his two most important works.

3.7 GLOSSARY

1. Tragedy : A play which has sad incidents, an unhappy ending and ends with the downfall of the chief character

2. Amphitheatre: An oval or circular building with rising tiers of seats around the arena, used in ancient Greece and Rome for viewing contests and public events
3. Trilog y : (in ancient Greece) a series of 3 tragedies performed in succession
4. Scapegoat : A person or animal which takes the sins of others or is wrongly blamed
5. Burlesque: A form of comedy characterized by ridiculous exaggeration or distortion.
6. Genre : a particular type of style of literature, type, category, species
7. Luminary: a person who is an expert or a great influence in a particular direction from a particular area
8. Roman empire : connected with ancient Rome or the city Rome
9. Poetics : Aristotle's Poetics is the greatest treatise written in Ancient Greek. It describes art of poetry, Tragedy and Drama.
10. Blank verse : verse without rhyme especially that which uses iambic pentameter
11. Latin : a language of ancient Rome and its empire widely used historically as a language of scholarship and administration
12. Chorus: The chorus in classical Greek drama was a group of actors who described and commented upon the main action of a play with song, dance and recitation.
13. Messenger: In Greek tragedies, a messenger reported important action that had occurred offstage
14. Morality play : a kind of allegorical drama having personified abstract qualities as the main characters and presenting a lesson about good conduct and character, popular in 15th and 16th centuries.

15. Senecan Tragedy : Set of ancient Roman tragedies written by Stoic philosopher and politician Lucius Annaeus Seneca. Senecan tragedy has a supernatural element with themes of bloodthirsty revenges.
16. Miracle plays: Also known as saint's plays in European Middle Ages. A miracle play presents authentic or fictitious account of the life, miracles or martyrdom of a saint.
17. The Stationers' Register: was a record book maintained by the Stationers' Company of London. The company is a trade guild given a royal charter in 1557 to regulate the various professions associated with the publishing industry, including printers, bookbinders, booksellers, and publishers in England. The Register itself allowed publishers to document their right to produce a particular printed work, and constituted an early form of copyright law. The Company's charter gave it the right to seize illicit editions and bar the publication of unlicensed books.
18. Cross dressing : wear clothes typical of the opposite sex
19. Prologue : An opening to a literary, dramatic or musical work. It establishes the context and provides background details.
20. Revenge tragedy: Genre of plays in which the protagonist seeks revenge for an imagined or actual hurt. The term revenge tragedy was first used by A.H. Thorndike in 1900 for plays written in late Elizabethan and early Jacobean times (1580- 1620)
21. Trojan : relating to ancient Troy in Asia Minor. Now known as Anatolia in modern Turkey.
22. Comic relief : in order to ease up the grave atmosphere in tragedies, a humorous character, scene or dialogues were introduced to let go the tension
23. Christian drama : Christian drama is based on Christian religious themes.

3.8 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

- Q1.) Write about the origin and meaning of 'tragedy'.

Ans. _____

Q2.) Elaborate about the woman's position in acting in tragedies.

Ans. _____

Q3.) Name some critics/ philosophers of tragedy.

Ans. _____

Q4.) What is Aristotle's definition of tragedy?

Ans. _____

Q5.) What are the six elements of a tragedy according to Aristotle?

Ans. _____

Q6.) What were the four periods and areas when prominent tragedies were staged ?

Ans. -----

Q7.) Who created the tragic heroine of the modern theatre? Name the work and the year.

Ans. -----

Q8.) Name the first tragic-verse-drama in English using blank verse.

Ans. -----

Q9.) Write a note on prologues in Locrine.

Ans. -----

Q10.) What is the complete title of Spanish tragedy?

Ans. -----

Possible answers:

A-1) The origin of the word tragedy is from the Greek word 'tragoidia' which means a goat song. Tragos in Greek means a goat and aeidein means to sing.

A-2) Though tragedies originated in Greece but Romans were the first to allow women to act in plays. In English dramas, especially staging of Shakespeare bears ample evidence of cross dressing. Women were allowed on English stage after the Restoration in 1660.

A-3) Philosophers like Plato, Aristotle, Saint Augustine, Voltaire, Hume, Hegel, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard , Nietze, Freud, Benjamin, Camus, Lacan and Deleuze have critiqued the genre.

A-4) Aristotle defined tragedy as , "an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions"

A-5) Aristotle states that a tragedy has six main elements i.e. plot, character, diction, thought, spectacle (scenic effect), and song (music), of which the first two are most prominent.

A-6) Studies have revealed that prominent tragedies were staged in four periods and areas:-

1. Athens in Greece in 5th century BC
2. England in the times of Elizabeth I and James I (1558-1625)
3. France in 17th century
4. Europe and America in second half of 19th century and first half of 20th century

A-7) The Norwegian playwright Henrik Ibsen, created the tragic heroine of the modern theatre through his eponymous play Hedda Gabler in 1890.

A-8) Gorboduc is the first tragic verse drama in English using blank verse , its full form is The Tragedie of Gorboduc.

A-9) Following the Senecan model of revenge tragedy, the play is divided into five acts. In the beginning of every act, there is a Prologue featuring the ancient goddess of folly and ruin i.e. goddess Ate.

A-10) The complete title goes as The Spanish Tragedie, Containing the lamentable end of Don Horatio, and Bel-imperia: with the pittifull death of olde Hieronimo. The long title was also referred as Hieronimo.

3.8.1 Multiple Choice Questions

- Q1) Tragedy bears its genesis in the theatres of Greece approximately ----- years back.
- (a) 2500
 - (b) 2000
 - (c) 1500
 - (d) 1000
- Q2) Athenian tragedies are the oldest tragedies. (True/False)
- Q-3) In which year Aristotle, in Poetics gave an insight on a dramatic art form known as tragedy.
- (a) 337 BC
 - (b) 338 BC

- (c) 335 BC
 - (d) 334 BC
- Q4) Who continued to influence drama of the Roman Empire, tragedies written in Western Europe during the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.
- (a) Marlowe
 - (b) Shakespeare
 - (c) Longinus
 - (d) Aristotle
- Q5) Reversal of fortune is termed as -----
- (a) Peripetia
 - (b) hubris
 - (c) catharsis
 - (d) tragedy
- Q6) Error of judgement is termed as -----
- (a) Peripetia
 - (b) hamartia
 - (c) catharsis
 - (d) comedy
- Q7) In-----, US playwright Arthur Miller made a revolutionary move by creating an ordinary salesman as a central figure in the tragic play Death of a Salesman.
- (a) 1946
 - (b) 1947

- (c) 1948
- (d) 1949
- Q8) Gorboduc, is also titled as Garrex and Porrex (True/ False)
- Q9) Gorboduc, was a King of Great Britain.
- Q10) Lochrine ,the play is divided into ----- acts.
 - (a) two
 - (b) three
 - (c) four
 - (d) five
- Q11) Names of the three sons of Brutus are Lochrine, Camber and -----
 - (a) Aristotle
 - (b) Hercules
 - (c) Albanact
 - (d) Iago
- Q12) Who wrote Dido, Queen of Carthage ?
 - (a) Peele
 - (b) Lylee
 - (c) Greene
 - (d) Marlowe
- Q13) Latin was a language of ancient Rome (True/ False)
- Q14) Morality play is a kind of allegorical drama having personified abstract qualities as the main characters and presenting a lesson about good conduct and character, popular in -----

- (a) 15th and 16th centuries.
- (b) 16th and 17th centuries
- (c) 17th and 18th centuries
- (d) 18th and 19th centuries

Q15) Comic relief is inserted into ----- in order to ease up the grave atmosphere.

- (a) comedy.
- (b) satires
- (c) tragedy
- (d) tragic-comedy

Answers:

- 1. (a) 2500
- 2. True
- 3. (c) 335 BC
- 4. (d) Aristotle
- 5. (a) Peripetia
- 6. (b) hamartia
- 7. (d) 1949
- 8. False
- 9. True
- 10. (d) five
- 11. (c) Albanact
- 12. (d) Marlowe

13. True
14. (a) 15th and 16th centuries.
15. (c) tragedy

3.9 LESSON END EXERCISE

- Q1) Write a short note on origin and development of tragedy.
- Q2) Relate hamartia to a tragedy you have read.
- Q3) How Henrik Ibsen and Arthur Miller changed the Aristotelian concept of tragedy.
- Q4) Discuss Goboduc as a tragedy.
- Q5) How is Locrine a tragedy with a different structure?
- Q6) Comment briefly about Thomas Kyd and his works
- Q7) Write a short appraisal of Marlowe and his works.

3.9 SUGGESTED READINGS

1. Aristotle, Poetics
2. William Shakespeare, King Lear
3. Sophocles, Oedipus Rex
4. Christopher Marlowe, Dr. Faustus
5. Henrik Ibsen, Hedda Gabler
6. Arthur Miller, Death of a Salesman
7. Clifford Leech, Tragedy
8. Richard H. Palmer, Tragedy and Tragic Theory: An Analytical Guide
9. M.S. Silk, Tragedy and the Tragic : Greek Theatre and Beyond
10. K.M.Newton, Modern Literature and the Tragic

3.10 REFERENCES

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2. Brooke, C.F. Tucker, ed. *The Shakespeare Apocrypha*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1908.
3. <https://interestingliterature.com/2013/05/01/a-brief-history-of-tragedy/>
4. Aristotle, *Poetics*
5. I have extensively read on Google, Wikipedia and e resources available on google

DEVELOPMENT OF TRAGEDY TILL SHAKESPEARE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Objectives
- 4.3 Shakespeare's Oeuvre
 - 4.3.1 Tragedies
 - 4.3.2 Histories
 - 4.3.3 Comedies
- 4.4 Shakespearean Tragedy
 - 4.4.1 Elements of a Shakespearean Tragedy
 - 4.4.2 Elements of a Shakespearean Tragedy : A discussion and details
- 4.5 Great Tragedies of Shakespeare : A Discussion
- 4.6 Summary / Conclusion/ Let us sum it up
- 4.7 Glossary
- 4.8 Short Answer Questions
 - 4.8.1 Multiple Choice Questions
- 4.9 Examination Oriented Questions:
- 4.10 Suggested Readings
- 4.11 References

4.1 INTRODUCTION

"But Shakespeare's magic could not copied be;

Within that circle none durst walk but he."

- John Dryden (1631-1700) Essay of Dramatic Poesy

William Shakespeare (26.4.1564 -23.4.1616) was born in Stratford-upon-Avon to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare. The fourth of the Shakespeares' eight children. Often addressed as the national poet of England, Bard of Avon or The Bard, wrote 38 plays, approximately 154 sonnets and two narrative poems, Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece. Unfortunately, he did not get a formal education, in 1569 joined the King's New School, an excellent grammar school of Stratford where Latin was taught. On Nov 28, 1582, Shakespeare married, at the age of 18 to 26 year old Anne Hathaway and was blessed with three children, eldest daughter Susanna, twins Hamnet and Judith. Son Judith died at the age of 11. In his will, Shakespeare left his property for the male heirs of Susanna.

Shakespeare moved to London, the exact reason is not known, but it is believed that the move was for career reasons. Unfortunately, the move occurred during a period known to Shakespearean scholars as the "dark years," a period for which there is no biographical information . Some say, it was to save his marriage as he realized that he did not love his wife. Another set of scholars say that he shot a deer that belonged to a wealthy politician Sir Thomas Lucy, who ordered Shakespeare's arrest.

In 1590, Shakespeare penned down his first play Henry VI, part one. There is no authentic information about his life, everything, including the dates of composition of his works are based on external and internal evidence, pointed out by scholars. In 1592, playwright Robert Greene made a scathing attack on Shakespeare's writing, making it clear that he was misfit in Greene's university-educated dramatist crowd. Perhaps his critiques were jealous of his popularity.

In 1593 bubonic plague had spread; resulting into closing of theatres. Shakespeare utilized this time in writing poetry. He wrote *Venus and Adonis*, and dedicated it to his patron, Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton. Next year i.e. in 1594, the theatres reopened for the public. Shakespeare penned down, *The Rape of Lucrece*, and dedicated it to the Earl of Southampton. Within next five years the 'Chamberlain's Men' a leading theatre company, associated with Shakespeare became most popular acting group of London. Shakespeare initially acted in the company and later purchased shares in it thus became a partner. In 1599, the Chamberlain's Men, built 'The Globe', a wooden theatre in London. Many plays of Shakespeare like *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *King Lear* were staged here. It was an extremely productive year for Shakespeare, the playwright as well. Same year he wrote *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *Julius Caesar* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Everyone except Puritans and some like-minded Reformers came to theatres for entertainment. Theatre became fashionable. His long association with the theatre was fruitful in providing deep knowledge on overall aspects of theatre.

In 1609, publisher Thomas Thorpe printed a collection of 154 of Shakespeare's sonnets. Shakespearean scholars have pointed out that the sonnets were autobiographical and almost all were either dedicated to a 'dark lady/ mistress' or 'Mr. W.H.' It is believed that Mr. W.H. was William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, or that he was Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton. Between 1610 and 1613, Shakespeare leaves London and moves back to Stratford, where his wife and married daughters resided. In 1613, Shakespeare wrote his final plays i.e. *Henry VIII*, *Two Noble Kinsmen* (probably in 1614) and *Cardenio*, which was written in collaboration with John Fletcher, and this play is untraceable now. The Globe caught fire during staging of *Henry VIII* and completely burnt to scratches. On 25th April, 1616, Shakespeare was buried in Holy Trinity Church of Stratford, the tombstone suggests a curse on anyone who disturbs his grave, this was the chief reason, his grave was untouched during the renovation of the church in 2008.

In 1623, John Heminge and Henry Condell, Shakespeare's erstwhile colleagues, posthumously published 36 of late Shakespeare's plays in a volume known as the First Folio.

4.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this unit are:-

1. To acquaint the scholar with the life and works of William Shakespeare.
2. To introduce the major works of Shakespeare with special reference to his tragedies.
3. To introduce the scholar with the concept of 'Shakespearean tragedy', its features and distinction with regular tragedy.
4. To introduce the scholar with various concepts/terms related to Shakespearean tragedy.
5. Written assignments for practice with key so that the students can do self evaluation.
6. Suggesting list of books for further reading.

4.3 SHAKESPEARE'S OEUVRE

Beyond doubt, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Julius Caesar, and Romeo and Juliet are among the most famous tragedies of Shakespeare; however Shakespeare did not limit himself only to this genre. Most of his works fall into three distinct genres. Each genre, whether it is tragedy, comedy, history or romance, has typical characteristics which make The Bard's work popular and seminal. A list of Shakespeare's oeuvre is as follows:-

4.3.1 Tragedies

1. Troilus and Cressida
2. Coriolanus
3. Titus Andronicus
4. Romeo and Juliet

5. Timon of Athens
6. Julius Caesar
7. Macbeth
8. Hamlet
9. King Lear
10. Othello
11. Antony and Cleopatra
12. Cymbeline

4.3.2 Histories

1. King Lear
2. Richard II
3. Henry IV, Part 1
4. Henry IV, Part 2
5. Henry V
6. Henry VI, Part 1
7. Henry VI, Part 2
8. Henry VI, Part 3
9. Richard III
10. Henry VIII

2.3.3 Comedies

1. The Tempest
2. Two gentlemen Of Verona
3. The Merry Wives of Windsor
4. Measure for Measure

5. Much Ado About Nothing
6. Love's Labour's Lost
7. A Midsummer Night's Dream
8. The merchant of Venice
9. As You Like It
10. The Taming of the Shrew
11. All's Well That Ends Well
12. Twelfth Night
13. The Winter's Tale
14. Pericles, Prince of Tyre
15. The Two Noble Kinsmen

4.4 SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY

A Shakespearean tragedy is a play written either by Shakespeare or by any other author but it has typical features that separates it from other tragedies. Shakespeare has mostly followed Aristotle's theory of tragedy in his works. Shakespearean tragedy has a sad end, the hero dies towards the end or undergoes mental, emotional or spiritual devastation that is beyond recovery. According to Andrew Cecil Bradley, a noted 20th century Shakespeare scholar, a Shakespearean tragedy "is essentially a tale of suffering and calamity conducting to death." (Usually the hero has to face death in the end.)

4.4.1 Elements of a Shakespearean Tragedy

All tragedies of Shakespeare include these elements in some form:-

1. Tragic hero : Protagonist, cursed by fate and in possession of a tragic flaw.
2. Tussle between good and evil : Struggle between good and evil may be a part of the plot or exist within the main character.

3. Hamartia : Also known as the tragic flaw that results in the hero's downfall, e.g. King Lear's 'error of judgement'.
4. Tragic waste: The good destroyed with the bad at the resolution of the play. Often resulting in the unnecessary loss of life, specially of a good character.
5. External conflict : It can be in the form of a problem facing the hero as a part of the plot or villainous character.
6. Internal conflict : The struggle that the hero undergoes with his/her tragic flaw.
7. Catharsis : The release of the audience's emotions through empathy with some characters.
8. Supernatural elements : In the form of magic, witchcraft, ghosts etc.
9. Lack of poetic justice: The end for everybody is poor/ bad including the end of good characters.
10. Comic relief: to lighten the mood of a tragedy, a humorous character or a scene is introduced.

2.4.2 Elements of a Shakespearean Tragedy : A discussion and details

1. **Tragic Hero** : Shakespearean tragic hero is not only a towering personality in his/her domain but also an elite class, in possession of a high royal rank. Tragic heroes are often kings, princes, or military generals, who are very important to their subjects, for example, Hamlet, prince of Denmark; he is intellectual, highly educated, sociable, charming, and of a philosophic bent. The hero is such an important person that his/her death gives rise to full-scale turmoil, disturbance, and chaos throughout the land. When Hamlet takes revenge for the death of his father, he is not only killing his uncle but inviting his own death at the hands of Laertes.
2. **Struggle between good and evil** : Shakespearean tragedies portray struggle between good and evil. Most of them deal with the supremacy of

evil and suppression of good. Evil is presented in Shakespearean tragedies in a way that suggests its existence is indispensable. For example in Julius Caesar, the mob is unaware of the struggle between good and evil within King Caesar. They are also ignorant of the secret motives of Cassius. Goodness never beats evil in the tragedies of Shakespeare. Evil conquers goodness. The reason for this is that the evil element is always disguised, while goodness is open and freely visible to all. The main character (the most pious and honest person in the tragedy) is assigned the task of defeating the supreme evil because of his goodness. As a result, he suffers terribly and ultimately fails due to his fatal flaw. This tragic sentiment is perfectly illustrated by Hamlet in the following lines, "O cursed spite,
That ever I was born to set it right."

3. **Hamartia** : According to Encyclopedia Britannica, Hamartia is also called tragic flaw. It is derived from the Greek word 'hamartanein' which means 'to err'. Hamartia is the inherent defect or shortcoming in the hero of a tragedy, who in other terms, is a superior being, favoured by fortune. According to A.C.Bradley, "The calamities and catastrophe follow inevitably from the deeds of men and the main source of these deeds is character."

Hamartia, refers to hero's tragic flaw and it is an essential element of a Shakespearean tragedy. Every hero of a Shakespearean tragedy has a downfall due to some tragic flaw in his character. As an outcome of the fatal flaw/ hamartia, the hero falls from a high to a low position, ultimately leading to his unavoidable death. For example, in Hamlet, Hamlet's hamartia is procrastination due to which he has an untimely death. He finds a number of chances to kill his uncle but is unable to act due to indecisiveness and procrastinating nature. Once, he finds an opportunity to kill Claudius while Claudius was praying. But, Hamlet forgoes the good opportunity to achieve his aim, with the excuse that he doesn't want to kill a man while he is praying. He wants to kill Claudius when he is in the act of committing a sin. It is this perfectionism, failure to act,

and uncertainty about the correct path that ultimately result in Hamlet's death and leads Denmark into chaos.

4. **Tragic Waste** : In a tragedy, when good is destroyed along with evil, the loss is known as a "tragic waste." Shakespearean tragedy always includes a tragic waste of goodness. . Hamlet is a perfect example of tragic waste. Even though Hamlet succeeds in extinguishing the evil from Denmark, he does so at the cost of his own death. In this case, the good (Hamlet) gets destroyed along with evil (Claudius). Neither of them wins. Instead, they fail together. In Shakespearean tragedies, the hero usually dies along with his opponent, as seen in the case of Hamlet. . The death of a hero is not an ordinary death; it is the loss of an exceptionally intellectual, honest, intelligent, noble, and virtuous person. And that is why it is a tragic waste.
5. **Conflict** : There are two types of conflict in Shakespearean tragedy, external and internal conflict.
 - External conflict plays an important role in the tragedies of Shakespeare. External conflict causes internal conflict in the mind of the tragic hero. Every tragic hero in a Shakespearean play is confronted with external conflicts that must be addressed, for example Hamlet is hurled against external conflict in the guise of his uncle Claudius, he has to take revenge but as a result of his uncle's cleverness and good security, Hamlet is unable to turn his ideas into action. This external conflict gives rise to internal conflict, which prevents Hamlet from taking any action.
 - Internal conflict is an important element of a Shakespearean tragedy. It is the outcome in the mind of the hero. Internal conflict is responsible for the hero's fall, along with fate or destiny. The tragic hero always faces a critical dilemma. In most of the cases, he cannot make a decision which results in his ultimate failure. For example Hamlet, who is usually a doer of an action but with due course of time, his habit of procrastination, create a hindrance to his action. It is Hamlet's internal conflict that makes him spare Claudius's life while he was praying.

6. **Catharsis** : Also known as purgation or cleaning, catharsis, refers to 'letting go' of the bottled up or pent-up emotions of the audience. In other words, the Shakespearean tragedies help the audience/ reader feel and release emotions through the help of the tragedy. A Shakespearean tragedy arouses the feelings of pity and fear in the minds and the audience, who begin to identify themselves with the protagonists. The hardships of the hero and the cruelty of the villain, causes empathy in the minds of the audience. For example feeling sorrowful for Hamlet and happy for Claudius, results into cathartic effect in the mind of the audience.
7. **Supernatural Elements**: These play an important role in creating an atmosphere of awe, wonder, and sometimes fear. Supernatural elements are typically used to advance the story and drive the plot. The ghost Hamlet sees plays an important role in stirring up internal conflict. It is the ghost who tells Hamlet his father was killed by his uncle Claudius and assigns him the duty of taking revenge. In the same way, the witches of Macbeth, play an important role in encouraging Macbeth to resort to murder in order to ascend the throne of Scotland.
8. **Absence of Poetic Justice** :- Poetic justice means that good is rewarded and evil is punished, In other words, everything has a befitting and just end. There is no poetic justice in the tragedies of Shakespeare, rather, these plays contain only partial justice. Shakespeare understood that poetic justice rarely happened outside fiction. Shakespeare understood that Good deeds often go without reward and immoral people are often free to enjoy life to its fullest. It is evident from the tragedies of Shakespeare that the good is crushed along with evil, e.g. Hamlet dies with Claudius.
9. **Comic Relief** : Shakespeare did not follow his Greek and Roman predecessors while writing tragedies. The Greek and Roman writers didn't use comic relief. In order to relieve the tension and lighten up the mood created by a tragedy, Shakespeare used comic relief in his tragedies. For

example- the grave digger scene in Hamlet, the drunken port scene in Macbeth, the fool's dialogues in King Lear, and the Polonius in the wings speech in Hamlet.

4.5 GREAT TRAGEDIES OF SHAKESPEARE : A DISCUSSION

Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra are some of the great tragedies of Shakespeare. All these tragedies produce a panorama of emotions that are quintessential to the mature years of human life. These tragedies are an outcome of the sorrowful phase that the Bard was undergoing in his personal life, for instance, Shakespeare wrote Hamlet, when he was approximately 36 years old and had lost a son named Hamnet. Antony and Cleopatra, was written in around 1606-07 when Shakespeare was 42, the play portrays the distressing phase of midlife crisis. These plays are deeply concerned with domestic and family relationships. Theme of Othello (1603-04) is jealousy in married life. Desdemona in Othello, is a single daughter of Brabantio, an aging senator of Venice, who dies heartbroken because his daughter eloped with a moor, who is of another culture and many years elder to Desdemona. The play illustrates the traditional model of a tragedy by demonstrating hamartia or tragic flaw, of Othello as he is instigated by Iago that Desdemona can seek erotic pleasure only with a man of similar background. This realization makes Othello grieve, he ponders about himself that he has, "loved not wisely, but too well" (Act V, scene 2, line 354). Desdemona, is initially happy despite her filial disobedience until Othello is instigated by Iago. King Lear (1605-06) portrays problems of aging parent and ingratitude of children. Two sets of parents and children are shown at the centre of big dilemmas in King Lear. Shakespeare, in most of his late plays, removes wife from the plot. Only fathers and daughters are left to deal with one another, as seen in Othello, The Winter's Tale, Cymbeline and The Tempest. Perhaps it has a reflection on Shakespeare's personal life, in which his relations with his daughter Susanna were more to him than his estranged wife Anne. Lear's action of banishing Cordelia for a minor fault of inability to profess love for Lear

may have incurred the sin of being belittled and humiliated by his thankless daughters Goneril and Regan. The play has a sub-plot, the Earl of Gloucester commits similar mistake with his good hearted son, Edgar and becomes an easy target of his cunning and illegitimate son, Edmund. Both the aged fathers are ultimately taken care of by their loyal childrens.

In Hamlet, Hamlet suffers from hamartia, as evident from melancholia and an inability to act. Choosing the right course of action is highly problematic for him. Hamlet sees examples around him of those whose straight forward actions lead to fatal mistakes or absurd ironies, infact, his own killing of the man he assumes to be Claudius hidden in his mother's chambers turns out to be a mistake for which he realizes heaven will hold him accountable.

Macbeth (1606-07) explores the themes of ambition that are poisonous enough to kill a father figure who stands in the way. Macbeth is a sensitive, poetic person and clearly understands the stakes involved in his well-thought act of murder. The reason he proceeded for murder is due to temptations of the three weird sisters, who sense Macbeth's vulnerability to their prophecies, and the terrifying strength of his wife, who pushes him to commit murder by branding his reluctance as unmanliness. Duncan is a great king and the guest of Macbeth. Macbeth, by committing regicide violates the sacred obligation of hospitality.

In Antony and Cleopatra, Antony becomes one of the three rulers of the Roman Empire, together with Octavius Caesar and Lepidus. He falls in love with Cleopatra, the Queen of Egypt, and settles in Alexandria. However, he is compelled to return to Rome when the empire is threatened by the rebellion of Sextus Pompey. Antony marries Octavius' sister, Octavia, in an attempt to heal the rift between the two emperors. They make peace with Pompey. When Cleopatra hears about Antony's marriage she flies into a jealous rage but is sure that Antony does not love Octavia. Antony goes to Athens but when war breaks out between Caesar and Pompey, Antony sends Octavia back to Rome and returns to Egypt. Caesar is so angry with Antony's behaviour that he declares war on both Antony and Cleopatra. Although Antony is offered a choice of how to fight

and, despite being renowned as the world's greatest soldier, he chooses to fight on sea. The Egyptian navy is inadequate and when Cleopatra's navy turns and flees, Antony follows them and Caesar defeats him.

Cleopatra goes to her tomb and sends a message to Antony that she is dead. Antony is devastated and decides to kill himself. His followers take him to Cleopatra's tomb, where he dies in her arms. . Having lost Antony and being at the mercy of Caesar, Cleopatra resolves to commit suicide. She has someone bring her some poisonous snakes and incites them to bite her. Caesar arrives just after her death and orders that the both lovers, Antony and Cleopatra be buried together.

Timon of Athens, a prosperous man when he realizes that he has exceeded his means, he turns to his 'fair weather friends' for help, he had offered them. To his dismay, he realizes that their memories are short. Resorting to isolation, Timon dies.

Coriolanus, similarly portrays the ungrateful responses of a city towards its military hero. Coriolanus, undertakes a political role in Rome for which he is not temperamentally fit. This tragedy ends in defeat and humiliation. Coriolanus is killed in the end. Titus Andronicus (c. 1589-92) is Shakespeare's first full-length tragedy, it owes much of its theme, structure, and language to Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*. This play ends in bloodbath and a vindication of the avenger . It is the story of Titus Andronicus, his sons are butchered and daughter is raped and mutilated. *Romeo and Juliet* (c. 1594-96) is a love tragedy, evoking strong emotional response. It manifests brevity of young love, regretting an unfeeling world, and evoking an emotional response that differs from that produced by the other tragedies.

4.6 SUMMARY / CONCLUSION/ LET US SUM IT UP

Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear, Julius Caesar, and *Romeo and Juliet* are among the most famous tragedies of Shakespeare; however Shakespeare did not limit himself only to this genre. Most of his works fall into three distinct genres. He wrote, 12 tragedies, 10 history plays and 15 comedies. According to

Andrew Cecil Bradley, a noted 20th century Shakespeare scholar, a Shakespearean tragedy "is essentially a tale of suffering and calamity conducting to death." (Usually the hero has to face death in the end.)

All tragedies of Shakespeare include these elements in some form:-

- Tragic hero
- Tussle between good and evil
- Hamartia
- Tragic waste
- External conflict
- Internal conflict
- Catharsis
- Supernatural elements
- Lack of poetic justice
- Comic relief

4.7 GLOSSARY

- Bard : A poet, Shakespeare is also known as Bard of Avon, the Bard
- Sonnet : A poem of 14 lines using any number of formal rhyme schemes in English, typically having 10 syllables
- Scathing : extremely critical, harsh, unsparing
- Bubonic plague: also known as Black death, was one of the most devastating pandemics in human history, resulting in the death of an estimated 75 to 200 million people in Eurasia
- Earl : nobleman of high rank
- Reformers : a person who works to achieve political or social change
- Mistress : a man's (usually a married man's) keep
- Holy Trinity Church : the collegiate church of the Holy and undivided Trinity

- Tombstone
- Oeuvre : complete body of work in literature
- Genre : a style or category of art, music or literature
- History : a play in this genre is known as history play and is based on a historical narrative, often set in the medieval or early modern time. History emerged as a distinct genre from tragedy in Renaissance England.
- Romance : a story of excitement and adventure, often set in the past
- Plot : the main events of a play, novel, film or similar work, devised and presented by the writer as an interrelated sequence
- Conflict : a struggle or clash between opposing forces, battle, a state of opposition between ideas , interests etc.

4.8 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1) Who said, "But Shakespeare's magic could not copied be;
Within that circle none durst walk but he." Name the work and year.
- John Dryden (1631-1700) Essay of Dramatic Poesy

Ans. _____

Q2) Throw some light on Shakespeare's family background.

Ans. _____

Q3) Highlight about the oeuvre of Shakespeare. Ans.

Ans. _____

Q4) Write about Shakespeare's marriage and his will.

Ans. _____

Q5) Who made a scathing attack on Shakespeare in the year 1592?

Ans. _____

Q6) What do you know about 'Chamberlain's Men' and 'The Globe'?

Ans. _____

Q7) What is a Shakespearean tragedy according to A.C. Bradley?

Ans. _____

Q8) What is comic relief?

Ans. -----

Q9) Elaborate briefly on struggle of good and evil in Shakespearean tragedies.

Ans. -----

Q10) Name some great tragedies of Shakespeare.

Ans. -----

Possible Answers:

A-1) John Dryden (1631-1700) said it in his Essay of Dramatic Poesy.

A-2) William Shakespeare (26.4.1564 -23.4.1616) was born in Stratford-upon-Avon to John and Mary Arden Shakespeare. The fourth of the Shakespeares' eight children.

A-3) Shakespeare is also addressed as the national poet of England, Bard of Avon or The Bard, wrote 38 plays, approximately 154 sonnets and two narrative poems, Venus and Adonis and The Rape of Lucrece.

A-4) Shakespeare married, at the age of 18 to 26 year old Anne Hathaway and was blessed with three children, eldest daughter Susanna, twins Hamnet and Judith. Son Judith died at the age of 11. In his will, Shakespeare left his property for the male heirs of Susanna.

A-5) In 1592, playwright Robert Greene made a scathing attack on Shakespeare's writing, making it clear that he was misfit in Greene's university-educated dramatist crowd.

A-6) The 'Chamberlain's Men' was a leading theatre company, associated with Shakespeare and soon became the most popular acting group of London. Shakespeare initially acted in the company and later purchased shares in it thus became a partner. In 1599, the Chamberlain's Men, built 'The Globe', a wooden theatre in London.

A-7) According to Andrew Cecil Bradley, a noted 20th century Shakespeare scholar, a Shakespearean tragedy "is essentially a tale of suffering and calamity conducting to death." (Usually the hero has to face death in the end.)

A-8) Shakespeare inserted a scene or a humorous character to lighten the mood of a tragedy. The fool is introduced in King Lear for comic relief.

A-9) Struggle between good and evil : Shakespearean tragedies portray struggle between good and evil. Most of them deal with the supremacy of evil and suppression of good. Evil is presented in Shakespearean tragedies in a way that suggests its existence is indispensable.

A-10) Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth, and Antony and Cleopatra are some of the great tragedies of Shakespeare.

4.8.1 Multiple choice questions :

Q1) In the year 1569, Shakespeare joined the King's New School, an excellent grammar school of Stratford where ----- was taught.

- (a) German
 - (b) Latin
 - (c) Greek
 - (d) English
- Q2) In 1590, Shakespeare penned down his first play-----, part one.
- (a) Henry VI
 - (b) Henry VII
 - (c) Richard II
 - (d) Macbeth
- Q3) Shakespeare dedicated Venus and Adonis, and The Rape of Lucrece to :-
- (a) Dark Mistress
 - (b) Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton.
- Q4) In 1599, the Chamberlain's Men, built 'The Globe', a wooden theatre in London.
- (a) 1595, The Globe
 - (b) 1596, The Globe
 - (c) 1559, The Globe
 - (d) 1599, The Globe
- Q5) In 1609, publisher ----- printed a collection of 154 of Shakespeare's sonnets.
- (a) Philip Thorpe
 - (b) Thomas Thorpe

- (c) Thomas Tom
- (d) Tomas Phelps
- Q6) 'Mr. -----' It is believed that Mr. W.H. was William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, or that he was Henry Wriothesley, Earl of Southampton.
 - (a) Mr. H.W.
 - (b) Mr. W.W.
 - (c) Mr. V.W.
 - (d) Mr. W.H.
- Q7) -----, which was written in collaboration with John Fletcher, and this play is untraceable now.
 - (a) Casablanca
 - (b) Antony and Cleopatra
 - (c) Cardenio
 - (d) King Lear
- Q8) The Globe caught fire during staging of Henry VIII and completely burnt to scratches
 - (a) Henry VIII
 - (b) Antony and Cleopatra
 - (c) Cardenio
 - (d) Richard II
- Q9) Shakespeare died on :-
 - (a) 23rd April, 1616
 - (b) 24th April, 1616

- (c) 25th April, 1616
 - (d) 25th April, 1616
- Q10) Shakespeare was buried in :-
- (a) Christ Church of Stratford
 - (b) His Majesty Church of Stratford
 - (c) Church of Stratford- on- Avon
 - (d) Holy Trinity Church of Stratford
- Q11) What does Shakespeare's tombstone suggest?
- (a) The tombstone suggests a blessing on anyone who disturbs his grave.
 - (b) The tombstone suggests a punishment on anyone who disturbs his grave.
 - (c) The tombstone suggests a fine on anyone who disturbs his grave.
 - (d) The tombstone suggests a curse on anyone who disturbs his grave.
- Q12) Shakespeare's grave was untouched during the renovation of the church in the year :-
- (a) 2007
 - (b) 2008
 - (c) 2009
 - (d) 2010
- Q13) John Heminge and-----, were Shakespeare's erstwhile colleagues.
- (a) Henry Beatle
 - (b) Henry Blair

- (c) Henry Condell
 - (d) John Condell
- Q14) In-----, John Heminge and Henry Condell, Shakespeare's erstwhile colleagues, posthumously published 36 of late Shakespeare's plays.
- (a) 1677
 - (b) 1623
 - (c) 1675
 - (d) 1688
- Q15) In 1623, John Heminge and Henry Condell, Shakespeare's erstwhile colleagues, posthumously published 36 of late Shakespeare's plays in a volume known as the -----.
- (a) First Folio
 - (b) Second Folio
 - (c) Third Folio
 - (d) Fourth Folio

Answers:

- 1) (b) Latin
- 2) (a) Henry VI
- 3) (b) Henry Wriothesley, the Earl of Southampton
- 4) (d) 1599, The Globe
- 5) (b) Thomas Thorpe
- 6) (d) Mr. W.H.
- 7) (c) Cardenio

- 8) (a) Henry VIII
- 9) (c) On 25th April, 1616
- 10) (d) Holy Trinity Church of Stratford
- 11) (d) The tombstone suggests a curse on anyone who disturbs his grave.
- 12) (b) 2008
- 13) (c) Henry Condell
- 14) (b) 1623
- 15) (a) First Folio

4.9 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- 1) What is a Shakespearean tragedy?
- 2) What did Shakespeare write about in his tragedies?
- 3) Elaborate on the types of plays that Shakespeare wrote.
- 4) How many plays of Shakespeare were tragedies and why?
- 5) Elaborate on the elements of Shakespeare's tragedies.
- 6) What is the main theme of the play Hamlet ?
- 7) What is the similarity in the plot and subplot of King Lear ?
- 8) Discuss Macbeth as a tragedy.
- 9) Name the tragedies of Shakespeare and what are the common features of these tragedies.
- 10) What is the main theme of Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet ?

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LITERATURE IN THE AGE OF CHARLES I

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Objectives
- 5.3 Various periods at the times of Charles I
 - 5.3.1 Jacobean period
 - 5.3.2 Caroline era
 - 5.3.3 Reformation Period
 - 5.3.3 Reformation Period
 - 5.3.5 Late Renaissance and development of poetry during the time of Charles I
- 5.4
 - 5.4.1 Drama
 - 5.4.2 Prose
- 5.5 Poetry:
 - 5.5.1 Cavalier Poets:
 - 5.5.2 Metaphysical poetry:
 - 5.5.3 John Donne (1572 - 1631) :
 - 5.5.4 Herbert (1593 - 1633) and Andrew Marvell (1621 - 1678):
 - 5.5.5 Difference between Cavalier and Metaphysical poetry :

- 5.6 Summary
- 5.7 Glossary
- 5.8 Multiple Choice Questions
- 5.9 Short Answer Questions
- 5.10 Lesson end exercise
- 5.11 Suggested Reading
- 5.12 References:

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Charles I (19.11.1600 to 30.1.1649) was the second son of King James VI of Scotland, but after his father inherited the English throne in 1603, he moved to England, where he spent much of the rest of his life. Charles I was the ruler of three kingdoms i.e. England, Scotland and Ireland from 27.3.1625 till he was executed in 1649. After succession, Charles I, believed that he could rule according to his own conscience. As a subsequent outcome, clashes took place between the Parliament of England, which wanted to curb his noble prerogative, specially his decision of levying taxes without parliament's consent. He was seen as a tyrannical monarch. Charles I married a Roman Catholic, not only his marriage but also his religious policies, resulted into aversion among the reformed groups, such as the English Puritans who regarded his outlook as too Catholic. From 1642, Charles fought the armies of the English and Scottish parliaments in the English Civil War. Soon after his defeat in 1645, he surrendered to a Scottish force that eventually handed him over to the English Parliament. Charles was against the wishing of his captors for setting a constitutional monarchy. He temporarily escaped captivity in November 1647 and was later re-imprisoned. Though Charles forged an alliance with Scotland, but by the end of 1648 Oliver Cromwell's army consolidated its control over England. In January 1649, Charles was convicted and executed for treason. The monarchy was terminated and a republic called the Commonwealth of England was announced. The monarchy was reinstated to Charles's son, Charles II, in 1660.

5.2 OBJECTIVES

1. The main objectives of this unit are:-
2. To acquaint the scholar with the life and brief background about Charles I and his time.
3. To introduce the scholar with various periods during the times of Charles I.
4. To introduce the scholar with the literature in the age of Charles I; the prose, Drama , Cavalier and Metaphysical poetry.
5. To familiarize the scholar with difficult words.
6. To prepare the scholar to respond to the various issues raised in the literature in the times of Charles I, by giving practice questions and key so that the students can do self evaluation.
7. Suggesting list of books for further reading.

5.3 VARIOUS PERIODS AT THE TIMES OF CHARLES I

Some prominent literary periods at the time of Charles I are as follows:-

1. Jacobean period
2. Caroline era
3. Reformation period
4. Restoration period
5. Renaissance period

5.3.1 Jacobean period

Jacobean period refers to the reign of James I (in Latin "Jacobus"), from 1603 to 1625, after queen Elizabeth. At this time Charles I's father James I was the king. At this time King James' translation of the Bible took place, Shakespeare wrote great plays, like King Lear (1605), Macbeth (1606), and The Tempest (1610). Patronage was not only from the king

but also his wife, Anne of Denmark. Bacon did prose writing, and times of John Donne's writings. Powerful works were composed in this period by John Webster, Thomas Middleton, John Ford and Ben Jonson. Jonson was also an important innovator in the specialised literary subgenre of the masque, which went through an intense development in the Jacobean era. In 1617 George Chapman completed his monumental translation of Homer's Iliad and Odyssey into English verse, which were the first ever complete translations of either poem, into the English language.

5.3.2 Caroline era

The Caroline era indicates the period in English and Scottish history during the Stuart period (1603-1714). It coexisted with the reign of Charles I (1625-1642). Carolus is Latin word for Charles. The Caroline era followed the Jacobean period (1603-1625). Jacobean era refers to the era during the times of Charles's father James I (1603-1625). Caroline era was followed by Interregnum. The Caroline era was dominated by conflicts between King and Parliament. In poetry, Caroline poetry was marked by the Cavalier poets (Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace and Sir John Suckling) and the metaphysical poets (John Donne, Robert Herrick, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Katherine Philips etc.)

5.3.3 Reformation Period

The Reformation refers to the period when new ideas in religion in 16th century Europe that led to attempts to reform the Roman Catholic Church and to the forming of the Protestant Churches or it may refer to period of time when these changes were taking place.

Though the Reformation movement prevailed in 16th and 17th century, but we are dealing only with the Reformation period during the times of Charles I. Therefore, in 1633, William Laud took over as the Archbishop of Canterbury. Charles I and Laud would take action against anyone who wouldn't accept the government i.e. Episcopalianism or worship of the Church of England.

5.3.4 Renaissance period

Renaissance means "rebirth", in European history, it began in Italy in the late 14th century and spread to other countries of western Europe, through 15th and 16th centuries. During this period in Europe, arts, paintings, sculpture, architecture and literature reached at a peak which is unsurpassable in other epochs. Renaissance reached late in England, i.e. in 16th century. It bloomed in the Elizabethan and Jacobean poets. Some critics have labeled John Milton (1608-74) as the last great Renaissance poet.

5.3.5 Late Renaissance and development of poetry during the time of Charles I :

Period between 1625 to 1660 is known as late Renaissance. The second generation of Metaphysical poets wrote during this time. They were Andrew Marvell (1621-1678), Thomas Traherne (1636-1637) and Henry Vaughan (1622-1695). Their style indicated presence of wit and extensive use of literary devices, specially hyperbole and conceits.

Another group of poets who were active during this period were the Cavalier poets. They were an important group of writers, who came from the classes that supported King Charles I during the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (1639-51). The most famous Cavalier poets were Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Thomas Carew, and Sir John Suckling. They were influenced by Ben Jonson. Most of the Cavalier poets were courtiers, with notable exceptions. For example, Robert Herrick was not a courtier, but his style marks him as a Cavalier poet. Cavalier works make use of allegory and classical allusions, and are influenced by Latin authors Horace, Cicero, and Ovid.

5.4 PROSE AND DRAMA DURING THE TIME OF CHARLES I

During the time of Charles I, prominent dramas and prose fiction was written. Chief works are summarized as follows:-

5.4.1 Drama

After Shakespeare, Ben Jonson (1572 - 1637) was the leading literary figure of the Jacobean era. *Volpone* (1605 or 1606) and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) were Jonson's prominent plays. During Jacobean time, Revenge plays ; a popular style of theatre was popular. During Elizabethan times Thomas Kyd (1558-94) popularized it and eventually it was developed by John Webster (1578-1632) in the 17th century. *The White Devil* (1612) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1613) were some famous plays of Webster. Some more famous revenge tragedies were *The Changeling* written by Thomas Middleton and William Rowley.

5.4.2 Prose

Philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) coined the phrase, "Knowledge is Power". He also wrote an incomplete novel *New Atlantis*. It is an incomplete utopian novel, published in 1627 . In this work, Bacon portrayed a vision of the future of human discovery and knowledge, expressing his aspirations and ideals for humankind. The novel depicts the creation of a utopian land where "generosity and enlightenment, dignity and splendour, piety and public spirit" are the commonly held qualities of the inhabitants of the mythical Bensalem. Francis Godwin's in 1638 wrote *The Man in the Moone*. It recounts an imaginary voyage to the moon and is now regarded as the first work of science fiction in English literature. It was during this time, that the Authorized King James Version had been done. It was started in 1604 and completed in 1611. It became the standard Bible of the Church of England, and some consider it one of the greatest literary works of all time.

5.5 POETRY

During the times of Charles I, the Cavalier and Metaphysical poets were noteworthy.

5.5.1 Cavalier Poets

Cavalier poets lived in the 17th century, and were loyal to King Charles

I. The cavalier poets was a school of English poets of the 17th century, that came from the classes that supported King Charles I during the English Civil War. Charles, a connoisseur of the fine arts, supported poets who created the art he craved. These poets in turn grouped themselves with the King and his service, thus becoming Cavalier Poets.

A cavalier was traditionally a mounted soldier or knight, but when the term was applied to those who supported Charles it was meant to portray them as roistering gallants. The term was thus meant to belittle and insult. However, it became the term applied to those who supported Charles. The intent of their works was often to promote the crown (particularly Charles I), and cavalier poets spoke outwardly against the Roundheads who supported the rebellion of Parliament against the crown. Cavalier poetry is closely linked to the Royalist cause in that the main intent of their poetry was to glorify the crown. In this way, cavalier poetry is often grouped in a political category of poetry.

The Cavalier poets, were members of the nobility. They were known as Royalists. Cavalier poetry is straightforward but refined. Many of the poems centered around sensual, romantic love and also the idea of *carpe diem*, which means to 'seize the day.' To the Cavalier poet, enjoying life was far more important than following moral codes. They lived for the moment. Some of the most prominent Cavalier poets were- Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace, Robert Herrick, and John Suckling. They emulated Ben Jonson, who was a contemporary of Shakespeare.

These poets opposed metaphysical poetry, such as that of John Donne. Commonly held traits certainly exist in cavalier poetry in that most poems "celebrate beauty, love, nature, sensuality, drinking, good fellowship, honor, and social life." In other words the cavalier poetry reflects the spirit of "*carpe diem*." Cavalier poets certainly wrote to promote Loyalist principles in favor of the crown, but their themes ran deeper than that. Cavalier poets wrote in a way that promoted seizing the day and the opportunities presented to them and their kinsmen.

They desired to revel in society and come to be the best that they possibly could within the bounds of that society. This endorsement of living life to the fullest, for Cavalier writers, often included gaining material wealth and womanizing . These themes contributed to the triumphant and boisterous tone and attitude of the poetry. Platonic Love was also another characteristic of cavalier poetry, where the man would show his divine love to a woman, and she would be worshipped as a creature of perfection. Therefore it was a common scene to hear praise of womanly virtues as though they were divine.

5.5.2 Metaphysical poetry

The word 'Metaphysical' is made of 2 words 'meta' - beyond and 'physical' - our surroundings which means an artificial world. Metaphysical poetry, a term coined by Samuel Johnson, has its genesis in 17th-century England. This type of poetry is witty, ingenious, and highly philosophical. Its themes included love, life and existence. It used literary elements of similes, metaphors, imagery, paradoxes, conceit, hyperboles and far-fetched views of reality.

John Donne is regarded as the pioneer of this highly intellectual form of poetry. Donne and other metaphysical poets believed in showing off their intelligence and wit through images in their poetry. He also used unconventional and colloquial rhythm and tone, which was highly contrary to the Elizabethan poetry style.

The term "metaphysical," as applied to English and continental European poets of the seventeenth century, was used by Augustan poets John Dryden and Samuel Johnson to rebuke those poets for their "unnaturalness." John Donne, along with similar but distinct poets such as George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, and Henry Vaughn, developed a poetic style in which philosophical and spiritual subjects were approached with reason and often concluded in paradox. The metaphysical poets were eclipsed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by romantic and Victorian poets, but

twentieth-century readers and scholars, seeing in the metaphysicals an attempt to understand pressing political and scientific upheavals, engaged them with renewed interest. In his essay "The Metaphysical Poets," T. S. Eliot, in particular, saw in this group of poets a capacity for "devouring all kinds of experience."

5.5.3 John Donne (1572 - 1631)

Donne , was the most seminal metaphysical poet. His personal relationship with spirituality is at the center of most of his work, and the psychological analysis and sexual realism of his work marked a dramatic departure from traditional, genteel verse. His early work, collected in *Satires* and in *Songs and Sonnets*, was released in an era of religious oppression. His *Holy Sonnets*, which contained many of Donne's perennial poems, was released shortly after his wife died in childbirth. The intensity with which Donne grapples with concepts of divinity and mortality in the *Holy Sonnets* is exemplified in "Sonnet X [Death, be not proud]," "Sonnet XIV [Batter my heart, three person'd God]," and "Sonnet XVII [Since she whom I loved hath paid her last debt]."

5.5.4 Herbert (1593 - 1633) and Andrew Marvell (1621 - 1678)

Herbert and Marvell were remarkable poets who were published posthumously. Herbert, was the son of a prominent literary patron to whom Donne dedicated his *Holy Sonnets*, spent the last years of his short life as a rector in a small town. On his deathbed, he handed his poems to a friend with the request that they be published only if they might aid "any dejected poor soul." Marvell wrote politically charged poems that would have cost him his freedom or his life had they been made public. He was a secretary to John Milton, and once Milton was imprisoned during the Restoration, Marvell successfully petitioned to have the elder poet freed. His complex lyric and satirical poems were collected after his death amid an air of secrecy.

5.5.5 Difference between Cavalier and Metaphysical poetry

While poets like John Donne wrote with a spiritual, scientific, and moral focus, the Cavalier poets wrote short, refined verses, and the tone of Cavalier poetry was generally easy-going. Cavalier poets wrote short, refined verses, and the tone of Cavalier poetry was generally easy-going. English poets of the early seventeenth century are crudely classified by the division into Cavaliers and metaphysical poets, the latter (for example John Donne) being much concerned with religion. The division is therefore along a line approximating to secular/religious.

5.6 SUMMARY

Charles I (19.11.1600 to 30.1.1649) was the second son of King James VI of Scotland, but after his father inherited the English throne in 1603, he moved to England, where he spent much of the rest of his life. Charles I was the ruler of three kingdoms i.e. England, Scotland and Ireland from 27.3.1625 till he was executed in 1649. Some prominent literary periods at the time of Charles I were - Jacobean period, Caroline era, Reformation period, Restoration period, 1

Jacobean period refers to the reign of James I (in Latin "Jacobus"), from 1603 to 1625, after queen Elizabeth. The Caroline era indicates the period in English and Scottish history during the Stuart period (1603-1714). It coexisted with the reign of Charles I (1625-1642). Carolus is Latin word for Charles. The Reformation refers to the period when new ideas in religion in 16th century Europe that led to attempts to reform the Roman Catholic Church and to the forming of the Protestant Churches. Renaissance reached late in England, i.e. in 16th century. It bloomed in the Elizabethan and Jacobean poets. Some critics have labeled John Milton (1608-74) as the last great Renaissance poet.

During the time of Charles I, prominent dramas and prose fiction was written. During the times of Charles I, the Cavalier and Metaphysical poets were noteworthy. Cavalier poets lived in the 17th century, and were loyal to King Charles I. Some of the most prominent Cavalier poets were- Thomas Carew,

Richard Lovelace, Robert Herrick, and John Suckling. The word 'Metaphysical' is made of 2 words 'meta' - beyond and 'physical'. John Donne is regarded as the pioneer of this highly intellectual form of poetry. Donne and other metaphysical poets believed in showing off their intelligence and wit through images in their poetry.

5.7 GLOSSARY

1. Roman Catholic : a member of the Christian Church that has the Pope as its leader
2. Puritan : A member of the Protestant group of Christians who wanted to worship God in simple ways
3. English Civil War: the war (1642-46) between the Parliamentarians and the Royalists, sometimes extended to include the events of the period 1646-48.
4. Alliance: a group of people, political parties etc. who work together in order to achieve what they want
5. Treason: A crime that could cause danger to your country such as helping its enemies during a war.
6. Commonwealth of England : The Commonwealth was the period from 1649 onwards when England and Wales, later along with Ireland and Scotland,[1] was ruled as a republic following the end of the Second English Civil War and the trial and execution of Charles I. The republic's existence was declared through "An Act declaring England to be a Commonwealth",[2] adopted by the Rump Parliament on 19 May 1649. Power in the early Commonwealth was vested primarily in the Parliament and a Council of State. During the period, fighting continued, particularly in Ireland and Scotland, between the parliamentary forces and those opposed to them, as part of what is now referred to as the Third English Civil War.
7. Subgenre : a subdivision of a genre

8. Masque : a form of amateur dramatic entertainment , popular among the nobility in 16th and 17th century England, which consisted of dancing and acting performed by masked players
9. Iliad : an ancient Greek epic poem
10. Odyssey : it is a sequel to Iliad
11. Latin : Through the power of Roman Republic, it became the dominant language, initially in Italy and subsequently throughout the Roman empire.
12. Era : period, age, time
13. Interregnum : the period in English history from the execution of Charles I in 1649 to the Restoration of Charles II in 1660

5.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- (1) Charles I (19.11.1600 to 30.1.1649) was the -----son of King James VI of Scotland :-
 - (a) first
 - (b) second
 - (c) third
 - (d) fourth
- (2) Charles I was the ruler of three kingdoms i.e. England, ----- and Ireland.
 - (a) France
 - (b) Sweden
 - (c) Finland
 - (d) Scotland
- (3) Charles I ruled from 27.3.1625 to 1649, till he was -----.
 - (a) shot
 - (b) hanged

- (c) executed
 - (d) Punished
- (4) Charles I married a -----.
- (a) Roman Catholic
 - (b) Protestant
 - (c) Buddhist
 - (d) Muslim
- (5) In January-----, Charles was convicted and executed for treason.
- (a) 1647
 - (b) 1648
 - (c) 1649
 - (d) 1650
- (6) The monarchy was terminated and a republic called the ----- of England was announced (Fill in the blanks) :-
- (a) Republic
 - (b) Federation
 - (c) Nation
 - (d) Commonwealth
- (7) The monarchy was reinstated to Charles's son, -----, in 1660.
- (a) Charles II
 - (b) Federation
 - (c) Nation
 - (d) commonwealth

- (8) Jacobean period refers to the reign of James I (in Latin "-----")
- (a) Jacomus
 - (b) Charlus
 - (c) Jacobus
 - (d) Corolus
- (9) James I ruled , from 1603 to-----, after queen Elizabeth.
- (a) 1623
 - (b) 1624
 - (c) 1625
 - (d) 1626
- (10) -----is Latin word for Charles.
- (a) Caroline
 - (b) Carlos
 - (c) Carolus
 - (d) Carpe diem
- (11) The Caroline era followed the Jacobean period
- (a) Jacobean
 - (b) Puritan
 - (c) Victorian
 - (d) Romantic
- (12) Jacobean period was from -----.
- (a) (1601-1626)
 - (b) (1602-1625)

- (c) (1603-1624)
- (d) (1603-1625)
- (13) Caroline era was followed by-----.
- (a) Enterrengnum
- (b) Intengnum
- (c) Interrenum
- (d) Interrengnum
- (14) Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace and Sir John Suckling were some ----
----- poets:-
- (a) Cavalier
- (b) Metaphysical
- (c) Reformation
- (d) Interrengnum
- (15) John Donne, Robert Herrick, George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Katherine Philips etc. were some ----- poets:-
- (a) Cavalier
- (b) Metaphysical
- (c) Reformation
- (d) Interrengnum
- (16) ----- works make use of allegory and classical allusions, and are influence by Latin authors Horace, Cicero, and Ovid.
- (a) Cavalier
- (b) Metaphysical

- (c) Reformation
 - (d) Interrengnum
- (17) Philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) coined the phrase, "-----
-----is-----".
- (a) Knowledge is Power
 - (b) Might is Right
 - (c) Knowledge is Right
 - (d) Money is Power
- (18) The word 'Metaphysical' is made of 2 words
- (a) 1
 - (b) 2
 - (c) 3
 - (d) 4
- (19) The word "meta" means:-
- (a) Near
 - (b) Above
 - (c) Beyond
 - (d) Below
- (20) ----- poets believed in showing off their intelligence and wit through images in their poetry.
- (a) Cavalier
 - (b) Metaphysical

(c) Reformation

(d) Interrengnum

Answers:-

- (1) (b) second
- (2) (d) Scotland
- (3) (c) executed
- (4) (a) Roman Catholic
- (5) (c) 1649
- (6) (d) commonwealth
- (7) (a) Charles II
- (8) (c) Jacobus
- (9) (c) 1625
- (10) (c) Carolus
- (11) (a) Jacobean
- (12) (d) (1603-1625)
- (13) (d) Interrengnum
- (14) (a) Cavalier
- (15) (b) Metaphysical
- (16) (a) Cavalier
- (17) (a) Knowledge is Power
- (18) (b) 2
- (19) (c) Beyond
- (20) (b) Metaphysical

5.9 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1) Write about the reasons for clashes between Charles I and parliament of England.

Ans. _____

Q2) Write a brief note on Jacobean period.

Ans. _____

Q3) Write a brief note on Caroline period.

Ans. _____

Q4) Write a brief note on "Reformation period during the times of Charles I" .

Ans. _____

Q5) Write a brief note on Renaissance in England.

Ans. _____

Q6) Write a brief note on Philosopher Francis Bacon's incomplete novel New Atlantis.

Ans. _____

Q7) Differentiate between Metaphysical and Cavalier poetry.

Ans. _____

Possible Answers:

A-1) Clashes took place between the Parliament of England, which wanted to curb his noble prerogative, specially his decision of levying taxes without parliament's consent.

A-2) Jacobean period refers to the reign of James I (in Latin "Jacobus"), from 1603 to 1625, after queen Elizabeth. At this time Charles I's father James I was the king.

A-3) The Caroline era indicates the period in English and Scottish history during the Stuart period (1603-1714). It coexisted with the reign of Charles I (1625-

1642). Carolus is Latin word for Charles. The Caroline era followed the Jacobean period (1603-1625).

A-4) Reformation period during the times of Charles I:-in 1633, William Laud took over as the Archbishop of Canterbury. Charles I and Laud would take action against anyone who wouldn't accept the government i.e. Episcopalianism or worship of the Church of England.

A-5) Renaissance reached late in England, i.e. in 16th century. It bloomed in the Elizabethan and Jacobean poets. Some critics have labeled John Milton (1608-74) as the last great Renaissance poet.

A-6) Philosopher Francis Bacon (1561-1626) wrote an incomplete novel New Atlantis. An incomplete utopian novel, published in 1627. In this work, Bacon portrayed a vision of the future of human discovery and knowledge, expressing his aspirations and ideals for humankind

A-7) While Metaphysicals wrote with a spiritual, scientific, and moral focus, the Cavalier poets wrote short, refined verses, and the tone of Cavalier poetry was generally easy-going. Cavalier poets wrote short, refined verses, and the tone of Cavalier poetry was generally easy-going.

5.10 LESSON END EXERCISE

- Q1) Write about life of Charles I.
- Q2) What do you know about Caroline era?
- Q3) Explain Reformation period with special reference to Reformation at the times of Charles I in England.
- Q4) Explain Renaissance at the time of Charles I.
- Q5) Write a note on prose and drama at the time of Charles I.
- Q6) Who were the Cavaliers. What were the features of their poetry.
- Q7) What do you understand by the word Metaphysical? Write the features of Metaphysical poetry.
- Q8) Write a note on John Donne as a metaphysical poetry. Illustrate from a poem of your choice.

5.11 SUGGESTED READING

1. Charles I: A Political Life, Richard Cust, Routledge, 2014
2. Charles I and the Popish Plot, Caroline M. Hibbard, University of North Carolina Press, 1983
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2. file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/A%20Brief%20Guide%20to%20Metaphysical%20Poets%20_%20Academy%20of%20American%20Poets.html
3. <file:///C:/Users/user/Desktop/Jacobean%20era%20-%20Wikipedia.html>
4. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Commonwealth_of_England
5. <http://www.dictionary.com/browse/english-civil-war>
6. M.H. Abrams, Glossary of Literary Terms, New Delhi : OUP, 1999
7. Oxford Advanced Learner's English Dictionary

PURITAN PROSE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 6.1 Introduction
- 6.2 Objectives
- 6.3 Political History of the Puritan Period
- 6.4 Themes of Puritan Literature
- 6.5 Puritan prose writers
 - 6.1 John Milton (9 December 1608 - 8 November 1674)
 - 6.3 Minor Puritan Prose Writers
- 6.6 Summary
- 6.7 Glossary
- 6.8 Multiple choice questions:
- 6.9 Short answer questions
- 6.10 Lesson end exercise
- 6.11 Suggested readings:
- 6.12 References

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Puritan age covers almost the first half of the 17th century. Puritanism, and Puritan literature, became popular during this time. Writers who wrote Puritan

literature were highly educated, too religious and used literature as a medium to generate the relevancy of Christian God. They came to America because England was going through the Protestant Reformation because of King Henry VIII creating the Anglican church. The Puritans were Calvinists who thought that the Anglican church was corrupt. Some thought that if they stayed in England, they could change the church. Other extremes went to America to escape from the corruptness of the Anglicans and the persecution, and also they could earn better in new lands. Puritans were very strict, and some Puritan dissenters such as Roger Williams and Anne Hutchinson didn't agree. Roger Williams was angry about how everything, even their government, was influenced by the church. So he went and founded Rhode Island and made a separation of church and state with complete religious tolerance, which made him a separatist.

The common unity strengthened the community. In a foreign land surrounded with the hardships of pioneer life, their spiritual bond made them sympathetic to each other's needs. Their overall survival techniques permeated the colonies and on the whole made them more successful in several areas beyond that of the colonies established to their south.

Each church congregation was to be individually responsible to God, as was each person. The New Testament was their model and their devotion so great that it influenced their entire society. People of opposing theological views were asked either to leave the community or to be converted.

6.2 OBJECTIVES

1. The main objectives of this unit are:-
2. To acquaint the scholar with a short background about the Puritans, their history and the political background at the time of the Puritans.
3. To introduce the scholar with the themes of their writings.
4. To introduce the scholar with prominent and minor prose writers of the Puritan era.

5. To prepare the scholar to respond to the various issues raised in the Puritan prose literature, by giving practice questions and key so that the students can do self evaluation.
6. Suggesting list of books for further reading.

6.3 POLITICAL HISTORY OF THE PURITAN PERIOD

Historically the Puritan period was one of tremendous conflict. The Puritans struggled for righteousness and liberty. During struggle for liberty the Puritans overthrew the corrupt monarchy, beheaded Charles I, and established the Commonwealth under Cromwell. The Commonwealth lasted only for a few years, and the restoration of Charles II in 1660 is regarded as the end of the Puritan period. The age has no distinct limits, but overlaps the Elizabethan period on one side, and the Restoration period on the other. Roughly, the half century between 1625 and 1675 is called the Puritan period for two reasons first, because Puritan standards existed during this time in England; and second, because the greatest literary figure during all these years was the Puritan, John Milton. The period not only produced one of the world's great literary leaders but also many writers, a few immortal books."The literature of the age is extremely diverse in character, and the diversity is due to the breaking up of the ideals of political and religious unity."

6.4 THEMES OF PURITAN LITERATURE

The main themes in their writings showed the concepts of original sin, which is the belief that everyone was born sinful because of Adam and Eve, and predestination, which is the idea that no matter what a person did in life, his or her salvation had already been determined. The Puritans believed that the Bible was God's true law, and that it provided a plan for living. The established church of the day described access to God as austere and possible only within the confines of "church authority". Puritans stripped away the traditional trappings and formalities of Christianity which had been slowly building throughout the previous 1500 years. Theirs was an attempt to "purify" the church and their own lives. Thus the literature of the time prominently displayed their belief system.

6.5 PURITAN PROSE WRITERS

John Milton, John Bunyan were prominent Puritan prose writers. The Minor Prose Writers were Burton, Browne, Fuller, Taylor, Baxter, and Walton.

6.5.1 John Milton (9 December 1608 - 8 November 1674)

Areopagitica; A speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing, to the Parliament of England is a controversial prose by the English poet and scholar John Milton. *Areopagitica* was published on 23 November 1644 at the height of the English Civil War. In it, John Milton opposed the licensing and censorship. *Areopagitica* is among history's most seminal and impassioned philosophical defences of the principle of a right to freedom of speech and expression. It was titled after *Areopagitikos*, a speech written by Athenian orator Isocrates in the 5th century BC. The *Areopagus* is a hill in Athens, the site of real and legendary tribunals, and was the name of a council whose power Isocrates hoped to restore.

In February 1649, less than two weeks after Parliament executed Charles I, Milton published *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates*, in which he defends the right of people to execute a guilty sovereign, whether tyrannical or not. Milton's thesis was not that Charles I was guilty as charged, but that Parliament had the right to prosecute him. Milton later clarified that the piece was "written to reconcile men's minds, rather than to determine anything about Charles"

The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce: Restor'd to the Good of Both Sexes, From the Bondage of Canon Law was published by John Milton on 1 August 1643. *The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce* argues for the ability to have a second chance at marriage. In particular, Milton claims, in Book I, Chapter III, that no one can always know the disposition of their spouse before they enter into marriage.

Eikonoklastes is a book by John Milton, published October 1649. In it he provides a justification for the execution of Charles I, which had taken

place on 30 January 1649. It was published immediately after the execution. Milton's book is therefore usually seen as Parliamentary propaganda, to revert the picture of the king's piety, and condemning the Puritans in the book *Eikon Basilike* (spiritual autobiography attributed to King Charles I of England).

6.5.2: John Bunyan (baptised 30 November 1628 - 31 August 1688) was an English writer and Puritan preacher. The *Pilgrim's Progress* from This World, to That Which Is to Come is a 1678 Christian allegory written by him. Bunyan began this work while in the Bedfordshire county prison. The best result of this imprisonment was that it gave Bunyan long hours for the working of his mind and for study of his two only books, the King James Bible and Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*. The result of his study and meditation was *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was probably written in prison, but which for some reason he did not publish till long after his release. The publication of *Pilgrim's Progress* in 1678 made him the most popular writer, as he was already the most popular preacher, in England.

It is regarded as one of the most significant works of religious English literature, has been translated into more than 200 languages, and has never been out of print. It has also been cited as the first novel written in English. He wrote approximately sixty works.

6.5.3: Minor Puritan Prose Writers

SIR THOMAS BROWNE (1605-1682)- Browne's greatest work is the *Religio Medici* (*The Religion of a Doctor*), a spiritual testament and an early psychological self-portrait. Published in 1643. Two other works of Browne are *Vulgar Errors* (1646), a curious combination of scientific and credulous research in the matter of popular superstition, and *Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial, or, a Discourse of the Sepulchral Urns lately found in Norfolk*, published in 1658 as the first part of a two-part work that concludes with *The Garden of Cyrus*.

THOMAS FULLER (1608-1661). His best known works are *The Holy State and the Profane State* (1642), *Church History of Britain* (1655), and *the History of the Worthies of England* (1662). The first book is chiefly a biographical record, the first part consisting of numerous historical examples to be imitated, the second of examples to be avoided.

JEREMY TAYLOR (1613-1667). *The Liberty of Prophesying* (1646), *The Rules and Exercises of Holy Living* (1650) *The Rule and Exercises of Holy Living* provided a manual of Christian practice, which has retained its place with devout readers.

RICHARD BAXTER (1615-1691) . His two most famous books are *The Saints' Everlasting Rest* (1650) and *A Call to the Unconverted* (1829), both of which were exceedingly popular, running through scores of successive editions, and have been widely read in our own generation.

6.6 SUMMARY

Writers who wrote Puritan literature were highly educated , too religious and used literature as a medium to generate the relevancy of Christian God. They came to America because England was going through the Protestant Reformation because of King Henry VIII creating the Anglican Church. Historically the Puritan period was one of tremendous conflict. The Puritans struggled for righteousness and liberty. During struggle for liberty the Puritans overthrew the corrupt monarchy, beheaded Charles I, and established the Commonwealth under Cromwell. The Commonwealth lasted only for a few years, and the restoration of Charles II in 1660 is regarded as the end of the Puritan period. The main themes in their writings showed the concepts of original sin, which is the belief that everyone was born sinful because of Adam and Eve, and predestination, which is the idea that no matter what a person did in life, his or her salvation had already been determined. John Milton, John Bunyan were prominent Puritan prose writers. The Minor Prose Writers were Burton, Browne, Fuller, Taylor, Baxter, and Walton.

6.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Puritanism** : Puritanism was a religious reform movement that arose within the Church of England in the late sixteenth century. Under siege from church and crown, it sent an offshoot in the third and fourth decades of the seventeenth century to the northern English colonies in the New World-a migration that laid the foundation for the religious, intellectual, and social order of New England.
2. **Anglican Church** : Anglicanism is a tradition within Christianity comprising the Church of England and churches which are historically tied to it or hold similar beliefs, worship practices and church structures. The word Anglican originates in ecclesia anglicana, a medieval Latin phrase dating to the Magna Carta (1215) and before which means the "English Church".
3. **Calvinist**: the doctrines and teachings of John Calvin or his followers, emphasizing predestination, the sovereignty of God, the supreme authority of the Scriptures, and the irresistibility of grace.
4. **The New Testament** : The New Testament is the second part of the Christian biblical canon, the first part being the Old Testament, based on the Hebrew Bible. The New Testament discusses the teachings and person of Jesus, as well as events in first-century Christianity. Christians regard both the Old and New Testaments together as sacred scripture.
5. **Commonwealth**: The Commonwealth of Nations (formerly the British Commonwealth), also known as simply the Commonwealth, is an intergovernmental organisation of 52 member states that are mostly former territories of the British Empire
6. **Cromwell**: Oliver Cromwell (25 April 1599 - 3 September 1658) was an English military and political leader and later Lord Protector of the Commonwealth of England, Scotland, and Ireland.
7. **Charles II**: Charles II (29 May 1630 - 6 February 1685) was king of England, Scotland and Ireland. He was king of Scotland from 1649 until his

deposition in 1651, and king of England, Scotland and Ireland from the restoration of the monarchy in 1660 until his death.

8. **Elizabethan period:** The Elizabethan era is the epoch in the Tudor period of the History of England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). Historians often depict it as the golden age in English history.

9. **Tudor period:** The Tudor period is the period between 1485 and 1603 in England and Wales and includes the Elizabethan period which ends with the completion of the reign of Elizabeth I in 1603. The Tudor period coincides with the dynasty of the House of Tudor in England whose first monarch was Henry VII (1457-1509).

10. **Restoration period:** The Restoration of the English monarchy took place during the Stuart period. It began in 1660 when the English, Scottish and Irish monarchies were all restored under the Stuart King Charles II. It followed the Interregnum that followed the Wars of the Three Kingdoms. The term Restoration is used to describe both the actual event by which the monarchy was restored, and the period of several years afterwards in which a new political settlement was established.[1] It is very often used to cover the whole reign of Charles II (1660-1685) and often the brief reign of his younger brother James II (1685-1688)

11. **Adam and Eve :** Adam and Eve, according to the creation myth , were the first man and woman and the ancestors of all humans.

12. **Predestination :** Predestination, in theology, is the doctrine that all events have been willed by God, usually with reference to the eventual fate of the individual soul

13. **Worthies:** The Nine Worthies are nine historical, scriptural, and legendary personages who personify the ideals of chivalry as were established in the Middle Ages

14. **Prophecy:** Prophecy involves a process in which one or more messages are allegedly communicated by a god.

6.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS:

- Q1) Which century the Puritan age covers?
- a) first half of the 16th century
 - b) first half of the 17th century
 - c) second half of the 16th century
 - d) second half of the 17th century
- Q2) Writers who wrote Puritan literature were highly educated , too religious and used literature as a medium to generate the _____ .
- a) relevancy of Christian God
 - b) intimacy to Christian God
 - c) communion to Christian God
 - d) right vibes to Christian God
- Q3) ----- came to America because England was going through the Protestant Reformation because of King Henry VIII creating the Anglican church.
- a) people
 - b) puritans
 - c) slaves
 - d) Britishers
- Q4) The Puritans were -----who thought that the Anglican church was corrupt.
- a) Cannibles
 - b) Cattle traders
 - c) Black-slaves
 - d) Calvinists

- Q5) ----- was angry about how everything, even their government, was influenced by the church
- a) Romey Williams
 - b) Rodham Williams
 - c) Roger Williams
 - d) Robin Williams
- Q6) Roger Williams founded Rhode Island and made a separation of church and state with complete religious tolerance, which made him a-----
- a) Separatist
 - b) Methodist
 - c) Puritan
 - d) Reformist
- Q7) In a foreign land surrounded with the hardships of pioneer life, their (puritans) -----bond made them sympathetic to each other's needs.
- a) Kexclusive
 - b) Superior
 - c) Spiritual
 - d) Reformist
- Q8) Each church congregation was to be individually responsible to-----, as was each person.
- a) King
 - b) Congregation
 - c) Spirits
 - d) God

- Q9) The -----was their (puritans) model and their devotion so great that it influenced their entire society.
- a) Old Testament
 - b) Hebrew Bible
 - c) Christian brotherhood
 - d) New Testament
- Q10) People of opposing theological views were asked either to leave the community or to be-----.
- a) Converted
 - b) Punished
 - c) Taught
 - d) Ostracised
- Q11) The Puritans struggled for ----- and liberty.
- a) Justice
 - b) Peace
 - c) Right to worship
 - d) Righteousness
- Q12) During struggle for liberty the Puritans overthrew the corrupt monarchy, beheaded -----
- a) James I
 - b) Charles I
 - c) Charles II
 - d) Victorians

- Q13) After beheaded Charles I, the Puritans and established the Commonwealth under-----.
- a) Cromwell
 - b) James II
 - c) Charles II
 - d) Victorians
- Q14) The Commonwealth lasted only for a few years, and the restoration of Charles II in 1660 is regarded as the end of the Puritan period.
- a) 1666
 - b) 1659
 - c) 1616
 - d) 1660
- Q15) The Puritan age has no distinct limits, but overlaps the Elizabethan period on one side, and the ----- period on the other.
- a) Victorean
 - b) Jacobean
 - c) Restoration
 - d) Romantic
- Q16) Roughly, the half century between 1625 and 1675 is called the Puritan period.
- a) 1673
 - b) 1672
 - c) 1674
 - d) 1675

- Q17) The greatest literary figure during the Puritan period was, John Milton.
- a) John Milton
 - b) Herman Melville
 - c) Edward Taylor
 - d) Anne Bradstreet
- Q18) Puritan literature in contrast with the hopefulness and vigor of Elizabethan writings, is -----in character; it saddens rather than inspires us.
- a) Gay
 - b) Hilarious
 - c) Depressing
 - d) Somber
- Q19) Puritan literature has lost the romantic impulse of youth, and become critical and intellectual; it makes us-----, rather than feel deeply
- a) Think
 - b) Beg
 - c) Pray
 - d) Dream
- Q20) The main themes in their writings showed the concepts of -----.
- a) Suffering
 - b) Evolution
 - c) Original sin
 - d) Adam and Eve

- Q21) The Puritans believed that the ----- was God's true law.
- a) Suffering
 - b) Evolution
 - c) Bible
 - d) Adam and Eve
- Q22) Puritans stripped away the traditional trappings and formalities of Christianity which had been slowly building throughout the previous ----
----- years.
- a) 2500
 - b) 1000
 - c) 1200
 - d) 1500
- Q23) Puritan's attempt was to "purify" the church and their ----- lives.
- a) Own
 - b) Neighbour's
 - c) Family's
 - d) Parent's
- Q24) John Milton, ----- were prominent Puritan prose writers.
- a) Burton
 - b) Fuller
 - c) Walton
 - d) John Bunyan

Q25) The Minor Puritan Prose Writers were Burton, Browne, Fuller, Taylor, -----, and Walton.

- a) John Bunyan
- b) John Milton
- c) Melville
- d) Baxter

Possible answers:

- A-1) b) First half of the 17th century
- A-2) a) Relevancy of Christian God
- A-3) b) Puritans
- A-4) d) Calvinists
- A-5) c) Roger Williams
- A-6) a) Separatist
- A-7) c) Spiritual
- A-8) d) God
- A-9) d) New Testament
- A-10) a) Converted
- A-11) d) Righteousness
- A-12) b) Charles I
- A-13) a) Cromwell
- A-14) d) 1660
- A-15) c) Restoration
- A-16) d) 1675

A-17) a) John Milton

A-18) d) Somber

A-19) a) Think

A-20) c) Original sin

A-21) c) Bible

A-22) d) 1500

A-23) a) Own

A-24) d) John Bunyan

A-25) d) Baxtor

6.9 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1) Write briefly about Puritan literature.

Ans. _____

Q2) Why did the Puritans come to America?

Ans. _____

Q3) Write briefly about the political upheaval during the Puritan age.

Ans. _____

Q4) What strengthened the Puritan community in foreign land?

Ans.

Q5) Why the years between 1625 and 1675 is called the Puritan period?

Ans.

Q6) How the Puritan literature differs from that of the preceding age? Give three reasons.

Ans.

Q7) Describe the main themes in Puritan writings.

Ans.

Q8) Name some major and minor writers of the Puritan age.

Ans. _____

Q9) Write a brief note on Milton's *Areopagitica*; A speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing, to the Parliament of England.

Ans. _____

Q10) Why is Milton's *Eikonoklastes* seen as Parliamentary propaganda?

Ans. _____

Q11) Write a note on John Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

Ans. _____

Possible answers:

A-1) Puritan age covers almost the first half of the 17th century. Puritanism, and Puritan literature, became popular during this time. Writers who wrote Puritan literature were highly educated, too religious and used literature as a medium to generate the relevancy of Christian God.

A-2) They came to America because England was going through the Protestant Reformation because of King Henry VIII creating the Anglican church. The Puritans were Calvinists who thought that the Anglican church was corrupt. Some thought that if they stayed in England, they could change the church. Other extremes went to America to escape from the corruptness of the Anglicans and the persecution, and also they could earn better in new lands.

A-3) Historically the Puritan period was one of tremendous conflict. The Puritans struggled for righteousness and liberty. During struggle for liberty the Puritans overthrew the corrupt monarchy, beheaded Charles I, and established the Commonwealth under Cromwell.

A-4) The common unity strengthened the community. In a foreign land surrounded with the hardships of pioneer life, their spiritual bond made them sympathetic to each other's needs. Their overall survival techniques permeated the colonies and on the whole made them more successful in several areas beyond that of the colonies established to their south.

A-5) The half century between 1625 and 1675 is called the Puritan period for two reasons first, because Puritan standards existed during this time in England; and second, because the greatest literary figure during all these years was the Puritan, John Milton. The period not only produced one of the world's great literary leaders but also many writers, a few immortal books.

A-6) Puritan literature differs from that of the preceding age in three marked ways: (1) It has no unity of spirit, as in the days of Elizabeth, resulting from the patriotic enthusiasm of all classes. (2) In contrast with the hopefulness and vigor of Elizabethan writings, much of the literature of this period is somber in character;

it saddens rather than inspires us. (3) It has lost the romantic impulse of youth, and become critical and intellectual; it makes us think, rather than feel deeply

A-7) The main themes in the Puritan writings showed the concepts of original sin, which is the belief that everyone was born sinful because of Adam and Eve, and predestination, which is the idea that no matter what a person did in life, his or her salvation had already been determined.

A-8) John Milton, John Bunyan were prominent Puritan prose writers. The Minor Prose Writers were Burton, Browne, Fuller, Taylor, Baxter, and Walton.

A-9) *Areopagitica*; A speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicenc'd Printing, to the Parilament of England is a controversial prose by the English poet and scholar John Milton . *Areopagitica* was published on 23 November 1644 at the height of the English Civil War. In it, John Milton opposed the licensing and censorship.

A-10) *Eikonoklastes* is a book by John Milton, published October 1649. In it he provides a justification for the execution of Charles I, which had taken place on 30 January 1649. It was published immediately after the execution. Milton's book is therefore usually seen as Parliamentary propaganda, to revert the picture of the king's piety, and condemning the Puritans in the book *Eikon Basilike* (spiritual autobiography attributed to King Charles I of England).

A-11) *The Pilgrim's Progress*, which was probably written in prison, and the publication of *Pilgrim's Progress* in 1678 made John Bunyan the most popular writer, as he was already the most popular preacher, in England. It is regarded as one of the most significant works of religious English literature, has been translated into more than 200 languages, and has never been out of print .

6.10 LESSON END EXERCISE

Q1) What is meant by the Puritan period? What were the objects and the results of the Puritan movement in English history?

Q2) What are the main characteristics of the literature of this period? Compare it with Elizabethan literature. How did religion and politics affect Puritan literature?

- Q3) Discuss Puritan ideas in the work of John Milton.
- Q4) Give the main idea or argument of *Religio Medici* .
- Q5) What quality strikes you most forcibly about Richard Baxter.
- Q6) Tell the story of Bunyan's life. What unusual elements are found in his life and writings?
- Q7) Give the main argument of *The Pilgrim's Progress*. If you read the story before studying literature, tell why you liked or disliked it. Why is it a work for all ages and for all races?
- Q8) What are the chief qualities of Bunyan's style?
- Q9) Name the chief works of Jeremy Taylor, Thomas Browne, and Izaak Walton.
- Q10) How is Milton's prose different from his poetry?

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2. I have extensively read on Google, Wikipedia and e resources available on google

PURITAN POETRY

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 7.1 Introduction
- 7.2 Objectives
- 7.3 Strictness : a way of life with Puritans
- 7.4 Themes in Puritan Poetry
- 7.5 The poets in puritan age
 - 7.5.1 John Milton (9 December 1608 - 8 November 1674)
 - 7.5.2 Anne Bradstreet (March 20, 1612 - September 16, 1672),
 - 7.5.3 Edward Taylor (circa 1642 - June 29, 1729)
 - 7.5.4 John Dryden (1631 to 1700)
 - 7.5.5 John Bunyan
- 7.6 Summary
- 7.7 Glossary
- 7.8 Multiple Choice Questions
- 7.9 Short Answer Questions
- 7.9 Lesson end Exercise
- 7.10 Suggested Readings
- 7.11 References

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Puritans were dissatisfied with the Church of England and worked towards religious, moral and societal reforms. They argued that The Church of England had become a product of political struggles and man-made principles. The Puritans were one branch of dissenters who decided that the Church of England was beyond reform. Escaping persecution from church leadership and the King, they came to America. As they immigrated and formed individual colonies, their numbers rose from 17,800 in 1640 to 106,000 in 1700. Religious exclusiveness was the foremost principle of their society. The spiritual beliefs that they held were strong. This strength held over to include community laws and customs. Since God was at the forefront of their minds, He was to motivate all of their actions. This premise worked both for them and against them. Puritans were not a small group of people. In England many of their persuasion sat in Parliament. The struggle was so great that England's Civil War hurled the Puritans against the Crown Forces. Though the Puritans won the fight with Oliver Cromwell's leadership, their victory was short-lived. Therefore, they were displaced to America. On reaching America, most of the Puritans settled in the New England area.

Their interpretation of scriptures was extremely strict. They emphasized a redemptive piety. The doctrine of predestination kept all Puritans constantly working to do good in present life to be chosen for the next eternal one. God had already chosen who would be in heaven or hell, and each believer had no way of knowing which group they were in. Those who were wealthy were obviously blessed by God and were in good standing with Him. The Protestant work ethic was the belief that hard work was an honor to God which would lead to a prosperous reward. Any deviations from the normal way of Puritan life met with strict disapproval and discipline. Since the church elders were also political leaders, any church infraction was also a social one. There was no margin for error. The Devil was behind every evil deed. Constant watch needed to be kept in order to stay away from his clutches. Words of hell fire and brimstone flowed from the mouths of eloquent ministers as they warned of the persuasiveness of the devil's power.

7.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this unit are:-

- To acquaint the scholar with History and background and concept of Puritans.
- To introduce the scholar with various Puritan poets.
- To familiarize the scholar with difficult words.
- To prepare the scholar to respond to the various facts, issues and themes in Puritan poetry by giving practice questions and key so that the students can do self evaluation.
- Suggesting list of books for further reading.

7.3 STRICTNESS : A WAY OF LIFE WITH PURITANS

Great pains were taken to warn their fellow members and especially their children of the dangers of the world. Religiously motivated, they were exceptional in their time for their interest in the education of their children. Reading of the Bible was necessary to living a pious life. The education of the next generation was important to further "purify" the church and perfect social living.

Three English diversions were banned; drama, religious music and erotic poetry. The first and last of these led to immorality. Music in worship created a "dreamy" state which was not conducive in listening to God. Since the people were not spending their time idly indulged in trivialities, they were left with two godly diversions.

The Bible stimulated their corporate intellect by promoting discussions of literature. Greek classics of Cicero, Virgil, Terence and Ovid were taught, as well as poetry and Latin verse. They were encouraged to create their own poetry, always religious in content. Their efforts to transform the nation contributed both to civil war in England and to the founding of colonies in America as working models of the Puritan way of life.

For the first time in history, free schooling was offered for all children. Puritans formed the first formal school in 1635, called the Roxbury Latin School. Four years later, the first American College was established; Harvard in Cambridge. Children aged 6-8 attended a "Dame school" where the teacher, who was usually a widow, taught reading. "Ciphering" (math) and writing were low on the academic agenda.

In 1638, the first printing press arrived. By 1700, Boston became the second largest publishing center of the English Empire. The Puritans were the first to write books for children, and to discuss the difficulties in communicating with them. At a time when other Americans were physically blazing trails through the forests, the Puritans efforts in areas of study were advancing our country intellectually. Religion provided a stimulus and prelude for scientific thought. Of those Americans who were admitted into the scientific "Royal Society of London," the vast majority were New England Puritans.

The large number of people who ascribed to the lifestyle of the Puritans did much to firmly establish a presence on American soil. Bound together, they established a community that maintained a healthy economy, established a school system, and focused an efficient eye on political concerns. The moral character of England and America were shaped in part by the words and actions of this strong group of Christian believers called the Puritans.

7.4 THEMES IN PURITAN POETRY

Puritan poetry was guided by strict codes and rules as was any Puritan writing. Themes referred only to the glory of God. Anything not linked to God and worship was looked down upon. Reading the Bible was desirable and appreciated and novels were strictly forbidden. Logic behind it was, any work of fiction was useless and therefore could not contribute to a life dedicated to worshipping God and so was unnecessary.

7.5 THE POETS IN PURITAN AGE

Puritan poets such as John Milton, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor and John Dryden produced some of the greatest verse of their age.

7.5.1 John Milton (9 December 1608 - 8 November 1674) : was an English poet, debator, scholar, and civil servant for the Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious flux and political upheaval, and is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), written in blank verse.

Milton's poetry and prose reflect deep personal convictions, a passion for freedom and self-determination, and the urgent issues and political upheaval of the time. Writing in English, Latin, Greek, and Italian, he achieved international renown in his lifetime, and his celebrated *Areopagitica* (1644), is among history's most influential and impassioned defences of free speech and freedom of the press.

John Milton was an English poet with religious beliefs emphasizing central Puritanical views. He was famous for his epic poem "*Paradise Lost*". While the work acted as an expression of his despair over the failure of the Puritan Revolution against the English Catholic Church, it also indicated his optimism in human potential. A sequel entitled "*Paradise Regained*" was published in 1671. Other notable published works by Milton include, "*On Shakespeare*" (1630), "*Comus*" (1637), "*Lycidas*" (1638) and the tragedy, "*Samson Agonistes*" (1671).

7.5.2: Anne Bradstreet (March 20, 1612 - September 16, 1672), nee Dudley, was the most prominent of early English poets of North America and first writer in England's North American colonies to be published. She is the first Puritan figure in American Literature and notable for her large oeuvre of poetry, as well as personal writings published posthumously.

Born to a wealthy Puritan family in Northampton, England, Bradstreet was a well-read scholar especially influenced by the works of Du Bartas. A mother of eight children and the wife of a public officer in the New England community, Bradstreet wrote poetry in addition to her other duties. Her early works read in the style of Du Bartas, but her later writings

develop into her unique style of poetry which centers on her role as a mother, her struggles with the sufferings of life, and her Puritan faith.

Anne Bradstreet was considered by many scholars to be the first American poet, emigrated to Salem, Massachusetts in 1630. She had no formal education but had constant tutoring provided by her father. Her book of collected poems, "The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up In America" (1650), was the first published work by a woman in America and England.

7.5.3 Edward Taylor (circa 1642 - June 29, 1729) : was of English origin and a colonial American poet, pastor and physician. His work remained unpublished for some 200 years but since then has established him as one of the foremost writers of his time. His poetry has been characterized as "American Baroque" as well as Metaphysical. Edward Taylor (approximately 1642 to 1729) emigrated to America in 1662 in defiance of the restoration of the English Monarchy. A Harvard-educated minister, Taylor did not write his poems for publication but as a private act to prepare for each holy communion. His poems were not discovered until the early 20th century; they were published in 1937. His most famous work, "Preparatory Meditations Before My Approach to the Lord's Supper," was a collection of personal thoughts and insights he gained while writing sermons. He is considered by many to be the greatest of the Puritan poets.

7.5.4 John Dryden (1631 to 1700) : was a highly influential English poet till the Restoration period in England. His first published poem, "Heroique Stanzas" (1658), was the eulogy for the Lord Protector of England, Oliver Cromwell. His poems often contained factual information and sought to express his thoughts in a precise way. His other published poems include: "Hidden Flame," "Mac Flecknoe," "One Happy Moment," "A Song for St. Cecelia's Day," "Song for Amphitryon," "Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring" and "To the Memory of Mr. Oldham." The Hind and the Panther, (1687) which celebrates his conversion to Roman Catholicism.

2.5.5 John Bunyan: (baptised 30 November 1628 - 31 August 1688) was an English writer and Puritan preacher best remembered as the author of the Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*. In addition to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan wrote nearly sixty titles, many of them expanded sermons.

7.6 SUMMARY

Puritans were dissatisfied with the Church of England and worked towards religious, moral and societal reforms. They argued that The Church of England had become a product of political struggles and man-made principles. The Puritans were one branch of dissenters who decided that the Church of England was beyond reform. Escaping persecution from church leadership and the King, they came to America. The writings and ideas of John Calvin, a leader in the Reformation, gave rise to Protestantism and were crucial to the Christian revolt. Since God was at the forefront of their minds, He was to motivate all of their actions. This premise worked both for them and against them. Their interpretation of scriptures was extremely strict. They emphasized a redemptive piety. The doctrine of predestination kept all Puritans constantly working to do good in present life to be chosen for the next eternal one. Puritan poetry was guided by strict codes and rules as was any Puritan writing. Themes referred only to the glory of God. Anything not linked to God and worship was looked down upon. Puritan poets such as John Milton, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor and John Dryden produced some of the greatest verse of their age.

7.7 GLOSSARY

1. **Puritan** : The Puritans were a group of English Reformed Protestants who sought to purify the Church of England from Catholic practices
2. **Reformation** : The Reformation also referred to as the protestant Reformation, was a split from the Roman Catholic Church initiated by Martin Luther King and continued by John Calvin
3. **John Calvin** : John Calvin was an influential French theologian, pastor and reformer during the Protestant Reformation

4. **Protestantism** : Protestantism is a form of Christianity which originated with the Reformation, a movement against what its followers considered to be errors in the Roman Catholic Church.
5. **Church of England** : (C of E) is the state church of England.
6. **Commonwealth of England** : The Commonwealth was the period from 1649 onwards when England and Wales, later along with Ireland and Scotland, was ruled as a republic following the end of the Second English Civil War and the trial and execution of Charles I.
7. **English Civil War** : The English Civil War (1642-1651) was a series of armed conflicts and political machinations between Parliamentarians ("Roundheads") and Royalists ("Cavaliers") over, principally, the manner of England's government.
8. **Oliver Cromwell** : Oliver Cromwell was Lord Protector of England for much of the 1650s, ruling in place of the country's traditional monarchy. In the 1640s a civil war broke out between supporters of King Charles I (the Royalists) and of Parliament (the so-called Roundheads). Cromwell was a Roundhead military leader in a long series of civil war battles, which ended with Charles I imprisoned and finally beheaded in 1649.
9. **New England** : New England is a geographical region comprising six states of the northeastern United States: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut.

In 1620, Puritan Separatist Pilgrims from England first settled in the region
10. **Scriptures** : sacred writings
11. **Predestination**: fate; destiny.
12. **Devil** : The Devil is, according to Christianity, the primary opponent of God.
13. **Ciphering** : To solve by means of arithmetic.
14. **Flux** : continuous change, passage, or movement
15. **Blank verse** : Blank verse is poetry written with regular metrical but unrhymed lines, almost always in iambic pentameter.

16. **Sequel** : A sequel is a literature, film, theatre, television, music or video game that continues the story of, or expands upon, some earlier work.
17. **Du Bartas** : Guillaume de Saluste Du Bartas (1544, Monfort - July 1590, Mauvezin) was a Gascon Huguenot courtier and poet. Trained as a doctor of law, he served in the court of Henri de Navarre for most of his career. Du Bartas was celebrated across sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe for his divine poetry, particularly L'Uranie (1584), Judit (1584), La Sepmaine; ou, Creation du monde(1578), and La Seconde Semaine (1584-1603).
18. **American Baroque** : The Baroque is a period of artistic style that used exaggerated motion and clear, easily interpreted detail to produce drama, tension, exuberance, and grandeur in sculpture, painting, architecture, literature, dance, theatre, and music. The style began around 1600 in Rome and Italy, and spread to most of Europe.
19. **Lord Protector** : Lord Protector (pl. Lords Protector) is a title that has been used in British constitutional law for head of state
20. **Sermons** : teachings , discourse

7.8. MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- Q1) The Puritans were one branch of dissenters who decided that the -----
-----was beyond reform.
- (a) King of England
 - (b) Church of Scotland
 - (c) Church of England
 - (d) Charles I
- Q2) Escaping persecution from church leadership and the King, the Puritans came to-----.
- (a) King of England
 - (b) Church of Scotland

- (c) Church of England
 - (d) America
- Q3) As the Puritans immigrated and formed individual colonies, their numbers rose from 17,800 in 1640 to 106,000 in-----.
- (a) King of England
 - (b) 1700
 - (c) Church of England
 - (d) America
- Q4) The struggle was so great that England's Civil War hurled the ----- against the Crown Forces.
- (a) People
 - (b) Puritans
 - (c) Republicans
 - (d) Tories
- Q5) Though the Puritans won the fight with ----- leadership, their victory was short-lived.
- (a) Charles I
 - (b) King's
 - (c) Public's
 - (d) Oliver Cromwell's
- Q6) On reaching America, most of the Puritans settled in the ----- area.
- (a) New England
 - (b) New Jersey
 - (c) New America
 - (d) New York

- Q7) The Puritans banned three English diversions; drama, -----
and erotic poetry.
- (a) Pure music
 - (b) Dancing
 - (c) Religious music
 - (d) Musical dramas
- Q8) According to Puritans, music in worship created a "-----" state
which was not conducive in listening to God
- (a) Dreamy
 - (b) Imaginative
 - (c) Drowsy
 - (d) Conscience
- Q9) Cicero, Virgil, Terence and Ovid wrote :
- (a) Roman classics
 - (b) English dramas
 - (c) Greek classics
 - (d) English classics
- Q10) Puritans formed the first formal school in-----, called the Roxbury
Latin School.
- (a) 1633
 - (b) 1634
 - (c) 1635
 - (d) 1636
- Q11) In 1639, the first American College was established; Harvard in-----.
- (a) Cambridge

- (b) Connecticut
 - (c) Oxford
 - (d) New England
- Q12) In ----- the first printing press arrived
- (a) 1636
 - (b) 1637
 - (c) 1638
 - (d) 1639
- Q13) By 1700, ----- became the second largest publishing center of the English Empire.
- (a) Scotland
 - (b) Boston
 - (c) New England
 - (d) Cambridge
- Q14) The Puritans were the first to write books for-----, and to discuss the difficulties in communicating with them.
- (a) Royals
 - (b) Women
 - (c) Children
 - (d) Girls
- Q15) Puritans wrote on themes referred only to the----- of God.
- (a) Glory
 - (b) Power
 - (c) Omnipotence
 - (d) Greatness

- Q16) John Milton and is best known for his epic poem Paradise Lost (1667), written in -----
- (a) Verse
 - (b) Prose-drama
 - (c) Blank verse.
 - (d) Iambic pentameter
- Q17) A sequel entitled "Paradise Regained" was published in-----.
- (a) 1670
 - (b) 1671
 - (c) 1672
 - (d) 1673
- Q18) Anne Bradstreet was a well-read scholar especially influenced by the works of -----.
- (a) Du Pont
 - (b) Du Pox
 - (c) Du Beauvoir
 - (d) Du Bartas.
- Q19) His poetry has been characterized as "American Baroque" as well as Metaphysical:-
- (a) John Donne
 - (b) John Milton
 - (c) Edward Taylor
 - (d) John Dryden

- Q20) John Dryden's life span is:-
- (a) 1631 to 1700
 - (b) 1632-1701
 - (c) 1633-1703
 - (d) 1634-1704
- Q21) His first published poem, "Heroique Stanzas" (1658)
- (a) John Donne
 - (b) John Milton
 - (c) Edward Taylor
 - (d) John Dryden
- Q22) "Heroique Stanzas" (1658), was the eulogy for the Lord Protector of England, -----
- (a) James I
 - (b) Charles I
 - (c) Charles II
 - (d) Oliver Cromwell
- Q23) The Hind and the Panther, was published in ----- .
- (a) 1685
 - (b) 1686
 - (c) 1687
 - (d) 1688
- Q24) ----- was the author of The Pilgrim's Progress.
- (a) John Dryden

- (b) John Milton
- (c) Edward Taylor
- (d) John Bunyan

Q25) The Pilgrim's Progress is a -----

- (a) Christian allegory
- (b) Allegory
- (c) Bible chapter
- (d) Parable

Possible Answers

- A-1) (c) Church of England
- A-2) (d) America
- A-3) (b) 1700
- A-4) (b) Puritans
- A-5) (d) Oliver Cromwell's
- A-6) (a) New England
- A-7) (c) Religious music
- A-8) (a) Dreamy
- A-9) (c) Greek classics
- A-10) (c) 1635
- A-11) (a) Cambridge
- A-12) (c) 1638
- A-13) (b) Boston
- A-14) (c) Children

- A-15) (a) Glory
- A-16) (c) Blank verse
- A-17) (b) 1671
- A-18) (d) Du Bartas
- A-19) (c) Edward Taylor
- A-20) (a) 1631 to 1700
- A-21) (d) John Dryden
- A-22) (d) Oliver Cromwell
- A-23) (c) 1687
- A-24) (d) John Bunyan
- A-25) (a) Christian allegory

7.9 SHORT ANSWER QUESTIONS

Q1) Who were the Puritans?

Ans. _____

Q2) Write briefly about the ideology/ belief system of the Puritans.

Ans. _____

Q3) What did the Puritans feel about the Devil? How did they speak about it in their sermons?

Ans. _____

Q4) What did the Puritans feel about art forms, such as drama, religious music and erotic poetry?

Ans. _____

Q5) Write briefly about the printing press and its role in spreading education by Puritans.

Ans. _____

Q6) Write a note on Puritan poetry.

Ans. _____

Q7) What literature the Puritans advocate on reading?

Ans. -----

Q8) Name some Puritan poets.

Ans. -----

Q9) Write a note on John Milton and his philosophy.

Ans. -----

Q10) Write a brief note on poetry of John Dryden.

Ans. -----

Q11) In which languages did John Dryden write? What do you know about Areopagitica ?

Ans. _____

Q12) Name some notable prominent works of Milton, apart from Paradise Lost and Paradise Regained.

Ans. _____

Q13) Write a note on Anne Bradstreet and her initial education.

Ans. _____

Q14) Name the book written about Anne Bradstreet, what was unique about it?

Ans. _____

Q15) Write briefly about Edward Taylor .

Ans. _____

Q16) Write down about Edward Taylor's most famous written work.

Ans. _____

Q17) Write briefly about John Bunyan.

Ans. _____

Q18) In addition to The Pilgrim's Progress, what did Bunyan write?

Ans. _____

Possible Answers

A-1) The Puritans were one branch of dissenters who decided that the Church of England was beyond reform. Escaping persecution from church leadership and the King, they came to America.

A-2) Puritans emphasized on a redemptive piety. The doctrine of predestination kept all Puritans constantly working to do good in present life to be chosen for the next eternal one. Their interpretation of scriptures was extremely strict.

A-3) According to the Puritans, the Devil was behind every evil deed. Constant watch needed to be kept in order to stay away from his clutches. Words of hell fire and brimstone flowed from the mouths of eloquent ministers as they warned of the persuasiveness of the devil's power.

A-4) These three i.e. drama, religious music and erotic poetry, were banned. The first and last of these led to immorality. Music in worship created a "dreamy" state which was not conducive in listening to God. Since the people were not spending their time idly indulged in trivialities, they were left with two godly diversions.

A-5) In 1638, the first printing press arrived. By 1700, Boston became the second largest publishing center of the English Empire. The Puritans were the first to write books for children, and to discuss the difficulties in communicating with them. At a time when other Americans were physically blazing trails through the forests, the Puritans efforts in areas of study were advancing in the country intellectually.

A-6) Puritan poetry was guided by strict codes and rules as was any Puritan writing. Themes referred only to the glory of God. Anything not linked to God and worship was looked down upon.

A-7) Reading the Bible was desirable and appreciated and novels were strictly forbidden. Logic behind it was, any work of fiction was useless and therefore could not contribute to a life dedicated to worshipping God and so was unnecessary.

A-8) Some prominent Puritan poets are- John Milton, Anne Bradstreet, Edward Taylor and John Dryden. They produced some of the greatest verse of their age.

A-9) John Milton (1608 to 1674), was most famous for his epic poem "Paradise Lost" in 1667, was an English poet with religious beliefs emphasizing central Puritanical views. While the work acted as an expression of his despair over the failure of the Puritan Revolution against the English Catholic Church, it also indicated his optimism in human potential.

A-10) His other published poems include: "Hidden Flame," "Mac Flecknoe," "One Happy Moment," "A Song for St. Cecelia's Day," "Song for Amphitryon," "Song to a Fair Young Lady, Going Out of the Town in the Spring" and "To the Memory of Mr. Oldham." Milton's poetry and prose reflect deep personal convictions, a passion for freedom and self-determination, and the urgent issues and political upheaval of the time.

A-11) John Dryden wrote in English, Latin, Greek, and Italian, he achieved international renown in his lifetime, and his celebrated *Areopagitica* (1644), is among history's most influential and impassioned defences of free speech and freedom of the press.

A-12) Some notable published works by Milton include, "On Shakespeare" (1630), "Comus" (1637), "Lycidas" (1638) and the tragedy, "Samson Agonistes" (1671).

A-13) Anne Bradstreet (approximately 1612 to 1672), considered by many scholars to be the first American poet, emigrated to Salem, Massachusetts in 1630. She had no formal education but had constant tutoring provided by her father.

A-14) Anne Bradstreet's book of collected poems, "The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up In America" (1650), was the first published work by a woman in America and England.

A-15) Edward Taylor (circa 1642 - June 29, 1729) was of English origin and a colonial American poet, pastor and physician. His work remained unpublished

for some 200 years but since then has established him as one of the foremost writers of his time.

A-16) Edward Taylor's most famous work, "Preparatory Meditations Before My Approach to the Lord's Supper," was a collection of personal thoughts and insights he gained while writing sermons.

Q-17) John Bunyan, was (baptised 30 November 1628 - 31 August 1688). He was an English writer and Puritan preacher best remembered as the author of the Christian allegory *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

A-18) In addition to *The Pilgrim's Progress*, Bunyan wrote nearly sixty titles, many of them expanded sermons

7.10 LESSON END EXERCISE

- Q1) What were the objects and the results of the Puritan movement in English history?
- Q2) How did religion and politics affect Puritan poetry ?
- Q3) Tell briefly the story of Milton's life. What are the three periods of his literary work?
- Q4) Give the main idea or argument of *Paradise Lost*. What are the chief qualities of the poem?
- Q5) What quality strikes you most forcibly in Milton's poetry?
- Q6) What are the chief qualities of Bunyan's style?
- Q7) What are the major themes in Puritan Poetry?
- Q8) Write a short note on the works of Anne Bradstreet.
- Q9) Make a short note about Edward Taylor as a poet.
- Q10) What do you know about life and works of John Dryden.

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7.12 REFERENCES

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MACBETH

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 8.1 Introduction
- 8.2 Objectives
- 8.3 The Age of William Shakespeare
- 8.4 Check Your Progress
- 8.5 Life and Literary Career of William Shakespeare
- 8.6 Check Your Progress
- 8.7 Shakespearean Tragedy
- 8.8 Check Your Progress
- 8.9 Introduction to Macbeth
- 8.10 Check Your Progress
- 8.11 Major Characters
- 8.12 Minor Characters
- 8.13 Check Your Progress
- 8.14 Let Us Sum Up
- 8.15 Glossary
- 8.16 Multiple Choice Questions

- 8.17 Short Answer type Questions
- 8.18 Examination Oriented Questions
- 8.19 Suggested Reading
- 8.20 References

8.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear distance learner, William Shakespeare remains as one of the most talented and imaginative playwright England has ever been able to produce. The list of his outstanding contribution towards literature and imaginative art remains unquestionably outstanding. Although with a very little scholarly experience, he with his insight of human nature, was able to draw some of the most unforgettable characters English literature and especially drama could ever come across. Unit-III deals one of the most well known and read play: Macbeth, by William Shakespeare. This unit is further divided into five lessons and tries to elucidate the play in detail. The emphasis is laid on in-depth study of the characters, themes and supernatural elements that makes this tragic drama as masterpiece and distinguishes it as smallest yet most powerful play by Shakespeare. Each lesson's are carefully structured and the distance learners are advised to follow all the steps diligently without missing a single component to have a clearer understanding of the content. It is further advised that the learners should try to answer the simple questions asked in 'Check Your Progress' to check whether the ideas expressed within the component are understood or not. Having any difficulty in the same, the learners should re-read it so that a better understanding is acquired.

8.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the distance learner with

- The Age of Shakespeare.
- His life and his works.
- To familiarize the play Macbeth and its major and minor characters.

8.3 THE AGE OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

It has been rightly said by Ben Jonson 'Shakespeare was not of an age, but of all ages'. Ben Jonson referred to him as the 'soul of the age'. The plays of Shakespeare are a reflection of the life of his time. He was a popular dramatist who wrote for the public stage, and his art was conditioned by the tastes of the people and limitations of stage. It was in the glorious age of Queen Elizabeth that Shakespeare reached his full maturity and became not only great and wise but also famous, rich and happy. It was the age of the Renaissance, the age in which the great revival of learning, which started in Italy in 13th century and which came to England in the second half of the 14th C, reached full blossoming. Monastic libraries were ransacked, and long-forgotten treasures of Greek and Latin literatures were brought to light.

The influence of Renaissance made the Age of Shakespeare fertile, productive and splendid. The period was of translations. Many of the great works of ancient and modern times had been translated into English by the end of Elizabeth's reign. For example, Plutarch's Lives, Montaign's Essays, Ovid's Metamorphosis, Homer's Iliad, Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, influenced the thought and works of all the writers of the period. Classical mythology, fine arts like painting, music fed the aesthetic sensibility of English nation. Shakespeare's plots are all borrowed from classical and foreign sources. English drama was nourished and inspired by tales of love, pleasure, lust, violence and bloodshed.

Renaissance did not only mean the re-birth of classical learning, it also meant an awakening of the minds of men. Old traditions lost their hold on the minds of the people. Freedom of thought and freedom of action were the dominant passions of the age. The Renaissance freed the minds of men from the shackles of medievalism. The process started in the Age of Chaucer, and it reached its consummation in the Age of Shakespeare. The Renaissance spirit is marked with a growing sense of beauty and an increasing enrichment of life. The Age of Shakespeare was an age of materialism and bold enjoyment of life. Beauty was a passion with Elizabethans and women were regarded as beautiful creatures. England's trade and commerce flourished and the country

grew rich and prosperous. The people liked to eat well, drink heavily, dress extravagantly. The plays of Shakespeare are full of references, often satirical, to the extravagant habits of his countrymen. The Renaissance spirit, which stirred feelings and passions, dilated imagination and expanded thought, was further fostered, nourished and strengthened by the spirit of patriotism. It was this spirit of patriotism, which made the historical plays very popular and glorified the English Kings.

The reign of Queen Elizabeth was like sunrise after a long period of darkness. We suddenly see England as a noble nation, emerging like a strong man after sleep, and shaking her locks. It was an age of great thought and great action. It was a great age of intellectual and spiritual liberty. There is another side of the picture too. The age was an age of great diversity. It was the age of Wisdom; Age of Light and Darkness; Age of Hope as well as of Despair. The conditions of life were fast changing. It was an age of disorder, violence and bloodshed. It was unsafe to go out after nightfall as streets were dark and deserted and highway robberies, as mentioned in Henry IV, Part I, were the order of the day. It was an age of ignorance and superstition. Despite the advance of science and learning, the majority of the people still believed in witchcraft and omens of all sorts. Frequent appearance of the supernatural in the works of Shakespeare is a concession to the popular faith. We have ghosts in Julius Caesar and Hamlet, witches in Macbeth, fairies in A Midsummer Night's Dream and The Tempest.

Despite this violence, ignorance and superstition, it was an age in which men lived intensely, thought intensely and wrote intensely. It was a glorious age in which men of genius, like Shakespeare, Spenser, Marlowe and Bacon could make their mark.

8.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

4.1. Answer these Questions

1. During _____ reign Shakespeare reached his full maturity and became not only great and wise but also famous, rich and happy.

2. Whose work is Metamorphosis?
3. The _____ freed the minds of men from the shackles of medievalism.
4. In which Shakespearean play there are fairies?
5. Which Shakespearean play mentions about the dark and deserted streets and highway robberies during Elizabethan age?

2. Answer Key

1. Queen Elizabeth
2. Ovid's
3. Renaissance
4. A Midsummer Night's Dream
5. Henry IV

8.5 LIFE AND WORKS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Shakespeare is the greatest name in the whole range of English Literatures. He was born in April 1564 at Stratford-on-Avon, in the country of Warwick. His mother, Mary Arden, came of a noble family, and his father, John Shakespeare, was a prosperous farmer, wool and timber merchant. At the age of nine he was admitted to the Grammar school of the village. He was not a good student. When he was twelve years of age, his father's fortunes began to decline, and the boy had to be withdrawn from school at this early age. He helped his father in business.

When Shakespeare was hardly nineteen years of age, he contracted marriage with Anne Hathaway, who was eight years senior to him. According to some critics the marriage was an unhappy one. In 1585, Shakespeare left Stratford for London to seek his fortunes there. It is said that he got mean employment and worked as a holder of horses at the doors of some London theatres. Then he tried his hand at acting and was soon a successful actor. He began his dramatic career by recasting plays and changing them beyond

recognition. He was an intelligent man, he soon impressed the theatre managers and his rise was rapid.

The success of his poem *Venus and Adonis* (1593), which he dedicated to Earl of Southampton, brought him into the notice of the royalty, and soon he reached the heights of fame. In the year 1612, he retired from business and settled at Stratford. He died at Stratford on 23rd April 1616, and was buried in the Stratford Church.

8.5.1 Literary Career of William Shakespeare

Shakespeare's dramatic career extends over a period of nearly twenty-two years, from 1590 to 1612. During this period, the dramatist worked hard producing, most of the time about two plays a year besides two poems; *Rape of Lucrece* and *Venus and Adonis* and a sequence of 154 Sonnets. His plays achieved immediate success and he died a rich and prosperous man. Shakespeare's dramatic career can be divided into four periods:

8.5.2. First period (1587-1594)

This is the period of apprenticeship. The dramatist was learning his craft. He was revising old plays, working in collaboration with other known dramatists of his day. He was 'in the workshop', so to say. The plays of this time are immature. The work is experimental in nature, for the poet was still groping in the dark. The important features of Shakespeare's early plays are, Excessive use of rhymes, puns, conceits; Artificiality in treatment and style; Farcical themes and; Excess of wit and imagery.

Important works of this period are:

- (1) *Love's Labour Lost*
- (2) *The Comedy of Errors*
- (3) *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*
- (4) *Richard III*
- (5) *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

8.5.3. Second Period(1595-1600)

This is the period of mature, joyous comedies and mature histories. By this time he had acquired experience of the world as well as mastery over his craft. His powers had matured and he wrote with full confidence and sureness of touch. The works of this period are original. The use of rhyme is discarded and his blank verse shows greater ease.

Important works of this period are:

- (1) Much Ado About Nothing
- (2) As You Like It and Twelfth Night
- (3) Merry Wives of Windsor and The Taming of the Shrew
- (4) The Merchant of Venice
- (5) Richard II, Henry IV, Henry V.

8.5.4. Third Period(1600-1608)

This is the period of the Dark Comedies, the Four Great Tragedies, and the Great Roman plays. In this period, he wrote out of the depths of his mind and heart and revealed the hidden recesses of human nature. Frustration in love, treachery of trusted friends, death of his father, and the bitterness of his life are shown in the plays of this period. The darker side of human life and human nature occupied his attention.

Important plays of this period:

- (1) The Dark Comedies: All's Well That Ends Well, Measure for Measure, Troilus and Cressida.
- (2) Roman Plays: Julius Caesar, Antony and Cleopatra, Coriolanus.
- (3) Great Tragedies: Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear and Othello.

5.5.5 Fourth Period

This is the period of the 'Dramatic Romances'. Shakespeare was now on the heights. He was at the top of his profession.

Important plays of this period are

- (1) Pericles
- (2) Cymbeline
- (3) The Winter's Tale
- (4) The Tempest

8.6. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6.1. Answer these Questions

1. He was born in _____ at Stratford-on-Avon
2. Macbeth was written during which period of Shakespeare dramatic career?
3. Venus and Adonis (1593) was dedicated to?
4. He died at Stratford on _____.
5. All's Well That Ends Well is a _____.

6.2. Answer Key

1. April 1564
2. Third Period
3. Earl of Southampton
4. 23rd April 1616
5. Dark comedy

8.7 SHAKESPEAREAN TRAGEDY

Shakespeare wrote a number of tragedies, the greatest among which are Macbeth, Othello, King Lear and Hamlet. A Shakespearean tragedy is invariably built around one pivotal figure- the hero, who stands as a colossus beside the many other characters of the play. It must be remembered that a Shakespearean tragedy does bring before us a very large number of Dramatis Personae . Their

number is indeed much larger than that of the characters in an ancient Greek tragedy, excluding, of course, the chorus but the stage lights always remained focussed on the hero. Other characters also experience ups and downs of fortune like the hero, but their life remain in the background. It is only in the love tragedies like *Romeo and Juliet* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, that some importance is given to the heroine also, their name being a part of the Title. In none of his tragedies does Shakespeare pre-eminently concern himself with more than two persons. A tragedy always ends in suffering and death, for otherwise it will not be tragedy. Shakespearean tragedy always depicts the suffering and death of the hero. If a play does not end in the death of hero, it is not, in the Shakespearean sense, a tragedy at all. Therefore, *Troilus and Cressida* and *Cymbeline*, though they have some elements of a tragedy, cannot be termed as Tragedies. A Shakespearean tragedy according to A.C Bradley is a tale of suffering and calamity with final culmination in the death of the hero. But the suffering does not befall in the beginning of the play. It starts only after the hero has committed a mistake and in the beginning of the play the hero may indeed be happy and altogether unmindful of the suffering and calamity which later would lead him to his death.

The suffering and calamity which befall on the hero are quite exceptional in their nature and magnitude. However, they befit the exceptional nature of the hero himself. They cause in the hero a great deal of mental agony, stress and dilemma. The hero under due to such mental agony appears shaken in spite of his greatness and heroic capacity for suffering. Hamlet due to his dilemma is finally laid on the rack. Othello experiences a tempest in his soul. Lear turns mad and Macbeth loses all interest in life. It may be pointed out that the suffering and calamity of experienced by the hero are not limited to him alone because they draw within their vortex many other characters as well. In *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, for instance, it is not only the King and Macbeth who suffer and die rather many other characters too have to die in the end. Thus the last scenes of the tragedy are scenes of general woe.

The hero who undergoes this nerve-breaking ordeal of suffering culminating in death is, in Shakespearean tragedy, always a man of an outstanding

social status. He may be a king, a noble, a prince and a very high official and so on. In his conception of the tragic hero as a member of royalty or nobility, Shakespeare conforms to the tradition of the ancient Greek tragedy as exemplified in the words of Sophocles, Aeschylus and Euripides, the ancient Roman tragedy as handled by Seneca, and even the tragic conception of the Middle Ages as expressed by Chaucer.

The conflict in Shakespearean tragedy is the essence of the whole drama. This conflict is of two kinds, both of which generally go on simultaneously. The first being the external conflict, in which the hero and his party are pitted against their antagonists and second is the internal conflict which goes on in the mind and soul of the hero. This conflict is between attitudes, loyalties, conceptions and passion. The hero ultimately gives way under the strain of these conflicts. He suffers both externally and internally. The progress of Shakespeare as a tragedian is characterised by his gradual shifting of the site of the tragic conflict from without to within. In *Romeo and Juliet* and *Richard III* the conflict is almost entirely external. In *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear* it is both external and internal. In *Othello* it is predominantly internal. In *Coriolanus* it is completely internal.

Shakespeare in his tragedies does not adhere to the doctrine of poetic justice which requires the dramatis personae to be rewarded or punished in rigid commensuration with their merits and demerits. The hero no doubt dies on account of some flaw- even if it is a very minor flaw- in his character. Even then, the suffering undergone is more than justly merited by him. No evil character does ever go unpunished in Shakespearean tragedy. But evil has a widely destructive power. It is self- destructive, but it pulls into destruction some good also. The total impression left on the reader or the spectator is not pessimistic but piteous, fearful and mysterious. Moreover, we are not so completely shocked at the death of the hero, for in his death he rises to a nobler only. Lear particularly, undergoes a sea-change. The mellow Lear of the last scene is a completely transformed version of the tempestuous Lear of the first scene.

At the height of his powers, Shakespeare revealed a tragic vision that comprehended the totality of possibilities for good and evil as nearly as the human

imagination ever has. His heroes are the vehicles of psychological, societal, and cosmic forces that tend to ennoble and glorify humanity or infect it and destroy it. The logic of tragedy that possessed him demanded an insistence upon the latter. Initially, his heroes make free choices and are free time after time to turn back, but they move toward their doom as relentlessly as did Oedipus. The total tragic statement, however, is not limited to the fate of the hero. He is but the centre of an action that takes place in a context involving many other characters, each contributing a point of view, a set of values or anti-values to the complex dialectic of the play. In Macbeth's demon-ridden Scotland, where weird things happen to men and horses turn cannibal, there is the virtuous Malcolm, and society survives. Hamlet had the trustworthy friend Horatio, and, for all the bloodletting, what was "rotten" was purged. In the tragedies, most notably Lear, the Aeschylean notion of "knowledge through suffering" is powerfully dramatized; it is most obvious in the hero, but it is also shared by the society of which he is the focal figure. The flaw in the hero may be a moral failing or, sometimes, an excess of virtue; the flaw in society may be the rottenness of the Danish court in Hamlet or the corruption of the Roman world in Antony and Cleopatra; the flaw or fault or dislocation may be in the very universe itself, as dramatized by Lear's raving at the heavens or the ghosts that walk the plays or the witches that prophesy. All these faults, that Shakespeare seems to be saying, are inevitabilities of the human condition. But they do not spell rejection, nihilism, or despair. The hero may die, but, in the words of the novelist E.M. Forster to describe the redeeming power of tragedy, "he has given us life."

Such is the precarious balance a tragedian must maintain: the cold, clear vision that sees the evil but is not maddened by it, a sense of the good that is equally clear but refuses the blandishments of optimism or sentimentalism. Few have ever sustained the balance for long. Aeschylus tended to slide off to the right, Euripides to the left, and even Sophocles had his hero transfigured at Colonus. Marlowe's early death should perhaps spare him the criticism his first plays warrant. Shakespeare's last two tragedies, Macbeth and Antony and Cleopatra, are close to the edge of a valueless void. The atmosphere of Macbeth

is murky with evil; the action moves with almost melodramatic speed from horror to horror. The forces for good rally at last, but Macbeth himself steadily deteriorates into the most nihilistic of all Shakespeare's tragic heroes, saved in nothing except the sense of a great nature, like Medea, gone wrong. Antony and Cleopatra, in its ambiguities and irony, has been considered close to the Euripidean line of bitterness and detachment. Shakespeare himself soon modulated into another mood in his last plays, Cymbeline (c. 1608-10), The Winter's Tale (c. 1609-11), and The Tempest (1611). Each is based on a situation that could have been developed into major tragedy had Shakespeare followed out its logic as he had done with earlier plays. For whatever reason, however, he chose not to. The great tragic questions are not pressed. The Tempest, especially, for all Prospero's charm and magnanimity, gives a sense of brooding melancholy over the ineradicable evil in humankind, a patient but sad acquiescence. All of these plays end in varying degrees of harmony and reconciliation.

From Shakespeare's tragedies to the closing of the theatres in England by the Puritans in 1642, the quality of tragedy is steadily worse, if the best of the Greek and Shakespearean tragedies are taken as a standard. Among the leading dramatists of the period-John Webster, Thomas Middleton, Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher, Cyril Tourneur, and John Ford-there were some excellent craftsmen and brilliant poets. Though each of them has a rightful place in the history of English drama, tragedy suffered a transmutation in their hands.

The Jacobean dramatists-those who flourished in England during the reign of James I-failed to transcend the negative tendencies they inherited from Elizabethan tragedy: a sense of defeat, a mood of spiritual despair implicit in Marlowe's tragic thought; in the nihilistic broodings of some of Shakespeare's characters in their worst moods-Hamlet, Gloucester in Lear, Macbeth; in the metaphoric implication of the theme of insanity, of man pressed beyond the limit of endurance, that runs through many of these tragedies; most importantly, perhaps, in the moral confusion ("fair is foul and foul is fair") that threatens to unbalance even the staunchest of Shakespeare's tragic heroes. This sinister tendency came to a climax about 1605 and was in part a consequence of the

anxiety surrounding the death of Queen Elizabeth I and the accession of James I. Despite their negative tendencies, the Elizabethans, in general, had affirmed life and celebrated it; Shakespeare's moral balance, throughout even his darkest plays, remained firm. The Jacobeans, on the other hand, were possessed by death. They became superb analysts of moral confusion and of the darkened vision of humanity at cross purposes, preying upon itself; of lust, hate, and intrigue engulfing what is left of beauty, love, and integrity.

8.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

8.1. Answer these Questions

1. A Shakespearean tragedy is invariably built around one pivotal figure_____.
2. A tragedy always ends in_____, for otherwise it will not be tragedy.
3. According to whom 'Shakespearean tragedy' is a tale of suffering and calamity with final culmination in the death of the hero?
4. Shakespeare in his tragedies does not adhere to the doctrine of?
5. The English Theatre were closed by the Puritans in _____.

8.2. Answer Key

1. the hero.
2. suffering and death
3. A.C Bradley
4. Poetic justice
5. 1642

8.9 INTRODUCTION TO MACBETH

Macbeth is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies. The action moves straight on to its end with no pause. The whole action is controlled by external forces, working in union with the 'Human will' of Macbeth. The witches have

much to do with the development of the action. Macbeth was ambitious and Lady Macbeth, who has been called the fourth witch, stimulated his ambition, until it could be fulfilled by crime.

In the first scene we meet the witches; first scene is said to strike the keynote of Shakespeare's plays. The witches are to dominate the play. In the next scene, the witches make the prophecy that Macbeth is destined to be king. Ambition to become king is there in Macbeth's mind but the path to the throne is through the murder of King Duncan. He receives the title of Thane of Cawdor. The election of Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland sends a shiver through Macbeth. Then Duncan arrives as Macbeth's guest. This news is conveyed to Lady Macbeth who has already been informed of the Witches prophecy.

The next scene brings Duncan, his two sons and lords to the Castle of Inverness. It is a short scene. The King arrives just before nightfall. Then follows the banquet. Lady Macbeth and Macbeth make a plan to murder king Duncan in order to attain the kingship. In the darkness of night, Macbeth murders king Duncan while he is asleep. The two sons of Duncan escape from Macbeth's castle and it becomes easy for him to secure the throne and to shift the blame onto the missing sons of the king. Macbeth suddenly begins to feel that he can't sit safely on the throne until Banquo is put out of the way. He himself murdered king Duncan but now he hires two assassins to murder Banquo.

In the next scene occurs the murder of Banquo, while Fleance, his son, escapes. In the fourth scene there is a royal banquet, at which Banquo should have been the guest of honour. At this moment the ghost of Banquo appears and only Macbeth sees the ghost. The next scene presents the witches again; their purpose towards Macbeth is revealed. The witches breed overconfidence in him by saying that no child born of a woman can ever harm him. Then occurs the murder of Macduff's wife and children. The flight of Macduff marks the climax of the play. Before doom falls upon Macbeth, there is a glimpse into his domestic life. Nature seems to have avenged herself upon Lady Macbeth. She commits suicide.

In the meantime the forces from England under Old Siward and Malcolm muster strong against Macbeth. His own Thanes desert him. In the last scene Macbeth is slain by Macduff and he realises that these witches are juggling fiends.

8.9.1 Main Points of the Play

Macbeth is a man of vaulting ambition and this leads to his downfall. In the very beginning of the play three witches are seen meeting amid thunder and lightning. In the next scene we find Duncan, king of Scotland, waiting for the news of the battle. A soldier tells the king that Macbeth conquered the rebel Macdonald. The three witches are seen again. They make a prophecy that Macbeth is destined to be king hereafter. Macbeth is lost in his thoughts about the prophecy of the third witch that Macbeth shall be king.

King Duncan greets Macbeth with very high praises for his great victories. The king gives the title of Thane of Cawdor to Macbeth. He declares before the court his nomination of Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland and this upsets Macbeth. At this moment, Macbeth plans evil methods in order to gain the kingship.

Lady Macbeth, after reading a letter from Macbeth about the prophecy of witches, that Macbeth shall be the king, decides to encourage him to reach the kingship. The news of King Duncan coming there as her guest, motivates her to plan, the king's murder. King Duncan, with his attendants arrives in Macbeth's castle. The right time has come to commit the bloody deed. Macbeth murders the king in his sleep. At this point, Lady Macbeth enters and holds up her blood stained hands before her husband. The next morning Macduff reveals the news that king has been murdered. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth pretend that they know nothing about the matter and curse the murderers. Hearing this, Lady Macbeth even faints. The two sons of Duncan decide to leave Scotland.

Macbeth is named as the new king, and he goes to Forres to be crowned there. After attaining the kingship, he is afraid of Banquo because he is a

man with king like nature and also because witches have prophesied that Banquo's descendants would be kings. So he decides to murder Banquo and his son. In the next scene Banquo is killed but his son Fleance escapes.

There is a banquet-scene in the hall of the palace at Forres. Macbeth welcomes his guests. When Macbeth, in the presence of guests, regrets the absence of Banquo, suddenly the ghost of Banquo appears and sits in the place reserved for Macbeth. The ghost is visible only to Macbeth. Macbeth begins to utter wild words to the ghost. The ghost soon disappears. After this episode, Macbeth determines to consult the three witches once again. Macbeth asks the witches to give him the information, which he requires. They make a prophecy that Macbeth will never be defeated until the great Birnam Wood comes to high Dunsinane Hill.

In the next scene there is a conversation going on between Lady Macduff and her young son. At this stage a messenger enters and advises her and her children to flee immediately. Murderers sent by Macbeth enter and ask for Macduff. On hearing that Macduff has gone away they condemn him as a traitor and later on they murder Lady Macduff and her children.

In the next scene we find Malcolm and Macduff in conversation. Macduff complains of Macbeth's oppression and tyranny under which Scotland is groaning. This is the proper time when this tyranny should be broken. Macduff prefers Malcolm to Macbeth, because he has kingly attributes. But Malcolm denies that he has any kingly virtues. This makes Macduff desperate. He can see now no hope for his country when such is the fate standing before it. Realizing Macduff's passionate love for his country Malcolm gives him the assurance, which he desires.

In Act V, we find Lady Macbeth in a sleepwalking scene. Lady Macbeth walking in her sleep enters carrying a candle. She is going through the

motions of washing her hands in an endeavor to remove from them, the stains of blood, which her troubled mind sees. The doctor says that Lady Macbeth needs the services of a priest rather than of a physician.

Now we find Macbeth preparing to withstand the siege of the enemy because the combined armies of Scottish nobles and those of the English under Malcolm, Macduff, Siward and his son advance towards the castle of Macbeth. Meanwhile Lady Macbeth dies. This news moves Macbeth so much that he speaks out.

Life has no significance now

Meanwhile, the messenger tells Macbeth that he has just seen the forest (Birnam Wood) moving towards the castle. This news shakes him. Macbeth now encounters Macduff on the battlefield. Macduff challenges him with his sword. But Macbeth tells him that he has no need to fear him since he will never fall at the hands of any man born of woman. At this, Macduff comes out with the nerve-breaking revelation that he was from his mother's womb untimely ripped i.e., prematurely born. Hearing this, his heart begins to sink. He curses the witches who have deceived him. Meanwhile Macduff enters with Macbeth's head. The victorious Macduff hails Malcolm as the king of Scotland. He ushers a new period of happiness for the people of his country.

8.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

8.10.1. Answer the following questions:

1. _____ is the shortest of Shakespeare's tragedies
2. The witches make the prophecy that Macbeth is destined to be _____.
3. Who is the son of Banquo?
4. Who receives Macbeth after his comes back from successful war?
5. In which Act we find Lady Macbeth sleepwalking?

8.10.2. Answer-Key

1. Macbeth
2. King
3. Fleance
4. The king of Scotland, Duncan
5. Act V

8.11. MAJOR CHARACTERS

Macbeth has two major characters; Macbeth and Lady Macbeth and many minor significant characters. Let us discuss the two major characters and other minor characters.

8.11.1. Macbeth : The character of Macbeth is the most complex that Shakespeare has ever portrayed. It is complex in the sense that Macbeth's motives cannot be clearly analysed and labeled. Macbeth's imagination and sensibilities are better elements in his character. His vaulting ambition seems to draw him to crime. We see in him the greatest physical courage. His ambition crosses ordinary limits and draws him to crime.

These are the main features in Macbeth's character:

a) **His ambition**: Ambition seems to have been latent in Macbeth. It is called forth by the predictions of the witches, and it begins to take a definite shape when Lady Macbeth studies his wavering purpose by the valour of her tongue. Macbeth himself is aware of this ambition. He confesses:

I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
vaulting ambition, which o'erleaps, itself,
And falls on the other.

Yet his ambition might not have been strong enough by itself to tempt him to crime. His weakness of will is more responsible for his crime.

b) **His weakness of will:** Macbeth is certainly a great soldier, a loyal and devoted subject of Duncan, and we may well believe, he deserves the praise and gratitude of king. He might have cherished ambition in his heart. But if let to himself, we can't believe that he could have raised his murderous hand against the king. He recognises that

Besides, this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been so clear

in his great office, that his virtues will plead like angels trumpet-tongu'd,
againstThe deep dimension of his taking off.

Yet, why is Macbeth rushed into crime? The witches can have no power upon a person who has a strong will of his own, and does not let himself be seduced by evil. It is Macbeth's weakness of will that throws him into the power of the witches, then into that of Lady Macbeth. The witches and Lady Macbeth are agents of evil, and Macbeth readily surrenders to their influence.

c) **His Imagination:** Macbeth has been a man of strong and vivid imagination, and a man in whom the imagination is so strong, can't be wholly bad. Even if we suppose that he had guilty thought in his mind, when he met the witches, his imagination does visualise it, and makes him quail before the crime. We ought not to forget that Macbeth experiences great searching of the heart before he agrees to commit the murder. His imagination might have been his saving grace; even when proceeding to the bedchamber of Duncan he can't express the startling image of murder that rises before his eyes. He seems to be led on by a phantom dagger. He is conscious that this dagger is a 'fatal vision'. A false creation proceeding from the heart-oppressed brain. He is dominated by imagination.

d) **His Tyranny:** Macbeth fulfills his ambition by murdering his king, and then to secure his throne he commits further murders- first of Banquo and then of Macduff's wife and children. The crime with which he opens his career of ambition has a coarsening effect upon his nature. Naturally he begins to rule, as a tyrant and alienates from his courtiers. Malcolm shows the effect of his tyranny on the eve of invasion of Scotland with an English army. There are daily reports of the desertion of his Thane; Macbeth himself, with his keen sensibilities, not yet dulled by crime, has a poignant feeling of it. Macbeth's downfall is brought about by his crimes and acts of tyranny.

8.11.2 Lady Macbeth

Whatever may have been the faults of Lady Macbeth, she never ceases to be a woman. She is fired by ambition, as much as, Macbeth if not more than him. The difference between the two is that Lady Macbeth is not at all deterred by scruples - being more impulsive, while her husband is more thoughtful and imaginative. It may be true if his wife had left Macbeth alone, he might not have pursued a career of crime. Lady Macbeth has been compared to another witch. Lady Macbeth does instigate her husband to the act of murder. It ought to be admitted that Macbeth's weakness of will gives his wife such an ascendancy over him. It is useless to debate the point whether Macbeth should have resisted his wife's suggestions and kept his soul untainted by crime. Lady Macbeth is ambitious for the sake of her husband. In order to enable her husband to achieve ambition, she actually goes through a process of unsexing herself. In the first instance she plans with her husband the murder of Duncan, in fact she takes the initiative in it. So revulsion comes to her immediately after the murder when Macbeth appears demented by the horror of the deed, when he seems to hear a voice, forbidding sleep, for he has murdered innocent sleep. Macbeth's sense of horror has at first little effect upon Lady Macbeth. Her strength of will and endurance must have been remarkable for a

woman. It is her iron-will that carries her through all the terror which her husband experiences. Her sleepwalking is the reaction of the guilt upon her. That Lady Macbeth suffered in secret, and was a prey to guilty conscience; show that she never ceased to be a woman. She sacrificed herself for the sake of love for her husband.

a) **Her essentially Feminine Nature:** Lady Macbeth has been ambitious and instigates her husband into the act of crime. But for her reproaches and her challenging Macbeth's love, Macbeth might not have launched into crime. She knows better than Macbeth that the way to the throne lays through the murder and she knows also that she will have to take the initiative in the matter. She prays to the evil powers that she may be unsexed, but the womanly instincts, which were in her heart never, vanish.

b) **Her love for her husband:** Lady Macbeth is not a devilish woman. It is her love for her husband, which leads her to crime. Lady Macbeth has just been Eve over again. She knows her husband better than anyone else, and she knows that her husband is ambitious without strength of will and purpose enough to achieve it. In her love for her husband, she braces herself, up to the task of fulfilling her husband's ambition. So great is her devotion to her husband that she is even prepared to renounce womanly nature, and to assume the role of a stern task-mistress. She overstrains herself in the interest of her husband, and the result is a total breakdown. Her love prompts her to undertake more than what a woman can accomplish. She unsexes herself, she is unable to renounce her womanly nature, and after the first crime, she keeps apart from her husband. She suffers in loneliness, and when it becomes too much for her- a frail woman to bear, she dies by violent means.

c) **Her resourcefulness:** Lady Macbeth is certainly more resourceful than her husband. It is she who takes the initiative, plans the murder of Duncan, and even partly assists Macbeth in carrying out the plot. After the act of murder, Macbeth loses all control over himself and is tormented by imaginative terrors. It is Lady Macbeth then who comes to his help.

Lady Macbeth is a realist, and takes the most practical view of things. She carries away the daggers that Macbeth has brought with him after murdering Duncan. Lady Macbeth drags him to their bedchamber. Macbeth seems to be so unbalanced that he would have easily betrayed himself to Macduff and Lennox when they called in the morning. At a critical moment she is always by the side of her husband. At the Banquet scene when Banquo's ghost, seen by nobody else, shakes him, Lady Macbeth covers up the raving terror of her husband and saves him from self-betrayal.

d) **Her nervous breakdown:** When the deed is done, she stands still while Macbeth begins to push on with bolder strides. After becoming the queen of Scotland, she loses control over her mind. She starts repeating the murder scene in her sleepwalking. Macbeth becomes frustrated on seeing her condition and requests the doctor to give her some medicine so that she may forget her past. She complains with groans of anguish that the smell and stain of blood will never wash away from her hands. She dies in the end. Lady Macbeth lives an inner intellectual life, in which her powers are turned inward upon herself.

8.12 MINOR CHARACTERS

8.12.1 Banquo

Banquo is meant to be a foil to Macbeth. The king says that both Macbeth and Banquo have equally distinguished themselves in the battle, but it is clear that the king honours Macbeth above Banquo. Macbeth appears to be the more dominating person. And Banquo, who is praised so sincerely by the king for valour in battle, must have served to increase Macbeth's renown by being placed beside him. Banquo sets off Macbeth also by contrast and difference. On the wild heath, Macbeth is first greeted by the witches and promised future greatness. Then, of course, Banquo gets interested, and demands of the witches whether they have anything to promise him. The effect of

the prophecies upon both most significantly brings out the difference in their character. Macbeth is rapt in thought when he hears the prophecy of his future greatness, and attracts Banquo's notice and even his remark of caution. As a matter of fact, Banquo warns Macbeth that he should not in any case trust these witches, for their prophecies may be fulfilled in minor details, and then will be the means of tempting him to commit crime to the damnation of his soul. This warning goes unheeded. The difference between the two is further shown by the fact that Macbeth broods over these prophecies, and takes the opportunity to acquaint his wife with the fulfillment of a part of the prophecies; while Banquo dismisses the prophecies made by the witches about himself, from his mind. It can't be denied that prophecies had partly an unsettling effect upon Banquo's mind. Banquo himself confesses:

A heavy summon lies like lead upon me,
And yet I would not sleep; merciful powers!

Banquo is a serious rival of Macbeth, and Macbeth has no peace of mind until he gets rid of him. But dead Banquo gives Macbeth no peace. His ghost returns to plague his mind. But as contrasted with Macbeth, Banquo keeps his loyalty to the king.

a) **His Honesty:** Banquo, though the witches greet him as the father of a line of kings, he does not take them seriously. Having no predisposition to crime like Macbeth, he would have nothing to do with the witches. He neither begs favour from them, nor dreads their malice. He points out to Macbeth the danger of trusting them when he notices how the latter is impressed. He does not let the prophecies of the witches about himself infect his mind, or poison the peace of his soul. But after all Banquo is human- as he confesses to cursed thoughts that take possession of his mind in sleep. Being honest and faithful, he restrains these thoughts. There was a moment when Macbeth tries to seduce Banquo of his honesty. Macbeth invites him to consultation over the prophecies of the witches, and Banquo seems to scent the

game, and insists that whatever the result of the conference, it must leave to him a 'franchis'd bosom' and a 'clear conscience.'

b) **His Caution:** Brave by nature, and a soldier by profession, Banquo is also a shrewd man of the world. He praises the reasonable suggestions of Macbeth and without committing himself to any dishonorable conduct, avoids giving open offence to him. He is aware how Macbeth has secured the throne, but he keeps Macbeth in good humour, and does his best to avert suspicion by professing allegiance in emphatic language. Macbeth himself is conscious of Banquo's caution as well as bravery.

c) **His Modesty:** Modesty marks Banquo's character. He had almost an equal share with Macbeth in winning the battle of Fife, Macbeth gets a new title and praise from King Duncan, but Banquo is contented with an embrace from his sovereign. Banquo's modest and sincere reply to the king's act of courtesy, is characteristic of him:

There if I grow,

The harvest is your own.

8.12.2. Macduff

Macduff is a blunt, outspoken soldier, a typically patriotic Scot. He is described as noble, wise, clear-sighted, and for choosing his opportunity well. Thus noble, blameless and elemental we should think Macduff entirely wanting, in that sharp ambition necessary to make him a victorious opponent of Macbeth and to enable him to stand his ground against that mighty and infuriated man.

a) **His Patriotism:** Macduff suspects Macbeth from the very beginning "wherefore did you so?" - with this he challenges Macbeth when the latter confesses to having murdered two chamberlains, shows how spirited he is. He is first to second Banquo's proposal of unearthing the assassins of Duncan. He refuses to attend Macbeth's Coronation Ceremony, and has a premonition 'that old robes might fit easier than new.' His loyalty to Duncan prevents him from offering

his allegiance to the usurper; his patriotism warns him that he would be betraying his country if he did so. He takes up an attitude of protest and defiance, whatever the consequences may be. He refuses to attend the banquet to which Macbeth invites him. As a defender of his country's interests against Macbeth's tyranny, he is not prepared to dissemble. When Banquo is murdered, Macduff feels that the time has come to rid Scotland of Macbeth's tyranny. Leaving wife and children home at the mercy of the tyrant, and even without informing his wife of his plan, he starts for England. To Malcolm, he paints the woes of his country most graphically. His first question to Ross is, 'Stands Scotland where it did?'

b) **His Reticence:** Macduff is a man of action, not of words. This explains why he left his family without giving any explanation. In the long dialogue with Malcolm, Macduff has much to say, because he has not only to represent the state of affairs in Scotland in order to induce the Prince to accept his proposals. In Act V, Scene (iv) he brings the futile discussion on the prospects of victory to a close by suggesting that they should 'put on industrious soldiership' and await the result of the battle. And when he meets Macbeth on the battlefield, he says,

'I have no words,

My voice is in my sword.'

c) **His Affection:** Lady Macduff might question her husband's affection and the strength of his family attachment. But when Ross brings him the news of the slaughter of his wife and children in his castle when he was not there to protect them, his grief, at first tongue-tied, breaks forth in passionate words of self-accusation and revenge upon the murderer. Nothing can be surer evidence of his deep affection for his wife and children. His broken sentences, his repetition of questions already answered, his desire to feel like a man—all this reveals tenderness of affection

in a veteran soldier. However, he soon recovers his balance, and with a prayer to heaven to rest the souls of his dear ones, he resolves to avenge their deaths with his own hands.

8.12.3 Duncan

The nobility of Duncan as a king is borne witness to by Macbeth himself:

Besides this Duncan

Hath borne his faculties so meek hath been

So clear in his great office, that his virtues

Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against

The deep damnation of his taking-off.

The historical Duncan was a weak and incompetent ruler but Shakespeare paints him as worthy of all veneration and loyalty, for his subjects. In any case he bears an honourable and virtuous character. He is gracious in his dealings with his subjects, and is, loved by them. He is of an amiable temperament, and is quick to acknowledge and reward services to the state. He is trustful and unsuspecting. It has to be said that he was a man born out of proper age into a century of intrigue and violence. In fact he is too peaceful a man to govern a country in which turbulence is so rife. His is a nature too refined to adopt those strong measures, which are needed to keep checking the unruly passions and ambitions of his nobles. Instead of being, as every king ought to be, a student of human character, he is a lover of nature and natural beauties. He is unable to understand the murderous plans of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. He can't see the mask of Lady Macbeth's treachery. He scents nothing wrong in Macbeth's absence from the supper-table. He enjoys heartily, and distributes presents. It is this failure to understand the world, which costs him his life. Infact, he is not a practical man. King Duncan is a man of a gentle nature. He is not so intellectual as to understand the evil designs of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

8.12.4 Malcolm

Malcolm is a cool, sagacious, farsighted man, richly empowered with all the qualities that make for leadership. He seems to be a contrast to his father Duncan who is of submissive and gentle nature. He is different from his father. He is wary and cautious, while king Duncan is trustful and unsuspecting. He has to run away and seek safety in England after the murder of his father, and again he has to repel the seductions of Macbeth, and to keep himself out of the traps that Macbeth lays for him. He rightly says that modest wisdom plucks him from overcredulous haste. Such has been his experience that he begins to mistrust everybody. He blackens his own character outrageously in order to test Macduff's honesty. Constant watchfulness is his leading characteristic. There is certainly no reason to suspect the truth of what he says about himself when he retracts his self-accusation. He is a slave neither of lust nor of avarice. He will not act the traitor, even when he is dealing with the Devil, and he will rather risk his life than utter a lie. He is very deeply grateful to the English king for the way in which the latter had received him and offered to help him. But Malcolm does not seem to be gifted with finer sensibilities. He can hardly appreciate Macduff's grief and does not seem to have delicacy enough to respect this grief. His talk of a great revenge at the moment seems to be ill timed. Nor is Malcolm free from a rash optimism. When marching on Dunsinane, he looks forward to triumph and rejoicing and for this he is promptly, though gently rebuked, by the veteran warriors, Siward and Macduff. Lastly when he is acclaimed king of Scotland by the assembled nobles, he is in such an intemperate hurry 'to make himself even with his supporters that one is led to suspect that he does not credit those supporters with any motive other than the seeking of rewards.

8.12.5. Lady Macduff

Lady Macduff is a typical domestic woman, who is little concerned with public affairs, and cares less for the issues of the state. Her thoughts

range within a narrow circle-husband, children, and the family property. Her husband has told her nothing of the troubles in the state, of Macbeth's acts of murder, tyranny and oppression. So when her husband runs away to England without giving her any previous hint, she can't conceive that it has got anything to do with policy. She can't but accuse him of desertion. Her commonsense tells her that when life and property are not safe in Scotland, Macduff's flight might be a foolish step. Nor can she understand why, if her husband is not guilty of treachery, he should run away and risk being considered a traitor. When she learns of her husband's flight, she has forebodings of danger but like a sensible woman, she carries on a playful talk with her little son, and it seems to mask her forebodings. Soon this witty and merry conversation is interrupted by the arrival of a messenger who warns Lady Macduff of the immediate danger to her and her children's life. Having little experience of the world, and unable to decide what to do in face of immediate peril, she has to meet the murderers. The murderers show no pity to her young son. Both mother and son fall victims to Macbeth's wanton cruelty.

8.13 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

8.13.1. Answer the following questions

1. Who is the major character in the play Macbeth?
2. Vaulting ambition is more dominated in_____.
3. Lady Macbeth used to repeat murder-scene in_____.
4. There if I grow,/ The harvest is your own, These lines are spoken by
5. Who is meant to be a foil to Macbeth?

8.12.2. Answer Key to Check Your Progress

1. Macbeth
2. Macbeth
3. Sleep-walking

4. Banquo
5. Banquo is meant to be a foil to Macbeth.

8.14 LET US SUM UP

Shakespeare was a popular dramatist. It was the age of Renaissance, when the genius of Shakespeare reached its maturity. Through his plays, Shakespeare has presented the habits of his countrymen. He wrote comedies, tragedies, and historical plays. His dramatic career began in 1590 and ended in the year 1612. He wrote 154 Sonnets. Rape of Lucrece and Venus and Adonis are his two famous poems dedicated to Earl of Southampton. His most important comedies are Twelfth Night, Much Ado About Nothing, The Merchant of Venice etc. His famous tragedies are Othello, King Lear, Macbeth and Hamlet. He died at Stratford on 23rd April 1616. He was buried in the Stratford Church.

This lesson also deals with the major and the minor characters in the play Macbeth. Major characters are Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Macbeth is a man of vaulting ambition whereas Lady Macbeth tempts him to fulfill his ambition. Both commit the heinous deed of murdering King Duncan. Lady Macbeth, after becoming the queen of Scotland loses control over her mind and commits suicide. Macduff murders Macbeth in the end. Although, Banquo is a contented man, he is very honest and loyal towards King Duncan of Scotland. He is a man of gentle nature. But he can't see the evil designs of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. Banquo is in contrast with the character of Macbeth. Lady Macduff is a domestic woman. Malcolm is a cool, sagacious, farsighted man. He seems to be a contrast to his father Duncan. He is cautious while King Duncan is trustful.

8.15 GLOSSARY

- Diligently: in a way that shows care and conscientiousness in one's work or duties.
- Renaissance: the revival of European art and literature under the influence of classical models in the 14th-16th centuries.
- Apprenticeship: a beginner.

- Puns: a joke exploiting the different possible meanings of a word or the fact that there are words which sound alike but have different meanings.
- Conceits: an ingenious or fanciful comparison or metaphor.
- Farcical: relating to or resembling farce, especially because of absurd or ridiculous aspects.
- Wit: good sense.
- Imagery: visually descriptive or figurative language, especially in a literary work.
- Blank verse: verse without rhyme, especially that which uses iambic pentameters.
- Dark Comedies: is a comic style that makes light of subject matter that is generally considered taboo.
- Pivotal: of crucial importance in relation to the development or success of something else.
- Dramatis Personae: the characters of a play, novel, or narrative.
- Calamity: a disaster
- Culmination: the highest or climactic point of something, especially as attained after a long time.
- Agony: extreme physical or mental suffering.
- Dilemma: a situation in which a difficult choice has to be made between two or more alternatives, especially ones that are equally undesirable.
- Woe: great sorrow or distress
- Mellow: tempered by maturity or experience.
- Comprehended: grasp mentally; understand.
- Societal: relating to society or social relations.
- Cosmic: inconceivably vast.

- Insistence: the fact or quality of insisting that something is the case or should be done.
- Dialectic: the art of investigating or discussing the truth of opinions.
- Nihilism: the rejection of all religious and moral principles, in the belief that life is meaningless.
- Precarious: not securely held or in position; dangerously likely to fall or collapse.
- Blandishments: a flattering or pleasing statement or action used as a means of gently persuading someone to do something.
- Murky: dark and gloomy, especially due to thick mist.
- Acquiescence: the reluctant acceptance of something without protest.
- Transmutation: the action of changing or the state of being changed into another form.
- Staunche: very loyal and committed in attitude.
- Sinister: giving the impression that something harmful or evil is happening or will happen.
- Intrigue: arouse the curiosity or interest of; fascinate.
- Fiends: an evil spirit or demon.
- Heath: an area of open uncultivated land, typically on acid sandy soil, with characteristic vegetation of heather, gorse, and coarse grasses.
- Rapt: completely fascinated or absorbed by what one is seeing or hearing.
- Seduce: entice (someone) to do or believe something inadvisable or foolhardy.
- Allegiance: loyalty or commitment to a superior or to a group or cause.
- Emphatic: expressing something forcibly and clearly.
- Sovereign: a supreme ruler, especially a monarch.

3. Macduff

4. 1600 -1608

5. Act-I Scene-I

8.17. SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Discuss Macbeth as a typical Shakespearean tragedy.

Possible Answer: Shakespearean tragedy is the tale of a person of eminence and high social position. The tragic hero is a man of high honour. Hamlet is the Prince of Denmark, Othello is a military general of Venice and Lear is the king of Britain. Likewise Macbeth is a military general of Scotland. In his position, he is renowned for his heroic exploits and personal valour. He is described as 'Valour's minion and Bellona's bridegroom'. Shakespearean tragedy is the story of the fall of such a man. Macbeth is presented 'as a traitor, as a murderer, as a base habitual deceiver, as a monster of unhesitating cruelty, a veritable fiend of Scotland.'

Shakespeare's tragic heroes suffer from some weakness of character, which ultimately becomes the cause of tragedy. In the case of Hamlet, it is indecision, in Othello, suspicion and jealousy, in King Lear, vanity and in Macbeth it is vaulting ambition. His ambition to become the king of Scotland is fanned and fired by Lady Macbeth who herself is ambitious, and by the witches who force him to commit murder.

Next important feature of a Shakespearean tragedy is conflict. Conflict is its essence. It manifests itself both in physical and spiritual forms. In other words, it is both external and internal. Internal conflict is more serious and moving. The real tragedy of the hero lies not in his physical sufferings, but in his mental agony, emotional crisis, and spiritual conflict. But what is more moving is the state in which his soul is torn in internal conflict. So acute is his suffering that we know not whether to hate Macbeth or pity him. Lady Macbeth evokes equal pity and heart-moving pathos lies in her condition when she walks in sleep, wrings her hands and says:

All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.

In fact, Macbeth is a spiritual tragedy in its true sense.

Supernatural element also plays an important role in Shakespearean tragedy. Although the catastrophe issues primarily from the hero's character, he is not solely responsible for his doom. The catastrophe is brought about partly through the operation of supernatural powers working upon the fate and actions of the hero. In Shakespeare, these supernatural powers take the form of fate, malignant gods, ghosts, witches, apparitions, hallucinations, etc. In Macbeth, supernatural appears in the form of three witches and the ghost of Banquo. The three witches drive Macbeth on to the path of murder and bloodshed. Thus, Macbeth is a characteristic Shakespearean tragedy. It possesses all the traits of a typical Shakespearean tragedy. As conceived by Shakespeare, Macbeth is concerned with the ruin of the soul of Macbeth. Its subject is the struggle between good and evil, evil dominating for the time being but ultimately defeated by the good.

Q2. How far is Lady Macbeth responsible for the tragic end of Macbeth?

Ans. _____

Q.3. Discuss Banquo's Character as a serious rival to Macbeth in the play Macbeth.

Ans. _____

Q.4. How far is Duncan responsible for his own murder?

Ans. _____

8.18 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- Q1. Compare and contrast Macbeth, Macduff, and Banquo. How are they alike? How are they different? Is it possible to argue that Macbeth is the play's villain and Macduff or Banquo its hero, or is the matter more complicated than that?
- Q2. How powerful the character of Lady Macbeth is? Is it true that without her the play Macbeth would have been incomplete?
- Q3. Discuss whether Macbeth is truly a tragic figure. What is his 'Tragic flaw'?

8.19. SUGGESTED READING

1. Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
2. Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

8.20. REFERENCES

- Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

MACBETH

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 9.1 Introduction
- 9.2 Objectives
- 9.3 Dramatis Personae
- 9.4 Act and Scene wise Summary of the Play
 - 9.4.1 Act I - Scene I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII
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- 9.5 Check Your Progress
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- 9.10 Examination Oriented Questions
- 9.11 Suggested Reading
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9.1. INTRODUCTION

Dear distance learner, in the previous lesson you have been introduced to the life and work of William Shakespeare and is also introduced to the play

Macbeth and its characters prescribed in our syllabus. We assume that all the components under Unit structure have been followed successfully. In this lesson the Act and Scene wise summary of the play, up-till Act-III, is discussed with introduction to all the characters. The distance learners are advised to follow all the components under unit structure properly to get an enhanced clarity on the topic at hand.

9.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is to acquaint the distance learners with

- The characters of the play
- The detailed summary of the play Macbeth up-till Act-III.

9.3 DRAMATIS PERSONAE

Duncan	-	King of Scotland
Malcolm	-	His son
Donalbain	-	His son
Macbeth	-	General of the King's Army
Banquo	-	General of the King's Army
Macduff	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Lennox	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Ross	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Menteith	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Angus	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Caithness	-	Nobleman of Scotland
Fleance	-	Son of Banquo
Siward	-	Earl of Northumberland

Young Siward	-	His son
Seyton	-	An officer attending on Macbeth
Lady Macbeth	-	Wife of Macbeth
Lady Macduff	-	Wife of Macduff
Three witches		
Hecate		

9.4 Act and Scene wise Summary of the Play

Act I - Scene I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII

Act II - Scene I, II, III, IV

Act III - Scene I, II, III, IV, V, VI

9.4.1. Act -I

Scene I: The beginning of the play takes place in a barren land where the witches meet amidst thunder, lightning and rain. They decide to meet again when the battle is over. By sunset the battle will be over, so they decide to meet again upon a heath, which Macbeth will pass through. To these witches 'fair is foul and foul is fair'.

Scene II: This scene opens in a camp near Forres where King Duncan (King of Scotland), with his two sons (Malcolm and Donalbain), is waiting for the news of the battle. A wounded soldier tells the king that Macbeth conquered the rebel Macdonald.

Now enters Ross (a nobleman of Scotland), who says that the Norwegian king, with the help of the disloyal Thane of Cawdor, made a fierce attack. But Macbeth encountered the king and conquered the enemy. Duncan greets this news with great joy and orders the immediate execution of Cawdor, and gives his title to Macbeth. The scene ends with the words of Duncan-

What he hath lost, noble Macbeth has won

Scene III: This scene opens on a heath near Forres, where the three witches are seen meeting again. Here they hear the noise of drums heralding the approach of Macbeth and Banquo. Now Macbeth and Banquo enter and are surprised to see these creatures. They are fantastically clad and they do not seem to be earthly creatures to them. The first witch always talks of the past, the second witch of the present, and the third witch of the future. Hence when they greet Macbeth, the first witch hails him as Thane of Glamis (title he has always held); the second witch hails him as Thane of Cawdor (title he has just earned, although he is yet unaware of it); while the third witch hails him as 'he who will be king hereafter'. These predictions cause Banquo to ask the witches about his own future. The first witch tells him that he is 'lesser than Macbeth and greater'; the second witch says that he is not 'as happy as Macbeth yet much happier'; and from the third witch he learns that he will never be a king himself, although his descendants will be kings.

Macbeth can't understand how he is Thane of Cawdor, or how he is likely to be king. But the witches vanish without answering him.

Then enter Ross and Angus. They bring to Macbeth the praise of Duncan for the great victories, which he has won. They tell him that he has been made Thane of Cawdor. This news has a great effect upon Macbeth, because according to the prophecies made by the witches this news is true. What, however, of the prophecy of the third witch—that Macbeth shall be king? He is lost in his own thoughts as to whether or not the prophecy will come true; and if so, whether it will be by the natural course of events, or by his own actions. He asks Banquo if they may talk in detail about the third prophecy at some later date. At this, Banquo deprecates any strong faith in the predictions of these witches. They are instruments of hell, and betray men into evils deeds by telling truths in trivial matters. However, Macbeth who is lost in a world of illusions, at last decides to leave it all to chance. And thanking Ross and Angus, Macbeth and Banquo resume their march.

Scene IV: This scene opens in a room in Duncan's palace at Forres. Here Malcolm tells Duncan that the execution of Cawdor has taken place. Duncan comments that it is not always possible to judge a man by his appearance.

At this point enter Macbeth, Banquo, Ross and Angus. The King (Duncan) at once greets Macbeth with very high praises for his great victories. He says that he deserves more than he (Duncan) can ever pay. Macbeth replies that the service and loyalty, which he owes to his king, is an adequate return for what he has done. His duty lies in doing everything in the interest of his king's love and honour. The king promises to promote and further honour Macbeth. Then he turns to Banquo and gives him no less praise than Macbeth.

After this King Duncan declares before the court his nomination of Malcolm as the Prince of Cumberland. Now the court breaks up in order to go to Macbeth's castle at Inverness. Macbeth proposes to go in advance, and communicate the happy news to his wife. But he is upset over the king's declaration of Malcolm as heir-apparent. It spoils his ambition and he plans evil methods in order to gain the kingship, which the witches foresaw in their prophecy. After Macbeth departs, the king is still full of praise for him. It seems that the praise of Macbeth is a feast to him.

Scene V: This scene opens in a room in Macbeth's castle at Inverness where Lady Macbeth is seen reading a letter sent to her by her husband (Macbeth), telling of the witches' prophecy. She is ambitious - far more than her husband - and she is determined that he shall be encouraged in every possible way to reach the kingship promised to him by the witches. But she has fears for Macbeth's gentle nature, as she knows that he will not willingly act wrongly in order to gain his ends. After much thinking, she decides that when her husband comes back, she will infuse her spirit into him, and incite his manhood with the eloquence of her tongue.

Then enters Macbeth. Lady Macbeth hails him as Glamis and Cawdor, and also with the hope of greater honour, which is to come later. In great glee of heart Macbeth tells her that King Duncan is coming to be their guest. But when Macbeth says that the king proposes to leave the next day, Lady Macbeth replies that he will never see that day. Besides, she warns him to assume a look of absolute innocence. She herself is prepared to carry out the evil task of murder.

Scene VI: This scene opens before Macbeth's castle where King Duncan, with his attendants, has arrived. The king and his followers admire the castle and the pleasant weather which has marked their visit. Then Lady Macbeth appears, and in reply to the greetings of Duncan, she says that whatever service is being done by her and her husband is indeed very small when compared with the honour which Duncan has given them by coming there. Further, she apologises for the shortcomings of the service rendered to the king. The king is eager to meet Macbeth who had ridden quickly ahead of him. So he asks the lady to conduct him to Macbeth, his host.

Scene VII: This scene opens in Macbeth's castle. Shortly after the opening of this scene, we meet Macbeth. He while all alone reviews the situation in a soliloquy; from which it is clear that Macbeth's conscience is worried by the evil deeds, which he contemplates. So he tells himself that if the mere execution of the deed were the end of the matter then it would be best for it to be done at once. But what deters him is the fact that even in this life retribution follows upon crime. The crime itself recoils upon the head of the criminal. When we commit bloody deeds, they react upon us, and unto those who do wrongful acts, wrongful acts are done in return.

Moreover, Macbeth thinks that Duncan is in his house under 'double trust'. First, as his kinsman (near relation) and subject he owes loyalty to him, and secondly, as his host, it is his duty to protect him against his murderer. Besides, Duncan as a king has been so gentle and so innocent

in the exercise of power that his virtues will arm themselves against his murder, and pity itself will denounce the crime to the world.

Lady Macbeth enters and tells Macbeth that the king has almost finished supper. Lady Macbeth urges her husband to carry on with the act as originally planned. For her part, if she has sworn to do so, she would dash out the brains of her own child, however tenderly she might love him. She cannot see failure even to be possible; while Duncan is asleep she will drug the two officers with wine and then she or her husband will murder the king, putting the blame on his two attendants.

Macbeth readily agrees to his wife's suggestion. He now makes up his mind to achieve that which his ambition seeks. He decides to delude the world so that none may judge from his appearance what dark thoughts are in his mind:

False face must hide what the false heart doth know.

9.4.2. Act -II

Scene I: This scene opens in the court of Macbeth's castle where we see Banquo, his son (Fleance) and a servant. The atmosphere is one of darkness and gloom. Banquo has been haunted by evil thoughts and he cannot sleep. Macbeth enters and Banquo tells him that King Duncan is sleeping. Banquo also tells Macbeth that Duncan has sent a diamond ring to Lady Macbeth. Banquo further tells Macbeth that he has dreamt of the three witches but Macbeth very cunningly says that he does not think of them. Macbeth now takes leave of Banquo and asks him to go and sleep. Macbeth asks his servant to go and tell his mistress to strike upon the bell as soon as his drink is ready. As soon as the servant leaves, Macbeth has a hallucination. He sees a vision of a dagger hanging in the air. The wooden hilt of the dagger is towards him, while its blade is pointing to the direction of the room in which the king is lying asleep. He extends his hand in the air to catch hold of the dagger but it eludes his grasp. He tells himself that it is only an illusion. Soon some drops of blood appear on the dagger. He

feels that the evil powers of sin and murder have sent this dagger to him in order to tempt him to follow the path of murder. His agitation and excitement get accelerated and he leaves calling upon the earth to suppress the sound of his footsteps.

Scene II: This scene also opens in the court of Macbeth's castle where we see Lady Macbeth standing outside the room in which Duncan is lying asleep. She keeps the dagger ready for her husband. She has given heavy doses of drug to the chamberlains guarding the king. Now appears Macbeth coming out from Duncan's chamber after murdering the noble king. After doing the horrible act, he loses control over himself. He is emotionally strained and feels that sleep will never come to him since he has taken the life of Duncan in his bed. Lady Macbeth asks him to control his fears. She takes the bloodstained daggers, which he has brought in a state of confusion and leaves them in the hands of the sleeping grooms, in order that it may be thought that it was his officers who murdered Duncan.

Macbeth is now left alone. His troubled mind is worried still further by a knock at the door. He again looks at his hands and in his upset brain it seems that not all the waters of the ocean will wash his hands:

Will all great Neptune's Ocean wash this blood clean from my hand?

Lady Macbeth re-enters and holds up her bloodstained hands before her husband. Hearing more knocking, they decide to return to their chamber to cleanse themselves of the blood, which has coloured them.

Scene III: This scene too opens in the court within the castle of Macbeth. A porter is awakened by the persistent knock at the gate. Macduff and Lennox, the two loyal officers of Duncan, have come to call on their king.

As the gates are opened, Macduff and Lennox enter announcing that they have been instructed by the king to summon him early morning. Now Macbeth enters. Macduff tells him the reason of his coming there so early. At this, Macbeth offers to conduct him to the king, but Macduff goes alone.

Shortly after, Macduff re-enters completely shocked. He gives the sad news of the horrible murder of Duncan with great pain and shock. He rings the alarm-bell and shouts hard to awaken all who were lying asleep. Macbeth goes to the chamber and returns after killing the two innocent grooms whose faces were covered with blood. He pretends loyalty to the dead king. Lady Macbeth falls down. Malcolm and Donalbain (the king's two sons) suspect foul play. They do not think it wise to stay in the castle of Macbeth and escape to foreign lands. Malcolm goes to England and Donalbain goes to Ireland. With their escape from the castle, the scene ends.

Scene IV: This scene opens outside Macbeth's castle where we find an old man narrating his experiences of the last stormy night to Ross. The old man tells Ross that in seventy years of his life he cannot remember so troubled a night as that on which King Duncan was killed. Ross replies that he saw the horses of Duncan breaking away from their stalls and eating each other. Now Macduff enters and the conversation turns to the murder. He cannot believe that the two officers in the king's chamber did the deed. Then Macduff informs Ross that Macbeth has been named as the new king, and that he has already gone to Scone to be crowned there. Macduff now takes leave of Ross with a hint that more troubles are ahead of them.

4.3. Act -III

Scene I: This scene is laid out at Forres in a room in the royal palace. Macbeth has become the King of Scotland. Banquo is soliloquizing over the predictions of the witches, which up to now have come true so far Macbeth is concerned. He remembers also that the witches had prophesied that Banquo's own descendants would become kings. His soliloquy is interrupted by the entrance of Macbeth as king and Lady Macbeth as queen, accompanied by Lennox, Ross, Lords, Ladies and attendants. He expresses a feeling of delight to see Banquo and requests his presence at the solemn supper, which he has decided to arrange that very evening. He

calls Banquo his chief guest without whom the feast will be dull. Banquo now takes leave of Macbeth.

Now left alone, Macbeth talks of the dangers, which he fears from Banquo. He remembers the prediction of the witches about Banquo's children. He thinks Banquo and his son should be removed as they are a hurdle in Macbeth's path. Meanwhile the attendant re-enters with two murderers. From Macbeth's conversation with the two murderers it becomes clear that Banquo has done some wrong to them and Macbeth instigates them against Banquo. He makes them agree to the idea that Banquo and his son must be murdered that very evening. He leaves after asking the murderers to remain outside and decide about the way they have to put their resolution into action.

Scene II: This scene opens in a chamber in the palace of Forres where Lady Macbeth is left to herself. She asks Macbeth why his brain is so full of worries. Macbeth tells her that there can be no peace of mind until the danger is totally eliminated. Banquo remains a great danger to him. He indirectly suggests this to his wife who has ceased to be that bold and strong-willed. Macbeth asks his wife to show the same happiness towards Banquo. He asks his wife to look bright and cheerful so that the guests at the supper may not know their inner thoughts and feelings. At this, Macbeth tells her that Banquo and his son Fleance are a great danger to him. Lady Macbeth wants to be told about the deed but her husband does not specify it. Instead of telling her about the deed he invokes the spirit of night to blindfold and seal the light of the day with darkness so that the day is not able to warn Banquo of the danger to his life.

Scene III: This scene marks the climax of the play. The two murderers hired by Macbeth are seen in the park and are joined by a third murderer. While they are talking, the hooves of horses are heard. They realize it must be Banquo and his son, so they get ready.

As Banquo and Fleance enter with a torch, the murderers fall upon Banquo at once. Banquo bids his son to escape and keep himself alive to avenge his death. Banquo is killed, but the light being struck out, Fleance escapes.

Scene IV: This is the famous banquet scene in the hall of the palace at Forres. Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Ross, Lennox and attendants enter. When the guests have been seated, the first murderer appears at the door. Macbeth goes to him and learns from him that Banquo has been killed. This pleases Macbeth. However, he feels sad to hear that Fleance has run away. Macbeth asks the murderer to go away. Then he returns to the table and joins the guests seated there.

Lady Macbeth approaches her husband and asks him to realise his duty as the host and attend to his noble guests. Macbeth comes to the table and cheers the guests. When Macbeth regrets the absence of Banquo, suddenly the ghost of Banquo appears, and sits in the place reserved for Macbeth. The ghost is visible only to Macbeth, and it raises uneasy thoughts in his mind. Macbeth begins to utter wild words to the ghost. Lady Macbeth saves the situation by saying that her husband often experiences such fits. The ghost soon disappears, and Macbeth then honours the absent Banquo with a pledge. But the mere mention of Banquo's name brings back the ghost of Banquo again before the eyes of Macbeth. On Ross's asking what Macbeth has seen, Lady Macbeth urges the company to excuse him, remembering that his health is poor and that the party should retire. At this, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth are left alone.

After all this, Macbeth determines to consult the three witches again very soon. But his wife urges him to come to bed, so that his troubled mind may gain rest.

Scene V: This scene opens on the heath where the three witches come to meet their chief witch, Hecate. Hecate chastises her subordinate witches for having foolishly made prophecies to Macbeth without consulting her. She tells the witches that on the following day Macbeth will come to hear

the future course of his destiny. They must make ambiguous predictions about his future. Such predictions will defy fate. This defiance will hasten the downfall that he deserves. After advising the witches, Hecate leaves.

Scene VI: This scene opens in the palace at Forres where Lennox meets another Lord. Lennox is worried by the course of developments since the death of Duncan-the murder of Banquo, and the flight of Fleance, Malcolm and Donalbain. He suspects that both Duncan and Banquo have been murdered by Macbeth. He thinks that Macbeth has arranged all his evil plans very cleverly.

Now the Lord tells Lennox that Malcolm has been living in the English court, where he was well received by the pious Edward, and that Macduff too has gone to England. Macduff is busy in war-like preparations, and it is hoped that Malcolm and Macduff, with the aid of Edward and of other English allies, may be able to overthrow Macbeth from his throne. In the end, both Lennox and the Lord wish success to Macduff's mission and pray for the deliverance of the country from the yoke of tyranny, so that their countrymen may enjoy perfect peace and happiness very soon.

9.4. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

9.4.1 Answer the following questions

1. The beginning of the play takes place in a _____ land.
2. Macbeth was the General in the army of _____.
3. Name the two persons whom the witches first met _____.
4. How many witches were there?
5. How many prophecies did they make?

4.2. Answer-Key

1. Barren
2. Scotland

3. Macbeth and Banquo
4. Three
5. Three

9.6 LET US SUM UP

In the beginning witches also meet amidst thunder and lightning in a deserted land. King Duncan is waiting for the news of the battle against the rebels and the Vikings. A soldier informs Duncan that Macbeth has defeated the rival party. Duncan is very happy to hear the news that Macbeth has defeated the rebel and he gives the title of Thane of Cawdor to him.

Then King Duncan, along with his attendants, arrives in Macbeth's castle. Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plan to murder King Duncan because Macbeth wants to attain the kingship and the way to the throne lies only through the murder of the king. In this project, Lady Macbeth is equally responsible as she incites him to murder Duncan. After murdering Duncan, the main hurdle in his way is Banquo as he is a man of king-like nature and because the witches have also prophesied that Banquo's descendants will be kings. So he also decides to murder Banquo. But the ghost of Banquo tortures him in the Banquet - scene. Lady Macbeth supports him in all his troubles but afterwards becomes mad.

9.7 GLOSSARY

- Clad: clothed.
- Deprecates: express disapproval of.
- Eloquence: fluent or persuasive speaking or writing.
- Denounce: publicly declare to be wrong or evil.
- Delude: make (someone) believe something that is not true.
- Hallucination: an experience involving the apparent perception of something not present.
- Porter: a person employed to carry luggage and other loads

- Soliloquy: an act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself or regardless of any hearers, especially by a character in a play.
- Solemn: characterized by deep sincerity.
- Yoke: cause (two people or things) to be joined in a close relationship.

9.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- Who has rebelled against Duncan?
 - Macbeth
 - Macdonald.
 - Macduff
 - All of them
- 'What he hath lost, noble Macbeth has won', these lines are said by_____.
 - Duncan
 - Lady Macbeth
 - Banquo
 - Macduff
- Fleance is son to_____.
 - Duncan
 - Macduff
 - Banquo
 - Lennox
- 'False face must hide what the false heart doth know', whose line it belongs to?
 - Lady Macbeth
 - Duncan
 - Macduff
 - Macbeth
- _____and Macduff, with the aid of Edward and of other English allies
 - Fleance
 - Malcolm
 - Lennox
 - All of them

8.1. Answer Key

- 1 . Macdonald
2. Duncan
3. Banquo

4. Macbeth

5. Malcolm

9.9 SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Describe the 'dagger-scene'. What light does it throw on the character of Macbeth?

Possible Answer: The dagger-scene is a very important and significant scene in Macbeth that its dramatic importance can hardly be exaggerated. Besides showing the working of the supernatural powers, it reveals much of the mind of Macbeth. There is a close association between the supernatural powers and the working of Macbeth's mind. The dagger is the objective representation of this association. Infact, the dagger is the projection of the black designs of Macbeth, though it has no physical existence.

Macbeth meets Banquo on his way to his bedchamber a little after midnight. There is a brief talk between them. Then they part. Now Macbeth sends a servant to his wife to tell her to get the drink ready and to strike the bell when it is time. Suddenly there shoots up before his eyes the phantom of a dagger. As he tries to clutch at it, it moves away. He asks himself whether it is not a creation of his heat-oppressed brain. It points the way he is to go. He does not know whether he should doubt the evidence of his eyes, or of all his other senses. He begins to see even spots of blood on the phantom of the dagger. His imagination, he feels, must have played this trick.

He is solemnly impressed by the silence of midnight when bad dreams afflict the sleeper, when witches celebrate the worship of Hecate and the grave, specter-like murderer stealthily moves towards his victim. Macbeth is afraid that his very footsteps may awaken the stones and take away the awfulness of the hour. The bell strikes, and he hurries towards the chamber of the king.

The dagger is the creation of Macbeth's imagination. But it may be noted that while Macbeth lets himself run away with his imagination, he realises that it

is a dagger of the mind. 'Is this a dagger which I see before meor art thou but a dagger of the mind, a false creation, proceeding from the heart-oppressed brain?'

Nevertheless the phantom of dagger has a very unsettling effect upon him. The point is that his feral imagination, though it does not paralyse his reason, does dominate him more than his reason. The perturbation of his mind on the eve of the murder, as we see, is due to the activity of his imagination, and we can easily conceive the revulsion of feeling which follows the murder, that again has its source in his imagination.

Sometimes it is also argued that the dagger is an instrument and incentive used by the witches. When the opportunity offers itself, Macbeth shows moral weakness - how can he kill his guest? By their supernatural powers, the witches must have noticed Macbeth hesitating in the execution of their black design, and to impel him to the action of the deed, they presented an apparition of the dagger pointing towards the bed-chamber of Duncan, Macbeth understands its intention:

Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going.

And such an instrument I was to use.

Q2. "Macbeth has been termed as tragedy of ambition", Discuss.

Ans. _____

Q.3. Is there any message in the play Macbeth? Illustrate.

Ans. _____

9.10 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- Q1. Discuss Macbeth's visions and hallucinations. What role do they play in the development of his character?
- Q2. Examine to what extent Lady Macbeth is to blame for her husband's downfall. Discuss the relationship between the couple as the play develops.
- Q3. Is there any similarities between Macbeth and Banquo? How far thus this similarity proves to be fatal for Banquo?

9.11 SUGGESTED READING

1. Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
2. Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

9.12 REFERENCES

1. Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
2. Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

MACBETH

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 10.1 Introduction
- 10.2 Objectives
- 10.3 Act and Scene wise Summary of the Play
 - 10.1. Act IV -Scene I, II, III
 - 10.2. Act V -Scene I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII
- 10.4. Check Your Progress
- 10.5 Let us sum up
- 10.6 Glossary
- 10.7 Multiple Choice Questions
- 10.8 Short Answer Type Questions
- 10.9 Examination Oriented Questions
- 10.10 Suggested Reading
- 10.11 References

10.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear distance learner, this lesson is in continuation to the previous lesson and Act-IV and V are summarised briefly so that the learner gets proper

knowledge of the sequential development of the story within the play. These last two Acts are very important to the play as in the Act-IV Macbeth is revealed of the way and cause of his death which creates a suspense to be finally exposed when he is killed. The distance learners are urged to read all the sections carefully and try to successfully attempt the 'Simple answer question' at the end of each section.

10.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is-

- To discuss the summary of Act- IV and V briefly
- To throw light upon the development of the play Macbeth.
- To help the distance learner able to answer the questions asked.

10.3 ACT AND SCENE WISE SUMMARY OF THE PLAY

10.1. Act IV - Scene I, II, III

10.3.2. Act V - Scene I, II, III, IV, V, VI, VII, VIII

10.3.1. Act-IV

Scene I: This scene opens in a cavern where the three witches are preparing to meet Macbeth. Very soon Macbeth enters and ask the witches to give him the information, which he requires. The witches then hurl more strange ingredients into the boiling pot, and an apparition - an armed head arises. It warns Macbeth against Macduff, the Thane of Fife. Next rises the apparition of a bloody child. It prophesies that Macbeth has nothing to fear from one born of a woman. Soon the third apparition - a crowned child with a tree in his hand arises. It prophesies that Macbeth will never be defeated until the great Birnam Wood comes to high Dunsinane Hill. Then there appears the procession of eight apparitions - all of them Scottish Kings - followed by the ghost of Banquo. This sight torments Macbeth. Shortly the witches vanish. Macbeth begins to curse the witches.

In the meantime enters Lennox with the news of Macduff's flight to England. Hearing this, Macbeth resolves that he will immediately send soldiers to Macduff's castle to kill his wife and child in order, at least, that they shall never succeed him.

Scene II: This scene opens in Macduff's castle in Fife, where Ross tells Lady Macduff that her husband has left for England. Lady Macduff criticizes her husband. She says that his flight in such a critical time is a sign of madness. Ross suggests to her to be patient and not to misjudge her husband. Now follows a dialogue between Lady Macduff and her young son. At this stage a messenger enters and advises her and her children to flee immediately. But before they have a chance to do so, murderers sent by Macbeth enter. Their ghostly faces strike terror into Lady Macduff's heart. They ask for Macduff. On hearing that Macduff has gone away they condemn him as a traitor. The young son of Macduff bravely defends his father, but he is at once stabbed to death. He urges his mother to run, which she does, but is pursued by the murderers.

Scene III: This scene is laid before the palace of Edward. Here we find Malcolm and Macduff in conversation. Macduff is stuffed with the thoughts of Macbeth's oppression and tyranny under which Scotland is groaning. Macduff says that he is determined to swing the sword for the sake of his sadly plighted country, a country in which every day there are new widows and new orphans to speak of the tyranny of Macbeth. But Malcolm distrusts Macduff as once Macduff himself loved Macbeth very much, whom he is now describing as a tyrant. Macduff loses hope on hearing such words from Malcolm. He protests his innocence and bewails the fate of his country. Malcolm agrees that Macduff may be honest and informs him that he has a promise of help from the King of England.

Macduff prefers Malcolm to Macbeth because he has kingly attributes to be set against these vices. But Malcolm denies that he has any kingly

virtues - justice, truth, temperance, constancy, mercy, courage, etc. This makes Macduff desperate. He can see now no hope for his country when such is the fate standing before it. He now wishes he may never return to Scotland, and prepares to take leave of Malcolm. Realizing Macduff's passionate love for his country Malcolm gives him the assurance, which he desires. At this time enters Ross. He says that tyranny of Macbeth is still continuing as before. He further tells them the people of Scotland are rising against Macbeth, and suggests if Macduff and Malcolm go to Scotland now, there will be no lack of soldiers to fight for them. He now breaks the news of the murder of Lady Macduff and her children at the hands of the agents of Macbeth. Macduff becomes grieved and prays that he may meet Macbeth face to face on the battlefield.

10.3.2. Act V

Scene I: This is the famous sleepwalking scene. It opens in an ante-room of the castle at Dunsinane where a doctor has been called as a result of Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking. Lady Macbeth, walking in her sleep, enters, bearing a candle, which by her instructions, is always placed at her bed-side. She is going through the motions of washing her hands to remove the stains of blood, which her troubled mind sees. She looks at her hands and exclaims impatiently whether they should be clean - Here is the smell of the blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand.

The Doctor now begins to suspect the truth. He tells the waiting-woman that such a disease is beyond his power to heal. Lady Macbeth needs the services of a priest rather than of a physician. Then he bids the waiting-woman to keep a watch on Lady Macbeth lest she may attempt suicide.

Scene II: This scene opens in the country near Dunsinane, where some of the rebel nobles and their soldiers assemble to join the English forces led

by Malcolm, Siward and Macduff. Angus says that Macbeth is now being punished for his breach of faith by the revolt of his nobles, occurring every minute. Infact, people don't support him through love or through loyalty, but only through fear.

Scene III: In this scene we see Macbeth talking with the Doctor and attendants. Here we see the effect of the prophecy made by the witches upon Macbeth; for even in the face of the advancing armies, he is feeling no danger. In the meantime, a servant reports that an English army of ten thousand strong soldiers is marching against him. On hearing this he calls for an officer, Seyton. To Seyton he gives orders that more horsemen be sent out, and calls for his own armor. Then Macbeth asks the Doctor about the condition of Lady Macbeth. The doctor replies that she is troubled with thick-coming fancies.

Scene IV: This scene opens in the country near Birnam Wood, where we find the combined army of the Scottish nobles and those of the English under Malcolm, Macduff, Siward and his son. Malcolm orders that every soldier should cut a branch of a tree from Birnam Wood and bear this leafy shield before him in the army's advance against the Castle.

Scene V: In this scene we see Macbeth full of inward confidence, inspired by the witches that the enemy will be beaten up. He hears a cry of women from a room within the castle. Seyton comes in with the news that the queen, Lady Macbeth, is dead. This news moves him so much that he comes out with a soliloquy on life. In it he says that life is like a brief candle, a walking shadow, a poor player who plays his part on the stage and then is heard no more. Life is a tale told by an idiot, having little meaning in it.

A messenger enters and tells Macbeth that he has just now seen a forest (Birnam Wood) moving towards the castle. This information shakes the brain of Macbeth. Now he realizes the double meaning of prophecy made by the witches. If Birnam Wood is coming to Dunsinane, there is no sense

in staying in or running away. Let the signal for battle be sounded. He will go out and meet the enemy in the open.

Scene VI: In this scene English army and Scottish army have gathered and Malcolm orders that the 'leafy screens' borne by his soldiers be thrown down. After this, he draws up the battle order; and he bids the trumpets sound the signal for battle.

Scene VII: This scene opens on the battle-field outside the castle. Macbeth still puts his faith in the fact that he has nothing to fear from a man born of woman. First of all, he meets young Siward, whom he kills with his sword. Macbeth passes on, following the noise; and afterwards Malcolm and old Siward come on the scene. But by this time, the castle has surrendered without any resistance. Thus the victory is almost Malcolm's.

Scene VIII: In this scene Macbeth is encountered by Macduff. Macduff challenges him with his sword. Macbeth tells him that he has no need to fear him since he will never fall at the hands of any man born of woman. At this, Macduff reveals that he was 'from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd' i.e., prematurely born. Hearing this, Macbeth's heart begins to sink. He curses the witches who have deceived him by the ambiguity of their prophecies. Macbeth and Macduff leave the scene lashing swords at each other.

Meanwhile Macduff enters, carrying with him Macbeth's head. The victorious Macduff hails Malcolm as King of Scotland; and then all the lords and soldiers present there, echo the cheer for their new sovereign. Malcolm ushers in a new period of happiness for the people of his country.

10.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

1. Who was Macduff?
2. The famous sleepwalking scene happens in which Act?

3. What misfortune did Macduff suffer?
4. How did Lady Macbeth die?
5. How did Macbeth die?

10.4.1 Answer-Key

1. The Thane of Fife
2. Act-V
3. His wife and children were murdered.
4. She becomes mad and kill herself.
5. Macbeth is killed by Macduff in battle.

10.5 LET US SUM UP

In Act IV witches are preparing to meet Macbeth. Soon Macbeth enters. He wants to know the course of his life. The witches make three prophecies.

- (1) First apparition warns Macbeth against Macduff
- (2) Next apparition prophesies that Macbeth has nothing to do with one born of woman.
- (3) And the third apparition prophesies that Macbeth will never be defeated until the great Birnam Wood comes to high Dunsinane Hill.

In the meanwhile, Macduff flees to England. Lady Macduff is informed by Ross that her husband has escaped. She considers his flight in such a critical time as a sign of madness. At this stage a messenger advises Lady Macduff and her children to flee immediately. But before they can escape, killers sent by Macbeth enter. They murder both Lady Macduff and her children.

In Act V, we find Lady Macbeth on the verge of death. She has lost control over her mind. She walks in her sleep, bearing a candle. She continuously looks at her hands and exclaims whether the stains of blood from her hand could be cleaned. Lady Macbeth ultimately dies.

On the other hand, Macduff and Malcolm are preparing for the war against Macbeth. Another scene opens on the battlefield where Macbeth encounters Macduff. Macbeth tells him that he will never fall at the hands of any man born of woman. At this, Macduff reveals that he was 'from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd'. i.e., prematurely born. He curses the witches who have deceived him by the ambiguity of their prophecies. Meanwhile Macduff enters, carrying with him Macbeth's head. The victorious Macduff hails Malcolm as King of Scotland and all the lords and soldiers echo the cheer for their new sovereign. Malcolm ushers in a new period of happiness for the people of his country.

10.6 GLOSSARY

- Cavern: a large cave or chamber in a cave.
- Apparition: a ghost or ghostlike image of a person.
- Condemn: express complete disapproval of; censure.
- Groaning: be oppressed by.
- Bemoans: express great regret, sadness, or disappointment about (something).
- Armor: the metal coverings formerly worn to protect the body in battle.
- Soliloquy: an act of speaking one's thoughts aloud when by oneself or regardless of any hearers, especially by a character in a play.

10.7 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. 'Life is a tale Told by an idiot, having little meaning in it,' these lines are said by _____.
a. Macbeth
b. Duncan
c. Lady Macbeth
d. Banquo
2. Lady Macbeth is tormented by the _____ in her sleep.
a. death of Banquo
b. smell of blood on her hands
c. ghost
d. none of these

3. What does the second apparition of a bloody child prophesies?
 - a. It warns Macbeth from Macduff.
 - b. It prophesies that Macbeth has nothing to fear from one born of a woman.
 - c. It prophesies that Lady Macbeth will die soon.
 - d. none of these.
4. Who is 'from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd'?
 - a. Duncan
 - b. Macbeth
 - c. Lennox
 - d. Macduff
5. Macduff kills Macbeth in a dual because _____.
 - a. He had killed his wife and son.
 - b. He had usurped his kingdom.
 - c. He was trying to kill Macduff.
 - d. He had murdered Duncan.

7.1. Answer Key

1. Macbeth
2. smell of blood on her hands
3. It prophesies that Macbeth has nothing to fear from one born of a woman.
4. Macduff.
5. He had killed his wife and son

10.8 SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

- Q1. Give a short account of the sleepwalking scene, mentioning the previous incidents in the play to which Lady Macbeth refers.

Possible Answer: A doctor has kept watch for two nights with a waiting-gentlewoman, to observe the fits of Lady Macbeth. The gentle-woman witnesses that she has seen her mistress rise from her bed, throw the dressing-gown upon

her, unlock her closet, take out her paper, write something on it, read it, and at last return to bed. All these details are supplied by the gentlewoman to the doctor but she is not prepared to communicate to him all that her mistress had said in sleep-walking. Suddenly Lady Macbeth enters at this moment with a taper. They stand aside to observe her. She keeps rubbing her hands and cries; "out damned spot! out, I say!". She seems to admonish her husband, and allude to a particular old man (Duncan) who has too much blood in him. She suddenly recalls that the Thane of Fife had a wife; again looks at her hands which she imagines to be blood-stained; wonders whether all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten them. With these dismal reflections she intermingles admonitions to her husband, sometimes bidding him wash his hands, put on his gown, and sometimes asking him not to worry about Banquo, and sometimes urging him to go to bed. Then she retires. The doctor declares that this disease is not one to be cured by him. He advises the gentlewoman to keep a sharp watch upon her and permit within her reach nothing with which she can harm herself. In the sleep-walking scene, Lady Macbeth recalls the past incidents - particularly the murder of Duncan in connection with which she was so anxious that her husband should wash his hands and worry no more about the murder. Sometimes she would mix up with it her memory of the banquet scene. Here is the example:

Wash your hands, put on your night-gown;
look not so pale I tell you yet again;
Banquo's buried; he can't come out on's grave.

Though she had nothing to do with the murder of Macduff's wife and children, yet the incident crops in her nightmare:

The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now

She sees the stains of blood on her hands. She seems to be obsessed with it, and with her anxiety for her husband. The scene of Duncan's murder, Macbeth's unnervement at Banquo's apparition, the fear and anxiety at the knocking after the murder of Duncan-all these come thronging back to her mind and she reacts to them in her sleep-walking.

Q.2. "Macbeth was a poet with his brain and villain with his heart", Discuss.

Ans. _____

Q3. Comment on the statement that Macbeth is the darkest and the blackest of all Shakespeare's tragedies.

Ans. _____

Q4. What is the theme of Macbeth?

Ans. _____

10.9 Examination Oriented Questions

Q1 Compare and contrast Macbeth, Macduff, and Banquo. How are they alike? How are they different? Is it possible to argue that Macbeth is the play's villain and Macduff or Banquo its hero, or is the matter more complicated than that?

Q2 What is the theme of the play Macbeth?

Q3 Dissuss the importance of the Sleepwalking Scene critically.

10.10 SUGGESTED READING

1. Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
2. Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

10.11 REFERENCES

1. Shakespearean Tragedy by H.B. Charlton.
2. Shakespeare's Macbeth by A.M. Dwivedi.

MACBETH

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 11.1 Introduction
- 11.2 Objectives
- 11.3 Macbeth the shortest play by William Shakespeare
- 11.4 Check your progress
- 11.5 Dramatic Irony in Macbeth
- 11.6 Check Your Progress
- 11.7 England and Witchcraft during King James
- 11.8 Check Your Progress
- 11.9 Three Witches and Supernatural Elements
- 11.10 Check Your Progress
- 11.11 Let us sum up
- 11.12 Glossary
- 11.13 Multiple Choice Questions
- 11.14 Short Answer Type Questions
- 11.15 Examination Oriented Questions
- 11.16 Suggested Reading
- 11.17 References

11.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear learner this lesson along with the subsequent lesson will guide you to understand and evaluate Macbeth critically. The lesson emphasise on the background to the play along with the supernatural elements, which makes this play one among the best of the masterpieces of Shakespeare. It is very important to understand, since now you are well aware of the story and the theme of the play, the different perspective or lens to gain a critical insight to the play. The lesson begins with a critical introduction to the play, followed by the use of dramatic irony and supernatural elements and its source. Keeping this in view, the lesson is structured carefully so that the learners find it easy to understand. The learners are advised to follow each steps properly so that better understanding is gained.

11.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this this lesson is-

- To discuss critically Macbeth.
- To acquaint the distance learners with supernatural elements in Macbeth
- To discuss the sources of these supernatural elements
- To make the learner able to answer the questions in CYP.

11.3. MACBETH THE SHORTEST PLAY BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Macbeth one of the last written among the four great tragedies and immediately preceded by Antony and Cleopatra presents Shakespeare as the master of tragedies at its best and the transition to this style is much more decidedly visible in Macbeth rather than in King Lear. For a Shakespearean scholar, in certain respects, Macbeth is more similar to Hamlet rather than Othello or King Lear. In the heroes of both plays the passage from thought to critical resolution and action is difficult, and excites the keenest interest. In neither play, as in Othello and King Lear, is painful pathos one of the main effects. Evil, again, though it shows in Macbeth a prodigious energy, is not the icy or stony inhumanity

of Iago or Goneril; and, as in Hamlet, it is pursued by remorse. Finally, Shakespeare no longer restricts the action to purely human agencies, as in the two preceding tragedies; portents once more fill the heavens, ghosts rise from their graves, an unearthly light flickers about the head of the doomed men. The special popularity of Hamlet and Macbeth is due in part to some of these common characteristics, notably to the fascination of the supernatural, the absence of characters that horrify and repel and are yet destitute of grandeur. The reader who looks unwillingly at Iago gazes at Lady Macbeth in awe, because though she is dreadful she is also sublime and the whole tragedy is sublime.

The dramatic art of Shakespeare was beyond comparison and perhaps his contemporaries had already accepted him as 'a class' and 'a master' of dramatic art. With critical writings in the praise of his work by renowned critics and writers the following ages gradually exalted his position as an outstanding playwright to immeasurable heights and no other dramatist has since been able to achieve such stature. Ben Jonson claim that Shakespeare was superior to "all that insolent Greece or haughtie Rome/ Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come" or Dryden's praise of Shakespeare's 'comprehensive soul'. The impulse to comment in detail on particular plays arose first in the eighteenth century. Once begun, it was carried on with all the vigour of that wonderful century.

Critical discussion on Macbeth might have begun soon after its first staging in 1606 by none other than the Elizabethan theatregoers as Shakespeare had already given them so much- the great historical plays, the comedies and great tragedies like Hamlet, King Lear and Othello that it would have been very natural for them to talk about yet another masterpiece. The basic curiosity and questions about the play's significance have never ceased to occur to men's mind since it was first staged. For instance are the witches put in merely to please King James the then king of England? Or, if they were really an integral part of the play, if yes, then in what way? Do they have power over future? And what kind of men is Macbeth? Do Malcom's words, "This dead butcher and his fiend-like queen" really sum up what we feel about him and Lady Macbeth?

11.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer these Simple Questions

1. Shakespeare has written _____ numbers of tragedies.
2. _____ and _____ are more similar than the other Tragedies.
3. Who claims that Shakespeare was superior to "all that insolent Greece or haughty Rome/ Sent forth, or since did from their ashes come"?
4. When was Macbeth first staged?
5. Who was the then King of England when Macbeth was staged for the first time?

Answer Key

1. Four
2. Macbeth and Hamlet
3. Ben Johnson
4. 1606
5. King James

11.5 DRAMATIC IRONY IN MACBETH

In Shakespeare's Macbeth there is a lot of dramatic irony, and Shakespeare intended the irony of the play to build and maintain suspense, while creating a vague sense of fear where the audience is aware of something that some of the characters are unaware of. For example, the irony in the play started out early, with the witches' prophecies to Macbeth and Banquo. The prophecies to Macbeth were all ironic paradoxes. Further the situation surrounding Duncan's death, Lady Macbeth's guilt, and Macbeth's insanity are all examples of dramatic irony because we have been able to witness Macbeth and Lady Macbeth plan out and commit the act of murder. It is perhaps an enhanced use of a literary expedient like 'Dramatic Irony'. Not even in Richard III, which in this, as in

other respects, has resemblances to Macbeth, is there so much of irony: Irony not only in the ordinary sense; to speeches, for example, where the speaker is intentionally ironical like that of Lenox in iii vi. Irony on the part of the author himself, to ironical juxtapositions of persons and events, and especially two the 'Sophoclean irony' by which a speaker is made to use words bearing to the audience, in addition to his own meaning, a further and ominous sense, hidden from himself and, usually, from the other persons on the stage. The very first words uttered by Macbeth,

So foul and fair a day I have not seen,

are an example to which a tension has often been drawn; for they startled the reader by recalling the words of the Witches in the first scene

Fair is foul, and foul is fair.

When Macbeth, emerging from his murderous reverie, turns to the nobles saying. 'Let us toward the King,' his words are innocent, but to the reader have a double meaning. Duncan's comment on the treachery of Cawdor,

There's no art

To End the mind's construction in the face:

He was a gentleman on whom I built

An absolute trust,

is interrupted' by the entrance of the traitor Macbeth, who is greeted with effusive gratitude and a like 'absolute trust.' I have already referred to the ironical effect of the beautiful lines in which Duncan and Banquo describe the castle they are about to enter' To the reader Lady Macbeth's light words,

A little water Clan us of this deed:

How easy is it then,

summon up the picture of the sleep-walking scene. The idea of the Porter's speech, in which he imagines himself the keeper of hell-gate, shows the

same irony. So does the contrast between the obvious and the hidden meanings of the apparitions of the armed head, the bloody child, and the child with the tree in his hand. It would be easy to add further examples. Perhaps the most striking is the answer which Banquo, as he rides away, never to return alive, gives to Macbeth's reminder, 'Fail not our feast.' 'My lord, I will not,' he replies, and he keeps his promise. It cannot be by accident that Shakespeare so frequently in this play uses a device, which contributes to excite the vague fear of hidden forces operating on minds unconscious of their influence.

11.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6.1 Answer these Simple Questions

1. The irony in a play to build and maintain suspense, while creating a vague sense of fear where the audience is aware of something that some of the characters are unaware of is called _____.
2. _____ is an irony in which a speaker is made to use words bearing to the audience, in addition to author's own meaning, a further and ominous sense, hidden from the character himself and, usually, from the other persons on the stage.
3. "Fair is foul, and foul is fair", these lines are spoken by _____.
4. Who walks in sleep?

11.6.2. Answer Key

1. Dramatic Irony
2. Sophoclean irony
3. Three Witches
4. Lady Macbeth

11.7 ENGLAND AND WITCHCRAFT DURING KING JAMES

In order to understand the true ability and merit of a writer, it is always correct to examine the genius of his age and the opinions of contemporaries. A

poet who should now make the whole action of his tragedy depend upon enchantment and produced the chief events by the assistance of supernatural agents would be censured as transgressing the bounds of probability. He can further be banished from the theatre to the nursery and condemned to write fairy tales instead of tragedies; but a survey of the notions that prevailed at the time when *Macbeth* was written will prove that Shakespeare was in no danger of such censures, since he only turned the system that was then universally admitted to his advantage and was far from overburdening the credulity of his audience.

The reality of witchcraft or enchantment, which, though not strictly the same, are confounded in this play, has in all ages and countries been credited by the common people, and in most, by the learned themselves. These phantoms have indeed appeared more frequently in proportion, as the darkness of ignorance has been grosser; but it cannot be shown that the brightest gleams of knowledge have at any time been sufficient to drive them out of the world. The time in which this kind of credulity was as its height seems to have been that of the holy war, in which the Christians blamed all their defeats to enchantments or devilish and wicked oppositions, and similarly they ascribed their success to the assistance of their military to saints. One of the learned doctors Warburton appears to believe in his *Supplement to the Introduction to 'Don Quixote'*, that the first accounts of enchantments were brought into this part of the world by those who returned from their Eastern expeditions.

The Reformation did not immediately arrived as its meridian, and though the day was gradually increasing, the goblins of witchcraft still continued to hover in the twilight. In the time of Queen Elizabeth was the remarkable trial of the witches of Warbois, whose conviction is still commemorated in an annual sermon at Huntingdawn. But in the reign of King James, in which *Macbeth* was written, many circumstances concurred to propagate and confirm this opinion. The king, who was much celebrated for his knowledge, had, before his arrival in England, not only examine in person a women accused of witchcraft but had given a very formal account of the practices and illusions of evil spirits, the compacts of witches, the ceremonies used by them, the manner of detecting them, and the justice of

punishing them, in his dialogues *Daemonologie*, written in the Scottish dialect, and published at Edinburgh. This book was, soon after his accession, reprinted at London, and as the ready way to gain King James' favour was to flatter his speculations, the system of *Daemonologie* was immediately adopted by all who desired either to gain preferment or not to lose it. Thus the doctrine of witchcraft was very powerfully inculcated; and as the greatest part of mankind have no other reason for their opinion than that they are in fashion, it cannot be doubted but this persuasion made a rapid progress, since vanity and credulity co-operated in its favour. The infection soon reached the parliament, who, in the first year of King James, made a law, by which it was enacted.

Thus, in the time of Shakespeare, was the doctrine of witchcraft at once established by law and by the fashion, and it became not only impolite, but criminal, to doubt it; and as prodigies are always seen in proportion as they are expected, witches were everyday discovered and multiplied so fast in some places that Bishop Hall mentions a village in Lancashire where their number was greater than that of the houses. The Jesuits and sectaries took advantage of this universal error and endeavoured to promote the interest of their parties by pretended cures of persons afflicted by evil spirits; but they were detected and exposed by the clergy of Established Church. Upon this general infatuation Shakespeare might be easily allowed to found a play, especially since he has followed with great exactness such histories as were then thought true; nor can it be doubted that the scenes of enchantment, however they may now be ridiculed, were both by himself and his audience thought awful and affecting.

11.8 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

11.8.1. Answer these Simple Questions

1. Who wrote Supplement to the Introduction to 'Don Quixote'?
2. The annual sermon at Huntingdawn is commemorated for the trial of the_____.
3. Macbeth was written during _____reign.
4. Who wrote the *Daemonologie*?

11.8.2. Answer Key

1. Doctor Warburton
2. Witches of Warbois.
3. King James.
4. King James.

11.9 THREE WITCHES AND SUPERNATURAL ELEMENTS

A Shakespearean tragedy as a rule has a special tone or atmosphere of its own, quite perceptible, however difficult to describe. The effect of this atmosphere is marked with unusual strength in *Macbeth*. It is due to variety of influences which combines with those just noticed, so that, acting and reacting, they form a whole; and the desolation of the blasted heath, the design of the witches, the guilt in the hero's soul, the darkness of the night, seem to emanate from one and the same source. This effect is strengthened by a multitude of small touches, which at the moment may be little noticed but still leave their mark on the imagination. We may approach the consideration of the characters and the action by distinguishing some of the ingredients of this general effect. Darkness, we may even say blackness, broods over this tragedy. It is remarkable that almost all the scenes, which at once recur to memory, take place either at night or in some dark spot. The vision of the dagger, the murder of Duncan, the murder of Banquo, the sleepwalking of lady Macbeth, all comes in night scenes. The Witches dance in the air of a strong, or, 'black and midnight hags', receives Macbeth in a cavern. The blackness of the night is to the hero a thing of fear, even of horror; and that which he feels becomes the spirit of the play. The faint glimmerings of the western sky at twilight are here menacing: it is the hour when the travellers hastens to reach safety in his inn and when Banquo rides homeward to meet his assassins; the hour when 'light thickens', when 'night's black agents to their pray do rouse', when the wolf begins to howl, and the owl to scream, and withered murder steels forth to his work. Macbeth bids the stars to hide so that his 'black' desires may be concealed; lady Macbeth calls on thick night to come, pulled in

the dunnest of the smoke of hell. The moon is down and no stars shine when Banquo, dreading the dreams of the coming night, goes unwilling to bed, and leaves Macbeth to wait for the summons of the little bell. When the next day should dawn, its light is 'strangled', and 'darkness does the face of earth entomb'. In the whole drama the sun seems to shine only twice; first in the beautiful but ironical passage where Duncan sees the swallows flitting around the castle of death; and, afterwards, when at the close the avenging army gathers to read the earth of its shame. Of the many slighter touches, which deepen this effect. The failure of nature in Lady Macbeth is marked by her fear of darkness; 'she has light by her continually'. And in the phrase of fear that escapes her lips even in sleep, it is of the darkness of the place of torment that she speaks.

The atmosphere of Macbeth, however, is not that of unravelled blackness. On the contrary, as compared with King Lear and its cold dim gloom, Macbeth leaves a decided impression of colour; it is really the impression of a black night broken by flashes of light and colour, sometimes vivid and even glaring. They are the lights and colours of the thunderstorm in the first scene; of the dagger hanging before Macbeth's eyes and glittering alone in the midnight air; of the touch born by the servant when he and his lord come upon Banquo crossing the castle-caught to his room; of the touch, again, which Fleance carried to light his father to death, and which was dashed out by one of the murderers; of the torches that flared in the hall on the face of the Ghost and the blanched cheeks of Macbeth. Macbeth; of the flames beneath the boiling caldron from which the apparition in the cavern rose; of the taper which showed to the doctor and the gentle women the wasted face and black eyes of Lady Macbeth. And, above all, the colour is the colour of blood. It cannot be an accident that the image of blood is forced upon us continually not merely by the events themselves. But by full descriptions and even by reiteration of the word in unlikely parts of the dialogue the Witches, after their first wild appearance, have hardly quitted the stage when there staggers onto it 'bloody man', gashed with wounds. His tale of a hero whose 'brandish steel smoked with bloody execution', 'carved out passage' to his enemy, and 'unseem'd him from the nave to the chaps'. And then he tells of a second battle so bloody that the combatants seem as if they 'meant to bathe in reeking wounds'.

What metaphors! What a dreadful image is that with which Lady Macbeth greets us almost as she enters, when she praises the spirits of cruelty so to thicken her blood that pity cannot flow along her veins! What pictures are those of the murderer appearing at the door of the banquet-room with Banquo's 'blood upon his face'; of Banquo himself 'with twenty trenched gashes on his head', or 'blood-bolter'd' and smiling in derision at his murderer; of Macbeth gazing at his hand, and watching it dye the whole green ocean red; of Lady Macbeth, gazing at hers, and stretching it away from her face to escape the smell of blood that all the perfumes of Arabia will not subdue! The most horrible lines in the whole tragedy are those of her shuddering cry, 'yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?' And it is not only in such moments that these images occur. Even in the quiet conversation of Malcolm and Macduff, Macbeth is imagined as holding a bloody sceptre, and Scotland as a country bleeding and deceiving everyday a new gash added to her wounds. It is as if the poet saw the whole story through an ensanguined mist, and as if it stands the very blackness of the night. When Macbeth, before Banquo's murder, invokes night to scarf up the tender eye of pitiful day, and to tear in pieces the great bond that keeps him pale, even the invisible hand that is to tear the bond is imagined as covered with blood.

The vividness, magnitude, and violence of the imagery on some of these passages are characteristic of Macbeth almost throughout; and their influence contribute to form its atmosphere. Images like those of the babe torn smiling from the breast and dashed to death; of poring the sweet milk of concord into hell; of the earth shaking in fever; of the frame of things disjointed; of sorrows striking heaven on the face, so that it resounds and yells out like syllables of dolour; of the mind lying in restless ecstasy on a rack; of the mind full of scorpions; of the tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury - all keep the imagination moving on a 'wild and violent sea', while it is scarcely for a moment permitted to dwell on thoughts of peace and beauty. In its language, as in its action, the drama is full action and tumult and storm.

Whenever the Witches are present we see and hear a thunderstorm: when they are absent we hear of ship-wrecking storm and direful thunders; of tempests that blow down trees and churches, castle, palaces and pyramids; of the frightful hurricane of the night when Duncan was murdered; of the blast on which pity rides like a new born babe, or on which heaven's cherubim are horsed. There is thus something magnificently appropriate in the cry 'Blow wind! Come wrack!' with which Macbeth, turning from the side of the moving wood of Birnam, bursts from his castle. He was borne to his throne on a whirlwind, and the fate he goes to meet comes on the wings of storm.

Now all these agencies - darkness, the lights and the colours that illuminate it, the storm that rushes through it, the violent and gigantic images- conspire with the appearances of the Witches and the Ghost to awaken horror, and in some degree also a supernatural dread. And to this effect other influences contribute. The pictures called up by the mere words of the Witches stir the same feelings, for example, of the spell-bound sailor driven tempest-tost for nine times nine weary weeks, and never visited by sleep night or day; of the drop of poisonous foam forms on the moon, and, falling to earth, is collected for pernicious ends; of the sweltering venom of the toad, the finger of the babe killed at its birth by its own mother, the trickling from the murderer's gibbet. In Nature, again, something is felt to be at work, sympathetic with human guilt and supernatural malice. She labours with portents, Lamentings heard in the air, strange screams of death, And prophesying with accents terrible, burst from her. The owl clamours all through the night; Duncan's horses devour each other in frenzy; the dawn comes, but no light with it. Common sights and sounds, the crying of crickets, the croak of the raven, the light thickening after sunset, the home coming of the rooks are all ominous. Then, as if to deepen these impression, Shakespeare has concentrated attention on the obscure regions of man's being, on phenomena which make it seem that he is in the power of secret forces lurking low, and independent of his consciousness and will: such as the relapse of Macbeth from conversation into a reverie, during which he gazes fascinated at the image of murder drawing closer and closer; the writing on his face of strange things he never meant to show; the pressure of imagination heightening into illusion, like the vision of a dagger in the

air, at first bright, then suddenly splash with blood, or the second sound of the voice that cried 'Sleep no more' and would not be silenced. To these are added other, and constant, allusions to sleep, man's strange half-conscious life; to the misery of its withholding; to the terrible dreams of remorse of; to the cursed thoughts from which Banquo is free by it, but which tempt him in his sleep: and again to abnormal disturbances of sleep; in the two men, of whom one during the murder of Duncan laughed in his sleep, and the other raised a cry of murder; and in Lady Macbeth, who rises to re-enact insomnambulism those scene the memory of which is pushing her onto madness or suicide. All this has one effect, to excite supernatural alarm and, even more, a dread of the presence of evil not only in its recognised seat but all through and around our mysterious nature. Perhaps there is no other work equal to Macbeth in the production of this effect.

On the one hand the Witches, whose contribution to the 'atmosphere' of Macbeth can hardly be exaggerated, are credited with far too great an influence upon the action; sometimes they are described as goddesses, or even as fates, whom Macbeth is powerless to resist. And this is perversion. On the other hand we are told that, great as is their influence on the action, it is so because they are merely symbolic representations of the unconscious or half conscious guilt in Macbeth himself. And this is inadequate. As to the former, Shakespeare took, as material for his purposes, the ideas about witchcraft that he found existing in people around him and in books like Reginald Scot's *Discovery* (1584). And he used these ideas without changing their substance at all. He selected and improved, avoiding the merely ridiculous, dismissing (unlike Middleton) the sexually loathsome or stimulating, re-handling and heightening whatever could touch the imagination with fear, horror and mysterious attraction. The Witches, that is to say, are not goddesses, or fates, or, in anyway whatever, supernatural beings. They are old women, poor and ragged, skinny and hideous, full of vulgar spite, occupied in killing their neighbours' swine or revenging themselves on sailors' wives who have refused them chestnuts.

However, there is not a syllable in Macbeth to imply that they are anything but women. But, again in accordance with the popular ideas, they have received

from evil spirits certain supernatural powers. They can 'raise haile, tempests, and hurtfull weather; as lightening, thunder etc'. They can 'pass from place to place in the aire invisible.' They can 'keep devils and spirits in the likenesses of todes and cats,' Paddock or Graymalkin. They can 'transferre come in the blade from one place to another.' They can 'manifest unto others things hidden and lost, and foresheew things to come, and see them as though they were resent.'

The reader will apply these phrases and sentences at once to passages in *Macbeth*. They are all taken from Scot's first chapter, where he is retailing the current superstitions of his time; and, in regard to the Witches, Shakespeare mentions scarcely anything, if anything, that was not to be found, of course in a more prosaic shape, either in Scot or in some other easily accessible authority. 'He read, to be sure, in Holinshed, his main source for the story of *Macbeth*, that, according to the common opinion, the 'women' who met *Macbeth* 'were either the weird sisters, that is (as ye would say) y' Goddesses of destinee, or els some Nimphes or Fairies'. But what does that matter? What he read in his authority was absolutely nothing to his audience, and remains nothing to us, unless he used what he read. And he did not use this idea. He used nothing but the phrase 'weird sisters,' which certainly no more suggested to a London audience the *Parcae* of one mythology or the *Norns* of another than it does today. His Witches owe all their power to the spirits; they are 'instrument of darkness'; the spirits are their 'masters' (iv. i. 63). Fancy the fates having masters! Even if the passages where *Hecate* appears are Shakespeare's,' that will not help the Witches; for they are subject to *Hecate*, who is herself a goddess or superior devil, not a fate.

Next, while the influence of the Witches' prophecies on *Macbeth* is very great, it is quite clearly shown to be an influence and nothing more. There is no sign whatever in the play that Shakespeare meant the actions of *Macbeth* to be forced on him by an external power, whether that of the Witches, or of their 'masters,' or of *Hecate*. It is needless therefore to insist that such a conception would be in contradiction with his whole tragic practice. The prophecies of the Witches are presented simply as dangerous circumstances with which *Macbeth*

has to deal: they are dramatically on the same level as the story of the Ghost in Hamlet, or the falsehoods told by Iago to Othello. Macbeth is, in the ordinary sense, perfectly free in regard to them: and if we speak of degrees of freedom, he is even freer than Hamlet, who was crippled by melancholy when the Ghost appeared to him. That the influence of the first prophecies upon him is made abundantly clear by the obviously intentional contrast between him and Banquo. Banquo, ambitious but perfectly honest, is scarcely even startled by them, and he remains throughout the scene indifferent to them. But when Macbeth heard them he was not an innocent man. Precisely how far his mind was guilty may be a question; but no innocent man would have started, as he did, with a start of fear at the mere prophecy of a crown, or have conceived thereupon immediately the thought of murder. Either this thought was not new to him, 'or he had cherished at least some vaguer dishonourable dream, the instantaneous recurrence of which, at the moment of his hearing the prophecy, revealed to him an inward and terrifying guilt. In either case not only was he free to accept or resist the temptation, but the temptation was already within him. We are admitting too much, therefore. When we compare him with Othello, for Othello's mind was perfectly free from suspicion when his temptation came to him. And we are admitting, again, too much when we use the word 'temptation' in reference to the first prophecies of the Witches. Speaking strictly we must affirm that he was tempted only by himself. He speaks indeed of their 'supernatural soliciting'; but in fact they did not solicit. They merely announced events: they hailed him as Thane of Glamis, Thane of Cawdor, and King hereafter. No connection of these announcements with any action of his was even hinted by them. For all that appears, the natural death of an old man might have fulfilled the prophecy any day. In any case, the idea of fulfilling it by murder was entirely his own.

When Macbeth sees the Witches again, after the murders of Duncan and Banquo, we observe however, a striking change. They no longer need to go and meet him; he seeks them out. He has committed himself to his course of evil. Now accordingly they do 'solicit.' They prophesy, but they also give advice: they bid him to bloody, bold, and secure. We have no hope that he will reject their

advice; but so far are they from having, even now, any power to compel him to accept it, that they make careful preparations to deceive him into doing so. And, almost as though to intimate how entirely the responsibility for this deed still lies with Macbeth, Shakespeare makes his first act after this interview one for which his tempters gave him not a hint—the slaughter of Macduff's wife and children.

To all this we must add that Macbeth himself nowhere betrays a suspicion that his action is, or has been, thrust on him by an external power. He curses the Witches for deceiving him, but he never attempts to shift to them the burden of his guilt. Neither has Shakespeare placed in the mouth of any other character in this play such fatalistic expressions as may be found in *King Lear* and occasionally elsewhere. He appears actually to have taken pains to make the natural psychological genesis of Macbeth's crimes perfectly clear, and it was a most unfortunate notion of Schlegel's that the Witches were required because natural agencies would have seemed too weak to drive such a man as Macbeth to his first murder. 'Still,' it may be said, 'the Witches did foreknow Macbeth's future; and what is foreknown is fixed; and how can a man be responsible when his future is fixed?' With this question, as a speculative one, we have no concern here; but, in so far as it relates to the play one can reach two logic, first, that not one of the things foreknown is an action. This is just as true of the later prophecies as of the first. That Macbeth will be harmed by none of woman born, and will never be vanquished till Birnam Wood shall come against him, involves (so far as we are informed) no action of his. It may be doubted, indeed, whether Shakespeare would have introduced prophecies of Macbeth's deeds, even if it had been convenient to do so; he would probably have felt that to do so would interfere with the interest of the inward struggle and suffering. And, in the second place, *Macbeth* was not written for students of metaphysics or theology but for people at large; and, however it may be with prophecies of actions, prophecies of mere events do not suggest to people at large any sort of difficulty about responsibility. Many people, perhaps most, habitually think of their 'future' as something fixed, and of themselves as 'free.' The Witches nowadays take a room in Bond Street and charge a guinea; and when the victim enters they hail him the

possessor of £1000 a year, or prophesy to him of journeys, wives, and children. But though he is struck dumb by their prescience, it does not even cross his mind that he is going to lose his glorious 'freedom'- not though journeys and marriages imply much more agency on his part than anything foretold to Macbeth. This whole difficulty is undramatic; and one can add that Shakespeare nowhere shows, like Chaucer, any interest in speculative problems concerning foreknowledge, predestination and freedom.

According to it the Witches and their prophecies are to be taken merely as symbolical representations of thoughts and desires, which have slumbered in Macbeth's breast and now rise into consciousness and confront him. With this idea, which springs from the wish to get rid of a mere external supernaturalism, and to find a psychological and spiritual meaning in that which the groundlings probably received as hard facts, one may feel sympathy. But it is evident that it is rather a 'philosophy' of the Witches than an immediate dramatic apprehension of them; and even so it will be found both incomplete and, in other respects, inadequate. It is incomplete because it cannot possibly be applied to all the facts. Let us rant that it will apply to the most important prophecy, that of the crown; and that the later warning which Macbeth receives, to beware of Macduff, also answers to something in his own breast and 'harps his fear aright' but there we have to stop. Macbeth had evidently no suspicion of that treachery in Cawdor through which he himself became Thane; and who will suggest that he had any idea, however subconscious, about Birnam Wood or the man not born of woman? It may be held rightly, that the prophecies which answer to nothing inward, the prophecies which are merely supernatural, produce, now at any rate, much less imaginative effect than the others, even that they are in Macbeth an element which was of an age and not for all time; but still they are there, and they are essential to the plot. And as the theory under consideration will not apply to them at all, it is not likely that it gives an adequate account even of those prophecies to which it can in some measure be applied.

It is inadequate here chiefly because it is much too narrow. The Witches and their prophecies, if they are to be rationalised or taken symbolically, must

represent not only the evil slumbering in the hero's soul, but all those obscurer influences of the evil around him in the world which aid his own ambition and the incitements of his wife. Such influences, even if we put aside all belief in evil 'spirits,' are as certain momentous, and terrifying facts as the presence of inchoate evil in the soul itself; and if we exclude all reference to these facts from our idea of the Witches, it will be greatly impoverished and will certainly fail to correspond with the imaginative effect. The union of the outward and inward here may be compared with something of the same kind in Greek poetry. In the first Book of the Iliad we are told that, when Agamemnon threatened to take Briseis from Achilles, 'grief came upon Peleus' son, and his heart within his shaggy breast was divided in counsel, whether to draw his keen blade from his thigh and set the company aside and so slay Atreides, or to assuage his anger and curb his soul. While yet he doubted thereof in heart and soul, and was drawing his great sword from his sheath, Athene came to him from heaven, sent forth of the white-armed goddess Hera, whose heart loved both alike and had care for them. She stood behind Peleus' son and caught him by his golden hair, to him only visible, and of the rest no man beheld her.' And at her bidding he mastered his wrath, 'and stayed his heavy hand on the silver hilt, and thrust the great sword back into the sheath, and was not disobedient to the saying of Athene.' The succour of the goddess here only strengthens an inward movement in the mind of Achilles, but we should lose something besides a poetic effect if for that reason we struck her out of the account. We should lose the idea that the inward powers of the soul answer in their essence to vaster powers without, which support them and assure the effect of their exertion. So it is in Macbeth. The words of the Witches are fatal to the hero only because there is in him something which leaps into light at the sound of them; but they are at the same time the witness of forces which never cease to work in the world around him, and, on the instant of his surrender to them, entangle him inextricably in the web of Fate. If the inward connection is once realised (and Shakespeare has left us no excuse for missing it), we need not fear, and indeed shall scarcely be able, to exaggerate the effect of the Witch-scenes in heightening and deepening the sense of fear, horror, and mystery which pervades the atmosphere of the tragedy.

11.10 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

10.1. Answer these Simple Questions

1. _____ broods over this tragedy. It is remarkable that almost all the scenes, which at once recur to memory, take place either at night or in some dark spot.
2. In the whole drama the sun seems to shine only_____.
3. "yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?", who says this line?
4. Who wrote the book Discovery?

11.10.2. Answer Key

1. Darkness
2. Twice
3. Lady Macbeth
4. Reginald Scot

11.11. LET US SUM UP

William Shakespeare as a playwright is beyond comparison and Macbeth remains unquestionably one of the best and true representations of his craftsmanship. Macbeth as a character remains the best and unforgettable dramatic persona ever on page and stage. His tragic flaw does not limit itself to simple misjudgement like Lear, or lack of trust like Othello, it perhaps explores the most common and vital aspect of human heart and mind i.e. Ambition. The gravity of the common flaw is exaggerated by non other than his better-half Lady Macbeth and leads to series of murder. The intensity of human conscience at play and the resultant acceptance of the error committed or perhaps the guilt of the error committed is best portrayed through the character of Lady Macbeth.

The Supernatural elements on the other hand adds different aura to the whole play. One cannot deny the fact that without the intervention of 'Wired

Sisters' or the Three Witches and the ghosts the play could have been not as enthralling as it is with these apparitions. Shakespeare was a master of elisions and undoubtedly wonderful observer of things happening around himself. England during the Elizabethan period was filled with superstitious mysteries and norms. Every non-reasonable subject matter was, without any doubt, associated with witchcraft and sorcery and Shakespeare as a true poet could not resist himself but to add such intriguing theme to already loved story by the Elizabethan theatregoers.

11.12 GLOSSARY

- Pathos: a quality that evokes pity or sadness.
- Prodigious: remarkably or impressively great in extent, size, or degree.
- Portents: a sign or warning that a momentous or calamitous event is likely to happen.
- Dramatic irony: a literary technique, originally used in Greek tragedy, by which the full significance of a character's words or actions is clear to the audience or reader although unknown to the character.
- Credulity: a tendency to be too ready to believe that something is real or true.
- Reformation: a 16th-century movement for the reform of abuses in the Roman Church ending in the establishment of the Reformed and Protestant Churches.
- Prodigies: an outstanding example of a particular quality.
- Menacing: suggesting the presence of danger; threatening.
- Flitting: move swiftly and lightly.
- Caldron: a large metal pot with a lid and handle, used for cooking over an open fire.
- Taper: diminish or reduce in thickness towards one end.

- Reeking: be suggestive of something unpleasant or undesirable.
- Sceptre: an ornamented staff carried by rulers on ceremonial occasions as a symbol of sovereignty.
- Derision: contemptuous ridicule or mockery.
- Ensanguined: to stain or cover with or as with blood
- Dolour: a state of great sorrow or distress.
- Ecstasy: an overwhelming feeling of great happiness or joyful excitement.
- Tumult: a state of confusion or disorder.
- Pernicious: having a harmful effect, especially in a gradual or subtle way.
- Sweltering: uncomfortably hot.
- Trickling: (of a liquid) flow in a small stream.
- Gibbet: execution by hanging.
- Malice: the desire to harm someone; ill will.
- Clamours: (of a group of people) shout loudly and insistently.
- Frenzy: a state or period of uncontrolled excitement or wild behaviour.
- Rooks: a gregarious Eurasian crow with black plumage and a bare face, nesting in colonies in treetops.
- Raven: a large heavily built crow with mainly black plumage, feeding chiefly on carrion.
- Reverie: a state of being pleasantly lost in one's thoughts; a daydream.
- Allusions: an expression designed to call something to mind without mentioning it explicitly; an indirect or passing reference.
- Somnambulism: sleepwalking.
- Chestnuts: a glossy hard brown edible nut which develops within a bristly case and which may be roasted and eaten.

- Melancholy: a feeling of pensive sadness, typically with no obvious cause.
- Recurrence: the fact of occurring again.
- Fatalistic: relating to or characteristic of the belief that all events are predetermined and therefore inevitable.
- Genesis: the origin or mode of formation of something.
- Metaphysic: Study of beyond physical sphere.
- Theology: The study of nature of God and religious belief.
- Slumbered: asleep.
- Apprehension: anxiety or fear that something bad or unpleasant will happen.
- Symbolically: purely in terms of what is being represented or implied.
- Incitements: the action of provoking unlawful behaviour or urging someone to behave unlawfully.
- Inchoate: anticipating or preparatory to a further criminal act.
- Succour: assistance and support in times of hardship and distress.

11.13 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

- Q1. Which of the two plays has supernatural elements?
- | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Macbeth and Hamlet | b. Macbeth and Othello |
| c. Othello and King Lear | c. Macbeth and King Lear |
- Q2. Who wrote Daemonologie?
- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| a. Queen Elizabeth | b. William Shakespeare |
| c. King James | c. None of these. |
- Q3. The most horrible lines in the play, 'yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?' are said by_____.

- a. Macbeth
- b. Macduff
- c. Duncan
- d. Lady Macbeth

Q4. The Witches in the play were inspired by book titled as Discovery (1584) written by_____.

- a. King James
- b. Reginald Scot
- c. Queen Elizabeth
- c. John Lyly

Q5. Whenever the Witches are present we see and hear _____.

- a. child crying
- b. Owl screeching
- c. dead people laughing
- c. a thunderstorm

11.13.1. Answer Key

- 1. Macbeth and Hamlet
- 2. King James
- 3. Lady Macbeth
- 4. Reginald Scot
- 5. a thunderstorm

11.14 SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. What is the significance of the supernatural in Macbeth?

Possible Answer: In his plays, particularly the tragedies, Shakespeare makes frequent use of the 'supernatural'. A. Nicoll remarks that 'By this means an otherwise sordid story of murder and revenge has been carried to higher level and assumes at once a peculiar significance of its own.' The supernatural element plays a vital role to heighten the tragic effect of his tragedies. This supernatural element manifests itself in various forms such as witches, ghosts, apparitions, hallucinations, thunder and storm and fate. Their presence in the play implies helplessness of man at the hands of the unseen power and also the existence of a superhuman force, which delights in the torture of human beings.

Shakespeare's Macbeth has been considered as the blackest of all his tragedies due to the active role-played by such supernatural elements as the witches and the ghosts.

The Witches: The three witches are the most dreadful supernatural agency in Macbeth. They are so ragged appearances that even Banquo is horrified and he says:

What are these?

So withered and wild in their attire.

The three witches not only influence and control the character and actions of Macbeth, but also govern the plot of the tragedy. These creatures are meant for evil:

Fair is foul, and foul is fair. The witches attract Macbeth by their prophecy in double meaning. Though Macbeth understands only the one-sided meaning of their prophecies and this leads to his downfall.

Ghosts: Ghosts in Macbeth serve the same dramatic purpose as is done by the witches. In Macbeth, it is the subjective ghost that appears. It is the ghost of Banquo, visible only to Macbeth to whom it is intended. When the ghost comes and occupies the chair of Macbeth in the banquet scene, the atmosphere of the play becomes horrified. The scene of Banquo's ghost sitting in his seat at the banquet table is terrible.

Banquo's ghost is interpreted by critics as the creation of the heated imagination and horror-stricken spirit of Macbeth. Lady Macbeth says:

O proper stuff!

This is the very painting of your fear.

The second ghost is of Duncan, which further increases the tragic tone of the drama.

Apparitions and Hallucinations: Apparitions and hallucinations also appear in Macbeth. They are no less mysterious than the ghosts. The dagger scene by

Macbeth before the murder of Duncan is an example of apparition. The dagger scene by Macbeth is just the creation of his mind. Thus it is clear that Shakespeare uses the supernatural with a definite dramatic purpose. By creating an atmosphere of mystery, awe and terror, he heightens the intensity of his tragic tales without the intervention of the supernatural; his tragedies would not be what actually they are.

Q2. Why are the Witches referred to as the Weird Sisters?

Ans. _____

Q3. How did Shakespeare link symbolism and mysticism in Macbeth?

Ans. _____

11.15. EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q1. The fantastical and grotesque witches are among the most memorable figures in the play. How does Shakespeare characterize the witches? What is their thematic significance?

Q2. Discuss the role that blood plays in Macbeth, particularly immediately following Duncan's murder and late in the play. What does it symbolise for Macbeth and his wife?

Q3. Did Shakespeare write Macbeth for James I?

11.16. SUGGESTED READING

1. Shakespeare Macbeth A Case book. Edited by John Wain.
2. Shakesperean Tragedy: Lecture on Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth by A.C. Bradley.

11.17 REFERENCES

1. Shakespeare Macbeth A Case book. Edited by John Wain.
2. Shakesperean Tragedy: Lecture on Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth by A.C. Bradley.
3. Focus on 'Macbeth'. Edited by John Russell

MACBETH

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 12.1 Introduction
- 12.2 Objectives
- 12.3 Macbeth the character
- 12.4 Check your progress
- 12.5 Lady Macbeth
- 12..6 Check Your Progress
- 12.7 Let us sum up
- 12.8 Multiple Choice Questions
- 12.9 Short Answer Type Questions
- 12.10 Examination Oriented Questions
- 12.11 Suggested Reading
- 12.12 References

12.1 INTRODUCTION

Dear distance learner, this lesson is in continuation to the last one and critically discusses the two central characters Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. The importance of understanding these two characters and their psychological working

is indeed very important to comprehend the whole drama holistically. Both of these two characters remains, among the Shakespearean critics, the subtlest yet with a comprehensive insight into human heart and mind. The lesson focuses on both the characters equally and each component is followed by 'Check Your Progress', based on what the learners would have read within that section. The learners are advised to try answering these questions before move on to the next component.

12.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this this lesson is to

- To critically acquaint the distance learners with the character sketch of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.
- To give a glimpse of their characterisation as one of the masterpiece by Shakespeare.
- To make distance learners able to answers questions at the end of the lesson.

12.3 MACBETH THE CHARACTER

Macbeth, the cousin of a King who is mild, just, and beloved, but now too old to lead his army, is introduced to us as a general of extraordinary prowess, who has covered himself with glory in pitting down rebellion and repelling the invasion of a foreign army. In this conflict he showed great personal courage, a quality which he continue to display throughout the drama in regard to all plain dangers. It is difficult to be sure of his customary demeanour, for in the play we see him either in what appears to be an exceptional relation to his wife, or else in the throes of remorse and desperation; but from his behaviour during his journey home after the war, from his later conversations with Lady Macbeth, and from his language to the murders of Banquo and to others, we imagine him as a great warrior, somewhat masterful, rough, and abrupt, a man to inspire some fear and much admiration. He was thought 'honest', or honourable; he was trusted, apparently, by everyone; Macduff, a man of the highest integrity, 'loved him well'.

And there was, infact, much good in him. We have no warrant, I think, for describing him, with many writers as a 'noble' nature, like Hamlet or Othello, but he had a keen sense both of humour and of the worth of a good name. The phrase, again, 'too full of the milk of human kindness', is applied to him in impatience by his wife, who did not fully understand him; but certainly he was far from devoid of humanity and pity.

At the same time he was exceedingly ambitious. He must have been so by temper. The tendency must have been greatly strengthened by his marriage. When we see him, it has been further stimulated by his remarkable success and by the consciousness of exceptional powers and merit. It becomes a passion. The course of action suggested by it is extremely perilous: it sets his good name, his position, and even his life on the hazard. It is also abhorrent to his better feelings. Their defeat in the struggle with ambition leaves him utterly wretched, and would have kept him so, however complete had been his outward success and security. On the other hand, his passion for power and his instinct of self-assertion are so vehement that no inward misery could persuade him to relinquish the fruits of crime, or to advance from remorse to repentance.

In the character as so far sketched there is nothing very peculiar, though the strength of the forces contending in it is unusual. But there is in Macbeth one marked peculiarity, the true apprehension of which is the key to Shakespeare's conception. This bold ambitious man of action, has, within certain limits, the imagination of a poet- an imagination on the one hand extremely sensitive to impressions of a certain kind, and, on the other, productive of violent disturbance both of mind and body. Through it he is kept in contact with supernatural impressions and is liable to supernatural fears. And through it, especially come to him the intimations of conscience and honour. Macbeth's better nature- to put the matter for clearness' sake too broadly- instead of speaking to him in the overt language of moral ideas, commands, and prohibitions, incorporates itself in images which alarm and horrify. His imagination is thus the best of him, something usually deeper and

higher than his conscious thoughts; and if he had obeyed it he would have been safe. But his wife quite misunderstands it, and he himself understands it only in part. The terrifying images which deter him from crime and follow its commission, and which are really the protest of his deepest self, seem to his wife the creations of mere nervous fear, and are sometimes referred by himself to the dread of vengeance or the restlessness of insecurity. His conscious or reflective mind, that is, moves chiefly among considerations of outward success and failure, what his inner being is convulsed by conscience. And his inability to understand himself is repeated and exaggerated in the interpretations of actors and critics, who represents him as coward, cold-blooded, calculating, and pitiless, who shrinks from crying simply because it is dangerous, and suffers afterwards simply because he is not safe. In reality his courage is frightful. His strides from crime to crime, though his soul never ceases to bar his advance with shapes of terror or to clamour in his ears that he is murdering his peace and casting away his 'eternal jewel'.

It is of the first importance to realise the strength, and also (what has not been so clearly recognised) the limits, of Macbeth's imagination. It is not the universal meditative imagination of Hamlet. He came to see in man, as Hamlet sometimes did, the 'quintessence of dust'; but he must always have been incapable of Hamlet's reflections on man's noble reason and infinite faculty, or of seeing with Hamlet's eyes 'this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical roof fitted with golden fire'. Nor could he feel, like Othello, the romance of war or the infinity of love. He shows no sign of any unusual sensitiveness to the glory or beauty in the world or the soul; and it is partly for this reason that we have no inclination to love him, and that we regret him with more of awe than of pity. His imagination is excitable and intense, but narrow. That which stimulates it is, almost solely, that which thrills with sudden, startling, and often supernatural fear. There is a famous passage late in the play, which is here very significant, because it refers to a time before his conscience was burdened, and so shows his native disposition:

The time has been, my senses would have cool'd

To hear a night-shriek; and my fell of hair

Would at a dismal treatise rise and stir

As life were in't.

This 'time' must have been in his youth, or at least before we see him. And, in drama, everything that terrifies him is of this character; only it has now a deeper and a moral significance. Palpable dangers leave him unmoved or fill him with fire. He does himself mere justice when he asserts he 'dare do all that may become a man' or when he exclaims to Banquo's ghost,

What man dare I dare:

Approach thou like the rugged Russian bear,

The arm'd rhinoceros, or the Hyrcan bear,

Take any shape but that, and my firm nerves

Shall never tremble.

What appals him is always the image of his own guilty heart or bloody deed, or some image which derives from them its terror or gloom. These, when they arise, hold him spell-bound and possess him wholly, like a hypnotic trance which is at the same time the ecstasy of a quite. As the first 'horrid image' of the Duncan's murder- of himself murdering Duncan- rises from unconsciousness and confronts him, his hair stands on end and the outward scene vanishes from his eyes. Why? For fear of 'consequences'?, the idea is ridiculous. Or because the deed is bloody? The man who with his 'smoking' steel 'carved out his passage' to the rebel leader, and 'unseem'd him from the nave of the chaps', would hardly be frightened by blood. How could fear of consequences make the dagger ease to use hang suddenly glittering before him in the air, and then as suddenly dash it with gouts of blood? Even when he talks of consequences, and declares that if he were safe against them he would 'jump the life to come', his imagination bears witness against him, and shows us that what really holds him back is the hideous vileness of the deed:

He's here in double trust;
First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
Who should against his murderer shut the door,
Not bear the knife myself. Besides, this Duncan
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angles, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking-off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast, or heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every eye,
That tears shall drown the wind.

It may be said that he is here thinking of the horror that others will feel at the deed- thinking therefore of consequences. Yes, but could he realise thus how horrible the deed would look to others if it were not equally not horrible to himself?

It is the same when the murder is done. He is well-nigh mad with horror, but it is not the horror of detection. It is not he who thinks of washing his hands or getting his night-gown on. He has brought away the daggers he should have left on the pillows of the grooms, but what does he care for that? What he thinks of is that, when he heard one of the men awaked from sleep say 'God bless us', he could not say 'Amen'; for his imagination presents to him the parching of his throat as an immediate judgement from heaven. His wife heard the owl scream and the crickets cry; but what he heard was the voice that first cried 'Macbeth doth murder sleep', and then, a minute latter,

with a change of tense, denounced on him, as if his three names gave him three personalities to suffer, the doom of sleeplessness:

Glamis hath murdered sleep, and therefore Cawdor
Shall sleep no more, Macbeth shall sleep no more.

There comes a sound of knocking. It should be perfectly familiar to him; but he knows not whence, or from what world, it comes. He looks down at his hands, and starts violently: 'What hands are here?' for they seem alive, they move, they mean to pluck out his eyes. He looks at one of them again; it does not move; but the blood upon it is enough to dye the whole ocean red. What has all this to do with fear of 'consequences'? It is his soul speaking in the only shape in which it can speak freely, that of imagination.

So long as Macbeth's imagination is active, we watch him fascinated; we feel suspense, horror, and awe; in which are latent, also, admiration and sympathy. But so soon as it is quiescent, these feelings vanish. He is no longer 'informed of purpose': he becomes domineering, even brutal, or he becomes a cool pity-less hypocrite. He is generally set to be a very bad actor, but this is not wholly true. Whenever his imagination stirs, he acts badly. It so possesses him, and is so much stronger than his reasons, that his face betrays him, and his voice utters the most improbable untruths or the most artificial rhetoric. But when it is asleep he is firm, self-controlled and practical as in the conversation where he skilfully elicits from Banquo that information about his movements which is required for the successful arrangement of his murder. Here he is hateful; and so he is in the conversation with the murderers, who are not professional cut-throats but old soldiers, and whom without a vestige of remorse, he beguiles with calumnies against Banquo and with such appeals as his wife had used to him. On the other hand, we feel much pity as well as anxiety in the scene (i vii) where she overcomes his opposition to the murder; and feel it (though his imagination is not specially active) because this scene shows us how little he understands himself. This is his great misfortune here. Not that he fails to realise in

reflection the baseness of the deed (the soliloquy with which the scenes opens shows that he does not). But he has never, to put it pedantically, accepted as the principle of his conduct the morality, which takes shape in his imaginative fears. Had he done so, and said plainly to his wife, 'The thing is vile, and, however much I have sworn to do it, I will not', she would have been helpless; for all her arguments proceed on the assumptions that there is for them no such point of view. Macbeth does approach this position once, when, resenting the accusation of cowardice, he answers:

I dare do all that may become a man;

Who dares do more is none.

She feels in an instant that everything is at stake, and, ignoring the point, overwhelms him with indignant and contemptuous personal reproach. But he yields to it because he is himself half-ashamed of that answer of his, and because, for want of habit, the simple idea which it expresses has no hold on him comparable to the force it acquires when it becomes incarnate in visionary and fears and warnings.

Yet these were so insistent, and they offered to his ambition a resistance so strong, that it is impossible to regard him as falling through the blindness or delusion of passion. On the contrary, he himself feels with such intensity the enormity of his purpose that, it seems clear, neither his ambition nor yet the prophecy of the Witches would ever without the aid of Lady Macbeth have overcome this feeling. As it is, the deed is done in horror and without the faintest desire or sense of glory- done, one may almost say, as if it were an appalling duty; and, the instant it is finished, its futility is revealed to Macbeth as clearly as the vileness had been revealed beforehand. As he staggers from the scene he mutters in despair:

Wake Duncan with thy knocking! I would thou could'st.

When, half an hour later, he returns with Lennox from the room of the murder, he breaks out:

Had I but died an hour before this chances,
I had lived a blessed time; for from this instant
There's nothing serious in mortality:
All is but toys: renown and grace is dead;
The wine of life is drawn, and the mere lees
Is left this vault to brag of.

This is no mere acting. The language here has none of the false rhetoric of his merely hypocritical speeches. It is meant to deceive, but utters at the same time his profoundest feeling. And this he can hence forth never hide from himself for long. However he may try to draw it in further enormities he hears it murmuring,

Duncan is in his grave:

After life's fitful fever he sleeps well

or

better be with the dead:

or

I have lived long enough:

and it speaks its last words on the last day of his life:

Out, out, brief candle!

Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player

That struts and frets his hour upon the stage

And then is heard no more: it is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,

Signifying nothing.

How strange that this judgement on life, the despair of a man who had knowingly made mortal war on his own soul, should be frequently quoted as

Shakespeare's own judgement, and should even be adduced, in serious criticism, as a proof of his pessimism!

It remains to look a little more fully at the history of Macbeth after the murder of Duncan. Unlike his first struggle this history excites little suspense or anxiety on his account: we have now no hope for him. But it is an engrossing spectacle, and psychologically it is perhaps the most remarkable exhibition of the development of a character to be found in Shakespeare's tragedies.

That heart-sickness which comes from Macbeth's perception of the futility of his crime, and which never leaves him for long, is not, however, his habitual state. It could not be so, for two reasons. In the first place the consciousness of guilt is stronger in him than the consciousness of failure; it keeps him in a perpetual agony of restlessness, and forbids him simply to droop and pine. His mind is 'full of scorpions'. He cannot sleep. He 'keeps alone', moody and savage. 'All that is within him does condemn itself for being there'. There is a fever in his blood, which argues him to ceaseless action in the search for oblivion. And, in the second place ambition, in the search of the love of power, the instinct of self-assertion, are much too potent in Macbeth to permit him to resign, even in spirit, the price for which he has put rancours in the vessel of his piece. The 'will to live' is mighty in him. The forces which impelled him to aim at the crown reassert themselves. He faces the world, and his own conscience, desperate, but never dreaming of acknowledging defeat. He will see 'the frame of things disjoint' first. He challenges fate into the lists.

The result is frightful. He speaks no more, as before Duncan's murder, of honour or pity. That sleepless torture, he tells himself, is nothing but the sense of insecurity and the fear of retaliation. If only he were safe, it would vanish. And he looks about for the cause of his fears; and his eyes falls on Banquo. Banquo, who cannot fail to suspect him, has not fled or turned against him; Banquo has become his chief councillor. Why? Because he, answers, the kingdom was promised to Banquo's children. Banquo, then, is waiting to attack him, to make a way from them. The 'bloody instructions' he himself

taught when he murdered Duncan are about to return, as he said they would, to plague the inventor. This then, he tells himself, is the fear that will not let himself; and it will die with Banquo. There is no hesitation now, and no remorse: he has nearly learned his lesson. He hastens feverishly, not to murder Banquo, but to procure his murder: some strange idea in his mind that the thought of the dead man will not haunt him, like the memory of Duncan, if the deed is done by other hands. The deed is done: but, instead of peace descending on him, from the depths of his nature his half murdered conscience arises; his deed confronts him in the apparition of Banquo's ghost, and the horror of the night of his murder returns. But, alas, it has less power, and he has more will. Agonised and trembling, he still faces this rebel image, and it yields:

Why, so: being gone,
I am a man again.

Yes, but his secret is in the hands of assembled lords. And, worse, this deed is a futile as the first. For, though Banquo is dead and even his ghost is conquered, that inner torture is unassuaged. But he will not bear it. His guests have hardly left him when he turns roughly to his wife:

How say'st thou, that Macduffdenies his person
At our great bidding?

Macduff it is that spoils his sleeps. He shall perish- he and aught else that bars the road to peace.

For mine own good
All causes shall give way: I am in blood
Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
Returning were as tedious as go o'er:
Strange things I have in head that will to hand,
Which must be acted ere they may be scann'd.

She answers, sick at heart,

You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

No doubt: but he has found the way to it now:

Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self abuse

Is the initiate fear that wants hard use:

We are yet but young in deed.

What a change from the man who thought of Duncan's virtues, and pity like a naked new-born babe! What a frightful clearness of self-consciousness in this descent to hell, and yet what a furious force in the instinct of life and self-assertion that derives him on!

He goes to seek the Witches. He will know, but the worst means, the worst. He has no longer any awe of them.

How now, you secret, black and midnight hags!

-so he greets them, at once he demands and threatens. They tell him he is right to fear Macduff. They tell him to fear nothing, for none of women born can harm him. He feels that the two statements are at variance; infatuated, suspects no double meaning; but, that he may 'sleep in spite of thunder', determines not to spear Macduff. But his heart throbs to know one thing, and he forces from the Witches the vision of Banquo's children crowned. The old intolerable thought returns, 'for Banquo's issue have I filed my mind'; and with it, for all the absolute security apparently promised him, there returns that inward fever. Will nothing quite it? Nothing but destruction. Macduff, one comes to tell him, has escaped him; but that doesn't matter: he can still destroy.

And even now,

To crown my thoughts with acts, be it thought and done:

The castle of Macduff I will surprise;

Seize upon Fife; and all unfortunate souls

That trace him in's line. No boasting like a fool

This deed I'll do before this purpose cool.

But no more sights!

No, he need fear no more 'sights'. The Witches have done their work, and after this purposeless butchery his own imagination will trouble him no more. He has dealt his last blow at the conscience and piety which spoke through it.

The whole flood of evil in his nature is now let loose. He becomes an open tyrant dreaded by everyone about him, and a terror to his country. She 'sings beneath the yoke'.

Each new morn

New widows howl, new orphans cry, new sorrows

Strike heaven on the face.

She weeps, she bleeds, 'and each new day a gash is added to her wounds'. She is not the mother of her children, but their grave;

Where nothing,

but who knows nothing, is once seen to smile:

Where sighs and groans and shrieks that rend the air

Are made, not marke'd.

for this wild rage and furious cruelty we are prepared; but vices of an other kind start up as he plunges on his downward ways.

I grant him bloody,

Luxurious, avaricious, false, deceitful,

Sudden, malicious,

Says Malcolm; and two of these epithets surprise us. Who would have expected avarice or lechery in Macbeth? His ruin seems complete.

Yet it is never complete. To the end he never totally loses our sympathy;

we never feel towards him as we do to those who appear the born children of darkness. There remains something sublime in the defence with which, even when cheated of his last hope, he faces earth and hell and heaven. Nor would any soul to whom evil was congenial be capable of heart-sickness which overcomes him when he thinks of the 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends' which 'he must not look to have' (and which Iago would never have cared to have), and contrast with them

Curses, not loud but deep, mouth-honour breath,

Which the poor heart would fain deny, and dare not,

(and which Iago would have accepted with indifference). Neither can we agree with those who find in his reception of the news of his wife's death proof of alienation or utter carelessness. There is no proof of these in the words:

She should have died hereafter

There would have been a time for such a word,

spoken as they are by a man already in some measure prepared for such news, and now transported by the frenzy of his last fight for life. He has no time to feel. Only, as he thinks of the morrow when time to feel will come- if anything comes- the vanity of all hopes and forward-looking sinks deep into his soul with an infinite weariness, and he murmurs,

To-morrow, and to-morrow, and to-morrow,

Creeps in this petty pace from day to day

To the last syllable of recorded time,

And all our yesterdays have lighted fools

The way to dusty death.

In the very depths a gleam of his native love of goodness, and with it a touch of tragic grandeur, rests upon him. The evil he has desperately embraced

continues to madden or to wither his in most heart. No experience in the world could bring him to glory in it or make his peace with it, or to forget what he once was Iago and Goneril never were.

12.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

12.4.1. Answer the following questions:

1. Macduff, a man of the highest integrity, 'loved him well'. Who is 'he'?
2. Who has the universal meditative imagination among Shakespeare great tragic heroes?
3. Whose words are these, I dare do all that may become a man;/ Who dares do more is none.
4. 'The thing is vile, and, however much I have sworn to do it, I will not', to whom these words are spoken to by Macbeth?
5. 'It is a tale/ Told by an idiot, _____,/
Signifying nothing.

4.2. Answer Key

1. Macbeth.
2. Hamlet.
3. Macbeth.
4. Lady Macbeth.
5. full of sound and fury

12.5 LADY MACBETH

To regard Macbeth as a play, like love tragedies- Romeo and Juliet and Antony and Cleopatra in which there are two central characters of equal importance, is certainly a mistake. But Shakespeare himself is in a measure responsible for it, because the first half of Macbeth is greater than the second, and in the first half Lady Macbeth not only appears more than in the second but

exerts the ultimate deciding influence on the action. And, in the opening Act at least, Lady Macbeth is the most commanding and perhaps the most awe-inspiring figure that Shakespeare drew. Sharing, as we have seen, certain traits with her husband, she is at once clearly distinguished from him by an inflexibility of will, which appears to hold imagination, feeling, and conscience completely in check. To her the prophecy of things that will be becomes instantaneously the determination that they shall be:

Glamis thou art, and Cawdor, and shalt be
That thou art promised.

She knows her husband's weakness, how he scruples 'to catch the nearest way' to the object he desires; and she sets herself without a trace of doubt or conflict to counteract this weakness. To her there is no separation between will and deed; and, as the deed falls in part to her, she is sure it will be done:

The raven himself is hoarse
That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
Under my battlements.

On the moment of Macbeth's re-joining her, after braving infinite dangers and winning infinite praise, without a syllable on these subjects or a word of affection, she goes straight to her purpose and permits him to speak of nothing else. She takes the superior position and assumes the direction of affairs- appears to assume it even more than she really can, that she may spur him on. She animates him by picturing the deed as heroic, 'this night's great business,' or 'our great quell', while she ignores its cruelty and faithlessness. She bears down his faint resistance by presenting him with a prepared scheme, which may remove from him the terror and danger of deliberation. She rouses him with a taunt no man can bear, and least of all a soldier- the word 'coward.' She appeals even to his love for her:

from this time
Such I account thy love;

-such, that is, as the protestations of a drunkard. Her reasoning's are mere sophisms; they could persuade no man. It is not by them, it is by personal appeals, through the admiration she extorts from him, and through sheer force of will, that she impels him to the deed. Her eyes are fixed upon the crown and the means to it; she does not attend to the consequences. Her plan of laying the guilt upon the chamberlains is invented on the spur of the moment and simply to satisfy her husband. Her true mind is heard in the ringing cry with which she answers his question, 'Will it not be received...that they have done it?'

Who dares receive it other?

And this is repeated in the sleepwalking scene: 'What need we fear who knows it, when none can call our power to account?' Her passionate courage sweeps him off his feet. His decision is taken in a moment of enthusiasm:

Bring forth men-children only;

For thy undaunted mettle should compose

Nothing but males.

And even when passion has quite died away her will remains supreme. In presence of overwhelming horror and danger, in the murder scene and the banquet scene, her self-control is perfect. When the truth of what she has done dawns on her, no word of complaint, scarcely a word of her own suffering, not a single word of her own as apart from his, escapes her when others are by. She helps him, but never asks his help. She leans on nothing but herself. And from the beginning to the end- though she makes once or twice a slip in acting her part- her will never fails her. Its grasp upon her nature may destroy her, but it is never relaxed. We are sure that she never betrayed her husband or herself by a word or even a look, save in sleep. However appalling she may be, she is sublime.

In the earlier scenes of the play this aspect of Lady Macbeth's character is far the most prominent. And if she seems invincible she seems also inhuman. We find no trace of pity for the kind old king; no consciousness of the treachery

and baseness of the murder; no sense of the value of the lives of the wretched men on whom the guilt is to be laid; no shrinking even from the condemnation or hatred of the world. Yet if Lady Macbeth of these scenes were really utterly inhuman or a 'fiend-like queen' as Malcolm calls her, the Lady Macbeth of the sleepwalking scene would be an impossibility. The one woman could never become the other. And in fact, if we look below the surface, there is evidence enough in the earlier scenes of preparation for the later. Lady Macbeth to some extent was not naturally humane. There is nothing in the play to show this, and several passages subsequent to the murder-scene supply proof to the contrary. One is that where she exclaims, on being informed of Duncan's murder,

Woe, alas!

What, in our house?

This mistake in acting shows that she does not even know what the natural feeling in such circumstances would be; and Banquo's curt answer, 'Too cruel anywhere', is almost a reproof of her insensibility. But, admitting this, we have in the first place to remember, in imagining the opening scenes, that she is deliberately bent on counteracting the 'human kindness' of her husband, and also that she is evidently not merely inexorably determined but in a condition of abnormal excitability. That exaltation in the projection, which is so entirely lacking in Macbeth is strongly marked in her. When she tries to help him by representing their enterprise as heroic, she is deceiving herself as much as him. Their attainment of the crown presents itself to her, perhaps has long presented itself, as something so glorious, and she has fixed her will upon it so completely, that for the time she sees the enterprise in no other light than that of its greatness. When she soliloquises,

Yet do I fear thy nature:

It is too full o' the milk of human kindness

To catch the nearest way: thou wouldst be great;

Art not without ambition, but without

The illness should attend it; what thou wouldst highly,
That wouldst thou holily,

one sees that 'ambition' and 'great' and 'highly' and even 'illness' are to her simply terms of praise, and 'holily' and 'human kindness' simply terms of blame. Moral distinctions do not in this exaltation exist for her; or rather they are inverted: 'good' means to her the crown and whatever is required to obtain it, 'evil' whatever stands in the way of its attainment. This attitude of mind is evident even when she is alone, though it becomes still more pronounced when she has to work upon her husband. And it persists until her end is attained. But, without being exactly forced, it betrays a strain, which could not long endure.

Besides this, in these earlier scenes the traces of feminine Weakness and human feeling, which account for her later failure, are not absent. Her will, it is clear, was exerted to overpower not only her husband's resistance but some resistance in herself. Imagine Goneril uttering the famous words.

Had he not resembled
My father as he slept, I had done't.

They are spoken, I think, without any sentiment- impatiently, as though she regretted her weakness: but it was there. And in reality, quite apart from this recollection of her father, she could never have done the murder if her husband had failed. She had to nerve herself with wine to give her 'boldness' enough to go through her minor part. That appalling invocation to the spirits of evil, to unsex her and ?ll her from the crown to the toe top full of direst cruelty, tells the same tale of determination to crush the inward protest. Goneril had no need of such a prayer. In the utterance of the frightful lines,

I have given suck, and know
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
I would, while it was smiling in my face,
Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,

And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn as you

Have done to this,

her voice should doubtless rise until it reaches, in 'dash'd the brains out,' an almost hysterical scream. 'These lines show unmistakably that strained exaltation which, as soon as the end is reached, vanishes, never to return.

The greatness of Lady Macbeth laid almost wholly in courage and force of will. It is an error to regard her as remarkable on the intellectual side. In acting a part she shows immense self-control, but not much skill. Whatever may be thought of the plan of attributing the murder of Duncan to the chamberlains, to lay their bloody daggers on their pillows, as if they were determined to advertise their guilt, was a mistake, which can be accounted for only by the excitement of the moment. But the limitations of her mind appear most in the point where she is most strongly contrasted with Macbeth- in her comparative dullness of imagination; for she sometimes uses highly poetic language, as indeed does everyone in Shakespeare who has any greatness of soul. Nor is she perhaps less imaginative than the majority of his heroines. But as compared with her husband she has little imagination. It is not simply that she suppresses what she has. To her, things remain at the most terrible moment precisely what they were at the calmest, plain facts which stand in a given relation to a certain deed, not visions which tremble and quiver in the light of other worlds. The probability that the old king will sleep soundly after his long journey to Inverness is to her simply a fortunate circumstance; but one can fancy the shoot of horror across Macbeth's face as she mentions it. She uses familiar and prosaic illustrations, like

Letting 'I dare not' wait upon. 'I would',

like the poor cat I' the adage,

(the cat who wanted fish but did not like to wet her feet); or,

We fail?

But screw your courage to the sticking-place,

And we'll not fail,

or,

Was the hope drunk

Wherein you dress'd yourself? hath it slept since?

And wakes it now, to look so green and pale

At what it did so freely?

The Witches are practically nothing to her. She feels no sympathy in Nature with her guilty purpose, and would never bid the earth nor hear her steps, which way they walk. The noises before the murder, and during it, are heard by her as simple facts, and are referred to their true sources. The knocking has no mystery for her: it comes from 'the south entry'. She calculates on the drunkenness of the grooms, compares the different effects of wine on herself and on them, and listens to their snoring. To her the blood upon her husband's hands suggests only the taunt,

My hands are of your colour, but I shame

To wear a heart so white;

and the blood to her is merely 'this ?lthy witness,'- words impossible to her husband, to whom it suggested something quite other than sensuous disgust or practical danger. The literalism of her mind appears fully in two contemptuous speeches where she dismisses his imaginings; in the murder scene:

Infirm of purpose!

Give me the daggers! The sleeping and the dead

Are but as pictures: 'tis the eye of childhood

That fears a painted devil;

and in the banquet scene:

O these ?aws and starts,

Impostors to true fear, would well become

A woman's: story at a winter's fire,

Authorised by her grandam. Shame itself!

Why do you make such faces? When all's done,

You look but on a stool.

Even in the awful scene where her imagination breaks loose in sleep she uses no such images as Macbeth's. It is the direct appeal of the facts to sense that has fastened on her memory. The ghastly realism of 'Yet who would have thought the old man to have had so much blood in him?' or 'Here's the smell of the blood still,' is wholly unlike him. Her most poetical words, 'All the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand,' are equally unlike his words about great Neptune's ocean. Hers, like some of her other speeches, are the more moving, from their greater simplicity and because they seem to tell of that self-restraint in suffering which is so totally lacking in him; but there is in them comparatively little of imagination. If we consider most of the passages to which has been referred, we shall find that the quality, which moves our admiration is courage or force of will.

This want of imagination, though it helps to make Lady Macbeth strong for immediate action, is fatal to her. If she does not feel beforehand the cruelty of Duncan's murder, this is mainly because she hardly imagines the act, or at most imagines its outward show, 'the motion of a muscle this way or that'. Nor does she in the least foresee those inward consequences which reveal themselves immediately in her husband, and less quickly in herself. It is often said that she understands him well. Had she done so, she never would have urged him on. She knows that he is given to strange fancies; but, not realising what they spring from, she has no idea either that they may gain such power as to ruin the scheme, or that, while they mean present weakness, they mean also perception of the future. At one point in the murder scene the force of his imagination impresses her, and for a moment she is startled; a light threatens to break on her:

These deeds must not be thought

After these ways: so, it will make us mad,

she says, with a sudden and great seriousness. And when he goes panting

on, 'Methought I heard a voice cry, "Sleep no more",' ...she breaks in, 'What do you mean?' half-doubting whether this was not a real voice that he heard. Then, almost directly, she recovers herself, convinced of the vanity of his fancy. Nor does she understand her self any better than him. She never suspects that these deeds must be thought after these ways; that her facile realism,

A little water clears us of this deed,

will one day be answered by herself, 'Will these hands ne'er be clean?' or that the fatal common- place, 'What's done is done', will make way for her last despairing sentence, 'What's done cannot be undone'.

Hence the development of her character- perhaps it would be more strictly accurate to say, the change in her state of mind- is both inevitable, and the opposite of the development we traced in Macbeth. When the murder has been done, the discovery of its hideousness, first reflected in the faces of her guests, comes to Lady Macbeth with the shock of a sudden disclosure and at once her nature begins to sink. The first intimation of the change is given when, in the scene of the discovery, she faints. When next we see her, Queen of Scotland, the glory of her dream has faded. She enters, disillusioned, and Weary with want of sleep: she has thrown away everything and gained nothing:

Nought's had, all's spent.

Where our desire is got without content:

"Tis safer to be that which we destroy

Than by destruction dwell in doubtful joy.

Henceforth she has no initiative: the stem of her being seems to be cut through. Her husband, physically the stronger, maddened by pangs he had foreseen, but still ?aming with life, comes into the foreground, and she retires. Her will remains, and she does her best to help him; but he rarely needs her help. Her chief anxiety appears to be that he should not betray his misery. He plans the murder of Banquo without her knowledge (not in order to spare her, for he never shows love of this quality, but merely because he does not need her now); and

even when she is told vaguely of his intention she appears but little interested. In the sudden emergency of the banquet scene she makes a prodigious and magnificent effort; her strength, and with it her ascendancy, returns, and she saves her husband at least from an open disclosure. But after this she takes no part whatever in the action. We only know from her shuddering words in the sleep-walking scene, 'The Thane of Fife had a wife: where is she now?' that she has even learned of her husband's worst crime; and in all the horrors of his tyranny over Scotland she has, so far as we hear, no part. Disillusionment and despair prey upon her more and more. That she should seek any relief in speech, or should ask for sympathy, would seem to her mere weakness, and would be to Macbeth's deplorable fury an irritation. Thinking of the change in him, we imagine the bond between them slackened, and Lady Macbeth left much alone. She sinks slowly downward. She cannot bear darkness, and has light by her continually: 'tis her command. At last her nature, not her will, gives way. The secrets of the past find vent in a disorder of sleep, the beginning perhaps of madness. What the doctor fears is clear. He reports to her husband no great physical mischief, but bids her attendant to remove from her all means by which she could harm herself, and to keep eyes on her constantly. It is in vain. Her death is announced by a cry from her women so sudden and direful that it would thrill her husband with horror if he were any longer capable of fear. In the last words of the play Malcolm tells us it is believed in the hostile army that she died by her own hand. And (not to speak of the indications just referred to) it is in accordance with her character that even in her weakest hour she should cut short by one determined stroke the agony of her life.

The sinking of Lady Macbeth's nature, and the marked change in her demeanour to her husband, are most strikingly shown in the conclusion of the banquet scene; and from this point pathos is mingled with awe. The guests are gone she is completely exhausted, and answers Macbeth in listless, submissive words which seem to come with difficulty. How strange sounds the reply 'Did you send to him, sir?' to his imperious question about Macduff! And when he goes on, 'waxing desperate in imagination', to speak

of new deeds of blood, she seems to sicken at the thought, and there is a deep pathos in that answer which tells at once of her care for him and of the misery she herself has silently endured:

You lack the season of all natures, sleep.

We begin to think of her now less as the awful instigator of murder than as a woman with much that is grand in her, and much that is piteous. Strange and almost ludicrous as the statement may sound, she is, up to her light, a perfect wife. She gives her husband the best she has; and the fact that she never uses to him the terms of affection, which up to this point in the play, he employs to her, is certainly no indication of want of love. She urges, appeals, reproaches, for a practical end, but she never recriminates. The harshness of her taunts is free from mere personal feeling, and also from any deep or more than momentary contempt. She despises what she thinks the weakness, which stands in the way of her husband's ambition; but she does not despise him. She evidently admires him and thinks him a great man, for whom the throne is the proper place. Her commanding attitude in the moments of his hesitation or fear is probably con?ned to them. If we consider the peculiar circumstances of the earlier scenes and the banquet scene, and if we examine the language of the wife and husband at other times, we shall come, I think, to the conclusion that their habitual relations are better represented by the later scenes than by the earlier, though naturally they are not truly represented by either. Her ambition for her husband and herself (there was no distinction to her mind) proved fatal to him, far more so than the prophecies of the Witches; but even when she pushed him into murder she believed she was helping him to do what he merely lacked the nerve to attempt; and her part in the crime was so much less open-eyed than his, that, if the impossible and undramatic task of estimating degrees of culpability were forced on us, we should surely have to assign the larger share to Macbeth.

'Lady Macbeth', says Dr. Johnson, 'is merely detested'; and for a long time critics generally spoke of her as though she were Malcolm's 'end- like queen'. In natural reaction we tend to insist, on the other and less obvious side;

and in the criticism of the last century there is even a tendency to sentimentalise the character. But it can hardly be doubted that Shakespeare meant the predominant impression to be one of awe, grandeur, and horror, and that he never meant this impression to be lost, however it might be modified, as Lady Macbeth's activity diminishes and her misery increases. One cannot believe that when she said of Banquo and Fleance,

But in them nature's copy's not eterne,

She meant only that they would some day die; or that she felt any surprise when Macbeth replied,

There's comfort yet: they are assailable;

though one can be sure no light came into her eyes when he added those dreadful words, 'Then be thou jocund'. She was listless. She herself would not have moved a finger against Banquo. But she thought his death, and his son's death, might ease her husband's mind, and she suggested the murders indifferently and without remorse. The sleepwalking scene, again, inspires pity, but its main effect is one of awe. There is great horror in the references to blood, but it cannot be said that there is more than horror; and Campbell was surely right when, in alluding to Mrs. Jameson's analysis, he insisted that in Lady Macbeth's misery there is no trace of contrition. 'Doubtless she would have given the world to undo what she had done; and the thought of it killed her; but, regarding her from the tragic point of view, we may truly say she was too great to repent.'

12.6 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

6.1. Answer the following questions

1. Who calls Lady Macbeth 'end-like queen'?
2. Yet do I fear thy nature:/ It is too full o' the milk of human kindness/
To catch the nearest way. Whom the words of Lady Macbeth referred to?
3. The greatness of Lady Macbeth laid almost wholly in_____.
4. Who calls the blood 'this thy witness'?

5. Who calls Lady Macbeth 'merely detested'?

6.2. Answer key

1. Malcolm
2. Macbeth
3. Courage and force of will
4. Lady Macbeth.
5. Dr Samuel Johnson

12.7 LET US SUM-UP

The two characters are fired by one and the same passion of ambition; and to a considerable extent they are alike. The disposition of each is high, proud, and commanding. They are born to rule, if not to reign. They are peremptory or contemptuous to their inferiors. They are not children of light, like Brutus and Hamlet; they are of the world. We observe in them no love of country, and no interest in the welfare of anyone outside their family. Their habitual thoughts and aims are, and, we imagine, long have been, all of station and power. And though in both there is something, and in one much, of what is higher- on a, conscience, humanity- they do not live consciously in the light of these things or speak their language. Not that they are egoist, like Iago; or, if they are egoist, theirs is an egoisme a deux. They have no separate ambitions. They support and love one another. They suffer together and if as time goes on, they drift a little apart, they are not vulgar souls, to be eliminated and recriminated when they experience the fruitless ness of their ambition. They remain to the end tragic, even grand.

So far there is much likeness between them. Otherwise they are contrasted, and the action is built upon this contrasted. Their attitudes towards the projected murder of Duncan are quite different; it produces in them equally different effects. In consequence, they appear in the earlier part of the play as of equal importance, if indeed Lady Macbeth does not overshadow her husband; but afterwards she retires more and more into the background, and he becomes unmistakable the lading figure. His is indeed far the more complex character:

which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

12.8 MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS

1. At the banquet Macbeth is haunted by the_____.
a. ghost of Banquo b. ghost of Duncan
c. the sight of bloody dagger d. Witches
2. When he visits the witches, Macbeth sees all of the following except
a. an armed head b. a bloody child
c. a crowned child c. a fire breathing serpent
3. The witches tell Macbeth to beware of_____.
a. Fleance b. Macduff
c. Lady Macbeth c. Malcolm
4. As she sleepwalks, Lady Macbeth appears to be_____.
a. adjusting her crown and robe b. clutching a baby to her breast
c. washing her hands c. stabbing an enemy
5. Who is the goddess of witchcraft in the play?
a. Aphrodite b. Hecate
c. Minerve c. Mordred

8.1. Answer Key

1. Ghost of Banquo
2. A fire breathing serpent
3. Macduff
4. Washing her hands

5. Hecate

12.9 SHORT ANSWER TYPE QUESTIONS

Q1. Write a short note on Macbeth as an ambitious character.

Possible Answer: Macbeth, the cousin of a King who is mild, just, and beloved, but now too old to lead his army, is introduced to us as a general of extraordinary prowess, who has covered himself with glory in pitting down rebellion and repelling the invasion of a foreign army. In this conflict he showed great personal courage, a quality which he continues to display throughout the drama in regard to all plain dangers. It is difficult to be sure of his customary demeanour, for in the play we see him either in what appears to be an exceptional relation to his wife, or else in the throes of remorse and desperation; but from his behaviour during his journey home after the war, from his later conversations with Lady Macbeth, and from his language to the murders of Banquo and to others, we imagine him as a great warrior, somewhat masterful, rough, and abrupt, a man to inspire some fear and much admiration. At the same time he was exceedingly ambitious. He must have been so by temper. The tendency must have been greatly strengthened by his marriage. When we see him, it has been further stimulated by his remarkable success and by the consciousness of exceptional powers and merit. It becomes a passion. The course of action suggested by it is extremely perilous: it sets his good name, his position, and even his life on the hazard. It is also abhorrent to his better feelings. Their defeat in the struggle with ambition leaves him utterly wretched, and would have kept him so, however complete had been his outward success and security. On the other hand, his passion for power and his instinct of self-assertion are so vehement that no inward misery could persuade him to relinquish the fruits of crime, or to advance from remorse to repentance.

Q2. Macbeth has been termed as the tragedy of the imagination. Discuss.

Possible Answer: Snider describes Macbeth as the tragedy of the imagination. Imagination is both the strength and weakness of Macbeth. Macbeth

possesses elements of greatness-imagination, sensibilities, passion, physical courage, dignity of bearing, etc. But all these good qualities are overturned by his vaulting ambition. Ambition in its ordinary limits would have been all right, but in Macbeth it exceeded all limits. The imagination begins to work in him when he hears the prophecies of the witches.

With Macbeth's imagination are associated his moral sensibilities, and he is plagued by both; his doom is caused through them. He had not been a born criminal. If he had been a born criminal and dull in imagination, he would have bothered little before or after the murder and might have slept in peace after the murder of King Duncan. It is Macbeth's imaginative bent of mind that becomes the cause of his mental and spiritual agonies. His sinful conscience rises against him, and he loses all peace of mind - Macbeth shall sleep no more. The soliloquy in the dagger-scene is a work of Macbeth's imagination:

Is this a dagger which I see before me,
The handle toward my hand?"
"A dagger of the might, false creation,
Proceeding from the heat-oppressed brain.'

It is a hallucination. With his imagination are associated his moral sensibilities and he is plagued by both; his doom is wrought through them. If he had been a born criminal, callous and dull in imagination, he would have bothered little. There is a fierce battle between imagination and ambition of Macbeth. He is ambitious, but he is not a callous and hardened soldier. He is rather a poet in his heart of hearts. None but a poet could utter these words:

Out, out, brief candle
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That shuts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more; it is a tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

In fact, it is Macbeth's imagination that hastens his tragedy. Imagination is his trouble. It is this lively, shaping imagination continually multiplying new aspects of anything to be done, or that has been done, which is at the root of his hesitation, his fears, his outburst of agony. His wife was not much infused with imagination but her impulsive common sense with Macbeth's imagination lead to the crime.

12.10 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- Q1. Characterize the relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. If the main theme of Macbeth is ambition, whose ambition is the driving force of the play-Macbeth's, Lady Macbeth's, or both? Comment.
- Q2. Is Lady Macbeth more responsible than Macbeth for the murder of King Duncan? Is Lady Macbeth a more evil character than her husband and, if so, why?
- Q3 Examine Macbeth's mental deterioration throughout the play.

12.11 SUGGESTED READING

1. Shakespeare Macbeth A Case book. Edited by John Wain.
2. Shakesperean Tragedy: Lecture on Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth by A.C. Bradley.

12.12 REFERENCES

1. Shakespeare Macbeth A Case book. Edited by John Wain.
2. Shakesperean Tragedy: Lecture on Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Macbeth by A.C. Bradley.
3. Focus on 'Macbeth'. Edited by John Russell

THE FLEE

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 13.1 Introduction
- 13.2 Objectives
- 13.3 Donne's Poems
 - 13.3.1 Metaphysical Poetry
 - 13.3.2 Poetic Style
- 13.13. Literary features
 - 13.13.1 Metaphysical Conceit
 - 13.13.2 Metaphysical Poets
- 13.5 The Flee (Text)
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13.1 INTRODUCTION

John Donne was born at London in 1572 and died there in 1631. His father was a prosperous London merchant. On this mother's side, he was connected with Sir Thomas More and John Heywood. He was brought up as a Roman Catholic for which religion his family suffered heavily. As a Catholic, Donne could not take a degree though he spent three years at Oxford (15813-87) and three at Cambridge (1587-90). To get a University degree, students in those days had to take an oath of allegiance to the Anglican Church. In the early 1590's he was a student at the Inns of Court in London, which was more a University than a law school. He studied law, languages and theology. In his spare time, he was, as we are told, a "great visitor of ladies and a frequent theatre goer". In these years he wrote most of the Elegies and Satires, Songs and Sonnets. In 1596 and 1597, he took part in the expeditions led by the Earl of Essex against Cadiz and the Azores. In 1598, he was appointed secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, a minister of Queen Elizabeth from 1598 to 1602, but lost his favour by secretly marrying his niece, Anne Moore, in 1601. He was briefly imprisoned, lived a life of poverty and deprivation and sought different patrons. Donne summed up these years as "John Donne, Ann Donne, undone".

After several years of material troubles and fruitless attempts to obtain a position through court favour, his *Pseudo Martyr* (1610) won him the notice of King James I. James, however, refused to promote him except in the Anglican Church. At last in 1615, at the age of 31, Donne became an Anglican. He was appointed successively Royal Chaplain, reader in divinity at Lincoln's Inn, and finally, in 1621, Dean of Saint Paul's Cathedral in London.

Three years after becoming an Anglican, in 1618, his wife, who had borne him twelve children and whom he had never ceased to love, died. It is believed that his death brought about his final sanctification and illumination and it was

certainly from the agony of his heart that he preached his first sermon after her death beginning: "Lo! I am the man that have seen affliction".

Most of Donne's poems circulated in manuscript during his lifetime through the hands of a select coterie of intellectuals at the universities. His audience was deliberately restricted to the happy few whose education, background and position equipped them to appreciate the most difficult poets of the day. His collected poems were not published until 1633, that is, two years after his death. His prose works include over 150 sermons, a satirical attack on the Jesuits and a small book of Devotions written during a serious illness in 1623.

Though Donne was a leader of the avantgarde in late Elizabethan and Jacobean London, Eighteenth Century, which believed in smoothness and clarity, did not care for his poetry. Pope "translated" Donne's satires so thoroughly that they were unrecognizable and Dryden mistakenly declared that he wrote "nice speculations of Philosophy" and not love poetry at all. Low estimate of Donne continued in the nineteenth century. It was possibly because he suffered in comparison with Milton. The poets of this century show, with the exception of Gerald Manley Hopkins, the influence of Milton rather than of the metaphysical poets. The poets of the twentieth century admired Donne's poetry. His modern reputation owes much to the edition of the Poems By H.J.C. Grierson (1912) and to the influence of the criticism of T.S Eliot. It is not for nothing that Eliot's criticism has been mainly directed upon the seventeenth century. He has restored the seventeenth century to its proper place in the English tradition. In his "Homage to John Dryden," he says:

A thought to Donne was an experience; it modified his sensibility. When a poet's mind is perfectly equipped for its work, it is constantly amalgamating disparate experience; the ordinary man's experience is chaotic, irregular, and fragmentary. The latter falls in love, or reads Spinoza, and these two experiences have nothing to do with each other, or with the noise of the typewriter or the smell of the cooking; in the mind of the poet these experiences are always forming new wholes.

This passage suggests synthesis of emotion, passion and thought as the corner-stone of Donne's poetry. Donne could be lyrical and intellectual, serious and cynical, intense and witty at the same time. Modern poets also exhibit the same kind of a complex, sensibility in their poetry. Since both Donne and a modern poet do not find any coherence or certainty in the outside world, they fall back on the truth of their own experience.

13.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this chapter is to acquaint the students with the literary trends of the 17th century which include the genres of literature i.e poetry, prose and drama. The students shall also be made familiar with the different schools of poetry i.e. Cavalier poets, Metaphysical poets, Spenserian poets with Special reference to John Donne.

13.3 DONNE'S POEMS

The best way to appreciate Donne's poetry is to make an effort to understand his poems.

1. "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning".
2. "The Relic".
3. "Love's Infiniteness".
4. "Hymn to God my God, in my Sickness"
5. Sonnet XIV: "Better my Heart Three Person'd god"

The first three are love poems and the last two are religious poems. The love poems do not express the variety of Donne's love poetry. All the three poems express sincere, fulfilled, or spiritual love. It must not be forgotten that Donne, also wrote poems which are cynical, bitter or express sensual love. In "The Apparition", the poet is extremely bitter and mocking; in "Song: Go, and catch a falling star" he insists that there is no true and faithful woman anywhere in the world; in "The Flea" he convinces his mistress to yield to him; and in "The Indifferent", he presents his cynical doctrine of sensuality. In addition to the

three poems of sincere love which you will read, there are several others which express the same feeling of true and fulfilled love. Some of the popular ones are: "The Sun Rising", "The Good-morrow", "Song; Sweetest Love I do not go," "The Canonization" and "The Ecstasy".

It was once believed that as a young man, he was extremely cynical about love and lived a life of sensuality, but a change occurred when he fell in love with Anne Moore and married her. He expressed cynical love in the poems which he wrote before he met Anne, but he celebrated the ecstasy of love in his poems which he wrote later. There is no evidence to prove the truth of this. It is possible that he wrote some cynical poems about love after his marriage and some poems of fulfilled love before meeting Anne Moore. In fact, it is dangerous to mix up biography and poetry. Writing poetry, particularly during the seventeenth century, was like role playing. Donne's poetry is dramatic. He creates a speaker who is responding to, or interacting with a listener (his beloved) in a dramatic situation at a moment of great significance and urgency.

John Donne was the founder of the metaphysical school of poetry and he is the greatest of the poets of this school. His works include Satires, songs and Sonnets, Elegies, which were published posthumously about 1633. His poetry falls naturally into three divisions.

(i) Amorous Poetry: Donne's love poetry was written in his brilliant and turbulent youth. His love poems, the Songs and Sonnets, are intense and subtle analyses of all the moods of a lover, expressed in vivid and startling language, which is colloquial rather than conventional. A vein of satire runs even in his love poetry. His best known love poems are Aire and Angels, A nocturnal upon St. Lucy Day, A Valediction; Forbidding Mourning and Ecstasy. Edward Albert writes about his love poems. "He is essentially a psychological poet whose primary concern is feeling. His poems are all intensely personal and reveal a powerful and complex being".

(ii) Religious Poems: Donnie's religious was written after 1610 Holy Sonnets and lyrics such as A hymn to God the Father are his memorable religious poems.

His religious or devotional poems, though they problem and questions, are nonetheless never sermons, but rather confessions or prayers. His love poems are noticeable for intellectual subtlety the scholastic learning, and the 'wit' and 'conceit' of the love poems.

(iii) **Atirical Poems** : Donne wrote satires, such as of the Progress of the Soul (1600), which reveals his cynical nature and keenly critical mind. They show his dissatisfaction with the world around him. They were written in the couplet form, which was later adopted by Dryden and Pope.

"He affects the metaphysics", said Dryden of Donne and the term "metaphysical" has come to be applied to Donne and the group of poets who followed him. The word metaphysical strictly means "based on abstract general reasoning", but Donne's poetry shows more than this. In the words of Edward Albert: "It reveals a depth of philosophy, a subtlety of reasoning, a blend of thought and devotion, a mingling of the homely and the sublime, the light and the serious, which make it full of variety and surprise." Donne's poetry bears the stamp of his scholarship. His images are far=fetched, obscure, unusual and striking; for example:

So doth each tear
Which three doth wear,
A globe, year world by that impression grow'
Till they tears mixed with mine do overflow.
This world, by waters sent form three, my heaven dissolved so.

Donne's influence was strongly felt in both the courtly and religious poetry of the seventeenth century. George Herbert, Richard Crawshaw, Henry Vaughan, Robert, Herrick and Thomas Carew show directly or indirectly Donne's influence.

"However in a very simple tone we can interpret the term. Metaphysical is termed as Meta (beyond) and Physical (Physical nature). Fondness for conceits is a major characteristic of metaphysical poetry; however, concentration is another important ingredient of it.

The metaphysical poets were men of learning and to show their learning was their whole endeavour. His poems are brief and closely woven and he develops the theme without digression.

Furthermore as fondness for conceits is a major characteristic of metaphysical poetry and Donne employs fantastic comparisons. The most famous and striking one is the comparison of a man who travels and his beloved who stays at home to a pair of compasses in "A valediction Forbidding mourning".

In "The Relique", John Donne imagines himself dead and beneath the soil. His grave is opened to admit the body of another and on his wrist; the grave digger finds a bracelet of bright hair about the bone. Henceforth, he end his urge like saints: All women shall adore us, and same men". This is an exceedingly hyperbolic conceit.

In "Twickenham Garden" the very truth of the beloved wills the poet. Furthermore, Donne makes an excellent combination of passion and thoughts. The poem, "Good Morrow" is a poem of passion but its intellectual character is no less evident. The poem is one loving argument to prove that the poet and his beloved are passionately in love. Each of the lovers is a whole world to the other and their little rooms is a kind of everywhere.

Another feature is the use of colloquial speech marks metaphysical poetry. In Donne's poems, it is especially apparent in the abrupt, conversational opening of many of his poems.

13.3.1 Metaphysical Poetry

The term "metaphysical" as applied to John Donne and a group of poets who wrote under his influence, had its origin in the same century in which the poets wrote their works. Drummond seems to have Donne in mind when he objected to the "modern" attempt to "abstract poetry to metaphysical ideas and scholastic quiddities," and Dryden later complained that "Donne affects the metaphysics not only in his satires but in his amorous verses," and "perplexes the minds of the fair sex with nice speculations of

philosophy." Dr. Johnson spoke of these poets as "the metaphysical poets" referring particularly to the exhibition of their learning.

Donne was not metaphysical in the same sense in which Dante, for example, was. Unlike Dante, he was not committed to a particular metaphysical or philosophical system, but he was interested in the fascinating, conflicting and often disturbing philosophies of his period. The medieval way of thought, in which system renaissance, which was analytical? Medieval (Ptolemaic) astronomy was challenged by Copernicus, Aristotle was challenged by Galileo. What interested Donne was not the ultimate truth of an idea but ideas themselves. There is a note of tension, springing from the contradictions in the very nature of things. Donne was keenly aware of the difficulty of metaphysical problems and saw them lurking behind any action, however, trivial it may be. In his greater poems, he comes up against fundamental problems and oppositions of a strictly metaphysical nature. He is concerned, in his love poems, with the identity of lovers as lovers and their diversity as the human beings in whom love manifests itself; the stability and self-sufficiency of love, contrasted with the mutability and dependence of human beings; with the presence of lovers to each other, though they are separated by travel and death; the spirit demanding the aid of the flesh, the flesh hampering the spirit; the shortcomings of this life summarized by decay and eat, contrasted with the divine it aspires. In "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning" the lovers are two, yet one. They are united even when they are separated physically by travels. These problems of contemporary philosophy arising out of the problems of One and Many, I and thou are seldom as elaborate or specific as it may appear. These allusions to ideas are there not to display his learning but to support and argument. He uses ideas as images and draws them from whatever belief best expresses the emotion he has to communicate.

A student reading Donne's poems should carefully analyze the sources of his learned and unexpected comparisons for which he is famous. Though

he draws upon everyday and common place experiences also, his distinctive source are the current beliefs in metaphysics, cosmology, geography, natural science, medicine and alchemy. All the poems included in your syllabus illustrate a great range of the areas from which Donne has taken his imagery. "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning: is a farewell to his wife on the occasion of his departure for a diplomatic mission to France. He tells her not to mourn because mourning would be little their love. The souls of true lovers are united. Distance can separate their bodies but they will suffer no real absence.

13.3.2 Poetic Style

Donne's style in his religious poetry is the same as I his love poetry. There are the same elements of surprise, boldness and audacity in both. His wit does not show lack of sincerity. In his holy sonnet "Batter my heart, three person'd God," Donne is carrying on an argument with God. In fact he is impatient with God and criticizes Him for not trying hard to end his subjugation to sin. Tension inside the sinner is externalized in violent images. His focus is on one moment when he is conscious of the conflict between his devotion to God and his sinfulness. God is the rightful ruler of his heart and devil has shut him out. He pleads with God to use greater force to regain his heart, to break off his unsuitable betrothal to sin. Donne uses audacious paradoxes after a series of bold images in the end of the sonnet.

For I

Except you enthrall me, never shall be free,

Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

Seeking a divorce from the wrong partner (devil), Donne wishes to be mated to the right partner (God). It is a new kind of subjugation. His freedom consists in subjugation to god, his purity consists in the love of God.

Donne was an original craftsman. His irregular metres and broken rhythms were the outcome of a double motive. First, he was in revolt against the smooth flow of Elizabethan love poetry; secondly, he wanted to portray accurately the searchings of his complex mind. His metres are deliberately made irregular, jerky, yet thoughtful to follow the swift process of his mind. He attains the dramatic effect by shocking abruptness, harsh transitions, uneven accents and snatches of conversation.

Modern readers admire the poetry of John Donne because it communicates a unified experience, a sense of imaginative pressure, and intensity of feeling. Donne energized poetry and made it reflect a new sensibility. He deepened the poetic experience and achieved an effect which suggested both passion and penetration of thought. Assimilating all that he had learnt into his experience, giving it depth and intensity, he evolved a technique to render the complex moment of feeling accurately.

13.13 LITERARY FEATURES

The English literary scene at the turn of the 16th century and the early years of 17th century displayed a curious complexity, confusion and diversity.

The country was divided into two hostile camps and literature of that period clearly reflected it.

During this period, there was a decline from the high Elizabethan standard. This decline was mainly because of the strong impact of Puritanism. Spenser's tradition was fast perishing and new forms, such as Metaphysical poetry became popular. The exalted fervor of the previous age was fading away. Drama was totally eclipsed and in prose there was a matured melancholy, but with a marked increase.

The metaphysical poetry, which had been started by John Donne in the later part of the Jacobean Age, blossomed during the Age of Milton. The writers who carried forward the tradition of John Donne were Crawshaw, George Herbert, Vaughan and Andrew Marvell. Their works are chiefly lyrical in nature,

and show an amalgamation of passion and thought. Their poems are loaded with imagery and striking conceits. Most of the metaphysical poets were of a religious and mystical temperament. The excessive use of over-elaborated similes and metaphors were drawn from the remote and unfamiliar sources by the metaphysical poets. The relationships perceived by them are occult. The images are logical and intellectual rather than sensual or emotional. Donne was the founder of so-called "Metaphysical school of poetry" His poetry is remarkable for its concentrated passion, intellectual agility and dramatic power. His poetry is marked with a tone of cynicism and realism but it is always forceful and startling.

13.13.1 Metaphysical Conceit

A conceit is an elaborate metaphor comparing two apparently dissimilar objects or emotions, often with the effect of shock or surprise. Metaphysical conceits used by Donne consisted in what Johnson called, the "discovery of occult resemblances in things apparently unlike." They are the result of a habit of mind that is immediately aware of logical situations recurring in diverse kinds of experience. The relation between separate and apparently unrelated parts is established with the help of the intellect. When Donne, in "A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning", compares two lovers to a pair of compasses it implies that all phenomena are facets of a single whole. The same flame which lights the intellect warms the heart; mathematics and love obey one principle. The fixed foot of the compasses does not move of itself, but when the circle is being described, it leans towards the other foot which moves. The firmness with which the fixed foot is pinned in the centre is what completes the circle. When the circle is completed the outstretched foot comes back to the other foot. The two feet of the compass are the lovers and words such as "roams", "leans," and "hearkens" gather up emotion into this intellectual image:

If they are two, they are two so
As stiff twin compasses are two

Thy soul the fix't foot, makes no show
To move, but doth, if th' other do.
And though it in the centre sit
Yet when the other far doth roam
It leans and hearkens after it,
And grows erect, as that comes home.
Such wilt thou be to me, who must
Like th' other foot, obliquely run;
Thy firmness draws my circle just,
And makes me end, where I begun.

It can be seen from this that a metaphysical conceit is neither a decoration nor an illustration which can be removed from the statement but the statement itself is made with the help of the conceit. Usually, a conceit is elaborated to the furthest stage, to which ingenuity can carry it. There are rapid associations of thoughts and no association is left unexploited.

Fusion of passionate feeling and logical argument is characteristic of Donne. Profound emotion generally stimulates Donne's powers of intellectual analysis and argument. For him the process of logical reasoning can in itself be an emotional experience. As he brings to the lyric poem a new realism and urgency and a new penetration of psychological analysis, so he carries further than any previous poet, the use of dialectic for a poem's whole structure and development. The argument of each of the five poems in your course has been very carefully analyzed in the next lessons. The generalization about the logical structure of his poems will become meaningful if you concentrate on the structure of one poem which you have liked the best.

As reasoning and analysis are not incompatible with feeling and sensuous immediacy, so there is no antithesis between wit and seriousness. Seriousness for Donne, never becomes simple solemnity. Exaggerated

tone, paradoxical argument, and surprising conclusion reached from a simple situation are the secrets of his wit. Witty analysis is most remarkable in "The Flea", which is not in your course. He starts in the tone of a serious argument trying to convince his mistress that there is nothing wrong in physical love: "Mark but this flea, and mark in this,/ How little that which thou denies me is." The flea has flitted from him to her and by biting both of them and mingling their blood has achieved the union which he desires. The flea becomes a "marriage temple" and "marriage bed". He argues that her fears are false and she would not lose more honour when she yields to him. "The Relic" is another poem which displays his incomparable wit.

13.13.2 Metaphysical Poets

The name 'Metaphysical' given by Dr. Johnson in derision, because of the fanatic form of Donne's poetry, is often applied to all minor poets of the Puritan Age. But here it can be used in the narrower sense, excluding the Cavalier poets. It includes Donne, Herbert, Waller, Denham, Cowley, Vaughan, Davenant, Marvell and Crawshaw.

John Donne: Donne did not follow the literary standard and threw style and all literary standards to the wind. Donne played havoc with Elizabethan style, he nevertheless influenced English literature in the way of boldness and originality; and the present tendency is to give him a larger place, nearer to the few great poets, that he has occupied since Ben Jonson declared that he was "the first poet of the world in some things," but likely to perish "for not being understood".

13.5 THE FLEE:TEXT

Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deny'st me is;
Me it suckied first and now sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingled be;

Confess it, this cannot be said
A sin, or shame, or loss of maidenhead,
 Yet this enjoys before it woo,
 And pampered swells with one blood made of two,
 And this, alas, is more than we could do.

Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare,
Where we almost, nay more than married are.
This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed, and marriage temple is;
Though parents grudge and you, w'are met,
And cloistered in these living walls of jet.

 Though use make three apt to kill me,
 Let not to that self murder added be,
 And sacrilege, three sins in killing three.

Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence?
In what could this flea guilty be,
Except in that drop which it sucked from thee?
Yet thou triumph'st and say'st that thou
Find'st not thyself, nor me the weaker now;

 Tis true, then learn how false, fears be;
 Just so much honour, when thou yield'st to me,
 Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

13.6 SUMMARY

Donne is considered the greatest love poet. But his concept of love was not Platonic, spiritual or intellectual. He believed that love purely of thoughts and

idea was just nonsense. Basically and truly love was something physical, a sexual pleasure, a union of the male and female. But the uniqueness and greatness of Donne's love poetry is that he explains that it is physical love that matures and perfects itself in intellectual or spiritual love. In brief, union of the bodies of the lover and the beloved is a precondition to the exalted spiritual love. Flea is one such poem where Donne emphasizes the need of physical union but physical love merges with the spiritual or intellectual love.

Flea was a popular subject for ribald and amatory poetry during the Renaissance. Ovid was the main model and inspiration for them. They envied the flea that had free excess to the body of the beloved. The flea could insert its teeth into the body of the beloved, and none would take it as a sin or crime. On the other hand, poor lover would be denied his right of sexual union. However, Donne's originality lies in the fact that his interest is not in the 'flea' but in the exploration of love-relationship.

The flea is a dramatic lyric where the lover makes a strange plea to his beloved to consent for a sexual relationship with him. Thus, he says:

"Mark but this flea, and mark in this,
How little that which thou deny'st me is"

meaning thereby that whereas she allows the flea to suck at her body, she rejects his right of sex with her. She should notice that first it has sucked his blood and then hers, and in this way, their bloods mingle in its body, as they do in sexual intercourse:

"Me it suck'd first, and now sucks thee,
And in this flea, our two bloods mingle be"

The flea has enjoyed, in a way, a union with her without any courtship or marriage. Yet, this is not considered any loss of honour. There is no shame, no loss of honour or loss of virginity in this case. Neither is it sin.

"Confess it, this cannot besaid
A sinne, or shame, or loss of maidenhood.

And, the flea enjoys all this before any license or right:

"Yet this enjoys before it woo"

He is unhappy that he has been denied the premarital sex with his beloved.

The next two stanzas of the poem demonstrate Donne's excellent use of conceit and wit. As the beloved gets ready to kill the flea, the lover asks her to stay, and not to kill the poor creature. Their two bloods have been united together in its body, as they are united through marriage in church. So its body is a temple in which they have been married. Their bloods have got mixed up into the flea's body. In other words, this fusion of their bloods amounts to a kind of sexual intercourse. The love-poet's argument is both strange and peculiar. He says that since the beloved has no objection to their union inside the flea's body, she should also have no objection to yield to him. Thus, he argues his case:

This flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed and marriage temple is
Though parents grudge, and you, we are met
And cloistered in these living walls of jet"

Therefore, the lover asks the beloved not to kill the flea. It would amount to triple murder. The flea has three lives within this body- a part of the lover's, a part of the beloved's and its own life. Hence the beloved should spare it. "Oh stay, three lives in one flea spare". No doubt, the beloved has the birth right to kill the love - "Though use make thee apt to kill me". But the beloved should avoid self murder at least. This suicide and this triple murder is both a sin and a sacrilege.

"Let not to this, self murder added be
And sacrilege, three sin in killing three"

It is really very amusing to note how deeply Donne uses religious terms for the trivial act of killing a flea. Really, it imparts peculiar intensity and immediacy to his desire for a sexual union with his beloved.

The third stanza of the poem further elaborates the poet's argument. By and by, the poet makes the beloved feel that her physical union with him will not be really much loss to her. The beloved herself admits that the loss of a drop of blood which the flea has sucked has in no way made her weak. Besides, there has been no loss of honour as well.

Yet thou triumph'st, and say'st that ho
Find'st not thy self, nor me the weaker now
"Tis true, then learn how yield'st to me
Will waste, as this flea's death took life from thee.

In this way, like a clever lawyer, he has argued his case with the beloved.

The poem powerfully demolishes the Platonic and Petrarchan attitudes towards love; sex or physical union is the first condition of love. The passage to intellectual or spiritual love goes through the body. Further, the poet also ridicules the notion of virginity, chastity and pseudo, morality. The claims of the body are no less important than the claims of the mind and soul. A.J. Smith (songs and Sonnets) is perfectly right when he says that the lyric fully batters and shatters the anti-courtly and anti-Petrarchan attitude towards love. In short, the poet's concept of love in the poem is down to the death (real). He is unhappy and angry with the beloved because she has cruelly killed the flea. Thus, he accuses her quite in an unromantic manner:

"Cruel and sudden, hast thou since
Purpled thy nail, in blood of innocence"

Thus, the poem makes a fantastic demonstration of a supremely great poet of wit and conceit. We simply marvel at his use of wit-concept.

John Donne rebelled against the outdated style of the Elizabethan poets. He used intellectualism and reason in place of idealism (which was followed by Elizabethan poets).

The remarkable features of John Donne's metaphysical poetry are:

- Conceits; the complex logic of comparison, that startled the readers.
- Concentration: very specific in the discussion of the ideas.
- Colloquial usage: it showed Donne's involvement in inducing the reader to delve deeper into the poem.
- Controversial, abrupt openings: sudden and startling openings which immediately draw the reader's attention (e.g. the sun raising, canonization)
- Deliberate use of false logic: he poses an argument and is able to convince the reader.
- Intellectual tone: he takes comparisons from science, philosophy, astronomy etc and compares his lover's teardrop to a minted coin (a valediction: for weeping) unlike the usual ones i.e. comparison of lover's checks to rosebuds.
- Dramatic effect: his energy injected poetry is full of vigour and animation.
- Freedom of rhythm: no particular format was used or adopted, his poems were mostly rash and argumentative.

Donne enriched the post Elizabethan era by differing from the Elizabethan poets with regard to the above given aspects.

In the flea, the poet deduces every kind of consequence from the fact that a flea bites him after sucking his mistress's blood. He will not let her kill the creature in which their blood has mingled and which is, therefore, their bridal bed, "the temple of their marriage (wedding)" -

This Flea is you and I, and this
Our marriage bed and marriage temple is

Their two bloods have been united together in its body, as they are united through marriage in a church. So its body is a temple in which they have been

married. The respective bloods of the lover and the beloved mingle through sexual intercourse. Now they have mingled in the flea, so its body is their marriage bed. In such passages, even Donne, the greatest of the metaphysical, lapses into the ridiculous and the fantastic. A flea's sucking a tiny drop of blood from the lover's body and then from the beloved's body means that the two have got married, and the flea is their marriage temple as well as their marriage bed.

13.6.1. The Neoplatonic concept of love

Donne draws on the Neoplatonic conception of physical love and religious love as being two manifestations of the same impulse. In the symposium, Plato describes physical love as the lowest rung of a ladder. According to the Platonic formulation, we are attracted first to a single beautiful person, then to beautiful people generally, then to beautiful minds, then to beautiful ideas, and ultimately to beauty itself, the highest rung of the ladder.

Centuries later, Christian Neoplatonists adapted this idea such that the progression of love culminates in a love of God, or spiritual beauty. Naturally, Donne used his religious poetry to idealize the Christian love for God, but the Neoplatonic conception of love also appears in his love poetry, albeit slightly tweaked.

For instance in the bawdy "Elegy 19. To His Mistress Going to Bed" (669), the speaker claims that his love for a naked woman surpasses pictorial representations of biblical scenes. Many love poems assert the superiority of the speaker's love to quotidian, ordinary love by presenting the speaker's love as a manifestation of purer, Neoplatonic feeling, which resembles the sentiment felt for the divine.

John Donne was both a poet and a divine. He was brought up as a Roman Catholic but joined the Church of England and lost to be Dean of St. Paul Cathedral. He is recognized as the greatest of so-called metaphysical poets whose works were full of unconventional and far-fetched images and conceits drawn from the most unlikely sources.

13.7 LET US SUM UP

Donne is considered as the greatest love poet. But his concept of love was not platonic, spiritual or intellectual. Basically true love was something physical, a sexual pleasure, a union of the male and female. But uniqueness and greatness of Donne's love poetry is that he explains physical love that perfects and matures itself is intellectual or spiritual love.

Flea is one such poem where Donne emphasizes the need of physical union but physical love merges with spiritual or intellectual love. During Renaissance Flea was a popular subject and everybody envied the flea that had free excess to the body of the beloved. The flea could insert its teeth into the body of the beloved and none would take it as a sin or crime. On the other hand, poor lover would be denied of his right of sexual union. However Donne's originality lies in the fact that his interest is not in the 'Flea' but in exploration of love relationship.

The 'Flea' is a dramatic lyric where lover makes a strange plea to his beloved to consent for a sexual relationship with him. He further feels why she allows the Flea to suck at her blood and rejects his right of sex with her. The blood sucking insect first sucked his blood and then hers and directly, indirectly their blood mingle in its body. The flea has thoroughly enjoyed the union with her without any courtship or marriage. There is no shame, no loss of honour or loss of virginity. Neither it is considered as sin. In the poem there is excellent use of concept and wit. As the beloved gets ready to kill the flea, the lover asks her to stay and not to kill the poor creature. Their two bloods have been united together in its body as they are united through marriage in church. Their bloods have got mixed up into the flea's body.

The lover feels if flea's comfortable with the fused blood of poet why doesn't she allow union inside the flea's body. She has no right to reject him. Lover further asks the beloved not to kill flea. It would be murder of three lives: part of the lover's a part of the beloved's and its own life. No doubt, the beloved has the right to kill the love but the beloved should

avoid self-murder at last. Suicide and triple murder is both a sin and a sacrilege. Donne amusingly tries to impart the intensity and immediacy to his desire for a sexual union with his beloved. Poet makes her feel that her physical union with him will not be really much loss to her. The attitude towards love, sex and physical union is the first condition of love. The claims of the body are not less important than the claims of mind and soul. Poet's concept of love is real. He is unhappy and angry with the beloved because she has cruelly killed the flea. The poet accuses her as unromantic.

13.8 GLOSSARY

Mark----Notice; flee----blood-sucking insect; in this----in the instance of the flea's biting; little----petty; deny'st----refuse; suck'd----draw in with the mouth; mingled---mixed; confess----admit; this----this kissing by the flea; maidenhood----virginhood; this----this flea; woo----i.e. show love to her; pampered----fed upon; is----i.e. is the embodiment of; marriage temple----the church in which we have been married to each other; grudge----object; cloistered----covered; jet---jet black body; use---habit; apt----suitable; self-murder---suicide: sacrilege ---- i.e. destruction of a sacred temple; cruel---pitiless, merciless; sudden-over----hasty, wanting in caution; operating suddenly; hast thou-i.e. have you been in killing the flea; since----seeing that, because; purpled----i.e. reddened; thy----your; in blood of innocence----i.e. in the blood of the innocent flea; in what- of what offence; guilty----justly chargeable; except in----with the exception of; drop----drop of blood; suck-sucked; three----i.e. you, your body; triumph'st-triumph, show joy at your success in killing it; now----i.e. now that you have killed it; 'Tis true----i.e. it is true that the flea's death has caused no weakness to you and me; learn----i.e. learn from my fears; false-unreal; just so much-only; honour----that much of your honour; yield's to me-i.e. surrender your body to me; will waste----i.e. will go waste; life----i.e. blood.

13.9 SELF ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

1. Bring out the development of thought in John Donne's Flea?

2. Comment upon Donne's use of conceit, imagery addiction with reference to Flee?
3. Discuss John Donne as a Metaphysical poet?
4. Discuss the concept of love as explained by Donne through his poetry?
5. How does Donne distinguish between physical and spiritual love.?

13.9.1 Lesson End Exercise

1. John Donne was the first English poet to challenge and break the supremacy of the Tradition

Elizabethan	Shakespearean
Romantic	Petrarchan
2. Donne's dramatic lyrics resemble

Sydney's	Tennyson's
Browning's	Spenser's
3. In a metaphysical poem the _____ are instruments of definition in an argument or instruments to persuade.

Conceits	Metaphors
Similies	Paradoxes
4. Donne's treatment of love is both _____ and realistic

Sensuous	Spiritual
Sexual	ideal
5. Donne creates the efforts of fantasy with use of bombastic _____ in his poetry

Metaphors	Similies
Hyperboles	conceits

6. Metaphysical poetry has some _____ element
- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| Lyrical | Spiritual |
| Dramatic | Religious |
7. John Donne was born in
- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1572 | 1670 |
| 1872 | 11392 |
8. John Donne is considered as
- | | |
|-------------|-------------------|
| Love poet | Metaphysical poet |
| Nature poet | religious poet |
9. What is the name of Donne's wife?
- | | |
|-----------|------------|
| Anne More | Jane More |
| Mary More | Diana More |
10. Donne represents _____ personal feeling through the process of reasoning
- | | |
|---------|--------|
| Ideal | Secret |
| Intense | Purely |

13.9.2 Examination Oriented Questions

- Q.1 What are the chief characteristics of Metaphysical poetry? Discuss with reference to John Donne's Flee?
- Q.2 Donne's genius, temperament and learning gave to his love - poems certain qualities which immediately arrested attention. Discuss.

13.10 SUGGESTED READING

1. Thompson, Hamilton, A History of English literature. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1997.

2. Cox, Michael, editor, *The Concise Oxford Chronology of English Literature*, P 92, Oxford University Press, 20013.
3. Arthur Compton and Rickett. *A History of English Literature*.
4. Sir, Ifor Evans *Short History of English Literature*.

13.11 REFERENCES

1. F.R. Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry*, London: Chatto and Windus Ltd., 1961.
2. Ian Gregson *Contemporary poetry and Post Modern*. London Macmillan, 1996.
3. Lionel Trilling. *Preface to the experience of literature*. (Oxford University Press, 1981).
4. Marjorie. *The Anatomy of poetry*.
5. Jerom. P.Schiller, I.A.Richards. *Theory of Literature*. New Havel. Yale University Press,1969.

13.12 MODEL TEST PAPER

(a) Multiple Choice Questions:

1. Which of the following was not a metaphysical poet?
Cowley Herbert Dryden Vaughan
2. John Donne dedicated his holy sonnets to whose mother?
Richard Crashaw's George Herbert's
Andrew Marvell's His own.
3. What kind of poetry did Donne Not write.
Elegies Sonnets Concrete poetry Satires.
4. John Donne eloped with
Egerton'sNiece Queen Elizabeth
Egerton's wife DianaMorre

(b) Short answer Questions:-

1. What is Neoplatonic conception of love.
2. Discuss the concept of love as explained by Donne through his poetry?
3. Discuss Donne's religious qualities?

(c) Long Answer questions:-

1. Describe John Donne as a Metaphysical poet?
2. Bring out the distinctive features of Donne's poetry.

TO HIS COY MISTRESS

SECTION - I

STRUCTURE

- 14.1 Objectives
- 14.2 Introduction
 - 14.2.1 The Age
 - 14.2.2 The Poet
- 14.3 Self-Check Questions
- 14.4 Glossary
- 14.5 Recapitulation of the Lesson
- 14.6 Answer-Key
- 14.7 Suggested Reading

14.1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this lesson are :

- * to acquaint the learner with the Puritan age
- * to give an idea about the life and major works of the poet
- * to elucidate the poem
- * to help the learner prepare for examination.

14.2. INTRODUCTION

Dear learners, in this section, we are going to read about the life and works of Andrew Marvell, who due to the inconsistencies and ambiguities within his work and the scarcity of information about his personal life has been a source of fascination for scholars and readers since the time his work found recognition in the early decades of the twentieth century.

14.2.1 The Age : The half century between 1625 and 1675 is called the Puritan period for two reasons : first, because Puritan standards prevailed for a time in England; and second, because the greatest literary figure during all these years was the Puritan, John Milton. Historically, the age was one of tremendous conflict. The Puritans struggled for righteousness and liberty. In their struggle for liberty the Puritans overthrew the corrupt monarchy, beheaded Charles I, and established the commonwealth under Cromwell. The commonwealth lasted but a few years, and the restoration of Charles II in 1660 is often put as the end of the Puritan period. The age has no distinct limits, but overlaps the Elizabethan period on one side, and the Restoration period on the other.

The age produced many writers, a few immortal books, and some of the world's great literary leaders. The literature of the age is extremely diverse in character, and the diversity is due to the breaking up of the ideals of political and religious unity. In this age we have the Transition Poets, of whom Donne is chief ; the Song writers, Campion and Breton; the Spenserian Poets, Wither and Giles Fletcher; the Metaphysical Poet, Andrew Marvell, the Cavalier Poets, Herrick, Carew, Lovelace and Suckling; John Milton; John Bunyan; Minor Prose writers Burton, Browne, Fuller, Taylor, Baxter and Walton.

14.2.2 The Poet : The son of a priest, the poet Andrew Marvell was born on the 31st March 1621, in the rectory of Winestead near Hull in Yorkshire, England. In 1624, the family moved from Winestead to Hull.

There Andrew was admitted to the Grammar school which had strong connections with Cambridge University. At the age of twelve, Andrew proceeded to Cambridge from where he matriculated as a sizar of Trinity College. In 1639, he took his B.A. degree. In 1641 his father died. He was at that time still at Cambridge working for his M.A. On hearing the news, he hurried home and never returned to his studies. From 1642 to 1644, he went abroad, travelling in Holland, France, Italy and Spain. When Marvell returned to London, the first poem he wrote for publication was entitled "To His Noble Friend Mr. Richard Lovelace Upon His Poem." Metaphysical poetry shows a peculiar blend of passion and thought. Many of the lyrics of Marvell, while expressing a fairly strong emotion, have at the same time an intellectual character. The most outstanding example of this is the poem, "To His Coy Mistress." Marvell is called by Legouis as "the saint of metaphysical school of poetry."

Andrew Marvell's contribution to literature may be classified as follows :

1. **Poems** which, for the most part, belong to the years 1650-1652
2. **Satires**, which he wrote on public men and public affairs during the reign of Charles II
3. **News-letters** which he regularly addressed to his constituents in Hull after his election as Member of Parliament in 1659, and which extend from 1660 to the time of his death in 1678.
4. **His Controversial Essays** on ecclesiastical questions, written at intervals between 1672 and 1677.

It is on his poems that Marvell's literary reputation mainly rests. He was a versatile poet. His love poems, e.g. "The Unfortunate Lover", "The Definition of Love". "To His Coy Mistress"; his religious poems, e.g. "Clorinda and Damon". "Thyrsis and Dorinda"; his nature poems e.g. "The Garden"; his patriotic verse e.g. "An Horatian Ode Upon

Cromwell's Return from Ireland" etc., reveal his diverse poetic talent. He died of malaria on 16th August 1678.

Andrew Marvell should ordinarily be classed with Milton as a Puritan poet. He was Milton's assistant as Latin secretary in the Cromwell Government. He was a great admirer of the dictator and remained inflexibly opposed to the Government after the Restoration. But curiously enough his verse is anything but Puritanical. As a poet, he was in sympathy with the opposite party and exhibits the best qualities of the Cavalier Poets. His poetry combines the clarity and grace of Ben Jonson with the metaphysical wit of Donne. It was Dr. Johnson who first used the label of metaphysical poet for John Donne and his followers who included George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell and a few others. The first characteristic of metaphysical poetry is its concentration. The reader is held to an idea or a line of argument. It is also distinguished by its fondness for conceits. A conceit is a comparison whose ingenuity is more striking than its justness, or at least is more immediately striking. The metaphysical poets convey a strong sense of actual. Their poetry is the product of both intellect and emotion.

The poetry of Marvell shows many of the qualities that are associated with what has come to be known as the 'metaphysical school of poetry'.

14.3. SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS

I. Fill in the blanks :

- a) Marvell was the son of a
- b) He matriculated from.....
- c) He died of.....
- d) He reveals the influence of the and poets .
- e) He was a in faith .

II. Write Short Answers :

- i) What is a conceit?
- ii) Name the principle works of Marvell.
- iii) Who are the metaphysical poets? Name the principle characteristic of metaphysical poetry.

III. True or False :

- i) Marvell was a cavalier in faith and Puritan in poetry .
- ii) He was closely associated with Milton.
- iii) He wrote his poems in collaboration with Donne.
- iv) He was persecuted and killed by the state.
- v) His poetry has a metaphysical strain.

14.4 GLOSSARY

- a) **Metaphysical Poetry** : Poetry in 17th century England characterised by subtlety of thought and complex imagery.
- b) **Conceit** :- a far fetched comparison
- c) **Satire** :- the use of ridicule, irony, sarcasm etc., to expose folly or vice

14.5. RECAPITULATION OF THE LESSON

Andrew Marvell belonged to the Puritan period. The age began with beheading of Charles I, saw the rule of Cromwell and was marked by Puritan rigidity in religion, morals and literature. With the restoration of crown to Charles II in 1660, the age began to decline. It is marked for its literary diversity ranging from the Transition Poets to the Metaphysical Poets and producing such creative geniuses as Milton and Bunyan.

Marvell graduated from Cambridge but could not complete his Masters degree due to the death of his father. Although closely associated with Milton, as a poet he belonged to the opposite party and his poetry exhibits the best qualities

of the Cavalier poets. He exhibits a strong strain of metaphysical poetry in his verses. His major works include love poems, religious poems, nature poems, patriotic poems, satires, newsletters and controversial essays.

14.6. ANSWER-KEY

- a) priest
- b) Cambridge
- c) malaria
- d) Cavalier, Metaphysical
- e) Puritan
- f) i) Conceit is a far fetched comparison. It is a figure of speech which establishes a striking parallel, usually ingeniously elaborate, between two very dissimilar things or situations e.g. comparing two lovers to two corpses in a grave.
ii) Ref. to section 14.2.2
iii) It was Dr. Johnson who first used the label of metaphysical poets for John Donne and his followers who included George Herbert, Henry Vaughan, Richard Crashaw, Andrew Marvell and a few others. The principle characteristic of metaphysical poetry is its use of conceit.
- g) i) False ii) True iii) False iv) False v) True

14.7 SUGGESTED READING

- i) *A History of English Literature* by Legouis and Cazamier
- ii) *The Life and Lyrics of Andrew Marvell* Ed. by Michael Craze.

SECTION II

STRUCTURE

- 14.8 Objectives
- 14.9 Poem
- 14.10 Introduction to the Poem
- 14.11 Summary
- 14.12 Critical Analysis
- 14.13 Self-Check Questions
- 14.14 Glossary
- 14.15 Reference to the Context
- 14.16 Examination Oriented Questions
- 14.17 Recapitulation of the Poem
- 14.18 Answer Key
- 14.19 Suggested Readings

14.8 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this lesson is to familiarize the learner with Marvell's poem "To His Coy Mistress". In the preceding section we studied the age, the life and the major works of the poet. This section will deal with one of his well known poem.

14.9 POEM

To His Coy Mistress

Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the flood
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love would grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow;
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast,
But thirty thousand to the rest;
An age at least to every part,
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state,
Nor would I love at lower rate.
But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found :
Nor, in thy marble vaults, shall sound

My echoing song; then worms shall try
That long-preserved virginity,
And your quaint honour turn to dust,
And into ashes all my lust:
The grave's a fine and private place,
But none, I think, do there embrace.
Now therefore, while the youthful hue
Sits on thy skin like morning dew,
And while thy willing soul transpires
At every pore with instant fires,
Now let us sport us while we may,
And now, like amorous birds of prey,
Rather at once our time devour
Than languish in his slow-chapped power.
Let us roll all our strength, and all
Our sweetness, up into one ball,
And tear our pleasure with rough strife
Through the iron gates of life:
Thus, though we cannot make our sun
Stand still, yet we will make him run.

14.10 INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM

Dear learners, in this section, we are going to read the poem “ To His Coy Mistress in detail :

- a) In this poem a lover addresses his beloved who refuses to grant him sexual favours on account of her modesty and her sense of honour.

- b) The lover says that her shyness or sexual reluctance would have been justified if they had enough space and time at their disposal.
- c) But time is passing at a very fast pace and, therefore, it would be appropriate for them to enjoy the pleasures of love when there is still time.
- d) If they had time and space enough, she could have gone to the river Ganges in India in search for rubies. While he would sit on the banks of Humber in England and mourn his unfulfilled love.
- e) If they had time enough, he would have fallen in love with her ten years before the Great Flood while she could refuse till the Judgement day.
- f) If they had time enough, he would have spent hundreds of years praising each part of her body.
- g) The time is passing at a very fast pace and there is nothing after death except barren eternity.
- h) When they are dead, her virginity would be attacked by worms and his songs, too, would fall silent.
- i) Thus, while they have time and youth, when they can still feel the fires of passion, they should enjoy making love with full force and vigour.

14.11 SUMMARY OF THE POEM

This is the most popular and the best known love poem of Andrew Marvell. In this poem a lover addresses his beloved who refuses to grant him sexual favours on account of her modesty and her sense of honour. The lover says that her coyness or sexual reluctance would have been justified if they had enough space and time at their disposal. If they had enough space at their disposal, she could have occupied herself by searching for rubies on the banks of the Indian river, the Ganges, while he would complain about his

unfulfilled love on the banks of the river Humber in England. If they had enough time at their disposal, he would have started loving her ten years before the Great Flood (mentioned in The Bible). While she could refuse to satisfy his desire till the Judgement Day. If they really had enough time, he would spend a hundred years in praising her eyes and gazing at her forehead; he would spend two hundred years in admiring each of her breasts; and he would spend thirty thousand years in praising the remaining parts of her body. But all this is not possible. Time is passing at a very fast pace, and eventually they have to face the “deserts of vast eternity”. After some years, her beauty will no longer be found on this earth. She will lie in her marble tomb, and he would no longer be there to sing his love-song. There, in the grave, worms will attack her long-preserved virginity. All her fastidious sense of honour will then turn to dust, and all his desire to make love to her will then turn to ashes. The grave is a fine and private place. but nobody can enjoy the pleasure of love-making there. Therefore, it would be appropriate for both of them to enjoy the pleasures of love when there is still time, when her skin is still youthful and fresh, and when her responsive soul is still turning with a desire for love-making. They should, like amorous birds of prey, devour the pleasure of love, which now time still permits them to enjoy, rather than suffering the pangs of unsatisfied love. They should enjoy the pleasure of love- making with all their energy and vigour, and they should even become fierce in extracting the maximum pleasure from their love-making. If they cannot arrest the passage of time, they can at least quicken time’s speed of passing.

14.12 CRITICAL ANALYSIS

Marvell wrote this poem in the classical tradition of a Latin love elegy, in which the speaker/poet praises his beloved through the motif of *carpe diem*, or "seize the day." The poem also reflects the tradition of the erotic blazon, in which a poet constructs elaborate images of his beloved's beauty by carving her body into parts. Its verse form consists of rhymed couplets in iambic tetrameter, proceeding as AA, BB, CC, and so forth.

The speaker/poet begins by constructing a thorough and elaborate conceit of the many things he "would" do to honour his beloved properly, if the two lovers indeed had enough time. He posits impossible stretches of time during which the two might play games of courtship. He claims he could love her from ten years before the Biblical flood narrated in the Book of Genesis, while she could refuse his advances up until the "conversion of the Jews," which refers to the day of Christian judgment prophesied for the end of times in the New Testament's Book of Revelations.

The speaker/poet then uses the metaphor of a "vegetable love" to suggest a slow and steady progress which would allow him to praise his beloved's features-eyes, forehead, breasts, and heart - in increments of hundreds and even thousands of years, which he says that she clearly deserves due to her superior stature. He assures her that he would never value her at a "lower rate " than she deserves, at least in an ideal world where time is unlimited.

Marvell praises his beloved's beauty by complimenting her individual features using a device called an erotic blazon, which also evokes the influential techniques of 15th and 16th century Petrarchan love poetry. Petrarchan poetry is based upon rarifying and distancing the female beloved, making her into an unattainable object. In this poem, though, the speaker/poet only uses these devices to suggest that distancing himself from his lover is mindless, because they do not have the limitless time necessary for the speaker to praise the Lady sufficiently. He, therefore , constructs an erotic blazon only to assert its futility.

The poem's nature shifts in line 21, when the speaker/poet asserts that "Time's winged chariot" is always near. The speaker's/poet's rhetoric changes from an acknowledgement of his beloved's limitless virtue to insisting on the radical limitations of their time as embodied beings. Once dead, he assures his beloved that her virtues and her beauty will lie in the grave along with her body as it turns to dust. Likewise, the speaker/poet imagines his

lust being reduced to ashes, while the chance for the two lovers to join sexually will be lost forever.

The third and final section of the poem shifts into an all-out display of poetic prowess in which the speaker/poet attempts to win over his beloved. He compares her skin to a vibrant layer of morning dew that is animated by the fires of her soul and encourages her to "sport" with him "while we may." Time devours all things, the speaker/poet acknowledges, but he nonetheless asserts that the two of them can, in fact, turn the tables on time. They can become "amorous birds of prey" that actively consume the time they have through passionate lovemaking.

14.13 SELF - CHECK QUESTIONS

- a) "To His Coy Mistress" is apoem.
- b) The coyness of the lady is not justified because..... .
- c) If they had lime enough at their disposal, the lover would have
- d) They should behave like of prey.
- e) They can quicken time's speed of passing by

14.14 GLOSSARY

- **coyness:** Evasiveness, hesitancy, modesty, coquetry, reluctance; playing hard to get.
- **which. . . walk :** Example of enjambment (carrying the sense of one line of verse over to the next line without a pause).
- **Ganges:** River in Asia originating in the Himalayas and flowing southeast, through India, to the Bay of Bengal. The young man here suggests that the young lady could postpone her commitment to him if her youth lasted a long time. She could take real or imagined journeys abroad, even to India. She could also refuse to commit herself to him until all the Jews convert to

Christianity. But since youth is fleeting (as the poem later points out), there is no time for such journeys. She must submit herself to him now.

- **rubies:** Gems that may be rose red or purplish red. In folklore, it is said that rubies protect and maintain virginity. Ruby deposits occur in various parts of the world, but the most precious ones are found in Asia, including Myanmar (Burma), India, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, and Russia.
- **Humber:** River in northeastern England. It flows through Hull, Andrew Marvell's hometown.
- **Flood :** Jews: Resorting to hyperbole, the young man says that his love for the young lady is unbounded by time. He would love her ten years before Great Flood that Noah outlasted in his ark (Gen.5:28-10:32) and would still love her until all Jews became Christians at the end of the world.
- **vegetable love:** Love cultivated and nurtured like a vegetable so that it flourishes prolifically
- **this state :** This lofty position; this dignity.
- **Time's winged chariot :** In Greek mythology, the sun was personified as the god Apollo, who rode his golden chariot from east to west each day. Thus, Marvell here associates the sun god with the passage of time.
- **marble Vault :** The young lady's tomb.
- **worms:** A morbid phallic reference.
- **quaint:** Preserved carefully or skillfully.
- **dew:** The 1681 manuscript of the poem uses *glew* (not *dew*), as apparently a coined past tense for *glow*.
- **transpires :** Erupts, breaks out, emits, gives off.
- **slow-chapt :** Chewing or eating slowly.
- **thorough :** Through.

14.15 REFERENCE TO THE CONTEXT

a) Had we but world enough, and time,
This coyness. Lady, were no crime.
We would sit down and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian 'Ganges' side
Shouldst rubies find ; I by the tide
Of Humber would complain.

1) **Reference :** These are the opening lines of Andrew Marvell's love poem "To His Coy Mistress". In this poem the speaker/ lover offers a strong plea for the beloved to soften towards him and to relax her rigid attitude of Puritanical reluctance to grant him sexual favours because life is too short to wait for anything.

2) **Explanation :** The speaker / lover says that her coyness or sexual reluctance would have been justified if they had enough space and time at their disposal. If they had enough space at their disposal, she could have occupied herself by searching for rubies on the banks of the Indian river, the Ganga, while he would complain about his unfulfilled love on the banks of the river Humber in England.

3) **Critical Comment :** Though Marvell belonged to the Puritan age and was closely associated with Milton, his verses do not display any Puritan rigidity of morals. Infact, these lines in which a lover is wooing the lady to grant him sexual favours is anti-Puritan in vein.

b) But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near ;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.

Thy Beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
My echoing song :

1) **Reference :** These lines are taken from the poem “To His Coy Mistress” written by Andrew Marvell. In this poem the speaker / lover offers a strong plea for the beloved to soften towards him because life is too short to wait for anything.

2) **Explanation :** In these lines the speaker / lover says that time is passing at a very fast pace and after this life there is no time but eternity. But that eternity is like a desert, barren without hope, where there is nothing that can cheer up a human being. After some years, her beauty will no longer be found on this earth. She will lie in her marble tomb, and he would no longer be there to sing his love-song.

3) **Critical Comment:** These lines show the poet’s belief in ‘this-worldliness’ instead of the ‘other worldliness’ or supposed life after death which he says is nothing but a ‘desert of vast eternity.’

c) Now let us sport us while we may.
And now, like amorous birds of prey.
Rather at once our time devour.
Than languish in his slow-chapt power.

1) **Reference :** These lines are taken from the poem “To His Coy Mistress” written by Andrew Marvell. In this poem the speaker / lover offers a strong plea for the beloved to soften towards him because life is too short to wait for anything.

2) **Explanation :** In these lines the speaker / lover tells the lady ‘that now is the time to love when both of them can feel the fires of passion. Now, in the present moment, like amorous birds of prey overcome by their passion, they should rather utilize their time to satisfy their desires

greedily than suffer slowly in the grip of time which will grind them slowly in its cruel jaws.

- 3) **Critical Comment :** In these lines the speaker / lover dwells upon the mortality of youth and passion to prevail upon his lady to surrender to him. The poet makes use of a highly sensuous imagery of the amorous birds of prey.

14.16 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

- a) Sum up the main ideas of the poem in your own words.

Ans. The poem is spoken by a male lover to his female beloved as an attempt to convince her to sleep with him. The speaker argues that the Lady's shyness and hesitancy would be acceptable if the two had "world enough, and time." But because they are finite human beings, he thinks they should take advantage of their sensual embodiment while it lasts.

- b) What are the arguments that the lover puts forth to convince his beloved to give up her shyness?

Ans. He tells the lady that her beauty, as well as her " long-preserved virginity," will only become food for worms unless she gives herself to him while she lives. Rather than preserve any lofty ideals of chastity and virtue , the speaker affirms, the lovers ought to "roll all our strength, and all/Our sweetness, up into one ball." He is alluding to their physical bodies coming together in the act of love making.

- c) Attempt a critical appreciation of the poem 'To His Coy Mistress'.

Ans. "To His Coy Mistress" is probably the best-known poem of Andrew Marvell and the most popular one. It is a love-poem in which the speaker offers a strong plea for the beloved to soften towards him and to relax her rigid attitude of Puritanical reluctance to grant him sexual favours. The lover builds up a really strong case and supports it with arguments which no sensible woman can reject. The poem has thus what is known

as a *carpe diem* theme—a word taken from the Latin phrase ‘*Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero*’ meaning ‘enjoy the present day, trusting the least possible to the future’.

Syllogism : The poem is written in the form of what is known as a syllogism which means an argument developed in a strictly logical form and leading to a definite conclusion. In a syllogism there are three stages which may be indicated by the words “if”, “but” and “therefore”. The poem is divisible into three clearly marked sections - “if” in ‘Had we but world enough’; “but” in ‘But at my back I always hear’; and “therefore” in ‘Now, therefore, while the youthful hue.’ Thus the poem begins with the statement of a condition; then reasons are given why that condition cannot be fulfilled; and finally a conclusion is drawn.

Imagery and Metaphysical Conceits : There are a number of concrete pictures in the poem, and a whole series of metaphysical conceits. The very notion of the lover that, having enough space and time at their disposal, they would be able to wander as far apart as the Indian Ganges and the English Humber is fantastic. Then his saying that he would love his mistress from a time ten years before the Great Flood and would spend hundred and thousands of years in admiring and adoring various parts of her body constitutes another metaphysical conceit. The picture of Time’s winged chariot hurrying and coming closer evokes a vivid concrete picture as opposed to a conceit. The picture of the woman lying in her grave and the worms attacking her long-preserved-virginity is again a conceit.

Concentration and Compression : The style of the poem is marked by compression and economy in the use of words. The entire poem has an epigrammatic quality. The poem seems to be able to say everything in very few words. For example.

Thy beauty shall no more be found,
Nor, in thy marble vault shall sound

My echoing song.

OR

The grave's a fine and private place,
But none I think, do there embrace.

This epigrammatic quality adds to the terseness and intensity of the poem.

“To His Coy Mistress” is a beautiful poem marked by metaphysical irony and wit. It has been equally praised by all the critics and there is no doubt that it is the crown achievement of Marvell.

- d) Why does this poem, written in the 17th Century, remain popular in the 21st Century?
- e) Analyze the personality and character of the young man in the poem “to His Coy Mistress”.
- f) Identify examples in the poem of metaphor, alliteration, hyperbole, personification, and other figures of speech.
- g) Why does Marvell use the word echoing in line 27?
- h) What is Marvell's tone (or attitude) in lines 31 and 32?

14.17 RECAPITULATION OF THE POEM

“To His Coy Mistress” is one of the best known poems of Andrew Marvell. It is a love poem and although Andrew wrote in the Puritan age, the poem is highly sensuous. The speaker/poet in the poem is a lover who is pleading with his beloved, trying to convince her to shed her coyness or shyness and grant him sexual favours. He says that if they had enough time and space, then this shyness would have been justified. But time passes away quickly, life is short and youth is shorter still. Thus without wasting time they should enjoy to the fullest extent the fruits of making love. After life, in death there is nothing except barren eternity with nothing to offer. So they should make the most of

the life they have and not let the present moment slip away. He says that if they can't stop time they can quicken its pace by enjoying love-making because when one is enjoying, time seems to fly.

14.18 ANSWER-KEY

- a) love
- b) they don't have enough time and space.
- c) started loving her ten years before the Great flood
- d) amorous birds
- e) extracting the maximum pleasure from their love making

14.19 SUGGESTED READING

- a) *Andrew Marvell : Poems* — Ed. by Arthur Pollard
(Casebook Series)
- b) *Andrew Marvell: The Complete Poems* — Ed. by Elizabeth
Story Donno
- c) *Andrew Marvell* — by MC Bradbook and MG Lloyd Thomas

“ON HIS BLINDNESS”

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 15.1 Introduction
- 15.2 Objectives
- 15.3 Introduction to the Poet
- 15.4 Introduction to the Poem
- 15.5 Summary
- 15.6 Sum and Substance
- 15.7 Self- Check Questions (SCQs)
- 15.8 Key Words
- 15.9 Comprehension Questions
- 15.10 Examination Oriented Questions (EOQs)
- 15.11 Recapitulation of the Lesson
- 15.12 Answer Key
- 15.13 Suggested Reading

15.1 INTRODUCTION

Well learners in this lesson we are going to read “On His Blindness” by John Milton. John Milton (December 9 1608- November 8 1674) was an English poet, polemicist, man of letters, and a civil servant for the

Commonwealth of England under Oliver Cromwell. He wrote at a time of religious unrest and political disturbance, and is best known for his epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), written in blank verse.

15.2 OBJECTIVES

Our objective in this lesson is:

- (a) to acquaint you with the life and works of the poet ; John Milton
- (b) to give you information about the poem “On His Blindness.”
- (c) To help you prepare the poem from the examination point of view.

15.3 INTRODUCTION TO THE POET

John Milton (1608-1674) the greatest poet of England was born on December 9, 1608 in London. He was educated at Christ's College, Cambridge.

In 1643, he married Mary Powell, a shallow, pleasure loving girl, the daughter of Royalist, and that was the beginning of sorrows. In 1652, Milton became completely blind. Milton died peacefully of gout in November, 1674, and was buried in the church of St. Giles, Cripplegate. His funeral was attended by "his learned and great Friends" in London. A monument in the name of Milton rests in Poets' Corner at Westminster Abbey. His famous works are:

1. L'Allegro
2. Il Penseroso
3. Camus
4. Lycidas
5. Paradise Lost
6. Paradise Regained
7. Samson Agonistes

15.4 INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM

On His Blindness

WHEN I consider how my light is spent
E're half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one Talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my Soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, least he returning chide,
Doth God exact day-labour, light deny'd,
I fondly ask; But patience to prevent
That murmur, soon replies, God doth not need
Either man's work or his own gifts, who best
Bear his milde oke, they serve him best, his State
Is Kingly. Thousands at his bidding speed
And post o're Land and Ocean without rest:
They also serve who only stand and waite.

“On His Blindness” represents on a small scale, the theme of Milton's epics “Paradise Lost” and “Paradise Regained.” Milton became blind at the age of forty- three. Here he expresses the fear that his poetic talent would go waste. Therefore, he raises the question of justness of God's ways to man in relation to his own loss of sight. But he takes comfort in the lessons of patience and perseverance.

The poem is a sonnet. Dear learners, do you know what is a sonnet? A sonnet is a fourteen line poem. The form originated in Italy. Giacomo da Lentini is credited with its invention. The term sonnet is derived from Italian word *sonetto* (from Old Provencal *sonnet* a little poem, from *son* song, from Latin *sonus* a sound). By the thirteen century it signified a poem of fourteen lines that follows a strict rhyme scheme and specific structure.

15.5 SUMMARY

John Milton's poem "On His Blindness" is an autobiographical sonnet in which Milton meditates on his own loss of sight. For most of his life, Milton had been able to see perfectly, but his late-night reading and writing on behalf of the government of the short-lived English Republic, in which he held a very prominent position, helped ruin his eyesight.

This sonnet, written in the "Petrarchan" rhyme scheme associated with the fourteenth century Italian poet Francesco Petrarca, is divided into an eight-line "octave" and a six-line "sestet." The octave rhymes a/b/b/a/a/b/b/a. The sestet rhymes c/d/e/c/d/e. The sonnet is therefore a typical Petrarchan sonnet in form, but in subject matter, the poem departs from the topics usually associated with Petrarchan poems. Petrarch (the English version of Petrarca's name) was most famous for writing about love; Milton departs from that conventional topic to deal with a very practical, very physical problem, but a problem with many broader spiritual implications.

When the poet thinks about the fact that he has lost his eyesight before reaching even middle age, a question arises in his mind. "Doth God exact day-labour light denied?" This big world is all dark to him because he has become blind. He would like to know whether God wants a person to work when he has deprived him of eyesight. Since he is blind, he cannot make use of his poetic talent with which he is endowed. He is conscious of his poetic abilities and he feels that it is like death not to give expression to his poetic feelings. The poet here refers to the parable of the Talents given in the Bible. A master has three servants. Before setting out on a journey, he gives them money, five talents to the first, two to the second and one to the third. The first two servants trade with their money and double the amount given to them, but the third merely buries the money underground. When the master returns, he is happy with the first two servants but is angry with the third who has done nothing with the money he was given. He takes from him even the little money he gave him, and gives it to the first servant, who already has ten talents. Here God is the master, and the servants

are human beings. It is man's duty to make full use of the abilities that have been given to him by God. Linking it with the context of the poem the poet says that God had given him one talent i.e., the poetic gift, but the means of using it has been taken away from him. The talent is lying with him useless. It is a shame, a crime to make no use of talent.

But he is unable to do so because of his blindness. His mind is much inclined to serve God and prove himself worthy of his creation.

In the second part of the poem, patience gives the answer to the question.

"Doth God exact day labour, light denied?" This question contains the poet's complaint. How can God expect any work from the poet when he has taken away his eyesight?

In order to check that complaint, the patience of the poet's mind comes out with a satisfactory reply. God does not want any man's work when he is physically incapable of doing it. God also does not want any return for his own gifts. Those, who patiently bear God's punishment and accept whatever sorrows or joys, he sends are his true servants. God has thousands of angels as his attendants moving over land and sea. But those who patiently wait for their turn to come serve God truly.

15.6 SUM AND SUBSTANCE

In "On His Blindness," Milton writes of his experience of blindness. He asks if God wants him to keep working, in spite of the fact that his job caused him to lose his eye sight. A personified Patience tells him that God rewards even those who stand and wait to be of service.

Milton went blind working for the English Republic. His service to the government often required that he stay up late reading and writing. This caused him to lose his eye sight.

The poem takes the form of a Petrarchan sonnet. Petrarchan sonnets traditionally focus on love and romance, but Milton subverts this in order to explore his relationship with God.

Milton says that God has given him **one talent**, i.e., the poetic gift, but the means of using it has been taken away from him. He has become blind. He fears that his poetic talent would go waste. He thinks God may scold him when he presents his accounts. Therefore, he raises the question of the justness of God's ways to man in relation to his own loss of sight. But he takes comfort in the lessons of patience and perseverance. Patience, the inner voice of his conscience tells him that God does not need man's work or anything in return for his own gifts. There are thousands of soldiers/angels spread over land and sea carrying out God's commands, but even those who only stand and wait for orders serve God. Therefore, even if Milton cannot serve God actively due to his blindness, he can serve him by bearing his yoke patiently.

15.7 SELF-CHECK QUESTIONS (SCQS)

Answer the following questions briefly :

- (a) Name the two famous epics written by John Milton.
- (b) Which age does John Milton represent?
- (c) What does 'One talent' refer to in the poem?
- (d) Why is Milton angry with God?
- (e) Who comes to Milton's rescue?

15.8 KEY WORDS

- | | | |
|----------------|---|----------------------------------|
| Light | - | refers to the poet's eye sight. |
| Spent | - | extinguished |
| Half my day | - | half my life |
| Dark world | - | the world is dark to a blind man |
| Lodged with me | - | given into my keeping |
| Exact | - | insist on |
| Fondly | - | foolishly |

- Patience - enduring trouble, suffering. Here patience has been personified
- Prevent - Check, stop
- Murmur - Complaint
- Yoke - Wooden cross-piece fastened over the necks of two oxen and attached to the plough or wagon that they are to draw.
- Thousands - These are the huge ,mighty and royal armies of angels.
- Post - A reference to a number of men placed with horses at intervals, the duty of each being to ride with letters or messages to the next stage.
- Stand and Wait - Attend as a servant to receive orders

15.9 COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1. Explain these lines-

When I consider how my light is spent.
Ere half my days, in this dark world.

Ans. In these lines John Milton expresses his depression over the loss of his eyesight. He has lost the light of his eyes before he has lived half his life. This big world is all dark to him because he is blind.

Q2. Explain these lines-

God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts : who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best.

Ans. In these lines the patience of the poet's mind come out with a satisfactory reply. God does not want any man's work when he is physically incapable of doing it. God also does not want any return for his own gifts. Those who patiently

bear God's punishment and accept whatever sorrows or joys he sends are his true servants. God has thousands of angels as his attendants moving over land and sea. But those who patiently wait for their turn to come serve God truly.

15.10 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

Q1. What does the poet say about the loss of his eyesight?

Ans. Milton, at first, feels like blaming God for his blindness. When he considers how he has lost the light of his eyes 'ere half my days' and how that one talent, (his poetic genius) to hide which is as painful as death, is lying with him 'useless', he gets frustrated and asks himself fondly. "Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?" In other words, he asks how God can expect any work from him when he has taken away his eyesight. But on second thought, resulting from his patience, Milton feels that God does not need man's work. Milton knows that God does not ask return from man for each gift given by Him. We must have faith in God. Thus, in the first part of the poem, the poet laments his lot as a blind man because the loss of eyesight makes it extremely difficult for him to use the one talent that God had given him. Yet in the second part of the poem, he expresses feelings of resignation and his undiminished faith in God's justice.

2. Discuss the implication of, 'one talent which is death to hide'.

Ans. The poet here makes a reference to the Parable of Talents given in the Bible.

In the parable, the word 'talent' is a gold coin. But in the general context of the poem, 'talent' means a special aptitude for writing poetry or poetic gift. Milton's talent was his poetic gift. He wishes to serve God with his poetic genius. But when he considers how God has snatched away his eye sight and consequently, how his poetic talent remains unused, he asks himself whether God demands work from a man whose eye sight. He has snatched away.

"Which is death to hide", can be explained in different ways. Some of the possible interpretations are:

1. to hide which is as painful as death,
2. hiding it would mean death for me,
3. only death can take it away from me.

The first meaning appears to be the most appropriate.

The poet is very eager to write poems; despite the physical setback. Milton's spirit yearns to serve God through this talent but he is unable to do so because of his blindness.

3. What does the poet murmur about?

Ans The poet murmurs against God. On the one hand, God has given him poetic gift and on the other hand he has deprived him of his eyesight. So he complains about his blindness

4. Trace the development of thought in the poem "On His Blindness".

Ans Refer Summary 15.5

5. How does Milton justify the ways of God to man?

Ans. Milton has the gift of writing poetry bestowed by God. But Milton has become blind. His blindness has made him incapable of making good use of his poetic talent. Thus, there is a reason for Milton to feel unhappy or dissatisfied. But soon he realises that his dissatisfaction is baseless. He argues with himself that God's position is like that of a great king. Thousands of angels keep attending to different duties given to them. They do not stop to take rest even for a single minute. Evidently, they are very loyal to God. But there are angels who keep standing, waiting for the orders of God. Although they do not work, yet they are loyal. So is the case with human beings. They are required to adjust themselves to their circumstances. True service lies in that. Man should not grumble about his misfortunes. On the other hand, he

should learn to adjust himself to the present situation. God's ways to man are just. Man must submit himself to the will of God.

6. How does his inner voice or patience help Milton?

Ans . The inner voice or patience explains to the poet the whole relationship between God and man. It tells the poet that God does not need man's work. Nor does God demand from man anything in return for His gifts. Those who bow down to God's will humbly are His best servants. Willing submission to the decree of God is His best service. God is the King of kings. He has infinite angels at His command. These angels move over land and sea without rest. They carry out the directions of God most speedily.

Thus, patience teaches Milton the lesson of devotion and submission to God's will. It tells the poet, "who best Bear His milde Yoke, they serve Him best'. The poet comes to realise that " They also serve who only stand and wait". God does not demand from man anything in return for His gifts. The best service of God is to put up with His will cheerfully. Man should not grumble over his lot. He should remain cheerful in whatever situation God places him. Thus patience reassures the poet's heart with peace. No doubt, he cannot serve God actively due to his blindness. But he can serve Him by bearing his Yoke patiently.

Q7. From where is the word 'talent' taken?

In line three, the poet refers to "one talent'," alluding to the famous passage in the Bible (Matthew 25:14-30) in which a master gives three servants different numbers of "talents" (coins) before he departs.

Q8. Why is Milton, the poet frustrated?

Milton, the poet is frustrated that his blindness is preventing him from serving God when he wants to so badly:

...Though my Soul more bent

To serve therewith my Maker, and present

My true account...(lines 4-6)

Q9. What does 'true account' refer to ?

Milton's 'true account' refers to his religious poetry. Much of his poetry was concerned with God's relationship to mankind and he considered it a serious duty to write poetry that simultaneously made God's mysterious ways more clear to people and honored God with its reverence.

15.11 RECAPITULATION OF THE LESSON

This poem is based on the idea that the ways of God to man are just. Man must adjust himself to the circumstances in which God has placed him. The real service of God lies in feeling happy and contented with our lot. God does not want anything in return for the gifts that he has given to human beings. Those who accept God's will cheerfully are his best servants.

15.12 ANSWER KEY

Self-Check Questions

- (a) The two famous epics written by John Milton are *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*.
- (b) John Milton represents the Puritan age.
- (c) 'One talent' refers to his poetic gift in the poem.
- (d) Milton is angry with God because God has given him the gift of poetic talent and has also taken away his eyesight before he has lived half of his life in this world. He fails to understand how he is going to serve God.
- (e) His inner voice, that is the voice of his conscience comes to his rescue.

15.13 SUGGESTED READING

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A BALLAD UPON A WEDDING

UNIT STRUCTURE

- 16.1 Introduction to the Poet
- 16.2 Objectives
- 16.3 About “A Ballad upon a Wedding”
- 16.4 Text of the Poem “A Ballad upon a Wedding”
- 16.5 Summary of the poem
- 16.6 Glossary
- 16.7 Reference to Context
- 16.8 Examination oriented questions
- 16.9 Suggested Readings

16.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE POET, JOHN SUCKLING

Sir John Suckling lived a very short life in the first half of the 17th century and has been described, by many historians, in terms such as “cavalier playboy” or “fop”. He was much more than that though and, at the tender age of 18, was sent abroad in an ambassadorial role by King Charles I. He also carried out military service both at home and abroad; this was the time of the Thirty Years War and Suckling spent time fighting in the Low Countries. Additionally he was a poet who wrote in a witty, somewhat carefree style that was much favoured at

the Royal court. His flamboyant air and easy, aristocratic charm made him a popular courtier and the King knighted him at the tender age of 21.

Suckling was born into a prosperous family in February 1609 who were living at that time in the district of Whitton, West London. He attended Westminster School and Trinity College, Cambridge but did not stay long enough to earn a degree. He then studied law at Grays Inn, London but again left those studies before they were completed. By this time though he was a wealthy man, his father having died and left him considerable estates. Then began his spell of office in the Low Countries but he was back at Court two years later to renew his acquaintance with a life of pleasure. He spent many a morning perfecting his bowling style or playing card games and it said that he invented the game of Cribbage. Born in 1609 in Twickenham, Middlesex, John Suckling was the eldest son of an aristocratic and influential family. His father was a Member of Parliament who held various court positions and his mother, Martha Cranfield, was the daughter of a wealthy merchant and the sister of Lionel Cranfield, who became Lord Treasurer of England. In 1623, he entered Trinity College, Cambridge, but left without obtaining a degree. Suckling led a dissolute life, gambling and carousing as a student and in 1627, he went to Gray's Inn, where he hoped to continue his education; however, the death of his father soon afterward put an end to his studies. After inheriting nearly the whole of his father's large estate, Suckling entered the military. He fought during the Thirty Years' War, accompanying the Duke of Buckingham to the Island of Ré in 1627, and joining Lord Wimbledon's expedition to the Low Countries in 1629. Suckling returned to his studies at the University of Leydon for a brief time in 1630, and was knighted in the same year by King Charles. He then entered the service of Sir Henry Vane, ambassador to the King of Sweden, until he returned to England in 1632. Upon his return Suckling led an extravagant life, conducting numerous affairs with women and incurring massive gambling debts, which forced him to sell off much of his inherited estate. At this time he began to pursue the heiress Anne Willoughby, probably seeking to replenish his wealth, but he ultimately failed in his effort after years

of intrigue and violent opposition from her father and rival suitors. Suckling began writing poetry in the early 1630s, but the majority of his works were not published until after his death; his first published work was *Aglaura*, a play which was produced in 1638 by the King's Company at court and at the Blackfriars Theatre. His appointment as a Gentleman of the Privy Chamber Extraordinary in 1638 may have been connected to the flattering depiction of courtly life in *Aglaura*, which was meant to catch the attention of the court. Suckling became active in the military again in 1639, during the First Bishops' War, and served as the captain of a troop of carabineers in 1640. Around this time, Suckling was elected to Parliament, but his political life was cut short by his involvement in the Army Plot of 1641—an attempt to free condemned prisoner Sir Thomas Wentworth, an advisor to the King and an opponent of Parliament. After the plot failed, a writ for Suckling's arrest was issued, but he fled to France. He was subsequently convicted, in absentia, of high treason. Suckling died soon after his escape to France. Although there are conflicting accounts of his death, the most credible evidence suggests that he committed suicide by drinking poison.

The canon of Suckling's poems include the first volume of his works, *Fragmenta Aurea*, (1646) which was not published until five years after his death. Suckling wrote poetry in a variety of forms, including satires, songs, sonnets, verse epistles, epithalamia, and epigrams. Thematically, his poems often reflect his libertine outlook. A great many of his poems concerned with love, courtship, and the relationship between the sexes—such as his early work "Loving and Beloved"—illustrate his humor and cynicism. One of Suckling's most famous poems, "A Ballade Upon a Wedding," parodies the typical epithalamion in honor of a bride and groom and demonstrates that even such a sacred event was not safe from his satiric wit and cynical view of romantic relationships. "Woman's Constancy" presents a similarly cynical view of love and reflects women as untrustworthy, deceitful, and inconstant—a common stereotype of women during the Renaissance. One of Suckling's most important and often imitated poems is "The Wits," a satirical depiction of a

group of poets who are competing for the crown of poetic excellence. Suckling uses the poem to ridicule his contemporaries—as well as himself—by mocking their poetry, attitudes, and physical appearance. In addition to writing poetry, Suckling also composed three plays, all of which were popular in their time. *Aglaura*, his most successful play, is a tale of excessive love, jealousy, and infidelity, the play centers on the title character, a Persian woman who is wanted in marriage by both a king and his son. Suckling wrote two versions of the final act—a tragic and tragicomic ending. The tragic version ends with the death of all the main characters; the tragicomic version features forgiveness and repentance. The play was evidently written to impress an aristocratic audience. The tragicomic version was probably composed to please Queen Henrietta Maria, who disliked tragic endings.

Suckling was widely admired in his own day, and his reputation rose to great heights during the Restoration with the frequent and successful revivals of his plays. Although his literary stature has diminished since that time, modern critics still regard Suckling as an important poet of the seventeenth century, and note his influence on later poets. Critics have observed that, like most Cavalier Poets, Suckling was influenced by Ben Jonson's unadorned style and use of iambic pentameter and tetrameter.

Suckling is commonly considered the quintessential Cavalier Poet—a soldier-poet associated with the court of Charles I. His poems, like those of his fellow Cavalier Poets Thomas Carew, Richard Lovelace, and Edmund Waller, are noted for their sophisticated wit, urbanity, and exaggerated gallantry, often tinged with cynicism and irony. Suckling was also infamous for his gambling, womanizing, and involvement in political conspiracy, and the image of him as a libertine courtier who effortlessly composed highly polished verse earned him the epithet “Natural, easy Suckling.” Suckling was also an accomplished amateur playwright whose first play, the richly extravagant *Aglaura* (1638), was both a critical and a popular success. Michael P. Parker has compared Suckling's poems to those of fellow Cavalier Poet Thomas Carew, contending that while

Carew's poetry looks back to earlier seventeenth-century poets, Suckling's poetry looks forward and anticipates future trends. Many twentieth-century critics have searched for deeper meaning in Suckling's poetry, beneath its surface cynicism and wit, and have discovered a more serious layer to many of his works. Frans Dirk de Soet has studied several of Suckling's songs and poems and has found that "at times he could be inspired by sublime and elevated thoughts." Like de Soet, Raymond A. Anselment has argued that Suckling was not a typical Cavalier Poet. In his examination of Suckling's love poetry Anselment found that beyond their apparent cynicism lies "a complex and even sensitive search for the wisdom in love." Other modern critical studies have focused on the establishment of a canon of Suckling's works; examinations of his letters and the short essay, *An Account of Religion by Reason* (1637); and assessments of his dramatic works. In general, modern critics have been less impressed with Suckling's plays than his poems. Charles L. Squier comments upon Suckling's abilities as a playwright, maintaining that his dramatic genius may be found in his "distinctive and brilliant".

Thomas Clayton divides Suckling's poetic career into four periods. The earliest poems, discovered by L. A. Beaurline in manuscript in the late 1950's, consist of a Christmas devotional sequence and two meditations on faith and salvation written before or during 1626. These pieces are derivative and not of great literary value, but they do suggest the young Suckling's receptiveness to influences and stylistic options open to him. Two of the eleven poems are important inasmuch as they forecast the themes that would run through Suckling's best-known lyrics. In "Faith and Doubt," the speaker contemplates the Christian mysteries of the incarnation and redemption; suspended between a desire to believe and an inability to move beyond the rational, he prays for the experience vouchsafed the apostle Thomas—the confirmation of faith through the senses. The speaker's troubled doubt serves as a prologue to the pose of libertine skepticism that Suckling later adopted in his amatory verse. Even more central to Suckling's poetic vision, perhaps,

is the exuberant description of rustic customs and superstitions in “Upon Christmas Eve.” With a sensitivity reminiscent of Robert Herrick, Suckling testified to his rural upbringing and his obvious delight in country life. Beneath the elegant courtliness of later poems this theme will persist, eventually reemerging in “A Ballad upon a Wedding.”

He was certainly a poet with no real interest in serious writing or publishing fame. His work is lyrical and stylish and was very popular at the time, but it could never be placed alongside great English writers such as [Thomas Carew](#) or Ben Johnson, both contemporaries of Suckling at that time. He even dabbled in politics, winning a seat in Parliament for a very short time before it was dissolved.

His military career was undistinguished and he was part of a failed campaign with the King in 1639 where the English were defeated by the Scots. He liked to dress his troops in bright colours – usually scarlet – and this flamboyance caused him to suffer a great deal of ridicule. In 1641 he was part of a Royalist plot to rescue the Earl of Stafford from the Tower of London and, because of this treasonable act, he was forced to flee the country. He reached Paris but lived for only a matter of months.

There are conflicting stories about how and when Suckling died. One theory is that he was injured deliberately by a servant who placed a nail or some sharp object in his boot and the infection that resulted from this wound eventually killed him. The other story was that he took poison and thus committed suicide, possibly as a result of losing his fortune through various means. It is possible that the servant who wounded him stole all of his master’s important papers and money.

Some accounts say that Sir John Suckling died around May 1641 while others place his death some time during the following year. He was no more than 33 years of age when he died.

16.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective of this chapter is to make the student aware about the English Cavalier poet, John Suckling, who is best known for his poem “A

Ballad upon a Wedding”, written on the occasion of the marriage of Roger Boyle with Margaret Howard. Further, its aim is to focus upon the artistic genius of the poet whose poetry is infused with naïve and rustic language. The detailed summary of the poem highlights the celebration of marriage of Suckling’s friend in a festive tone.

16.3 ABOUT “A BALLAD UPON A WEDDING”

This poem was probably written for the marriage of Roger Boyle, Baron Broghill, and the Lady Margaret Howard in 1641. The marriage celebrated was likely that of Lord Lovelace to Anne Wentworth in 1638, the “Dick” being Richard Lovelace. The verses describe the bride, with others relating details about the food served at the celebration. The humor introduced at the bride’s expense remains good humor, supporting the festive tone of the happy event. Suckling’s artistry and ingenuity infused with a naive and hearty rustic have delighted readers for three centuries.

“Ballad upon a Wedding” is inimitable for witty levity and choice beauty of expression. It has touches of graphic description and liveliness equal to the pictures of Chaucer. The poem is a rustic contrast to most of Suckling’s cynical verse; it is casual, colloquial, a bit boisterous, and spiced with a faint trace of bawdiness.

Text of the Poem “A Ballad upon a Wedding”

I TELL 1 thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I, the rarest things have seen;
O, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
Be it at Wake or Fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st!) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs;
And there, did I see coming down
Such folk as are not in our town,
Forty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent fine
(His beard no bigger, though, than thine)
Walked on before the rest.
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The King (God bless him!), 'twould undo him,
Should he go still so drest.

At Course-a-Park, without all doubt,
He should have first been taken out
By all the Maids i' th' town;
Though lusty Roger there had been
Or little George upon the Green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? The Youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing.
The Parson for him stayed;
Yet, by his leave, for all his haste,
He did not so much wish all past,

Perchance, as did the Maid.

The Maid (and thereby hangs a tale!): 4

For such a Maid no Whitsun-Ale

Could ever yet produce;

No grape that 's kindly ripe could be

So round, so plump, so soft, as She;

Nor half so full of juice!

Her Finger was so small, the ring

Would not stay on; which they did bring.

It was too wide a peck;

And to say truth, (for out it must)

It looked like the great collar (just)

About our young colt's neck.

Her Feet, beneath her petticoat,

Like little mice stole in and out,

As if they feared the light:

But O, She dances such a way!

No sun, upon an Easter Day,

Is half so fine a sight.

Her Cheeks so rare a white was on;

No daisy makes comparison;

Who sees them is undone;

For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Katherine pear
(The side that's next the sun).

Her lips were red, and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly:
But, Dick! her Eyes so guard her face;
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her Mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth, her words did break,
That they might passage get:
But She so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better;
And are not spent a whit!...

Just in the nick, the Cook knocked thrice,
And all the Waiters, in a trice,
His summons did obey;
Each Serving Man, with dish in hand,
Marched boldly up, like our Trained Band,
Presented, and away!

When all the meat was on the table;
What man of knife, or teeth, was able

To stay to be intreated!
And this the very reason was,
Before the Parson could say Grace,
The company was seated!
The business of the kitchen 's great,
For it is fit that men should eat;
Nor was it there denied.
(Passion o' me! how I run on!
There's that, that would be thought upon,
I trow, besides the Bride!)

Now, hats fly off; and Youths carouse!
Healts first go round; and then the house!
The Bride's came thick and thick;
And when 'twas named another's Health;
Perhaps, he made it hers by stealth;
(And who could help it, Dick?)

O' th' sudden, up they rise and dance;
Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
Then dance again and kiss!
Thus, several ways, the time did pass;
Whilst every woman wished her place,
And every man wished his!...

By this time all were stol'n aside
To counsel and undress the Bride;

But that he must not know:
But yet 'twas thought he guess'd her mind,
And did not mean to stay behind
Above an hour or so.
When in he came (Dick) there she lay
Like new-fal'n snow melting away,
('Twas time I trow to part)
Kisses were now the only stay,
Which soon she gave, as who would say,
Good Boy! with all my heart.

But just as heav'ns would have to cross it,
In came the Bridemaids with the Posset:
The Bridegroom eat in spite;
For had he left the Women to't
It would have cost two hours to do't,
Which were too much that night.

At length the candles out and out,
All that they had not done, they do't:
What that is, who can tell?
But I believe it was no more
Then thou and I have done before
With Bridget, and with Nell.

16.4 SUMMARY OF THE POEM

The speaker in the poem is anonymous and tells his story in six-line stanzas with a rhyme scheme “aabccb”. He makes clear that the Charing Cross wedding described is a special event, not one that took place in his part of town, where common laborers live. He addresses his friend Dick and begins by describing the event he witnessed as one of “the rarest things” he had ever seen. It occurred close to the place, he tells Dick, where the two “sell our hay”. The “Forty at least, in pairs” of folk he witnesses were “Such folk as are not in our town.” He first describes the groom as one who, had he appeared in “Course-a-Park,” would have been set upon by all the women. Then he describes the bride, noting “No grape, that’s kindly ripe, could be So round, so plump, so soft as she, Nor half so full of juice”.

As a court poet, Suckling spends many more lines on the subject of the bride than the groom. She had a tiny finger that the ring “Would not stay on,” and her feet looked “Like little mice,” while her cheeks “so rare a white was on, / No daisy makes comparison.” Her red lips appeared to have been bee stung, and her eyes were so guarded, perhaps by remaining downcast, that the speaker could not catch a good view of them. Her fragile nature is clear from the description of a tiny mouth that threatens to have its teeth broken from the spoken word. Suckling’s hyperbole complements the “tall tale” nature of the ballad subject matter.

The bride’s appearance did not dampen the celebration when the group sat to eat, served by a number of men carrying dishes. When “all the meat was on the table,” no man “was able / To stay to be intreated.” Instead, they ate with relish, dispatching the food. Later, “hats fly off, and youths carouse,” as everyone toasts the health of the new couple. Suckling well captures the joy of the scene, concluding,

On the sudden up they rise and dance; Then sit again and sigh, and glance:

Then dance again and kiss: Thus several ways the time did pass,
Whilst ev’ry woman wished her place, And every man wished his.

Suckling takes the reader on lyric flight through his ballad, its tone never losing its airy quality. The poem is an example of parody and it parodies an epithalamium, a wedding poem. Further, the poem is also an example of tail rhyme.

16.5 GLOSSARY

1. Dick: It has been suggested that Dick may be Suckling's friend, Richard Lovelace, but it is more likely a type name for a rustic.
2. Vorty: Rustic dialect for Forty.
3. 'At course-a-park': A country game in which a girl called out one of the other sex to chase her.
4. Whitsun-ale: A country merry-making held at Whitsuntide, fifty days after Easter.
5. 'Kindly ripe': Naturally, fully, ripe.
6. Katherine pear: The Catherine pear, a small and early variety.
7. Spent: Worn, consumed
8. Trained band: body of militia.
9. 'The bride's': The bride's health
10. A house with stairs: said to be Suffolk House, afterwards Northumberland House

16.6 REFERENCE TO CONTEXT

I TELL thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I, the rarest things have seen;
O, things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
Be it at Wake or Fair.

The speaker starts the poem by addressing his friend, Dick who is basically Richard Lovelace. He describes him the “rarest thing” that he had ever seen. This rarest thing referred by the speaker is the grand aristocratic wedding that took place in London. He states that such a sight cannot be ever traced ever and anywhere in any place, be it any moment of celebration or festival.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we (thou know'st!) do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs;
And there, did I see coming down
Such folk as are not in our town,
Forty at least, in pairs.

He suggests that the Charingcross wedding is a special event and it occurred close to the place, he tells Dick, where the two “sell our hay”. Being a farmer, the speaker, along with his friend come to London, to sell their products. He states that he sees forty pairs coming down from a house with stairs and this “Forty at least in pairs” of folk that he witnesses are not there in the town. Here the voice is that of a farmer who comes to sell hay in London and is a witness of this grand historic wedding.

Amongst the rest, one pest'lent fine
(His beard no bigger, though, than thine)
Walked on before the rest.
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The King (God bless him!), 'twould undo him,
Should he go still so drest.

Among this group of forty pairs, the speaker witnesses one person who has a small beard and walks before the rest of the people. The speaker asserts

that even his own landlord was nothing before him. The person referred here is basically the handsome groom.

At Course-a-Park, without all doubt,
He should have first been taken out
By all the Maids i' th' town;
Though lusty Roger there had been
Or little George upon the Green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

He first describes the groom as the one who first appeared in the “course-a-park” would have been set upon by all the women. He states that the handsome groom would be the first pick of any girl back in their village.

But wot you what? The Youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing.
The Parson for him stayed;
Yet, by his leave, for all his haste,
He did not so much wish all past,
Perchance, as did the Maid.

The speaker describes here that when the parson asked them what they wanted, the groom desired very less, “did not so much wish all past” as compared to what the maid desired.

The Maid (and thereby hangs a tale!):
For such a Maid no Whitsun-Ale
Could ever yet produce;
No grape that 's kindly ripe could be

So round, so plump, so soft, as She;
Nor half so full of juice!

In this stanza, the speaker describes the beauty of the maid as he remarks that not even the “Whitsun-Ale” could ever have such a production. He describes the bride noting that no grape, that’s kindly ripe, could be so round, so plump, so soft as she, nor half so full of juice.

Her Finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on; which they did bring.
It was too wide a peck;
And to say truth, (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar (just)
About our young colt’s neck.

As expected from a court poet, Suckling spends many more lines on the subject of the bride than the groom. He provides minute details of the bride. He says that she had tiny fingers, so small that the “ring would not stay on”. Further, he states that the ring looks like a green collar which envelopes or surrounds the neck of a young uncastrated male horse.

Her Feet, beneath her petticoat,
Like little mice stole in and out,
As if they feared the light:
But O, She dances such a way!
No sun, upon an Easter Day,
Is half so fine a sight.

Her feet which are hidden behind her petticoat, are compared to “little mice”, suggesting that they look like it and are scared of brightness or light as is the little mice. Further, the speaker applauds her dance stating that even the Sun during Easter days doesn’t shines half of the sight of that maid dancing.

Her Cheeks so rare a white was on;
No daisy makes comparison;
Who sees them is undone;
For streaks of red were mingled there,
Such as are on a Katherine pear
(The side that's next the sun).

The speaker in these lines compares the maid's cheeks to that of a daisy flower, stating that they are so white that the flower stands nothing in front of them. The one who witnesses her white cheeks is "undone" as one can observe red layers mingle on them which are similar to the Catherine pear.

Her lips were red, and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin,
Some bee had stung it newly:
But, Dick! her Eyes so guard her face;
I durst no more upon them gaze,
Than on the sun in July.

Her red lips appeared to have been bee stung and were followed by her charming chin. The speaker addresses Dick, his friend and says that her eyes were so guarded, perhaps by remaining downcast, that even he could not catch a good view of them while he was there in the month of July on Sunday.

Her Mouth so small, when she does speak,
Thou'dst swear her teeth, her words did break,
That they might passage get:
But She so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better;
And are not spent a whit!...

Her fragile nature is clear from the description of her tiny mouth that threatens to have its teeth broken from the spoken word so that they might get a passage. But the way she handles her spoken words was not only good but far better than that of ours (speaker and his native place).

Just in the nick, the Cook knocked thrice,

And all the Waiters, in a trice,

His summons did obey;

Each Serving Man, with dish in hand,

Marched boldly up, like our Trained Band,

Presented, and away!

In this short span of time, the cook knocked at the door almost three times. All the waiters appeared in front of him and summoned to his command. All the serving men, having their respective dishes in their hands came in front, marching and presented the dishes to them. Here, speaker remarks that the bride's appearance did not hamper the celebration when the group sat to eat, served by a number of men carrying dishes.

When all the meat was on the table;

What man of knife, or teeth, was able

To stay to be intreated!

And this the very reason was,

Before the Parson could say Grace,

The company was seated!

The stiring lines further elaborate that all the meals were readily available on the table and that every man was busy relishing the dishes he ate and also dispatching the food. Everything was so systematic that the entire company seated before the parson could start with the ceremony.

The business of the kitchen 's great,

For it is fit that men should eat;
Nor was it there denied.
(Passion o' me! how I run on!
There's that, that would be thought upon,
I trow, besides the Bride!)

Applauding the meals and the way they were served systematically, the speaker says that they were so fit to eat and nobody denied. Looking upon such an ambience that is full of zeal, the speaker states that he was filled with passion. He suggests that everyone there would have definitely pondered upon the thought of standing besides the bride.

Now, hats fly off; and Youths carouse!
Healts first go round; and then the house!
The Bride's came thick and thick;
And when 'twas named another's Health;
Perhaps, he made it hers by stealth;
(And who could help it, Dick?)

Suckling beautifully captures the joyous environment at the scene. He describes the ceremony as the hats flying off in the air and that younger people drinking merrily. The bride enters the place and they both make promises, leading to their union.

O' th' sudden, up they rise and dance;
Then sit again, and sigh, and glance;
Then dance again and kiss!
Thus, several ways, the time did pass;
Whilst every woman wished her place,
And every man wished his!...

Suckling takes the reader on lyric flight through his ballad, its tone never losing its airy quality. The speaker illustrates the scene as he says that after the ceremony, they (groom and bride) rise up to dance, sit again and then after glancing again dance and kiss each other. The course of act is repeated as the time passes by. All the women present at the occasion desire bride's place and consequently, all the men there desire the place of the groom.

By this time all were stol'n aside
To counsel and undress the Bride;
But that he must not know:
But yet 'twas thought he guess'd her mind,
And did not mean to stay behind
Above an hour or so.

The speaker further carries forward the description and says that now everybody started giving advices and counseling to the new bride. When the people around them were passing time, looking at their beauty and charisma, the groom read bride's mind and both didn't wish to stay there more than an hour now.

When in he came (Dick) there she lay
Like new-fal'n snow melting away,
('Twas time I trow to part)
Kisses were now the only stay,
Which soon she gave, as who would say,
Good Boy! with all my heart.

The bride is taken ceremonially to the chamber and undressed, and the groom soon follows. The speaker addresses Dick and states that as soon as the groom entered, the bride laid like the fresh snow that gradually melts away. He comes in, kisses her. Fortunately, he then adds "'Twas time, I trow, to part".

But just as heav'ns would have to cross it,

In came the Bridemaids with the Posset:
The Bridegroom eat in spite;
For had he left the Women to't
It would have cost two hours to do't,
Which were too much that night.

But before everybody leaves the newly-weds alone, the bridesmaids bring posset, a dish made of spiced hot milk curdled with sherry, traditionally given to the groom on his wedding night to strengthen him. He eats it, even though he is not hungry, because if he left it to the women to do it, it would take them two hours and he wants to get rid of them as soon as possible.

At length the candles out and out,
All that they had not done, they do't:
What that is, who can tell?
But I believe it was no more
Then thou and I have done before
With Bridget, and with Nell.

Then finally everybody leaves, the candle is out and the poet ironically points out that people there are doing nothing but what one might have done with Bridget or with Nell, pointing out that despite all the display of the riches, sex is the great leveler.

16.8 EXAMINATION ORIENTED QUESTIONS

A. Objective Type Questions:

1. Sir John Suckling was born in the year:
a. 1607 b. 1608 c. 1609 d. 1610
2. Sir John Suckling belongs to the group of:
a. Lake poets b. Cavalier Poets c. Metaphysical Poets d. None

3. The occupation of the speaker in this poem is:
 - a. Landlord b. Parson c. Farmer d. None
4. What according to the speaker is the “rarest thing” he has ever seen:
 - a. Forty pairs b. Daisy flower c. Charing Cross Wedding d. None
5. According to the speaker, who guards the face of the bride? :
 - a. Her Chin b. Her Cheeks c. Her Eyes d. Her Lips

Answers: 1. 1609, 2. Cavalier Poets, 3. Farmer,
4. Charing Cross Wedding 5. Her Eyes

B. ONE WORD ANSWER:

1. Sir John Suckling was born in _____.
2. Sir John Suckling was the inventor of the game _____.
3. The poet addresses Dick in the poem who is his friend, _____.
4. A Ballad upon a Wedding was edited by _____.
5. The meaning of “A house with stairs” refers to _____ House.

Answers: 1. London 2. Cribbag 3. Richard Lovelace
4. William Stanley Braithwaite 5. Suffolk

1. What is the background of the poem, “A Ballad upon Wedding” by Sir John Suckling?

Ans: Sir John Suckling utilizes optimistic tones full of passion, happiness and gratitude in “A Ballad Upon a Wedding” to lure the reader into his experience at Roger Boyle’s marriage to Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, in 1641. As he talks to Dick about the occasion the audience is able to feel the level of familiarity that he has through the earnest details he transmits throughout every scene in the poem. This poem delivers the vive of the celebration and helps in imaging “Where [he] the rarest things [has] seen,” and “Where [he has] been,” through his conversation with Dick.

2. Describe the ambience of Suckling's A Ballad Upon a Wedding?

Ans: In the poem, the wedding goes on, the toasts are proposed, people dance, all the women wish to be in place of the bride and all the men wish to be in place of the groom. Then the bride is taken ceremonially to the chamber and undressed, and the groom soon follows. He comes in, kisses her. Fortunately, he then adds "‘Twas time, I trow, to part". But before everybody leaves the newly-weds alone, the bridesmaids bring posset, a dish made of spiced hot milk curdled with sherry, traditionally given to the groom on his wedding night to strengthen him. He eats it, even though he is not hungry, because if he left it to the women to do it, it would take them two hours and he wants to get rid of them as soon as possible. Then finally everybody leaves, the candle is out and the poet ironically points out that people there are doing nothing but what one might have done with Bridget or with Nell, pointing out that despite all the display of the riches, sex is the great leveler.

3. Write a brief summary of the poem "A Ballad upon a Wedding".

Ans: The poem is six-line stanzas of twenty-two lines with a rhyme scheme "aabccb". The speaker addresses his friend, Dick and narrates his experience of an aristocratic wedding when he goes to London to sell hay. He makes clear that the Charing Cross wedding described is a special event, not one that took place in his part of town, where common laborers live. He addresses his friend Dick and begins by describing the event he witnessed as one of "the rarest things" he had ever seen. He elaborates that the "Forty at least, in pairs" of folk he witnesses are "Such folk as are not in our town." He first describes the groom as one who, had he appeared in "Course-a-Park," would have been set upon by all the women. Then he describes the bride, noting "No grape, that's kindly ripe, could be So round, so plump, so soft as she, Nor half so full of juice".

As a court poet, Suckling spends many more lines on the subject of the bride than the groom. She had a tiny finger that the ring "Would not stay on," and her feet looked "Like little mice," while her cheeks "so rare a white was on, / No daisy makes comparison." Her red lips appeared to have been bee stung, and her eyes were so guarded, perhaps by remaining downcast, that

the speaker could not catch a good view of them. Her fragile nature is clear from the description of a tiny mouth that threatens to have its teeth broken from the spoken word. Suckling's hyperbole complements the "tall tale" nature of the ballad subject matter.

The bride's appearance did not dampen the celebration when the group sat to eat, served by a number of men carrying dishes. When "all the meat was on the table," no man "was able / To stay to be intreated." Instead, they ate with relish, dispatching the food. Later, "hats fly off, and youths carouse," as everyone toasts the health of the new couple. Suckling takes the reader on lyric flight through his ballad, its tone never losing its airy quality. The poem is an example of parody and it parodies an epithalamium, a wedding poem. Further, the poem is also an example of tail rhyme.

4. Describe all the comparisons that the speaker makes in the poem.
5. Describe Sir John Suckling as a Cavalier Poet.

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