

Radu Burdujan

English Literature

**from origins
to 18th century**

Guidebook for students



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FOREWORD

The guide on English Literature spans from its origins to the 18th century and is tailored specifically for EFL students who study Anglophone Literature.

Part I offers an exploration of basic periods and important literary works.

Unit I: Introduction to English Literature lays the groundwork, elucidating key terminologies and historical contexts.

Units II-III delve into Old Literature, traversing the Anglo-Saxon Period and the epic saga of Beowulf.

Units IV-VI explore Medieval Literature, focusing on the nuances of this era, classical English ballads, and Geoffrey Chaucer's unforgettable contributions.

Units VII-XI herald the Renaissance era, immersing in William Shakespeare's sonnets, dramatic prowess, and timeless tragedies.

Units XII-XVI take an in-depth look at neoclassical literature, spotlighting luminaries such as Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Jonathan Swift, whose narratives resonate across generations.

Part II, the Reader, serves as an anthology curated to exemplify English literary heritage. Each text, from Beowulf to Jonathan Swift's satire, invites readers into realms of intellectual inquiry and aesthetic appreciation. Approaching each text, students navigate literary corridors enriched by the enduring contributions of scholars, authors, and thinkers.

Studying literature holds immense importance for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students as it offers a multifaceted approach to language acquisition and cultural understanding. Literature provides an extensive exposure to diverse vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and linguistic structures, thereby enhancing language proficiency in a contextualized and meaningful manner. Through literary works, students gain insights into cultural nuances, historical contexts, societal norms, and values of English-speaking countries, fostering a deeper understanding of the target language's cultural heritage. Furthermore, literature encourages critical thinking skills, analytical reasoning, and empathy by immersing students in complex narratives, diverse characters, and thought-provoking themes, thereby developing their cognitive abilities and enhancing their ability to engage in nuanced discussions and debates.

PART I: COURSE NOTES

UNIT I. Introduction to English Literature

Etymologically, the word “literature” originates from the Latin word “litera,” signifying “an individual written character (letter).” Literature, quite literally, implies “an acquaintance with letters.” The initial sense, as per the Oxford English Dictionary, identifies it as a collection of texts.

Every nation or state possesses its own literature, constituting a vital component of its cultural heritage generously shared with all, thereby enhancing our lives in diverse ways.

The English language, evolving over centuries and still undergoing transformation, has earned gratitude from numerous states, including the United States of America, Canada, and Australia, for England’s rich literary heritage.

In this context, *the concept of English literature* encompasses two aspects:

1. Literature originating from England, written in the modern English language, or its predecessors (such as Middle or Old English).
2. Literature predominantly composed in the English language by non-English writers, encompassing Irish literature, American literature, Indian literature in English, Canadian literature in English, and New Zealand literature.

The notion of period means an arrangement of literary and cultural facts chronologically, within certain distinct time limits. Every epoch is supposed to have its distinguishing features with representative literary works or creations.

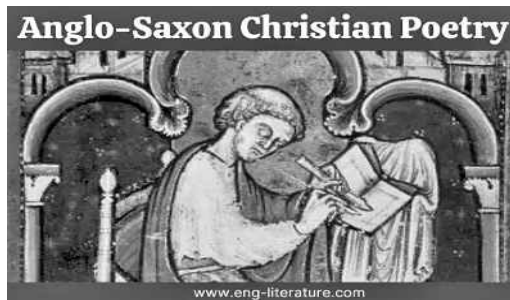
Essentially, we have to mention two ideas referring to the concept of a period. It implies that: (1) literary works can be set according to their common features within a particular time limit, and (2) this group must be distinguishable from other chronological groups.

Overview of British Literary Periods

Although historians have delineated the eras of British literature in different ways over time, common divisions are outlined below.

Old English (Anglo-Saxon) Period (5th c. – 1066)

The term Anglo-Saxon comes from two Germanic tribes: the Angles and the Saxons. This period of literature dates back to their invasion of Celtic England in the 5th century. The era ended in 1066 when Norman France, under William, conquered England.



Anglo-Saxon Christian Poetry

Much of the first half of this period — before the seventh century, at least— is characterized by oral literature. Much of the prose from this time comprised translations or focused on legal, medical, or religious topics. However, notable works like *Beowulf* and compositions by period poets such as Caedmon and Cynewulf emerged as significant literary contributions. Despite the prevalence of oral traditions and translations, these writings played a crucial role in shaping the literary landscape of the Anglo-Saxon period.

Middle English Period (1066–1500)

The Middle English period witnessed a significant transition in the language, culture, and lifestyle of England, resulting in what we can now recognize as a form of “modern” (recognizable) English. This era extends to around 1500. While religious themes dominated much of the early Middle English writings, a noteworthy shift occurred around 1350 with the ascent of secular literature. Among the notable figures of this period stands Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343 – 25 October 1400), acknowledged as the Father of English literature and widely regarded as the greatest English poet of the Middle Ages. His enduring masterpiece, *The Canterbury Tales*, remains a testament to the richness and diversity of Middle English literature.

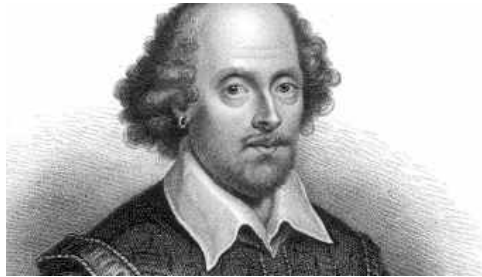


Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343 – 1400)

The Renaissance (1500–1660)

While some contemporary critics and literary historians now prefer to label this era as the “Early Modern” period, here we retain the historically familiar term “Renaissance.” This period is often subdivided into four parts, including the Elizabethan Age (1558–1603), the Jacobean Age (1603–1625), the Caroline Age (1625–1649), and the Commonwealth Period (1649–1660).

The Elizabethan Age was the golden age of English drama, featuring noteworthy figures such as Christopher Marlowe, Francis Bacon, Edmund Spenser, Sir Walter Raleigh, and, of course, William Shakespeare.



William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

The Jacobean Age is named after the reign of James I and includes the works of John Donne, William Shakespeare, Michael Drayton, John Webster, Elizabeth Cary, Ben Jonson, and Lady Mary Wroth. The King James translation of the Bible also appeared during the Jacobean Age.

The Caroline Age covers the reign of Charles I (“Carolus”). John Milton, Robert Burton, and George Herbert are some of the notable figures.

Finally, the Commonwealth Period was so named for the period between the end of the English Civil War and the restoration of the Stuart monarchy. This is when Oliver Cromwell, a Puritan, led Parliament, which ruled the nation. At this time, public theaters were closed (for nearly two decades) to prevent public assembly and to combat moral and religious transgressions. John Milton and Thomas Hobbes’ political writings appeared, and while drama suffered, prose writers such as Thomas Fuller, Abraham Cowley, and Andrew Marvell published prolifically.

The Neoclassical Period (1600–1785)

The Neoclassical period is also subdivided into ages, including The Restoration (1660–1700), The Augustan Age (1700–1745), and The Age of Sensibility (1745–1785). The Restoration comedies (comedies of manner) developed during this time under the talent of playwrights like William

Congreve and John Dryden. Satire, too, became quite popular, as evidenced by the success of Samuel Butler. Other notable writers of the age include Aphra Behn, John Bunyan, and John Locke.



John Dryden 1631 - 1700

The Augustan Age was the time of Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift, who imitated those first Augustans and even drew parallels between themselves and the first set. Daniel Defoe was also popular.

The Age of Sensibility was the time of Edmund Burke, Edward Gibbon, Hester Lynch Thrale, James Boswell, and, of course, Samuel Johnson. Ideas such as neoclassicism, a critical and literary mode, and the Enlightenment, a particular worldview shared by many intellectuals, were championed during this age. Novelists to explore include Henry Fielding, Samuel Richardson, Tobias Smollett, Laurence Sterne, and the poets William Cowper and Thomas Percy.

Years	Literary Period	Literary Events	Historical Events
450 - 1066	Old English (Anglo-Saxon) Period	800 – <i>Beowulf</i> 970 – <i>The Wanderer</i>	5th c.: traditional date for the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon Conquest.
1066 – 1500	Middle English Period	1385-1400 <i>composition of The Canterbury Tales</i> by Geoffrey Chaucer.	1066: Norman Conquest; 1362: Parliament opened in English for the first time; The Statute of Pleading makes English the official language of legal proceedings.

1500 – 1660	The Renaissance	<i>John Milton,</i> <i>Thomas More,</i> <i>Thomas Hobbes,</i> <i>Edmund Spenser,</i> <i>Sir Philip Sidney,</i> <i>William Shakespeare</i>	1616 – 48: Thirty Years War. All over Europe (Protestants against Catholics); 1642: Outbreak of Civil War; 1660: Restoration of Charles II; England is “Mistress of the Seas”
1660 – 1785	The Neoclassical Period	<i>John Dryden,</i> <i>Alexander Pope,</i> <i>Jonathan Swift,</i> <i>Samuel Johnson,</i> <i>Daniel Defoe.</i>	1665: Plague (the Black Death); 1775–1783: The American War of Independence.



Comprehension questions:

1. What is the etymological origin of the word “literature,” and what does it signify in Latin?
2. How does the Oxford English Dictionary initially define the term “literature”?
3. What are the two aspects that define the concept of English literature?
4. How is the notion of a period defined in the context of literary and cultural facts?
5. What is the significance of arranging literary and cultural facts chronologically within certain time limits?

Exercise 1. Identify the events significant for English literature that occurred in the following years: 5th century, 1066, 1350, 1343, 1400, 1660, 1600–1785.

Exercise 2. Briefly summarize the evolution of the English language.
the Old English Period:

6. Where does the term “Anglo-Saxon” originate, and what are the two Germanic tribes it comes from?
7. What historical event marks the beginning of the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) Period?

8. What characterized much of the first half of the Old English Period before the seventh century in terms of literature?
9. What are some notable works that emerged as significant literary contributions during the Old English Period?
10. Despite the prevalence of oral traditions and translations, how did writings like *Beowulf* and compositions by poets like Caedmon and Cynewulf contribute to shaping the literary landscape of the Anglo-Saxon period?

Exercise 3. In your own words, explain the role of oral traditions during the Old English Period, and how they influence the literary landscape.

the Middle English Period:

11. What major changes occurred in the Middle English period in terms of language, culture, and lifestyle in England?
12. Describe the shift in themes that occurred around 1350 in the Middle English period. What dominated early Middle English writings, and what replaced it?
13. Who is Geoffrey Chaucer, and what is his significance in the context of the Middle English period?
14. What work by Geoffrey Chaucer is the most important, and what does it signify about the richness and diversity of Middle English literature?
15. How is Geoffrey Chaucer named in English literature?

Exercise 4. In your own words, explain how the cultural changes in the Middle English period influenced the development of literature, especially with the shift towards secular themes.

the Renaissance:

16. What term do some contemporary critics and literary historians prefer for the period discussed, and which term is retained here?
17. Why is the term “Renaissance” historically familiar, and how does it characterize the period in question?
18. List the four subdivisions mentioned for the Renaissance period and their respective timeframes.
19. Who were some notable figures during the Renaissance?
20. In which subdivision(s) did William Shakespeare contribute?

Exercise 5. Connect each subdivision of the Renaissance period with the monarch or significant figure associated with it.

1. Elizabethan Age	a. James I
2. Jacobean Age	b. Charles I
3. Caroline Age	c. Elizabeth I
4. Commonwealth Period	d. Oliver Cromwell

the Neoclassical period:

21. List the subdivisions mentioned for the Neoclassical period and their respective timeframes.
22. What characterized each of the subdivisions, namely The Restoration, The Augustan Age, and The Age of Sensibility?
23. Describe the literary developments during The Restoration. Who were some of the notable writers mentioned?
24. Who were the prominent figures during The Augustan Age, and what is mentioned about their imitation of the first Augustans?
25. Identify the notable figures during The Age of Sensibility and the literary and critical movements associated with this period.

Exercise 6. Match the subdivisions of Neoclassicism with the corresponding writers:

The Restoration (1660–1700)

The Augustan Age (1700–1745)

The Age of Sensibility (1745–1785)

- a. Alexander Pope; b. Jonathan Swift; c. Samuel Johnson; d. William Congreve;
- e. Samuel Butler; f. Henry Fielding; g. John Locke; h. Daniel Defoe.

Exercise 7. Match each literary period with its key characteristics:

1. Old English (Anglo-Saxon) Period	a. emphasis on reason, order, and classical influences.
2. Middle English Period	b. dominated by religious themes in early writings, transition to secular literature.
3. The Renaissance	c. characterized by a revival of classical ideas, humanism, and artistic expression.
4. The Neoclassical Period	d. oral literature, translations, and notable epic poems.

Exercise 8. Determine whether the following statements about the given literary periods are true or false:

1. The Old English (Anglo-Saxon) Period is characterized by a transition to secular literature around 1350.
2. The Renaissance is marked by a revival of classical ideas, humanism, and artistic expression.
3. The Middle English Period saw the dominance of religious themes throughout its duration.
4. The Neoclassical Period emphasized oral literature and translations.

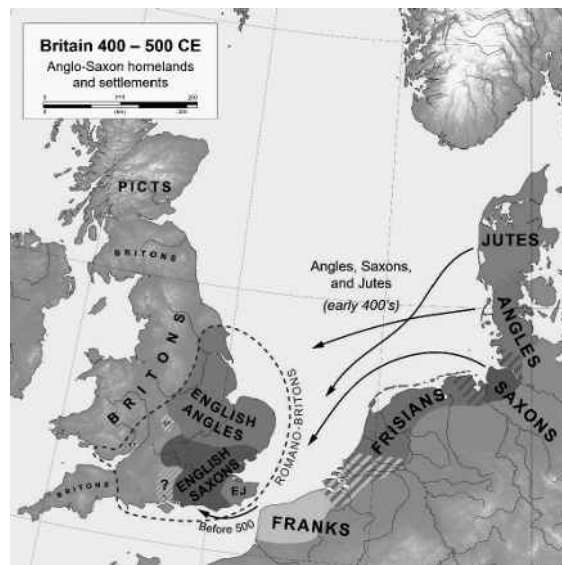
Exercise 9. Complete the following sentences by filling in the blanks with the correct literary period:

1. The ___ is known for its oral literature, translations, and works like Beowulf.
2. The ___ is characterized by a revival of classical ideas, humanism, and artistic expression.
3. In the ___, there was a transition from religious themes to secular literature around 1350.
4. The ___ Period emphasized reason, order, and classical influences in literature.

UNIT II. The Anglo–Saxon Period

The Anglo–Saxon Period (5th c. – 1066)

In the 5th century, the migration of the Anglo-Saxons marked a significant historical event that transformed the cultural and demographic landscape of Britain. As the Roman Empire began to decline, the vacuum of power left by its withdrawal from the British Isles created an opportunity for various Germanic tribes, including the Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, to migrate across the North Sea. Their arrival to the British Isles led to a series of conflicts with the indigenous Celtic populations, primarily the Britons, as the Anglo-Saxons sought to establish their own kingdoms. The 5th-century migrations laid the foundation for the establishment of Anglo-Saxon kingdoms in England and played a crucial role in shaping the cultural and linguistic identity of the region.



The subject matter of Old English literature has its roots in the Heroic Age of Germanic tribes. Their world appears to us as a hostile environment marked by famine, warfare, and a ruthless climate. The social structure of their society was simple, comprising a small ruling nobility expected to demonstrate leadership, bravery, and generosity, dispensing a basic “eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth” kind of justice. Those who served the nobility exhibited loyalty and subordination in both war and peace. At the lowest rung of this class society were slaves who could be bought and sold like cattle.

A period of high culture emerged in England when the resilient barbarians from northern Europe encountered the equally tough-minded Christians from southern Europe and Ireland. Monks of the Anglo-Saxon period in England

believed that culture and the growth of civilization went hand-in-hand with Christianity. Consequently, they established magnificent centers of learning from which education spread throughout England.

The surviving manuscripts represent only a small fraction of what must have been created in the Anglo-Saxon period. What has endured is considered the best. *Beowulf*, for instance, has reached us through a single manuscript, now safely housed in the British Museum after enduring numerous damaging adventures.

Old English was the Germanic language spoken in the area now known as England between the 5th and 11th centuries. Most texts were written in West Saxon, one of the four main dialects. The other dialects were Mercian, Northumbrian, and Kentish.



Significant Old English literary works

The Wanderer

The Wanderer is the lament of a man who, having lost his protecting lord, wanders over the waters to find a resting place. In dreams, his vanished happiness returns to him, but day brings only bleakness, desolation, snow, and the sea. The poem was written under the influence of Christianity, but it

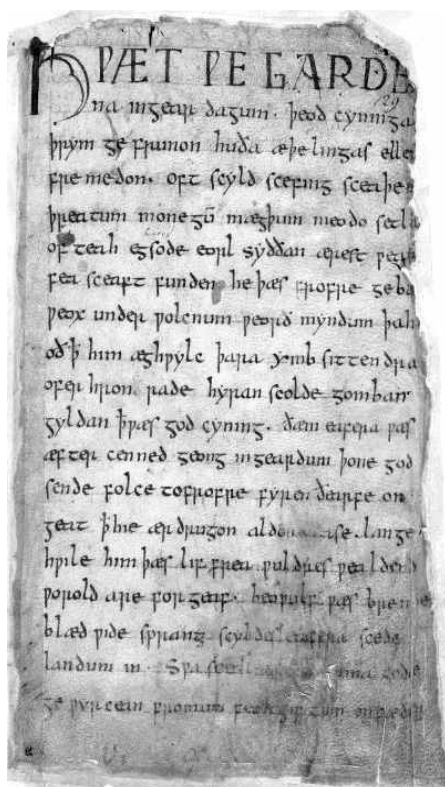
reveals the qualities of generosity and loyalty admired by the Anglo-Saxons, the dependence of warriors upon the king and companions, and a sense of melancholy and hopelessness against the hand of Fate.

The Seafarer

Another poem, *The Seafarer*, involves despair and a great sea of passion. Part I presents the old sailor who knows from bitter experience the joyless life of the sea. Part II presents another view: death is God's will; heaven is the antitype of earth, the reward for a painful existence on earth.

Beowulf

A more complete fusion of Christian and pagan elements is found in the epic *Beowulf*. Beowulf is an actual Swedish warrior who lived in the sixth century. A Christian poet, whose name has not been preserved for us, reworked this material and built it into a unified poem of 3,182 lines shortly after the year 700. The only surviving copy from Anglo-Saxon times was produced about the year 1000 and narrowly escaped destruction in 1536 when Henry VIII emptied the monasteries, and again in 1731 when it was rescued from the flames that nearly destroyed the collection of Sir Robert Cotton.



The first page of Beowulf

St. Bede the Venerable



St. Bede the Venerable (672/673–735) was an Anglo-Saxon theologian and historian, famed for his “Ecclesiastical History of the English People.” His scriptural commentaries and chronology works influenced medieval Europe’s monastic libraries. Educated at Monkwearmouth-Jarrow, he never left except for Lindisfarne and York visits. His teachings persisted through Archbishop Egbert of York and Alcuin, Charlemagne’s educator. His works span grammar, biblical commentary, and history. Notable is his 731/732 “*Historia ecclesiastica*,” a vital source on Anglo-Saxon Christianity.

Caedmon and Cynewulf

Nearly all Anglo-Saxon authors are anonymous, with some exceptions. Two poets are worthy of note, though we know little about them except their names: Caedmon, who turned into song many of the Biblical stories into songs, and Cynewulf, who carefully hid his name in an acrostic.



Cynewulf (8th or 9th century)

Now let us praise the Guardian of the Kingdom of Heaven
the might of the Creator and the thought of his mind,
the work of the glorious Father, how He, the eternal Lord
established the beginning of every wonder.
For the sons of men, He, the Holy Creator

first made heaven as a roof, then the
Keeper of mankind, the eternal Lord
God Almighty afterwards made the middle world
the earth, for men.

(Caedmon, *Hymn*)

King Alfred



The Old English period wouldn't be complete without mentioning the work of King Alfred (849-901). He established a school system that taught people to read and write English (Anglo-Saxon); Latin was to be a second language offered to advanced students. To encourage the use of English, Alfred himself translated and adapted several books from Latin, including Augustine's *Soliloquies* and Boethius' *Consolations of Philosophy*. For his work and for the encouragement he gave to others, Alfred has been called by literary historians "The Father of English Prose."



Comprehension Questions:

The Anglo-Saxon Period

1. What were the primary Germanic tribes that migrated to Britain during the Anglo-Saxon Period?
2. How did the arrival of the Anglo-Saxons impact the indigenous Celtic populations?
3. What were the characteristics of the social structure in Anglo-Saxon society?
4. What role did Christianity play in the cultural development of England during the Anglo-Saxon Period?
5. What is Old English?
6. How many main dialects of Old English are there, and what are they?
7. Which dialect was most commonly used for writing texts in Old English?
8. Name one of the modern languages that belong to the Germanic language family.

Significant Old English literary works

9. List significant Old English literary works.
10. Who is the central character in the epic poem *Beowulf*?
11. When was *Beowulf* originally written, and by whom?

Old English writers

12. Who was St. Bede the Venerable, and what is he famous for?
13. Name two Anglo-Saxon poets. What distinguishes them from other Anglo-Saxon authors?
14. What significant contributions did King Alfred make during the Old English period?
15. Why is Alfred referred to as “The Father of English Prose” by literary historians?

UNIT III. The epic poem *Beowulf*

Epic poem

Aristotle has defined the *epic* as “an imitation of serious subjects in an impressive kind of verse...in narrative form...based on a single action, one that is a complete whole in itself...The characters celebrated should be of a superior type.”

There are two types of epics, *the folk epic* and *the literary epic*.

The folk epic originated among the people and passed through a long period of telling before it reached its written form. The poet who finally made it a unified poem is usually unknown. *Beowulf* is the only folk epic in the English language.

The literary epic is the conscious product of one known writer. It reflects the thoughts and opinions of the age in which it was written. The greatest literary epic in the English language is Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.

Definition: An *epic poem* is a long poem narrating the heroic achievements of an individual in a way central to the beliefs and culture of his society. Typical elements are fabulous adventures, superhuman deeds, majestic language, and deploying the full variety of literary devices, from lyrical to dramatic. Nonetheless, the first epics were created and transmitted orally. Homer’s “*Iliad* and *Odyssey*” are usually regarded as the first important epic poems and are considered to define the form. (Mark Flanagan)

The *essential elements of the epic* are:

- the plot is a unified story.
- there is one central, heroic character acting in relation both to men and to superhuman forces.
- the setting is in the distant past, either legendary or supernatural.
- the mood is noble and dignified, religious and sublime.
- the literary conventions often include formal introductions; genealogies establish the nobility of main characters, and speeches are written in a superior style.

Factors that distinguish epics from other forms of narrative poetry are

- **Scale:** Epic poems tend to be very long to be read or performed in a single session.
- **Stylistic:** Epic poems are written in a high style, avoiding popular meters and verse patterns. There are no punctuation marks in this work.

- **Persons and Events:** Persons and events are considered to be historically real by the poet and their audience.
- **Epic Hero Cycle:** The hero in an epic poem follows a cycle of events that is repeated in epics from every sort of culture.

The *cycle* may vary somewhat in order from epic to epic. The common points of the cycle comprise:

- **A Test (Quest):** The hero is presented with a challenge or quest that he must undertake.
- **A Main Antagonist:** Often supernatural, the hero faces a formidable adversary or obstacle.
- **A Magical/Unreal World:** The hero ventures into a realm that is extraordinary or otherworldly, often inaccessible to ordinary humans. This can include the underworld or the world of the gods.
- **Resurrection:** The hero experiences a form of rebirth or renewal, overcoming a significant obstacle or even facing death and returning to life or a revived state of mind.

These elements form a recurring pattern in the narrative structure of many epic poems across various cultures and traditions.

The epic poem *Beowulf*

Beowulf is one of the oldest epics in any European language.

Beowulf is the earliest surviving epic poem written in English, instead of literary Latin (c. between 700-1000 AD). It is a traditional heroic epic poem written in Old English (Late West Saxon dialect). At 3,182 lines (longer than any other Old English poem), it represents about 10% of the existing poetry written in Old English. The poem is untitled in the manuscript but has been known as *Beowulf* since the early 19th century.

“*Beowulf* is the longest and finest literary work to have come down to us from Anglo-Saxon times and one of the world’s greatest epic poems. Set in the half-legendary, half-historical Scandinavian past, it tells the story of the hero *Beowulf*” Charles Causley.

Author: unidentified (anonymous)

Genre and type of work: Epic poem

Language: Anglo-Saxon (also called Old English); (Late West Saxon dialect)

Time and place written: between 700 and 1000 a.d.; in England

First publication: the only manuscript is thought to have been written around 1000 A.D.

Narrator: a Christian narrator telling a story of pagan times

Point of view: the third person.

Tense: past, but with deviations into the remote past and predictions of the future

Setting (time): the main action of the story takes place around 500 a.d.; the poem also retells historical events that happened much earlier.

Setting (place): Denmark and Geatland (a region of southern Sweden)

Protagonist: Beowulf

Major conflicts: The poem consists of three parts each has its central conflicts:

Grendel's domination of Heorot Hall;

the revenge of Grendel's mother after Grendel is killed;

the anger of the dragon after a thief steals a treasure that it has been guarding.

Although the material in *Beowulf* is pagan and Scandinavian in the background, there can be no doubt of its Christian spirit. The epic emerges at last as a Christian poem. Pagan elements remain, however. For example, side by side we find references to the blind power of Wyrð, or Fate, and to the providence of God. But often Fate is controlled by the Christian God. Reference to the Old Testament runs throughout the poem in Christian terms. The portrait of Beowulf is that of a powerful pagan warrior whose best qualities are elevated by the power of grace.



Beowulf, from *Hero-Myths & Legends of the British Race*, 1910

The **themes of Beowulf** include *good and evil, the influence of Christianity, the identity of the hero, the heroic ideal* (bravery, loyalty, and generosity), *tensions between the heroic code and other value systems* (the heroic code illustrates strength, courage, and loyalty in warriors; hospitality, generosity, and political skill in kings; ceremoniousness in women; and good reputation in all people), *the difference between a good warrior and a good king* (Beowulf changes from a brave combatant into a wise king), *wars, and fate*.



Map of Beowulf's world

The verses of *Beowulf* are characterized by the following norms:

1. Each line is broken by a pause in the middle, a *caesura* /sɪ'ʒʊər ə, sɪz'yʊər ə/.
2. There are, usually, two natural word accents in each half-line, no matter how many syllables.

3. The most strongly accented syllable in each half-line begins with the same sound (*alliteration*).

The following example, lines 198-199 of the present text, will illustrate this pattern.

Tha com of wore under mist-hleothum
Grendel gongan Godes yrre baer.

/Then came from the moors, under the misty hollows, Grendel going, god's anger he bore/

The poetic figure commonly found in Old English poetry is the **kenning** — the picturesque linking of nouns as poetic expressions. The use of kennings had such an effect on poetry that many phrases often became clichés / kli'fei /.

For example, many kennings are used over and over in the story Beowulf. Thus *the body* is a 'bone-cage', *the sea* is the 'whale-path', and when a man speaks he 'unlocks his word-hoard'. Other examples of kennings in Beowulf are *the sea* is called the 'swan's road', 'sail-road', 'the sea-bird's baths' or 'whale-way', *the battle* is called the 'storm of swords', sword - 'battle-lightning', queen - 'peace-bringer among nations', lord/king - 'the protector of warriors'; 'ring-giver'; <dispenser of treasure>, sword – <light of battle>.

The name Beowulf in Old English is itself a kenning: beo-wulf, literally "bee-wolf," is the kenning for "bear." Beowulf is often compared to a bear because of his physical strength, courage, and ferocity in battle.



Comprehension Questions:

Epic poem

1. What are the two types of epics, and how do they differ?
2. What are the essential elements of an epic poem according to Mark Flanagan?
3. What distinguishes epic poems from other forms of narrative poetry in terms of scale, style, and portrayal of persons and events?
4. Describe the common points of the Hero Cycle in epic poems.

Beowulf

5. What is *Beowulf*, and why is it considered significant in literary history?
6. Who is the protagonist of *Beowulf*, and where does the main action take place?

7. Describe the major conflicts presented in *Beowulf*.

	Good	Evil
1st conflict		
2nd conflict		
3rd conflict		

8. How does the poem incorporate both pagan and Christian elements?

The form of Beowulf

9. What are the three norms that characterize the verses of Beowulf?
10. What is a kenning, and how is it commonly used in Old English poetry like Beowulf?
11. Guess the meaning of the following kennings: captain of evil, shadow-stalker, God’s beacon, Shield-clash, Battle-brothers, battle-sweat, raven-harvest, sky-candle, earth-hall, helmet-bearers.

Exercise. Poetic Devices Analysis:

Analyze the lines from Beowulf in terms of the poetic devices (caesura, alliteration, kennings). Identify and explain the instances of each device in the lines provided.

Fere fyhtum, þu, wine min Beowulf,
 [Beowulf, my friend, you have traveled here]

ond for arstafum usic sohtest.
 [To favor us with help and fight for us.]

UNIT IV. The Medieval Period

The Medieval Period, lasting from 1066 to 1476, saw the emergence of literature in the British Isles. Most classic pieces of medieval literature are set in a world much unlike the one that the writers lived in. These fantasy realms were often perfect lands—with chivalrous knights, beautiful damsels, and magical powers. Many popular characters appeared and reappeared, including the ever-popular King Arthur. The medieval period was an important time for literature in Britain. The works of this period helped to distract people from their everyday fears.

The scholars who chose “Middle English” made a particularly fortunate choice. The language written then shows its Anglo-Saxon roots strongly, and it is quite close to the modern English that was to evolve from it. The greatest author of the period, Geoffrey Chaucer, stands midway, chronologically, between the composition of “Beowulf” and the works of literature that are being produced in our day.

The Norman invasion of England under William the Conqueror in 1066 points to French intellectual and cultural leadership in Europe. It signifies the beginning of more than 300 years of the domination of French in English letters. With the Norman invasion, the Anglo-Saxon language went underground. French was spoken and written by the educated and aristocratic, and for over two centuries, English was identified with the rustic and uneducated. The native tradition survived, although little 13th-century, and even less 12th-century, vernacular literature is extant since most of it was transmitted orally. Anglo-Saxon fragmented into several dialects and gradually evolved into Middle English.



WILLIAM the CONQUEROR.

William the Conqueror (c. 1028 – 1087)

The English that reappeared about 1300 is a changed language. The grammar has been simplified; the word endings have dropped or changed, and the vocabulary has been immensely enriched by permanent borrowings from French.

Several scholars propose different endpoints for Middle English Literature. One milestone is 1500, marked by the standardization of English and the rise of Renaissance humanism. Another is 1476, when William Caxton introduced the printing press to England, leading to the transition to Early Modern English. Caxton's *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, published in that year, was the first English printed book. Additionally, the accession of the Tudor dynasty in 1485 under Henry VII influenced literary themes and styles.

The Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries. English literature in this era is shaped by a period of transition. After the Norman Conquest in 1066, French became a major language of administration, education, literature, and law in England, leading to a bilingual society where Anglo-Norman literature coexisted with surviving Anglo-Saxon traditions. This bilingualism influenced the literary landscape, resulting in a blending of linguistic and cultural elements. The Norman rulers brought their own literary traditions and cultural practices to England, contributing to the development of Anglo-Norman literature. This literature often drew upon themes of chivalry, courtly love, and heroic exploits, reflecting Norman values and sensibilities. Despite the Norman Conquest, elements of Anglo-Saxon literature and oral traditions persisted. Works such as *Beowulf* and other Old English poetry continued to be transmitted orally, preserving aspects of pre-Norman English literary heritage. Religious literature remained prominent during this period. Monastic scriptoria played a vital role in preserving and disseminating religious literature. Towards the end of the 12th century, Middle English began to emerge as a distinct literary language, blending Anglo-Saxon and Norman French elements. This linguistic evolution laid the foundation for the development of Middle English literature in subsequent centuries.

The Thirteenth Century. Middle English prose of the 13th century continued in the tradition of Anglo-Saxon prose—being didactic and directed toward ordinary people rather than polite society.

In the 13th century, the romance, an important continental narrative verse form, was introduced in England. It drew from three rich sources

of character and adventure: the legends of Charlemagne, the legends of ancient Greece and Rome, and the British legends of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

However, French romances, notably the Arthurian romances of Chrétien de Troyes, were far more influential than their English equivalents. In England, French romances popularized ideas of adventure and heroism quite contrary to those of Anglo-Saxon heroic literature. Ideals of courtly love, together with its elaborate manners and rituals, replaced those of the heroic code; adventure and feats of courage were pursued for the sake of the knight's lady rather than for the sake of the hero's honor or the glory of his tribal king. Many French literary forms became popular, among them the fabliau, or moral tale; the animal fable; and the dream vision.

The Fourteenth Century. In 1362, Edward III became the first English king to address Parliament in English, a pivotal moment that emphasized the growing importance of the English language in official discourse. This historic event marked a significant milestone in the linguistic history of England, signaling a shift away from the dominance of Norman French in governance and administration. Consequently, the 14th century witnessed a notable resurgence of the Anglo-Saxon verse form, known as the poetry revival, which brought forth some of the finest poetry in Middle English. Among the prominent figures of this era, Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400) stands as a towering figure, revered as the Father of English literature. Chaucer's contributions to English poetry, including his seminal work *The Canterbury Tales*, solidified his legacy as one of the greatest poets of the Middle Ages.



Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343-1400)

The Fifteenth Century. Of the many 15th-century imitators of Chaucer, the best-known are John Lydgate and Thomas Hoccleve. Other poets of the time include Stephen Hawes and Alexander Barclay, and the Scots poets William Dunbar, Robert Henryson, and Gawin Douglas. The poetry of John Skelton, which is mostly satiric, combines medieval and Renaissance elements.

William Caxton, an English merchant, diplomat, writer, and printer, introduced the art of printing to England in 1476 with the introduction of the printing press, a revolutionary invention that transformed the dissemination of information and literature in Westminster, London.



William Caxton (c. 1422 - c. 1491)



Comprehension Questions:

The Medieval Period

1. What time frame does the Medieval Period encompass?
2. What were some key features of literature during this period?
3. How did the literature of the Medieval Period differ from the reality of the writers' lives, and what purpose did it serve for the people of that time?
4. Who was Geoffrey Chaucer, and what significance did he have in the literature of the Medieval Period?
5. How did the dominance of French in English letters affect the perception of the English language and its speakers during the Medieval Period?
6. What changes occurred in the English language during the transition from Old English to Middle English, and how did these changes impact literature?
7. What factors contributed to the survival of the native tradition of English literature despite the dominance of French during the Medieval Period?

The Eleventh and Twelfth Centuries

8. How did the Norman Conquest of England in 1066 influence the linguistic and literary landscape of the country?
9. Despite the dominance of Norman culture, what aspects of Anglo-Saxon literature and traditions persisted during this period?
10. What role did monastic scriptoria play in preserving and disseminating literature during the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
11. What were some common themes found in Anglo-Norman literature, and how did they differ from those in Anglo-Saxon literature?
12. What were some examples of religious literature that remained prominent during the eleventh and twelfth centuries?
13. What were some of the major cultural and literary contributions brought by the Norman rulers to England following the conquest?
14. Match the following words with their definitions:

a) Bilingualism	1. The quality or state of being sensitive, especially in matters of taste or culture.
b) Scriptoria	2. The quality of possessing and exhibiting knightly virtues such as bravery, honor, and courtesy.
c) Chivalry	3. A place, typically a room in a monastery, where manuscripts are copied and stored.
d) Heritage	4. The practices, beliefs, and traditions that are passed down through generations.
e) Sensibilities	5. The ability to speak two languages fluently or to a high level of proficiency.

The Thirteenth Century.

15. How did Middle English prose in the 13th century differ from Anglo-Saxon prose in terms of its audience and purpose?
16. How did French romances differ from Anglo-Saxon heroic literature in terms of the ideals they promoted and the motivations for adventure and feats of courage?
17. What replaced the heroic code in French romances, and for what purpose were adventure and feats of courage pursued?
18. Besides romance, what other French literary forms became popular in England during the 13th century?
19. What were some key characteristics of courtly love as depicted in French romances, and how did they contrast with Anglo-Saxon literary traditions?
20. Match the following words with their definitions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Didactic b) Romance c) Fabliau d) Courtly love e) Heroic code 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A narrative verse form characterized by themes of adventure, chivalry, and love. 2. A literary genre focused on teaching or instructing moral or ethical principles. 3. A French literary form consisting of humorous or satirical tales often involving lower-class characters. 4. A set of rules and behaviors associated with love and courtship among the nobility, emphasizing devotion, courtesy, and admiration. 5. A system of values and behaviors governing the conduct of heroes, emphasizing honor, courage, and loyalty.
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The Fourteenth Century.

21. What significant event occurred in 1362 during the reign of Edward III, and what was its significance in the linguistic history of England?
22. What literary revival took place in the 14th century, and what was its impact on Middle English poetry?
23. Who was Geoffrey Chaucer, and what is his significance in the history of English literature? What major work is Geoffrey Chaucer known for?
24. How did Chaucer's works, particularly *The Canterbury Tales*, contribute to the preservation and promotion of the English language during the Middle Ages?
25. Match the following words with their definitions:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Resurgence b) Legacy c) Seminal d) Revere e) Pivotal 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highly influential and important, often serving as a foundation or starting point for future developments. 2. To hold in high esteem or deep respect. 3. A significant event or moment that serves as a turning point or critical juncture. 4. A revival or renewed interest in something after a period of decline or obscurity. 5. Something handed down or inherited from the past, especially from an ancestor or predecessor.
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The Fifteenth Century.

26. Who were some of the notable poets who imitated Geoffrey Chaucer, and what are their respective contributions to English literature?
27. Who was William Caxton, and what was his contribution to the dissemination of literature in England during the fifteenth century?

28. How did the introduction of the printing press impact the spread of information and literature?
29. Match the following words with their definitions:

a) Imitators	1. Poets who emulate or mimic the style or themes of another writer.
b) Satiric	2. Pertaining to a period of cultural rebirth and revival of classical learning and arts.
c) Renaissance	3. Spreading or distributing something, especially information or knowledge, widely.
d) Dissemination	4. Markedly new or innovative; causing a significant and lasting change.
e) Revolutionary	5. Characterized by satire, which is the use of humor, irony, or ridicule to criticize or mock someone or something.

Exercise: Arrange the following events or developments in chronological order according to their occurrence in the Medieval period:

- a) Norman Conquest of England in 1066.
- b) Emergence of imitators like John Skelton, John Lydgate, and Thomas Hoccleve.
- c) Emergence of Middle English as a distinct literary language.
- d) Popularization of French literary forms in England.
- e) Influence of French romances on English literature.
- f) Persistence of Anglo-Saxon literature and oral traditions.
- g) Introduction of the printing press by William Caxton in England.
- h) Edward III addresses Parliament in English.
- i) The publication of *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer.

Critical Thinking Exercise 1:

Reflect on the significance of Edward III’s decision to address Parliament in English. Why was this event considered pivotal in the linguistic history of England, and what broader implications did it have for governance, culture, and literature during the 14th century?

Critical Thinking Exercise 2:

Reflect on the impact of the introduction of the printing press by William Caxton on English literature and society during the fifteenth century. How did this revolutionary invention change the way information was disseminated and literature was produced and consumed? Discuss the implications of this change for literacy, education, and cultural development.

UNIT V. Classical English Ballad

The Popular Ballad

The Popular Ballad refers to a type of narrative poem or song that tells a story, often of folklore or legend, in a simple and direct style. Popular ballads have been a part of oral tradition for centuries, passed down through generations by word of mouth before being written down and collected.

The *ballad stanza* contains an *a b c b* rhyme scheme.

When as the sheriff of Nottingham	A
Was come with mickle grief ,	B
He talkd no good of Robin Hood ,	CC
That strong and sturdy thief .	B

An **internal rhyme** is a rhyme involving a word in the middle of a line and another at the end of the line or in the middle of the next.

He talkd no *good* of Robin *Hood*,

The characteristic of the ballad is grim realism. Unlike longer narrative poems, ballads usually concern a single event; motive and action are presented by allusion rather than by detailed and direct revelation; the narrator usually remains impersonal, injecting little comment or moralizing.

“A poem meant for singing, quite impersonal in material, probably connected in its origins with the communal dance, but submitted to a process of oral tradition among people who are free from literary influences and fairly homogeneous in character.” F. B. Gum

Among the most familiar themes of the English popular ballads of this period, we find the supernatural, unreciprocated love, border wars, religion, and the Robin Hood cycle. Although the tragic note predominates, there are many humorous ballads.

Though the ballad is a form still much written, the so-called “popular ballad” in most literatures belongs to the early periods before written literature was highly developed. They appear among illiterate and semi-literate peoples.

Classical English Ballad

A ballad is a story in a song, usually a narrative song or poem. It is a rhythmic saga of a past affair, which may be heroic, romantic, satirical, or political, almost inevitably catastrophic, which is related in the third person, usually with foreshortened alternating four- and three-stress lines (‘ballad meter’) and simple repeating rhymes, and often with a refrain.

The ballad meter with a four-stress line: he TALKD no GOOD of ROBIN HOOD

Some characteristics of a ballad are:

- a ballad tells a story, typically in the third person narrative.
- a ballad focuses on actions and dialogue rather than characteristics and narration.
- a ballad has a simple metrical structure and sentence structure.
- a ballad is sung to a modal melody.
- a ballad is of oral tradition, passed down by word of mouth.
- a ballad usually has a theme that is not directly spoken.
- a ballad is often based on true stories.

Robin Hood Cycle



The Robin Hood Statue at Nottingham Castle

Robin Hood is the archetypal English folk hero of modern folk mythology. Robin is famous for his gallantry, robbing the rich to feed the poor and fighting against injustice and tyranny. The names of Little John, Friar Tuck, Maid Marion, Allan a Dale, Will Scarlet, Much the Miller, and the evil Sheriff of Nottingham are as much a part of the legend as Robin Hood himself. He operates with his “seven score” (140 strong) group of fellow outlawed yeomen, called his “Merry Men” (“score” refers to a unit of measurement equivalent to twenty). A brilliant archer, Robin lived a life of adventure, hunting the King’s deer in Sherwood Forest.

One of the controversial aspects of the Robin Hood legend is the period of its origins. Dr. J.R. Maddicott put forward the suggestion that it should be

sought in the 1330s, a generation or so before the reference to “rymes of Robin Hood” in the text of *Piers Plowman* in 1377.

Robin Hood name

The hypothesis was considered that the Hood/Hode surname is of Scottish or Yorkshire origin. Robin is supposedly a contraction of Robert [French phonetic Rober], which is a particularly Scottish first name. It was widely used and introduced by the Norman-French; it is not a Christian name. Hood is a very common surname in Scotland and some northern English counties.

The term Sheriff

The term **sheriff** (pl. sheriffs) comes from *shire reeve*, an Old English title for a royal official managing a county for the king. The sheriff’s duties included keeping peace, collecting taxes, and providing soldiers during conflicts. Over time, the role became ceremonial in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, with the sheriff serving as a symbolic local representative.

The ballad about Robin Hood and the Golden Arrow.

The ballad of Robin Hood and the Golden Arrow is a traditional English ballad that recounts the exploits of the legendary outlaw Robin Hood. The ballad celebrates themes of heroism, justice, defiance, and camaraderie, capturing the enduring appeal of the Robin Hood legend as a symbol of resistance against oppression and injustice.

This is a fairly late ballad, not recorded until the eighteenth century, though it was known to the compiler of the Forrester’s manuscript and is used in *Robin Hood and the Shryff*. It describes the archery contest, a favorite episode in the outlaw tradition. The question must be whether it is a literary reworking of that source or a long-preserved separate story.

Honor is a fully medieval concept. In the story, Robin wins, but is not identified, and the outlaws think it is a matter of honor to inform the sheriff of Robin’s victory with a message arrow, which makes the sheriff extremely angry. This is reminiscent of the obsession in Arthurian romance with giving precisely the right degree of praise to combatants at a tournament, some of whom may have been incognito.

The language and style of the ballad are characterized by a blend of archaic vocabulary, rhythmic meter, and vivid imagery. The text employs elements of Middle English, reflecting its origins in medieval folklore and oral tradition.

archaic pronouns: thou, thee, thy

verbs with “-eth” endings for third person singular

archaic vocabulary: “henceforth,” “prithee” (please), “nay” (no), and “ye” (you)

old spellings: “knyght” instead of “knight” or “gaol” instead of “jail.”

distinctive syntax: “To Sherwood Forest went he”



Comprehension Questions:

The Popular Ballad

1. What is the defining characteristic of the ballad stanza, and what is its rhyme scheme?
2. According to F. B. Gum, what are the characteristics of a popular ballad?
3. What themes are commonly found in English popular ballads?
4. What distinguishes the ballad form from longer narrative poems?
5. How are popular ballads typically transmitted through generations?

Exercise 1: Rhyme Scheme Identification

Identify and label the rhyme scheme of the following stanza from the text:

So unto London-road he past,
His losses to unfold
To King Richard, who did regard
The tale that he had told.

Classical English Ballad

6. What is the primary form of expression in a ballad?
7. Are ballads typically based on fictional or real-life events, according to the text?
8. List the characteristics of a popular ballad.

Exercise 2: Match each characteristic of a ballad with its corresponding description:

1. Narrative perspective	a. Typically passed down by word of mouth
2. Focus on actions and dialogue	b. Describes events from the third person viewpoint
3. Simple metrical sentence structure	c. Emphasizes what characters do and say rather than their traits
4. Modal melody	d. Utilizes a straightforward and repetitive structure
5. Oral tradition	e. Sung to a specific type of melody
6. Implicit themes	f. Themes are suggested rather than explicitly stated
7. Basis on true stories	g. Often inspired by real-life events

Exercise 3: Theme Identification

Identify and explain the theme in the following ballad excerpt:

In Sherwood's glade where love does bloom,
Fair Maid Marian, in the forest's gloom,
With eyes like stars and heart so true,
Yearns for Robin, her love to renew.

Exercise 4: Metrical Analysis

Analyze the metrical structure of the following lines from a ballad:

So unto London-road he past,
His losses to unfold
To King Richard, who did regard
The tale that he had told.

Robin Hood Cycle

9. Who is Robin Hood and what is he famous for?
10. Can you name some of the prominent characters associated with Robin Hood in the legend?
11. How many men are said to make up Robin Hood's band of outlaws, and what are they commonly referred to as?
12. What skill is Robin Hood renowned for, and where did he primarily operate?

13. What are the origins of the Robin Hood legend, and what timeframe has been suggested by Dr. J.R. Maddicott?
14. What hypothesis has been proposed regarding the origins of the surname Hood and the name Robin?
15. What is the historical evolution of the term sheriff?

Exercise 5: Intercultural Comparison

“Merry men” is often translated as “haiduci” into Romanian. Find the similarities and differences between “merry men” in English tradition and “haiduci” in Romanian tradition.

The ballad about Robin Hood and the Golden Arrow.

16. What is the main focus of the ballad, and why is it considered a favorite episode in the outlaw tradition?
17. How does the concept of honor play a role in the story, particularly in relation to Robin Hood’s victory in the archery contest?
18. What linguistic and stylistic features suggest a late origin for the ballad, according to the text?

UNIT VI. Geoffrey Chaucer

Geoffrey Chaucer (c. 1343 – October 25, 1400) was an English writer, poet, philosopher, and diplomat. The best-known of Chaucer's works is *The Canterbury Tales*.



Before William Shakespeare, Geoffrey Chaucer was the preeminent English poet, and still is considered to be the most important poet to write in Middle English.

Chaucer was born in the early 1340s, probably in London (the exact date and location are not known), to a middle-class family.

The name Chaucer, a French form of the Latin *calcearius*, meaning shoemaker, is found in London and the eastern counties as early as the second half of the 13th century.

His father, John Chaucer, was a wine merchant and deputy to the king's butler. The financial success of his family came from work in the wine and leather businesses. There are no sure details about Chaucer's early life and education, but his writings demonstrate a close familiarity with a number of important books of his contemporaries and of earlier times.

Chaucer knew several languages, including French, Italian, and Latin. The first time he is mentioned is in 1357 when his father's relations made it possible for him to become a page to the noble lady Elizabeth de Burgh, Countess of Ulster. This was a usual arrangement in which sons of middle-class parents were placed in royal service to receive a courtly education.

In 1359, at the beginning of the Hundred Years' War, Chaucer was able to travel with Lionel of Antwerp, Elizabeth's husband, as part of the English army under Edward III. In 1360, Chaucer was captured during an unsuccessful offensive at Reims and became a prisoner of war. Later, Chaucer was ransomed. Chaucer served under a number of diplomatic missions.

By 1366, Chaucer had married Philippa Pan, who had been in service with the Countess of Ulster.

Chaucer's first published work was *The Book of the Duchess*, a poem of over 1,300 lines that is an elegy for the Duchess of Lancaster. During his missions to Italy, Chaucer came in contact with the works of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio, which had a deep influence on his own works.

In 1374, Chaucer was named as a comptroller for the Port of London, his first job which didn't concern the British court. In February 1377, he was sent to Paris in connection, probably, with the peace negotiations between England and France, and at the end of April, he was again dispatched to France.

On the accession of Richard II, Chaucer, in January 1378, seems to have been in France in connection with a proposed marriage between Richard and the daughter of the French king, returning on the 19th of September. This was his last diplomatic journey.

In August 1386, he became a knight of the shire for Kent. Around the time of his wife's death in 1387, Chaucer moved to Greenwich and later to Kent. Changing political circumstances led to Chaucer falling out of favor with the royal court and leaving Parliament, but when Richard II became King of England, Chaucer recovered royal favor. During this period, Chaucer used writing as an escape from public life.

In the following year, the cessation of Philippa's pension suggests that she died.

In July 1389, after John of Gaunt had returned to England, and the king had taken the government into his own hands, Chaucer was appointed clerk of the works at various royal palaces. He was also made a commissioner to maintain the banks of the Thames between Woolwich and Greenwich.

Chaucer died in 1400, on the 25th of October. He was buried in St. Mary's Chapel, Westminster Abbey, and his tomb became the nucleus of what is now known as Poets' Corner.

The portrait of Chaucer, by his disciple Thomas Hoccleve, caused to be painted in a copy of the latter's *Regement of Princes* (now in the British Museum), shows him as an old man with white hair; he has a fresh complexion, gray eyes, a straight nose, a gray mustache, and a small double-pointed beard. His dress and hood are black, and he carries in his hands a string of beads. We may imagine that it was thus that during the last months of his life, he used to walk about the Abbey.

Quotes about Geoffrey Chaucer

Chaucer is fresh and modern still, and no dust settles on his true passages. It lightens along the line, and we are reminded that flowers have bloomed, and birds sung, and hearts beaten in England. Before the earnest gaze of the reader, the rust and moss of time gradually drop off, and the original green life is revealed. He was a homely and domestic man, and did breathe quite as modern men do. - *Henry David Thoreau*

Gentleness and delicacy of character are everywhere apparent in his verse. The simplest and humblest words come readily to his lips. - *Henry David Thoreau*

The Canterbury Tales



The Canterbury Tales is a framework piece in which around thirty pilgrims journey from London to visit the shrine of St. Thomas Becket at Canterbury. To enliven the trip, each pilgrim tells two stories on the way to Canterbury and two on the return journey. Despite Chaucer's original plan for over one hundred tales, the work consists of only twenty-four, some of which remain unfinished.

Chaucer's depiction of the diverse group of pilgrims offers a vivid portrayal of medieval society, showcasing his talent for satire. This work secured his literary reputation and stands as one of the greatest achievements in Middle English literature.

While Chaucer did not complete *The Canterbury Tales* as intended, the collection of tales is considered sufficiently finished, presenting a variety of

genres including romantic adventures, fabliaux, saint's biographies, animal fables, and religious allegories. The structure is reminiscent of Boccaccio's *Decameron*, with no single genre dominating the narrative.

The surviving versions of *The Canterbury Tales* come from two Middle English manuscripts, and despite its unfinished state, the work remains a masterpiece of English literature.

Full title: The Canterbury Tales

Author: Geoffrey Chaucer

Type of work: Poetry (two tales are in prose: the Tale of Melibee and the Parson's Tale)

Genres: Narrative collection of poems; character portraits; parody; estates satire; romance; fabliau

Language: Middle English

Time and place written: Around 1386–1395, England

Date of first publication: in the early fifteenth century

Publisher: initially spread in hand-copied manuscripts

Narrator: The main narrator is anonymous. The other pilgrims narrate most of the tales.

Point of view: In the General Prologue, the narrator speaks in the first person, describing each of the pilgrims as they appeared to him. The pilgrims tell their stories from third-person point of view.

Tense: Past

Setting (time): The late fourteenth century, after 1381

Setting (place): The Tabard Inn; the road to Canterbury

Protagonists: Each individual tale has its own protagonists.

Major conflict: The struggles between characters, social classes, differing tastes, and competing professions.

In 1809, the English poet and artist William Blake made the following observation: "Chaucer's pilgrims are the characters which compose all ages and nations. . . . Some of the names or titles are altered by time, but the characters themselves forever remain unaltered."

Paraphrase

Reading medieval texts, such as *The Canterbury Tales*, can be challenging because they often contain unfamiliar words and complex sentences. One way that you can make sense of Chaucer's work is to paraphrase, or restate information in your own words.

A paraphrase is usually the same length as the original text but contains simpler language. As you read, paraphrase difficult passages.

Here is an example.

Chaucer's Words: Whan that Aueryll wt his shoures soote,

Paraphrase: When in April the sweet showers fall

The Legends of Good Women

The Legends of Good Women is a collection of poems by Geoffrey Chaucer that showcases the lives of various virtuous women from history and mythology. Written in the late 14th century, this work consists of nine individual legends, each dedicated to portraying the exemplary deeds and moral virtues of different female figures. Chaucer's portrayal of these women reflects the cultural and literary conventions of his time, while also offering insights into themes such as love, loyalty, and the role of women in society. Through vivid storytelling and rich imagery, Chaucer presents a diverse array of characters, from classical heroines like Cleopatra and Dido to legendary figures like Alceste and Lucretia. "The Legends of Good Women" serves as both a celebration of feminine virtue and an exploration of the complexities of female agency and identity in medieval literature.

Dream Vision

Dream visions formed one of the most popular genres of literary writing in the later Middle Ages. They were among Chaucer's favorite genres, as evidenced by his works such as *The Book of the Duchess*, *The Parliament of Fowls*, and *The House of Fame*. The Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* is considered to be the last of Chaucer's dream visions.

A *dream vision* or *visio* is a literary device in which a dream or vision is recounted as having revealed knowledge or a truth that is not available to the dreamer or visionary in a normal waking state.

The stages of a dream vision typically involve the following progression:

- I. Initiation:** The narrator falls asleep, entering the dream state.
- II. Exploration:** The narrator dreams, experiencing the events and scenarios within the dream.
- III. Encounter with the Guide:** In the dream, there is usually a guide (a god) who appears to the narrator.

- IV. Revelation by the Guide:** The guide imparts knowledge, often related to religion or love, which the dreamer couldn't have acquired otherwise.
- V. Return / Awakening:** The narrator awakens from the dream, leaving the dream state.
- VI. Resolution / Sharing:** The narrator resolves to share the knowledge gained from the dream with other people.



Comprehension Questions:

Geoffrey Chaucer's biography

1. What is Geoffrey Chaucer's most famous work, and why is he considered significant in English literature?
2. Describe Chaucer's background, including his family's occupation and his early education.
3. How did Chaucer become involved in diplomatic missions, and what impact did his travels have on his literary influences?
4. Discuss Chaucer's marriage and the significance of his first published work, *The Book of the Duchess*.
5. Explain the political shifts that affected Chaucer's career and his eventual recovery of royal favor.
6. When did Chaucer die and where was he buried upon his death?
7. Describe Chaucer's physical appearance as depicted in a portrait by his disciple Thomas Hoccleve.

The Canterbury Tales

8. What is the overarching purpose of the pilgrims' journey in *The Canterbury Tales*?
9. How many stories were each pilgrim expected to tell during the pilgrimage, according to Chaucer's original plan?
10. What genres are represented in *The Canterbury Tales*?
11. What similarities can be drawn between the structure of *The Canterbury Tales* and Boccaccio's "Decameron"?
12. Where and when is the setting of *The Canterbury Tales*, both in terms of time and place?
13. Are the protagonists in *The Canterbury Tales*, and how do they vary from tale to tale?

14. There are different genres represented in *The Canterbury Tales*. Match the genres with their meanings:

1. Narrative	a) A humorous imitation of a serious piece of literature or genre.
2. Parody	b) A type of medieval French verse tale characterized by comic, often bawdy, content.
3. Estates satire	c) A genre of literature that critiques or satirizes social classes and their roles in society.
4. Fabliau	d) A spoken or written account of connected events; a story.

The Legends of Good Women

15. How many legends are included in *The Legends of Good Women* by Geoffrey Chaucer?
16. What is the primary focus of each legend in the collection?
17. Name any of the specific female figures featured in the collection.

UNIT VII. English Renaissance

The word Renaissance, originating from the French for ‘rebirth’, or Rinascimento in Italian, first emerged to characterize the historical age in Italy, and subsequently in Europe, that succeeded the Middle Ages. It announced a revival of classical learning and culture, a rediscovery of Greek and Roman literature that had been largely neglected during the preceding centuries.

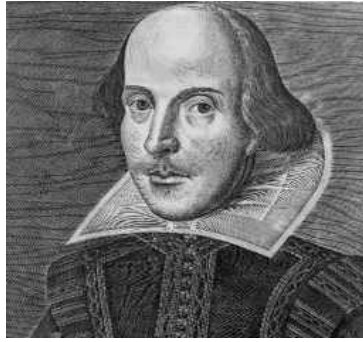
At that moment, England had a strong tradition of literature in the English vernacular, which gradually increased as the use of the printing press became common by the mid-16th century. This tradition of literature written in English vernacular largely began with the Protestant Reformation’s call to let people interpret the Bible for themselves instead of accepting the Catholic Church’s interpretation. The growing population of England, the growing wealth of its people, and their fondness for spectacle produced a dramatic literature of remarkable variety, quality, and extent.

The English Renaissance, a term used to describe a cultural and artistic movement in England, spanning roughly from the late 15th century to the early 17th century, was deeply influenced by the broader European Renaissance. Often referred to as “the age of Shakespeare” or “the Elizabethan era,” this period marked a flowering of creativity in literature, drama, poetry, music, and the visual arts.



Ben Jonson (c. 1572 – 1637)

Central to the ideals of the Renaissance was the notion of the individual’s significance within society, a theme that is echoed in the works of English Renaissance writers. The poems and plays of Ben Jonson, for example, frequently explore the distinction between virtue and vice, with Jonson championing sincerity, honesty, self-discipline, and concern as chief virtues, while condemning dissimulation, lying, or the masking of identity as vicious behavior.



William Shakespeare (1564 - 1616)

The English Renaissance also witnessed the emergence of some of the greatest literary figures in English history. Chief among them was, whose plays continue to be celebrated for their profound insights into the human condition, rich characterization, and poetic language. Shakespeare's works, including *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, and *Romeo and Juliet*, remain central to the English literary canon and are still performed and studied around the world today.

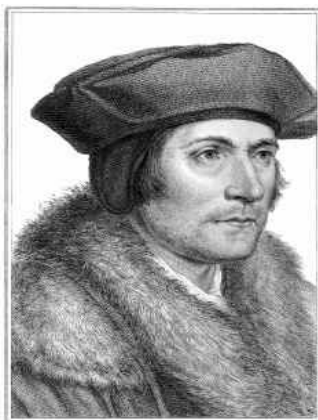
Moreover, the literature of the English Renaissance often drew upon classical sources for inspiration and subject matter. Shakespeare's plays such as *Coriolanus*, *Troilus and Cressida*, and *Julius Caesar* are prime examples of this, as they take their themes and characters from classical history and mythology.



Edmund Spenser (c. 1552 - 1599)

Poets like Edmund Spenser and John Milton, meanwhile, demonstrated an increased interest in understanding English Christian beliefs, with works such as Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* exploring themes

of sin, redemption, and the fall of man. Playwrights such as Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare likewise engaged with English life, death, and history through their theatrical representations.



Sir Thomas More (1478 – 1535)

In addition to literature and drama, the English Renaissance also witnessed advancements in philosophy and political thought. Philosophers like Sir Thomas More and Sir Francis Bacon published their own ideas about humanity and the ideal society, contributing to the intense intellectual activity, innovation, and debate of the era.

The English Renaissance was also a period of profound political and social change. The reigns of monarchs such as Henry VIII, Elizabeth I, and James I saw England emerge as a major European power, with cultural achievements that rivaled those of Italy and Spain. During this period, the first British colony, Jamestown, was established in 1607 by the Virginia Company of London, aiming to create a permanent English settlement in North America. This colony marked the beginning of British colonial expansion in the New World and played a significant role in shaping the future of the British Empire. The rise of the merchant class and the expansion of trade contributed to a growing sense of national identity and pride, while advancements in education and literacy allowed for greater access to knowledge and ideas.



Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the origin of the term “Renaissance,” and what does it signify in the context of European history?

2. How did the Protestant Reformation contribute to the development of literature in the English vernacular during the English Renaissance?
3. What were some of the key features of the English Renaissance, and how did it compare to the broader European Renaissance?
4. Discuss the themes explored in the works of Ben Jonson and how they reflect the ideals of the Renaissance.
5. Who are some of the notable literary figures of the English Renaissance, and what are their contributions to English literature?
6. How did classical sources influence the literature and drama of the English Renaissance, using examples from Shakespeare's plays?
7. Explain the themes explored in the works of poets like Edmund Spenser and John Milton during the English Renaissance.
8. How did playwrights like Christopher Marlowe and William Shakespeare engage with English life, death, and history in their works?
9. What advancements occurred in philosophy and political thought during the English Renaissance, and who were some of the prominent thinkers of the time?
10. How did political and social changes during the English Renaissance, including the reigns of monarchs and colonial expansion, impact England's cultural landscape and national identity?
11. Match the following words with their definitions:

1. Renaissance	a. The revival of classical learning and culture in Europe, marked by significant cultural and artistic achievements.
2. Vernacular	b. Language or dialect spoken by ordinary people in a particular country or region.
3. Virtue	c. Behavior showing high moral standards or excellence.
4. Dissimulation	d. The act of concealing one's true intentions or feelings.
5. Canon	e. A collection or list of texts considered authoritative or culturally significant.
6. Monarchs	f. Sovereign rulers such as kings or queens.
7. Colonial	g. Relating to or characteristic of a colony or colonies.

UNIT VIII. The Consequences of Genre

Genre is a French term derived from the Latin *genus, generis*, meaning “type,” “sort,” or “kind.” It designates the literary form or type into which works are classified according to what they have in common, either in their formal structures or in their treatment of subject matter, or both.

The division of the literary domain into three major genres, as proposed by Plato, Aristotle, and later Horace, is utilized. The three traditional literary forms into which writing has been grouped are: Narrative (Epic), Lyric, and Drama.

A **narrative** tells a story or tale; drama is presented on a stage, where actors embody characters; lyrics express the poet’s emotions, which the poet places at the center of the poem, informing us about their personal state of mind, emotions, and convictions.

Lyric: The poet writes the poem as his or her own experience; often the poet uses the first person (“I”); however, this speaker is not necessarily the poet but may be a fictional character.

The lyric includes all shorter forms of poetry, e.g., song, ode, ballad, elegy, sonnet. Up to the nineteenth century, the short lyric poem was considered the least important of the genres, but with the Romantic movement, the prestige of the lyric increased considerably.

Typically, the subject matter is expressive, whether of personal emotions, such as love or grief, or of public emotions, such as patriotism, reverence, or celebration.

Drama: The characters are obviously separate from the writer; in fact, they generally seem to have lives of their own, and their speech reflects their individual personalities. The writer is present, of course, in stage directions (which the audience isn’t aware of during a performance), and occasionally, a character acts as a mouthpiece for the writer.

The conventional formal arrangement into acts and scenes derives ultimately from the practice in Greek drama of alternating scenes of dialogue with choral sections. From classical examples also comes the standard subdivision into *tragedy* and *comedy*.

Although the structural principles are quite fluid, dramatic form often tends to move from exposition or presentation of the dramatic situation, through complication, setting the direction of the dramatic conflict, to a climax or turning

point, and then through further action, resolving the various complications, to the denouement or conclusion of the play.

Epic: This long narrative is primarily written in the third person. However, the epic poet makes his presence known, sometimes by speaking in the first person.

The epic, in the classical formulation of the three genres, referred exclusively to the “poetic epic.” It was, of course, in verse and rather lengthy. It dealt in elevated language with heroic figures (human heroes and deities) whose exploits affected whole civilizations or the whole of mankind. Today, epic can include many kinds of narratives, in prose as well as in verse.

It should be noted that the three-part division of lyric, drama, and epic, while useful and relatively comprehensive, does not provide a place for all known literary genres. Some obvious omissions are the essay, the pastoral, biography, autobiography, and satire.



Comprehension Questions:

1. What is the origin of the term *genre* and how is it related to literary classification?
2. According to the traditional division proposed by Plato, and Aristotle, what are the three major genres of literature?
3. How does a lyric poem differ from a narrative or dramatic work?
4. What are some key characteristics of epic narratives?
5. Describe the typical characteristics of a dramatic work.
6. What are some literary genres that are not covered by the traditional division of lyric, drama, and epic?

Exercise 1: Genre Identification

Read the following descriptions and determine the correct genre for each piece of literature. Choose from the options provided: Lyric, Drama, Epic

- a) A collection of poems expressing the poet’s innermost emotions and reflections on nature, love, and the human experience.
- b) A stage play featuring a family torn apart by greed and betrayal, with dialogue and actions performed by actors on stage.
- c) A lengthy narrative poem recounting the adventures of a hero on a quest to fulfill a noble destiny, often involving supernatural elements and grand battles.

Exercise 2: Match each characteristic with the corresponding literary genre:

- a) Intimate portrayal of personal emotions and experiences
- b) Sole reliance on poetic language
- c) Exploration of societal issues and commentary
- d) Focus on the journey or quest of the protagonist
- e) Vivid descriptions of historical events
- f) Central conflict resolved through dialogue and action
- g) Structured dialogue between characters
- h) Presentation through performance on stage
- i) Expression of the poet's subjective thoughts and emotions
- j) Lengthy narratives with complex plots
- k) Short, musical, and emotive compositions
- l) Grand scope, featuring heroic deeds and legendary figures

Exercise 3: Match each primary purpose with the corresponding literary genre:

- a) To celebrate moments of beauty and transcendence
- b) To engage and challenge the audience's perceptions and beliefs
- c) To glorify heroes and their legendary adventures
- d) To evoke emotional responses from the reader or listener
- e) To express personal feelings, experiences, and reflections
- f) To convey a story through the interactions of characters on stage
- g) To provide social commentary and critique
- h) To explore universal themes of human existence
- i) To explore the complexities of human relationships and psychology
- j) To capture fleeting moments and emotions
- k) To preserve cultural and historical heritage
- l) To inspire awe and admiration in the audience

Exercise 4: Examine examples of epic, lyric and dramatic pieces of literature.

a) *Beowulf*

Beowulf got ready,
donned his war-gear, indifferent to death;
his mighty, hand-forged, fine-webbed mail
would soon meet with the menace underwater.

b) *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love*, by Ch. Marlowe

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

c) *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare

Act 1, Scene 5:

Ghost: I am your father's ghost. I'm doomed to wander at night and suffer in flames during the day until my sins are cleansed. But I'm not allowed to reveal everything. If I could, my story would terrify you. Listen, listen! If you loved your father, avenge his murder.

Hamlet: Oh God!

Ghost: Avenge his murder.

e) *Robinson Crusoe*, by Daniel Defoe

When I woke up, it was daytime, and the weather was clear. The storm had stopped, so the sea was not rough like before. What surprised me the most was that the ship had been lifted off the sand during the night by the rising tide. It had been pushed almost as far as the rock where I had been hurt by the waves earlier.

f) *Romeo and Juliet*, by William Shakespeare

Act 2, Scene 2:

Juliet: O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name;

Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet.

Romeo: [Aside] Shall I hear more, or shall I speak at this?

Juliet: 'Tis but thy name that is my enemy.

g) *A Red, Red Rose*, by Robert Burns

O my Luve is like a red, red rose

That's newly sprung in June;

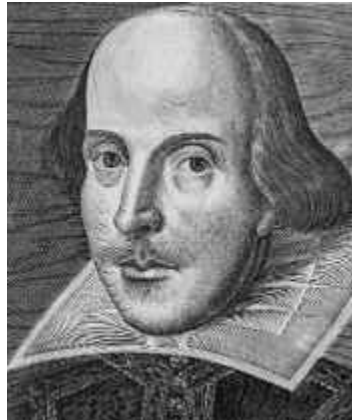
O my Luve is like the melody

That's sweetly played in tune.

UNIT IX. William Shakespeare

He was not of an age, but for all time! **Ben Jonson**

John Shakespeare, father of William Shakespeare, moved to the idyllic town of Stratford-upon-Avon in the mid-sixteenth century, where he became a successful landowner, moneylender, dealer of wool and agricultural goods, and glover. In 1557, he married Mary Arden. John Shakespeare lived during a time when the middle class was growing and became increasingly wealthy, thus allowing its members more freedoms and luxuries, and a stronger voice in the local government. He took advantage of the opportunities afforded him through this social growth, and in 1557 became a member of the Stratford Council. In 1567, he was made bailiff, the highest elected office in Stratford - equivalent to a modern-day mayor.



The town records indicate that William Shakespeare was the third child of John and Mary. While his birth is unregistered, legend suggests it occurred on April 23, 1564, coincidentally the date of his death 52 years later. In any event, his baptism was officially recorded on April 26, 1564. Little is known about his childhood, though it is presumed he attended the local grammar school, the King's New School. Staffed by faculty with Oxford degrees, the curriculum encompassed mathematics, natural sciences, Latin, rhetoric, logic, Christian ethics, and classical literature. He did not attend a university, but this was not unusual at the time, since university education was reserved for future clergymen. However, the education he received in grammar school was excellent, as evidenced by the numerous classical and literary references in his plays.

While many records of Shakespeare's life as a citizen of Stratford, including marriage and birth certificates, remain extant, very little information exists about his early years as a playwright. Young Will didn't achieve immediate and widespread success; the earliest written record of Shakespeare's life in London comes from a statement by rival playwright Robert Greene, who refers to Shakespeare as an "upstart crow... [who] supposes he is as well able to bombast out a blank verse as the best of you" - hardly high praise.

With Henry VI, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *Titus Andronicus* under his belt, Shakespeare was a popular playwright by 1590, but 1593 marked a significant leap forward in his career. By the end of that year, he had gained a prominent patron in the Earl of Southampton, and his *Venus and Adonis* was published. It remains one of the first of his known works to be printed and was a huge success. Next came *The Rape of Lucrece*. Shakespeare had firmly established himself as a poet, and most scholars agree that the majority of Shakespeare's sonnets were probably written in the 1590s.

In 1594, Shakespeare returned to the theater and joined the Lord Chamberlain's Men, a group of actors who later changed their name to the King's Men when James I ascended the throne. By 1598, he had become the "principal comedian" for the troupe, and by 1603, he held the title of "principal tragedian". He remained associated with the organization until his death. During this era, acting and playwriting were not considered noble professions, but successful and prosperous actors were relatively respected. Shakespeare achieved considerable success and gained significant wealth, which he invested in real estate in Stratford. In fact, in 1597, he purchased New Place, the second-largest house in Stratford, for his parents. In 1596, Shakespeare applied for a coat of arms for his family, effectively elevating himself to the status of a gentleman, and his daughters married into successful and wealthy families.



NON SANZ DROICT (not without right), motto on Shakespeare's coat of arms

The same year he joined the Lord Chamberlain's Men, Shakespeare penned *Romeo and Juliet*, along with *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, and several other plays. Two of his greatest tragedies, *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*, followed in 1600 (or thereabouts), and the opening decade of the seventeenth century witnessed the debut performances of many of his most celebrated works: *Richard III* in 1601, *Othello* in 1604 or 1605, *Antony and Cleopatra* in 1606 or 1607, and *King Lear* in 1608. The last play of his to be performed was probably *King Henry VIII*, either in 1612 or 1613.

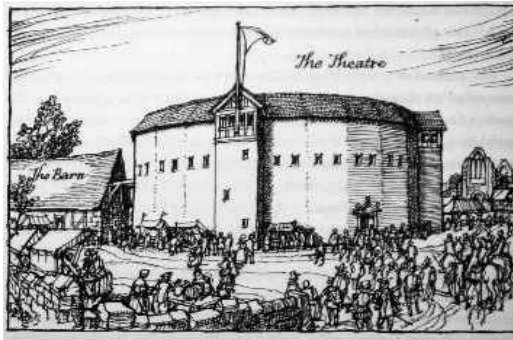
William Shakespeare lived until 1616, and his wife Anna died in 1623 at the age of 67. He was buried in the chancel of his church at Stratford. The lines above his tomb (allegedly written by Shakespeare himself) read:

“Good friend, for Jesus' sake forbear
To dig the dust enclosed here.
Blessed be the man that spares these stones
And cursed be he that moves my bones.”

In his poems and plays, Shakespeare invented thousands of words, often combining Latin, French, and native roots. His impressive expansion of the English language, according to the Oxford English Dictionary, includes such words as: birthplace, bloodsucking, courtship, dewdrop, downstairs, hunchbacked, leapfrog, misquote, radiance, schoolboy, and zany.

Shakespeare wrote more than 30 plays. These are usually divided into four categories: histories, comedies, tragedies, and romances. His earliest plays were primarily comedies and histories such as *Henry VI* and *The Comedy of Errors*, but in 1596, Shakespeare wrote *Romeo and Juliet*, his second tragedy, and over the next dozen years he would return to the form, writing the plays for which he is now best known: *Julius Caesar*, *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, and *Antony and Cleopatra*. In his final years, Shakespeare turned to romance with *Cymbeline*, *A Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*.

Only eighteen of Shakespeare's plays were published during his lifetime; a complete collection of his works did not appear until the publication of the First Folio in 1623, several years after his death. Nonetheless, his contemporaries recognized Shakespeare's achievements. Francis Meres cited “honey-tongued” Shakespeare for his plays and poems in 1598, and the Chamberlain's Men rose to become the leading dramatic company in London, installed as members of the royal household in 1603.



The Globe theater

Shakespeare's plays

Many of Shakespeare's plays have the reputation of being among the greatest in the English language and in Western literature.

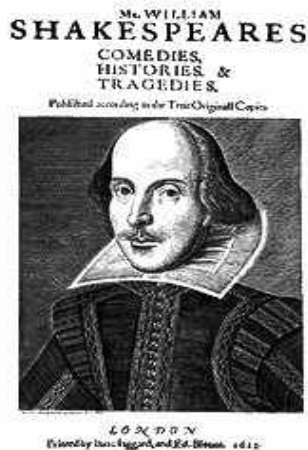
Shakespeare wrote tragedies, histories, comedies and romances.

Tragedies: "Hamlet", "Macbeth", "Othello", "King Lear", "Romeo and Juliet".

Histories: "Henry IV, Part 1", "Henry IV, Part 2", "Henry V", "Richard II", "Richard III".

Comedies: "A Midsummer Night's Dream", "Twelfth Night", "Much Ado About Nothing", "As You Like It", "The Comedy of Errors".

Romances (also known as tragicomedies): "The Tempest", "The Winter's Tale", "Cymbeline", "Pericles, Prince of Tyre", "The Two Noble Kinsmen".



Shakespeare's plays tend to be placed into three main stylistic groups: early romantic comedies and histories (such as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Henry IV*);

middle period romantic comedies and tragedies (including his most famous tragedies, *Othello*, *Macbeth*, *Hamlet* and *King Lear*, as well as “problem plays” such as *Troilus and Cressida*);

later romances (such as *The Winter’s Tale* and *The Tempest*).

The earlier plays range from broad comedy to historical nostalgia, while the middle-period plays tend to have grander themes, addressing such issues as betrayal, murder, power, and ambition. By contrast, his late romances feature redemptive plotlines with ambiguous endings and the use of magic and other fantastical elements. However, the borders between these genres are never clear.

Theatrical Conditions: The Globe and its predecessor, the Theatre, were public playhouses run by the Chamberlain’s Men (later the King’s Men), a leading theater company of which Shakespeare was a member. Almost all classes of citizens, except the Puritans, came to these playhouses for afternoon entertainment. The players were also called to perform before the monarch and assembled nobility. In the summer, they toured the provinces, and on occasion, they performed at London’s inns, universities, and great houses.

Shakespeare’s initial associations with the Chamberlain’s Men appear to have been as an actor. He is not known to have acted after 1603, and tradition assigns him only secondary roles, such as the ghost in *Hamlet*.

In Shakespeare’s era, there was little time for group rehearsals, and actors were provided with only their own lines. Consequently, the crucial scenes in Shakespeare’s plays typically involve two or three characters, or a single character dominating a crowded stage. Female parts were written for young male actors or boys, so Shakespeare seldom wrote substantial roles for them or kept them actively engaged on stage for extended periods.

Quotes about William Shakespeare

Shakespeare was the man who of all modern, and perhaps ancient poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul. All the images of Nature were still present to him and he drew them, not laboriously, but luckily; when he describes any thing, you more than see it, you feel it too. Those who accuse him of having wanted learning, give him the greater commendation: he was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there. [...] Shakespeare was the Homer, or father of our dramatic poets; [...] I love Shakespeare. *John Dryden*

The remarkable thing about Shakespeare is that he is really very good - in spite of all the people who say he is very good.

Robert Graves

Sweet Swan of Avon!

Ben Jonson

He was not of an age, but for all time!

Ben Jonson

When I read Shakespeare I am struck with wonder
That such trivial people should muse and thunder
In such lovely language.

D. H. Lawrence

Shakespeare - The nearest thing in incarnation to the eye of God.

Laurence Olivier

Priceless Shakspeare was the free gift of Nature; given altogether silently -- received altogether silently, as if it had been a thing of little account. And yet, very literally, it is a priceless thing...

Thomas Carlyle



Comprehension Questions:

1. What were some of the professions and roles that John Shakespeare, William Shakespeare's father, held in Stratford-upon-Avon?
2. Describe the education William Shakespeare received during his childhood. What subjects were included in the curriculum of the King's New School?
3. How did William Shakespeare establish himself as a poet in the 1590s?
4. What significant career moves did William Shakespeare make in 1594 and 1596?
5. What were some of the notable plays that Shakespeare wrote between 1596 and the early 1600s?

6. Explain the significance of the Globe theater in Shakespeare's career. What was the audience like, and how did the theatrical conditions influence the way plays were performed?
7. How did Shakespeare's contemporaries, such as Francis Meres, view his works during his lifetime?
8. What was the title of the prominent office John Shakespeare held in Stratford-upon-Avon, and how did it compare to a modern-day position?
9. What was the significance of the First Folio in preserving Shakespeare's works, and when was it published?
10. What are the four main stylistic groups into which Shakespeare's plays are often categorized?
11. Name examples of tragedies, comedies, and histories by Shakespeare?
12. How do the themes of Shakespeare's middle period plays differ from those of his earlier and later works?

Exercise 1. Chronological Order:

Arrange the following events in the order they occurred in William Shakespeare's life:

- a) Shakespeare's marriage to Anne Hathaway
- b) The publication of "Venus and Adonis"
- c) Shakespeare's application for a coat of arms for his family
- d) Shakespeare's purchase of New Place
- e) Shakespeare's baptism
- f) Shakespeare's sonnets are published.

Exercise 2. Interpretation:

Explain the significance of the lines inscribed on William Shakespeare's tomb.

Exercise 3. Match the following terms with their corresponding descriptions:

1. Tragedies; 2. Histories; 3. Comedies; 4. Romances.
 - A. Plays that often end in the death or downfall of the main character, exploring themes of fate, ambition, and human suffering.
 - B. Dramatic works that focus on historical events, often involving kings, wars, and political intrigue.
 - C. Light-hearted theatrical works characterized by humor, mistaken identities, and happy endings.

- D. Plays that blend elements of comedy and tragedy, featuring themes of love, magic, and reconciliation.

Exercise 4. Categorize Shakespearean plays in Tragedies; Histories; Comedies; Romances: The Taming of the Shrew, Macbeth, The Tempest, Henry IV, Much Ado About Nothing, Romeo and Juliet, Richard III, Cymbeline, Othello, A Midsummer Night's Dream.

Exercise 5. What does the phrase "He was not of an age" by Ben Jonson suggest about William Shakespeare?
Choose a quote about William Shakespeare and interpret it.

UNIT X. The sonnet. Shakespearean sonnets

The term “sonnet” derives from the Provençal word “sonet” and the Italian word “sonetto,” both meaning “little song.”

A **sonnet** is a poem of 14 lines, usually in iambic pentameter (beginning with an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable, followed by another pair of unstressed and stressed syllables, and so on, until there are five pairs of syllables or ten syllables in total), restricted to a definite rhyme scheme.

It seems to have originated in the 13th century among the Sicilian school of court poets. In the 14th century, Petrarch established the most widely used sonnet form.

There are two prominent types: the Italian, or Petrarchan, sonnet, and the Elizabethan, or Shakespearean, sonnet. The sonnet is generally believed to have developed from medieval songs. In Italy, where it was cultivated during the Renaissance, it achieved great expression in the work of Petrarch, Dante, Tasso, and Michelangelo. Innumerable sonnets appeared in Elizabethan England, notably by Philip Sidney, Edmund Spenser, and William Shakespeare.

The Italian sonnet (or Petrarchan, named after the Italian’s most famous sonneteer Francesco Petrarca (1304–1374)) consists of an eight-line octave that asks a question, expresses emotional tension, poses a problem, or relates a narrative, followed by a six-line sestet that resolves the problem, answers the question, resolves the tension, or comments upon the narrative.

Stanzaic pattern: 8 - 6

The octave is typically rhymed a-b-a-b, a-b-a-b; later, the a-b-b-a, a-b-b-a pattern became the standard for Italian Sonnets. For the sestet, there were two different possibilities: c-d-e-c-d-e and c-d-c-c-d-c.

The English sonnet was introduced by Thomas Wyatt in the early 16th century. His sonnets were chiefly translations from the Italian of Petrarch and the French of Ronsard and others. While Wyatt introduced the sonnet into English, it was Surrey who gave them the rhyme scheme, meter, and division into quatrains that now characterize the English sonnet.

Other poets who contributed to its development were Sir Philip Sidney, Michael Drayton, Samuel Daniel, the Earl of Surrey’s nephew Edward de Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, and William Shakespeare.

The form is often named after Shakespeare, not because he was the first to write in this form, but because he became its most famous practitioner.

The form consists of three quatrains and a couplet. The couplet generally introduces an unexpected sharp thematic or imagistic “turn”.

Stanzaic pattern: 4 - 4 - 4 - 2

The usual rhyme scheme is a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g. In addition, sonnets are written in iambic pentameter, meaning that there are 10 syllables per line, and every second syllable is accented. Most of Shakespeare’s writing is in this style.

Monometer	One Foot
Dimeter	Two Feet
Trimeter	Three Feet
Tetrameter	Four Feet
Pentameter	Five Feet
Hexameter	Six Feet
Heptameter	Seven Feet
Octameter	Eight Feet

Types of Meter in Poetry

Foot, plural **Feet**, (prosody) in verse, the smallest metrical unit of measurement.

Iamb, metrical foot consisting of one short syllable (as in classical verse) or one unstressed syllable (as in English verse) followed by one long or stressed syllable, as in the word ‘be|cause’.

An example of an iamb would be **good BYE**.

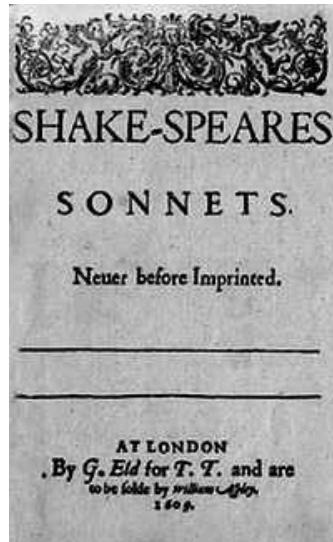
poetry	metrical foot	musical notation
— ◡	trochee	
◡ —	iamb	
— ◡ ◡	dactyl	
◡ ◡ ◡	anapest	
— —	spondee	
◡ ◡ ◡	tribrach	

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Classification of Rhythmic Meter

The first line of Shakespeare's Sonnet 18 can be divided into iambs as follows:

— ∪ / — ∪ / — ∪ / — ∪ / — ∪
shall I / com PARE / thee TO / a SUM / mer's DAY



SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS, or simply **The Sonnets**, comprise a collection of 154 poems in sonnet form written by William Shakespeare that deal with such themes as love, beauty, politics, and mortality. The poems, all but two, first appeared in a 1609 collection; numbers 138 and 144 had previously been published in 1599.

In 1609, appeared *SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS appeared. Never before Imprinted.* At this date, Shakespeare was already a successful author, a country gentleman, and an affluent member of the most important theatrical enterprise in London.

Shakespeare's sonnets do not give the impression of an ordered sequence as exists in Sidney, Spenser, and others. It is only at times that a narrative can be sensed.

Characters. Most of the sonnets are addressed to a beautiful young man, a rival poet, and a dark-haired lady. Readers of the sonnets today commonly refer to these characters as *the Fair Youth* (sonnets 1-126), *the Rival Poet* (within the Fair Youth group in sonnets 78-86), and *the Dark Lady* (127-152). The narrator expresses admiration for the Fair Youth's beauty and later has an affair with the Dark Lady. It is not known whether the poems and their characters are fiction or autobiographical.



Comprehension questions:

1. What are the two main types of sonnets, and who are some of the key figures associated with each type?
2. Describe the structure of an Italian (Petrarchan) sonnet and an English (Shakespearean) sonnet.
3. Who is credited with introducing the sonnet form into English literature, and what changes did they make to the original Italian form?
4. What is the significance of the couplet in a Shakespearean sonnet, and how does it contribute to the overall meaning or effect of the poem?
5. Briefly discuss the themes commonly explored in Shakespeare's Sonnets.
6. Who are the three main characters addressed in Shakespeare's Sonnets?
7. What is the significance of the publication of *SHAKE-SPEARE'S SONNETS. Never before Imprinted* in 1609, considering Shakespeare's status and career at the time?

Exercise 1: Identifying Sonnet Types:

Identify whether the following characteristics describe an Italian (Petrarchan) sonnet or an English (Shakespearean) sonnet:

- a) Consists of an eight-line octave followed by a six-line sestet.
- b) Typically rhymed a-b-a-b, a-b-a-b for the octave.
- c) Rhyme scheme is a-b-a-b, c-d-c-d, e-f-e-f, g-g.
- d) Introduced by Thomas Wyatt in the early 16th century.
- e) Has three quatrains and a couplet.

Exercise 2: Analyzing Rhythmic meters:

Mark the stressed (—) and unstressed (◡) syllables of the following lines.

Identify whether they belong to an Italian sonnet or an English sonnet.

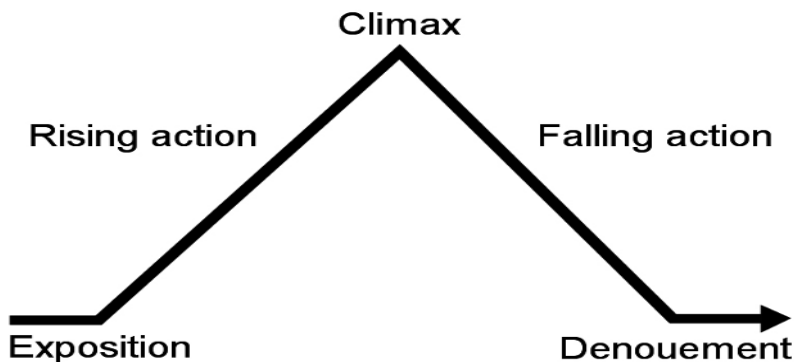
- a) "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?"
- b) "How do I love thee? Let me count the ways."
- c) "My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun."
- d) "When, in disgrace with fortune and men's eyes."
- e) "So long as men can breathe or eyes can see."

UNIT XI. The Dramatic Structure

The term *dramatic structure* refers to the parts into which a short story, a novel, a play, a screenplay, or a narrative poem can be divided.

Gustav Freytag is known for his analysis of the structure of ancient Greek and Shakespearean drama. According to Freytag, a drama is divided into five parts, or acts:

- exposition (inciting incident);
- rising action;
- climax (or turning point);
- falling action;
- dénouement [*dei'numan*] or resolution/catastrophe (depending upon whether the drama is a comedy or a tragedy).



Freytag's Pyramid:

Exposition: Setting the scene. The writer introduces the characters and setting, providing a description and background.

Inciting Incident: Something happens to begin the action. A single event usually signals the beginning of the main conflict. The inciting incident is sometimes called 'the complication'.

Rising Action: The story builds and gets more exciting.

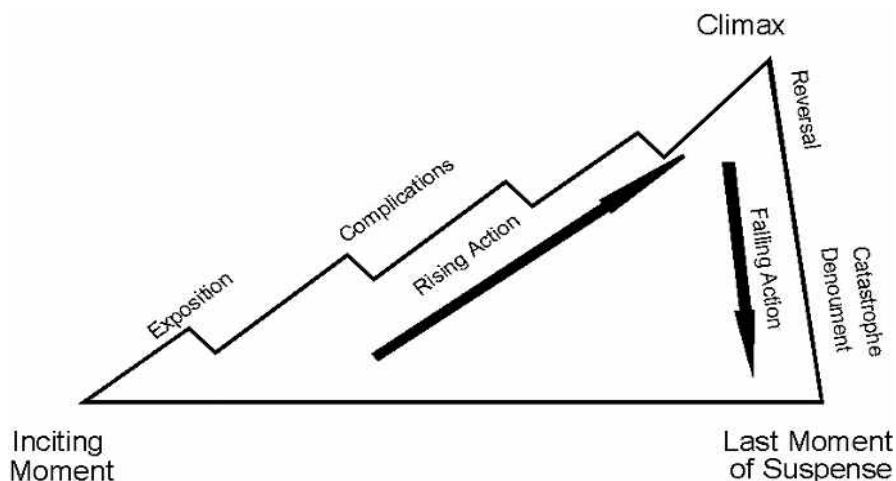
Climax: The moment of greatest tension in a story. This is often the most exciting event. It is the event that the rising action builds up to and that the falling action follows.

Falling Action: Events happen as a result of the climax and we know that the story will soon end.

Resolution: The character solves the main problem/conflict or someone solves it for him or her.

Dénouement: (a French term, pronounced: day-noo-mon) The ending. At this point, any remaining secrets, questions, or mysteries that remain after the resolution are solved by the characters or explained by the author. Sometimes the author leaves us to think about THEME or future possibilities for the characters.

Although Freytag’s analysis of dramatic structure is based on five-act plays, it can sometimes be applied in a modified manner.



Comprehension questions:

1. What are the main components outlined in Freytag’s Pyramid?
2. Can Freytag’s analysis be applied to works with a different number of acts? If so, how?
3. What is the purpose of the inciting incident in Freytag’s Pyramid?
4. What happens during the raising action phase according to Freytag’s Pyramid?
1. Describe the role of the climax in Freytag’s analysis of dramatic structure.
2. What happens during the falling action phase according to Freytag’s Pyramid?
3. How does the resolution phase contribute to the overall structure of a story?

Exercise: Arrange stages of Freytag’s Pyramid

Inciting Incident, Resolution, Dénouement, Rising Action, Climax, Exposition, Falling Action.

UNIT XII. The Tragedy of Hamlet

Tragedy: A drama in prose or poetry about a noble, courageous hero of excellent character who, because of some tragic character flaw, brings ruin upon himself or herself.

The tragic form was practiced extensively by the ancient Greeks. In the Middle Ages, when classical works were virtually unknown, tragedy came to denote any works about the fall of persons due to any reason: fate, vice, weakness, etc.

The classical form of tragedy was revived in the 16th century; it flourished especially on the Elizabethan stage.

Tragedy is a drama that depicts the suffering of a heroic individual who is often overcome by the obstacles he is struggling to remove.

The drama of a serious and dignified character typically describes the development of a conflict between the protagonist and a superior force (such as destiny, circumstance, or society) and reaches a sorrowful or disastrous conclusion.

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

“Shakespeare’s greatest play” (Professor James Shapiro)



The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, often shortened to *Hamlet* (/ˈhæmlɪt/), is a tragedy in five acts written by William Shakespeare sometime between 1599 and 1601. It is Shakespeare’s longest play (29,551 words). Set in Denmark, the play depicts Prince Hamlet and his attempts to exact revenge against his uncle, Claudius, who has murdered Hamlet’s father to seize his

throne and marry Hamlet's mother. *Hamlet* is a revenge tragedy. It features the elements of a tragedy common in his time such as a murder, ghosts, and someone seeking revenge, but it also has elements of a tragedy such as the main character having a fatal flaw. *Hamlet* is considered among the most powerful and influential tragedies in the English language.

It is widely considered one of the greatest plays of all time. Three different early versions of the play are extant: the First Quarto (Q1, 1603); the Second Quarto (Q2, 1604); and the First Folio (F1, 1623). Each version includes lines and passages missing from the others.

Here are some features of *Hamlet* that demonstrate its classification as a tragedy:

Tragic Hero: The central character, Hamlet, is a classic example of a tragic hero. He possesses noble qualities but also has flaws, such as indecisiveness and a tendency to overthink, which ultimately lead to his downfall.

Fatal Flaw: Hamlet's fatal flaw is his inability to take decisive action. He hesitates throughout the play, which contributes to the tragic events that unfold.

Conflict: The play is filled with internal and external conflicts that lead to tragedy. Hamlet's inner uncertainty, caused by his desire for revenge and his moral doubts about violence, is a central conflict. Additionally, there are conflicts between characters, such as Hamlet and Claudius, Hamlet and Gertrude, and Hamlet and Laertes.

Fate and Free Will: The theme of fate versus free will is present in *Hamlet*. While Hamlet makes his own choices, there's also a sense of inevitability in the tragic events that occur, especially in light of the play's supernatural elements, such as the appearance of the ghost of Hamlet's father.

Death and Suffering: Tragedies often explore themes of death, suffering, and the human condition. *Hamlet* is filled with death, including murders, suicides, and accidental deaths. Characters experience profound emotional suffering, leading to their tragic fates.

Downfall of the Protagonist: Ultimately, *Hamlet* ends with the tragic deaths of several main characters, including Hamlet himself. The downfall of the protagonist is a hallmark of the tragedy genre.

Full title: The Tragedy of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

Author: William Shakespeare

Type of work: Play, Hamlet is also the longest Shakespearean play

Genre: Tragedy, revenge tragedy

Language: English

Time and place written: London, England, early 17th century (probably 1600–1602)

Date of first publication: 1603, in a pirated quarto edition titled *The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet*; 1604 in a superior quarto edition

Protagonist: Hamlet

Antagonist: Claudius

Major conflict: Hamlet feels a responsibility to avenge his father's murder by his uncle Claudius, but Claudius is now the king and thus well protected. Moreover, Hamlet struggles with his doubts about whether he can trust the ghost and whether killing Claudius is the appropriate thing to do.

Rising action: The ghost appears to Hamlet and tells Hamlet to revenge his murder; Hamlet simulates madness to his intentions; Hamlet stages the mousetrap play; Hamlet passes up the opportunity to kill Claudius while he is praying.

Climax: When Hamlet stabs Polonius through the arras in Act III, scene iv, he commits himself to overtly violent action and brings himself into unavoidable conflict with the king. Another possible climax comes at the end of Act IV, scene iv, when Hamlet resolves to commit himself fully to violent revenge.

Falling action: Hamlet is sent to England to be killed; Hamlet returns to Denmark and confronts Laertes at Ophelia's funeral; the fencing match; the deaths of the royal family

Setting (time): The late medieval period, though the play's chronological setting is notoriously imprecise

Settings (place): Denmark

Tone: Dark, ironic, melancholy, passionate, contemplative, desperate, violent

Themes: Vengeance, action, and inaction; madness; the mystery of death; women in a patriarchal society; the nation as a diseased body

Motifs: Incest; spying; death and suicide; darkness and the supernatural; misogyny

Symbols: The ghost (the spiritual consequences of death); Yorick's skull (the physical consequences of death)

Famous Quotations from Hamlet.

1. Something is rotten in the state of Denmark. **(1.4.90), Marcellus**
E ceva putred în Danemarka.
2. To be, or not to be: that is the question. **(3.1.64), Hamlet**
A fi sau a nu fi, iată întrebarea.
3. This above all: to thine ownself be true. **(1.3.82), Polonius**
Însă mai cu seamă / Fii ție însuși credincios
4. The rest is silence. **(5.2.348), Hamlet**
Restul e tăcere.
5. Brevity is the soul of wit. **(2.2.97), Polonius**
Vorba scurtă Fiind chiar miezul minții omenеști
6. Good night, sweet prince, / And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest!
(5.2.350-1), Horatio
Prinț nobil, noapte bună. / Odihnește În cântul cetelor de heruvimi!
7. I must be cruel, only to be kind. **(3.4.191), Hamlet**
Se cere să fiu rău spre a fi blând.
8. Alas, poor Yorick! I knew him, Horatio. **(5.1.185), Hamlet**
Vai! Sărmanul Yorick! L-am cunoscut Horațio;
9. Neither a borrower nor a lender be. **(1.3.79), Polonius**
Să nu iei nici, să dai cu împrumut
10. “Words, words, words.” **(2,2,194), Hamlet**
Vorbe, Vorbe, Vorbe

Soliloquy and Monologue: the Difference

“To be or not to be” is perhaps the most famous soliloquy in English literature, spoken by Prince Hamlet in William Shakespeare’s play “Hamlet.” In this introspective moment, Hamlet grapples with the existential dilemma of existence and the pain of life versus the unknown of death. The soliloquy delves into themes of mortality, suffering, and the human struggle with fate, showcasing Shakespeare’s profound insight into the complexities of the human condition. Hamlet’s contemplation of whether it is nobler to endure life’s hardships or to end them by taking one’s own life remains a timeless exploration of the fundamental questions of existence.

A soliloquy and a monologue are both dramatic devices used in plays to convey the thoughts, feelings, and intentions of a character, but they differ in their presentation and purpose.

A *soliloquy* is a speech delivered by a character alone on stage, expressing their innermost thoughts, emotions, and conflicts. The character speaks as if they are talking to themselves, unaware of any other characters present.

A *monologue* is a longer speech delivered by one character to other characters on stage or to the audience. Unlike a soliloquy, a monologue acknowledges the presence of others and is often used by characters to persuade, inform, entertain, or express strong emotions.



Comprehension questions:

Tragedy

1. What is the classical definition of tragedy?
2. Describe the typical protagonist in a tragedy.
3. How does a tragedy typically conclude?

Hamlet, Prince of Denmark

4. Who is the protagonist of Shakespeare's "Hamlet"?
5. What is the central conflict in the play?
6. What are the three different early versions of "Hamlet"?
7. List the features of Hamlet that demonstrate its classification as a tragedy.

Key elements of Hamlet

8. Describe Hamlet's internal struggle and doubts regarding avenging his father's murder.
9. How does the appearance of the ghost impact Hamlet's actions and decisions throughout the play?
10. What are some key events in the rising action of "Hamlet"?
11. Identify the climax of the play and discuss its significance in Hamlet's journey.
12. What events constitute the falling action in "Hamlet"?
13. Discuss the setting of the play, both in terms of time and place.
14. Talk about the major themes explored in *Hamlet*.
15. Identify and explain the significance of some motifs and symbols present in *Hamlet*.

16. How do the symbols of the ghost and Yorick's skull in "Hamlet" represent different aspects of death?

Exercise 1: Choose an element of Hamlet that illustrate its classification as a tragedy and explain the significance of the chosen element.

Exercise 2: Choose a famous quotation from Hamlet and explain its significance within the context of the play.

UNIT XIII. Neoclassical literature

Neoclassicism refers to a movement in literature, art, and architecture that emerged in the 18th century in Europe, particularly in England, France, and Germany. It was characterized by a revival of classical forms and themes inspired by the art and culture of ancient Greece and Rome. Neoclassical works often exhibit a focus on order, rationality, clarity, and restraint, drawing upon principles of balance, symmetry, and harmony. This movement arose in response to the perceived excesses of the preceding Baroque period and reflected a desire to return to the perceived ideals of classical antiquity.

Neoclassicism thrived in England from around 1660, when the Stuarts returned to power, until the publication of Wordsworth's *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798, which marked the start of the Romantic Age.

This period is divided into three main parts: the Restoration Age (1660-1700), the Augustan Age (1700-1750), and the Age of Johnson (1750-1798).

Neoclassical writers admired classical texts and followed aesthetic values from Ancient Greece and Rome. Unlike the Renaissance, which celebrated human potential, Neoclassicism perceived human nature as imperfect and requiring both reason and decorum, appropriate behavior in various social situations.

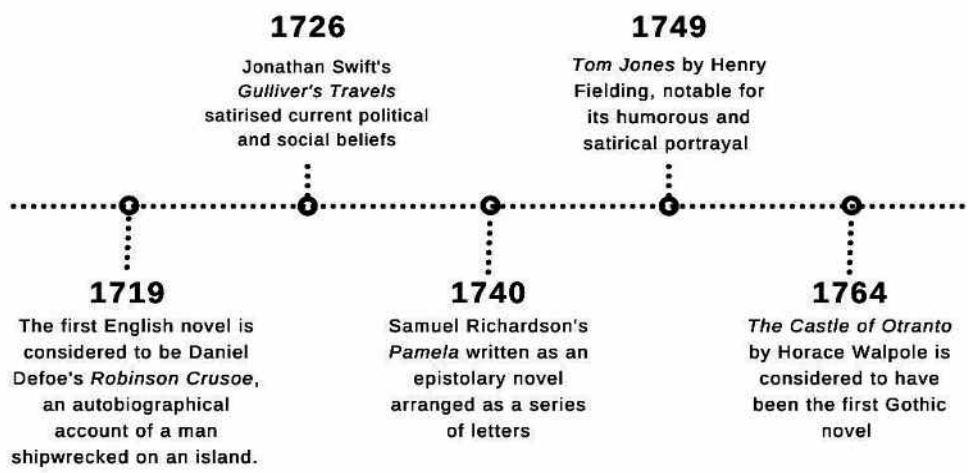
In terms of style, Neoclassical writers valued balance, symmetry, restraint, and order. They aimed for refinement and correctness in their works, much like their ornate clothing and meticulously designed gardens. They believed art should entertain and educate, portraying humans as part of a polite society. Their manner was sophisticated and elitist.

The social unrest leading to the American and French revolutions challenged this refined worldview. Romanticism emerged in the 19th century, depicting common workers amidst vast natural landscapes.

The Restoration Age is not typically classified as part of the Neoclassical period. While there are elements of Neoclassicism present during the Restoration period, such as a revival of classical forms and themes, the Restoration Age is generally considered a distinct period in English literature. During the Restoration Age, heroic couplets and odes became popular in poetry, while theaters showcased plays in verse and prose, notably the comedy of manners. Major works included Milton's *Paradise Lost* and Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*. Dryden's works, though overshadowed by Milton and Bunyan, foreshadowed the Augustan Age.

In the **Augustan Age**, Alexander Pope’s mastery of the couplet in *Essay on Man* was notable, with lines like “Fools rush in where angels fear to tread.” Journalism evolved into fiction with Daniel Defoe’s novels *Robinson Crusoe* and *Moll Flanders*.

The Age of Johnson saw Samuel Johnson’s *Dictionary of the English Language* and the rise of ballads and sentimental poetry by Gray, Cowper, Burns, and Crabbe. The novel of sensibility by Walpole and Radcliffe foreshadowed the Gothic novel.



The 18th century saw the rise of the novel as a popular literary form. A novel is a long fictional narrative prose work that typically explores various characters, events, and settings. Novels often delve into complex themes and may involve intricate plots and character development.

Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is often considered the first true English novel. The novel, with its emphasis on individual experience and realistic portrayal of characters, became a powerful medium for exploring the complexities of human nature and society.

Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela* (1740) and **Henry Fielding’s** *Tom Jones* (1749) further contributed to the development of the novel as a distinct literary genre.

Moreover, the period witnessed the emergence of the literary magazine and periodical essay. Writers like **Joseph Addison** and **Richard Steele** collaborated on *The Spectator*, a widely influential periodical that combined essays, moral reflections, and social commentary. These publications played a crucial role in shaping public opinion and fostering a sense of shared cultural values.

The 18th century was also marked by the works of the Romantic poets, who rebelled against the rationalism and restraint of neoclassicism. While the Romantic movement is often associated with the early 19th century, its roots can be traced back to the latter part of the 18th century. Poets like **William Blake** and **Thomas Gray** explored themes of imagination, nature, and emotion, paving the way for the more radical expressions of Romanticism that would follow in the next century.

In addition to literature, the 18th century was a period of significant cultural and intellectual developments. The Enlightenment, with its emphasis on reason, science, and individual rights, influenced writers to engage with social and political issues. **John Locke**'s ideas on government and individual rights, for example, found expression in literary works that addressed questions of power, authority, and the social contract.



Comprehension questions

Neoclassicism

1. What were the key characteristics of Neoclassicism in literature, art, and architecture during the 18th century in Europe?
2. What were the main motivations behind the emergence of Neoclassicism?
3. How did Neoclassical writers perceive human nature, and how did this perception influence their works?
4. Describe the three main parts into which the Neoclassical period in England is divided, and highlight the distinguishing features of each.
5. Why is the Restoration Age not typically considered part of the Neoclassical period, despite exhibiting some Neoclassical elements?
6. What were some popular literary forms and styles during the Restoration Age, and what were some notable works from this period?
7. How did social unrest, particularly leading to revolutions, challenge the worldview of Neoclassicism, and what literary movement emerged as a response to this challenge?

English novel in the 18th century

8. How did the novel emerge as a significant literary form in the 18th century, and what distinguishes novels from other literary genres?
9. What literary work is often regarded as the first true English novel, and what elements of the novel contributed to its lasting influence?

10. What role did literary magazines and periodical essays play in shaping public opinion and cultural values during the 18th century?
11. How did the Romantic poets of the late 18th century react against the rationalism and restraint of neoclassicism, and what themes did they explore in their works?

Exercise 1: Matching Exercise

Match the following terms with their corresponding definitions:

1. Neoclassicism, 2. Restoration Age, 3. Augustan Age, 4. Age of Johnson, 5. Romanticism.
 - a. Movement characterized by a revival of classical forms and themes in literature, art, and architecture.
 - b. Period in English literature from 1660 to 1700, known for the revival of classical forms and themes, and the popularity of heroic couplets and odes.
 - c. Period from 1700 to 1750, marked by the mastery of the couplet, the rise of journalism into fiction, and the emergence of the novel as a literary form.
 - d. Period from 1750 to 1798, featuring Samuel Johnson's Dictionary of the English Language, the rise of sentimental poetry, and the emergence of the novel of sensibility.
 - e. Literary movement that emerged in the 19th century, portraying common workers amidst natural landscapes, in response to social unrest and revolutions.

Exercise 2: Short Answer

Briefly explain the significance of the following literary works or figures within the context of Neoclassicism:

John Milton's *Paradise Lost*,
Alexander Pope's *Essay on Man*,
Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary of the English Language*.

Exercise 3: Matching Exercise

Match the following literary works or figures with their corresponding contributions or significance:

1. Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, 2. Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*, 3. Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, 4. William Blake, 5. Thomas Gray, 6. Joseph Addison and Richard Steele, 7. John Locke.

- a. Often considered the first true English novel, emphasizing individual experience and realistic portrayal of characters.
- b. Contributed to the development of the novel as a distinct literary genre through its exploration of complex themes and characters.
- c. Collaborated on “The Spectator,” a widely influential periodical combining essays, moral reflections, and social commentary.
- d. Explored themes of imagination, nature, and emotion, contributing to the early roots of Romanticism.
- e. Influential Enlightenment philosopher whose ideas on government and individual rights influenced literary works addressing social and political issues.

UNIT XIV. Daniel Defoe. *Moll Flanders*. *Robinson Crusoe*

Daniel Defoe's biography



Daniel Defoe (c. 1660 – 24 April 1731), born Daniel Foe, was an English trader, writer, journalist, pamphleteer, and spy, most famous for his novel *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe is noted for being one of the earliest proponents of the novel, as he helped to popularize the form in Britain, and is among the founders of the English novel.

Daniel Foe (his original name) was probably born in Fore Street in the parish of St Giles Cripplegate, London. Defoe later added the aristocratic-sounding “De” to his name, and on occasion made the false claim of descent from a family named De Beau Faux. “De” is also a common prefix in Flemish surnames. His birthdate and birthplace are uncertain, and sources offer dates from 1659 to 1662, with the summer or early autumn of 1660 considered the most likely. His father, James Foe, was a prosperous tallow chandler of probable Flemish descent.

He was a prolific and versatile writer, producing more than five hundred books, pamphlets, and journals on various topics, including politics, crime, religion, marriage, psychology, and the supernatural. He was also a pioneer of economic journalism.

In addition to *Moll Flanders*, Defoe is famous for *Robinson Crusoe*, *Roxana*, and *A Journal of the Plague Year*.

A Journal of the Plague Year was first published in March 1722. It is an account of one man’s experiences of the year 1665, in which the bubonic plague struck the city of London in what became known as the Great Plague of London, the last epidemic of plague in that city. Presented as an eyewitness account of the events at the time, Defoe was only five years old in 1665 when the Great Plague took place.

Daniel Defoe’s most renowned work, *Robinson Crusoe*, is a foundational piece of literature that has made a lasting impact on the literary landscape. The novel, first published in 1719, narrates the story of an individual stranded on a deserted island, delving into themes of survival, isolation, and self-discovery. *Robinson Crusoe* is frequently regarded as a prototype for adventure novels and has sparked numerous adaptations and reinterpretations across various media.

Writing before Fielding and Richardson, he did a great deal to make the novel respectable. Certainly, he succeeded in producing a brand of fiction that was more compelling and imaginative than what had gone before. Yet *Moll Flanders* was not a novel that enjoyed great success at the time of its publication; the coarseness of its subject matter isolated many potential readers. It was for later centuries to appreciate the nature of his achievement in this book, which has been compared to such works as Zola's *Nana* (1880) and Dreiser's *Sister Carrie* (1900).



Comprehension questions

1. When was Daniel Defoe likely born, and what was his original name?
2. What were some of Daniel Defoe's professions besides being a writer?
3. What is Daniel Defoe most famous for, and what is one of his most renowned works?
4. What is *A Journal of the Plague Year* about, and when was it published?
1. How did Daniel Defoe contribute to the development of the novel genre in Britain?

Exercise: Matching Exercise

Match the following works by Daniel Defoe with their corresponding descriptions:

1. Robinson Crusoe, 2. A Journal of the Plague Year, 3. Moll Flanders.
 - a. An account of the bubonic plague striking London in 1665.
 - b. A novel about the adventures of a man stranded on a deserted island.
 - c. The story of a woman's experiences in 17th-century England, including her life of crime and punishment.

The picaresque novel. Moll Flanders

The **picaresque novel** is a genre of prose fiction that depicts the adventures of a criminal hero or heroine of low social class who lives by his or her wits in a corrupt society. The word *picaro* first started to appear in Spain with its current meaning in 1545, and it meant a rascal. These novels typically unfold as a series of episodic adventures, showcasing the protagonist's cunning and resourcefulness as they confront and navigate the challenges posed by a corrupt and stratified social order.

Characteristics of a picaresque novel with examples:

1. It is usually written in the first person as an autobiographical account.

I was born in Newgate, and in a few days after I was born, I was appointed by the parish to go to nurse.

M-am născut în Newgate, și în câteva zile după nașterea mea, am fost desemnată de către parohie să fiu dusă la o bonă.

2. The main character is often of low character or social class. He or she rarely holds a job.

I was now, in the school of affliction indeed; for I was in the condition of one starving, having no employment, and not much business provided; my governess and my tutoress, as I called her, being both dead.

Acum eram, într-adevăr, în școala necazurilor vieții mele; căci eram în condiția unui om înfometat, fără slujbă și cu puține perspective, guvernanta mea și profesoara mea, așa cum le numeam eu, amândouă fiind moarte.

3. There is no plot. The story is told in a series of loosely connected adventures or episodes.

I was now a single person again, as I may call myself; I was loosed from all the obligations either of wedlock or mistressship in the world, except my husband the linen-draper.

Și iarăși eram de una singură, cum se zice; dezlegată de orice legături, fie ele de soție sau de amantă, în afară de legătura cu bărbatul meu, pânzarul.

4. There is little if any character development in the positive character.

Once a picaro, always a picaro.

I often reflected how my life was spent in that wicked robbing, murdering kind of life which I had formerly been engaged in, and how my present life was a life of luxury compared to that; and the hazard of it, and the constant anxiety which I lived in, lest I should be taken and executed, was worse than all the three put together.

Adesea reflectam cum îmi petreceam viața în acea perioadă de odinioară vicioasă, de jaf și crimă, în care eram angajată în trecut, și cum viața mea actuală era o viață de lux în comparație cu aceea; iar riscul și anxietatea constantă în care trăiam, teama de a fi prinsă și executată, erau mai rele decât toate cele trei combinate.

5. The picaro's story is told with simplicity or realism.

Directness in Describing Circumstances: *I had nobody to converse with,*

nothing to converse about, no employment, no diversion, unless it was to go into the streets, which was improper for a woman to do.

Nu aveam pe nimeni cu cine să vorbesc, nimic despre care să vorbesc, nici un loc de muncă, nici o distracție, decât să merg pe străzi, ceea ce nu era potrivit pentru o femeie să facă.

6. Satire might sometimes be a prominent element.

If he gave me ten thousand pounds, and left it me absolutely, I had been undone; for I must have owned myself married to him.

Dacă mi-ar fi dat zece mii de lire și le-ar fi lăsat în voia mea, aș fi fost pierdută; căci aș fi fost nevoită să mă recunosc căsătorită cu el.

Moll's pragmatic approach to marriage and her willingness to enter into relationships for financial gain satirizes traditional notions of love and matrimony.

7. The behavior of a picaresque hero or heroine stops just short of criminality.

But my own terror seized me with such violence at the thoughts of it that I sat down, or rather sunk down, on the ground, and cried vehemently, and so continued crying for a great while, till, my spirits being exhausted with the violence of my passion, Nature I suppose as it were, as it were, spent, made an end of it, by a great deal of tears, and a profound sleep that fell upon me.

Dar propria mea spaimă m-a cuprins cu o violență atât de mare la gândul acestui lucru, încât m-am așezat, sau mai degrabă am căzut la pământ, și am plâns cu foc, și am continuat să plâng pentru o perioadă lungă, până când, spiritele mele fiind epuizate de intensitatea emoțiilor mele, Natura, aș spune și-a luat ale ei, s-a terminat, prin multe lacrimi și un somn profund care m-a cuprins.

Society in Moll Flanders' time

In the 17th century, crime, at least thievery, really paid because labor was very cheap and goods were very expensive. Before the era of industrialization, the production of objects required an immense amount of labor: a piece of cloth could be the result of many hours of work, while stealing it might only take a minute.

Theft was not the only illegal occupation open to women. In the 17th and 18th centuries, prostitution was widespread in London. This was probably the

result of a social system in which poor women could hardly make an honest living and completely lost their reputations if they were seduced, making it almost impossible to obtain an honest job.

However, theft was not without its risks: a thief could be transported or hanged for stealing a watch. At the very least, they could expect to spend several weeks in Newgate Prison.

Transportation to Virginia was considered a terrible punishment, even though transported convicts could eventually hope to be freed and settle their own land. The difference between colonial America as viewed by Americans and as viewed by the colonizing English is worth noticing. In the 17th century, Virginia was simply a place where good money could be made raising tobacco.

The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders (commonly known simply as *Moll Flanders*), published in 1722, was one of the earliest English novels. It purports to be the true account of the life of the eponymous Moll, detailing her exploits from birth until old age.

The original *Moll Flanders* does not have chapters.

Full Title: The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders, Etc.

When Written: 1722

Where Written: London, England

When Published: 1722

Literary Period: Enlightenment or Neoclassical

Genre: Picaresque Novel

Setting: England and the American colonies during the 17th century

Climax: Moll is arrested and sent to Newgate Prison

Antagonist: 17th-century society

Point of View: First-person

By 1721, Defoe had become a recognized novelist, with the success of *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719.

The novel is based partially on the life of Moll King, a London criminal whom Defoe met while visiting Newgate Prison.



Elizabeth Adkins, also known as Moll King

There are many tall tales told about Mary (Moll) King, a shrewd businesswoman and proprietress of King's Coffee House in London's Covent Garden. Several sources say she was a pickpocket, stealing watches from ladies' pockets and was held in Newgate before being transported.

Many of the descriptions given in *Moll Flanders* are drawn from Defoe's personal experience with poverty and imprisonment. Later, his confinement in Newgate Prison provided him with detailed encounters with thieves and their various thieving techniques, which he probably took down in his own version of shorthand during his interviews with them.

Like many early novels, *Moll Flanders* is told in the first person as a narrative and is presented as a truthful account since, at that time, the idea of a long, realistic work of fiction was still new.

Moll Flanders is characterized by its episodic quality. Events follow one another spasmodically with little or no transition. Incidents are arbitrarily held together with such weak transitions as "I had now a new scene of life upon my hands..." or "At length, a new scene opened." The phrases "in short" and "in a word" are used repeatedly to loosely tie one episode to another.



Comprehension questions:

1. What is the picaresque novel genre, and what are its typical characteristics?
2. Why was theft a prevalent occupation, especially for women, in the 17th and 18th centuries in London?

3. Why was transportation to Virginia considered a severe punishment for criminals?
4. Who was Moll Flanders, and what is her story as depicted in Daniel Defoe's novel?
5. What influence did Defoe's personal experiences with poverty and imprisonment have on the writing of *Moll Flanders*?
6. What is the significance of the phrase "in short" and "in a word" in the narrative structure of the novel?
7. What was the social status of Moll King, and how does it relate to the character of Moll Flanders?

The adventure novel. Robinson Crusoe



Robinson Crusoe, illustrator Louis Henri Brévière, 1842

An adventure novel is a literary genre characterized by exciting, daring journeys undertaken by the main characters. These stories often involve exploration of unknown territories, encounters with perilous situations, and tests of courage, wit, and resourcefulness.

Robinson Crusoe, first published in 1719 by Daniel Defoe, serves as a quintessential example of this genre. The narrative centers around the protagonist, Robinson Crusoe, who becomes shipwrecked on a remote island. Crusoe must navigate the challenges of survival, which include building shelter, finding sustenance, and defending himself against various threats.

Also, *Robinson Crusoe* epitomizes the survival novel genre, focusing on characters confronting extreme challenges to remain alive. These challenges encompass natural disasters, wilderness environments, and life-threatening situations, emphasizing resilience, resourcefulness, and human endurance.

In *Robinson Crusoe*, the protagonist's experiences on the island highlight the intersection of adventure and survival. As Crusoe confronts the unknown, battles nature's forces, and adapts to his environment, the novel embodies both genres' themes of exploration, peril, and resilience in the face of hardship.

The story of Selkirk, a real-life counterpart of Robinson Crusoe



Selkirk reading his Bible, 1837

Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish sailor, is widely believed to have served as a significant source of inspiration for Daniel Defoe's iconic novel *Robinson Crusoe*.

In 1704, Selkirk found himself left on the uninhabited island of Más a Tierra (now known as Robinson Crusoe Island) in the South Pacific Ocean after a dispute with the captain of his ship, the *Cinque Ports*.

During his four-year hardships on the island, stranded with limited supplies, Selkirk demonstrated remarkable resourcefulness and resilience. He fashioned shelter from natural materials, hunted goats for food and clothing, and maintained a strict routine to stave off loneliness and despair. His ingenuity and survival skills enabled him to endure the harsh conditions of the island and eventually catch the attention of passing ships.

In 1709, Selkirk was rescued by an English privateer, Woodes Rogers, and his story of survival quickly spread throughout England. It is believed that Daniel Defoe, a prolific writer and journalist, drew upon Selkirk's experiences as inspiration for his novel *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719.

Full Title: The Life and Strange Surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner: Who lived Eight and Twenty Years, all alone in an uninhabited Island on the Coast of America, near the Mouth of the Great River of Oroonoko; Having been cast on Shore by Shipwreck, wherein all the Men perished but himself. With An Account how he was at last as strangely deliver'd by Pyrates

Author: Daniel Defoe

Type of Work: Novel

Genre: Adventure story; survival novel

Language: English

Time and Place Written: 1719; London, England

Date of First Publication: 1719

Narrator: Robinson Crusoe is both the narrator and main character of the tale.

Point of View: Crusoe narrates in both the first and third person, presenting what he observes. Crusoe occasionally describes his feelings, but only when they are overwhelming.

Tone: Crusoe's tone is mostly detached, meticulous, and objective.

Tense: Past

Setting (Time): from 1659 to 1694

Setting (Place): York, England; then London; then Salée, North Africa; then Brazil; then a deserted island off Trinidad; then England; then Lisbon; then overland from Spain toward England; then England; and finally the island again

Protagonist: Robinson Crusoe

Major Conflict: Shipwrecked alone, Crusoe struggles against hardship, privation, loneliness, and cannibals in his attempt to survive on a deserted island.

Rising Action: Crusoe disobeys his father and goes out to sea. Crusoe has a profitable first merchant voyage, has fantasies of success in Brazil, and prepares for a slave-gathering expedition.

Climax: Crusoe becomes shipwrecked on an island near Trinidad, forcing him to fend for himself and his basic needs.

Falling Action: Crusoe constructs a shelter, secures a food supply, and accepts his stay on the island as the work of Providence.

Themes: survival and self-reliance, religion, isolation and loneliness, transformation, civilization vs. nature

Motifs: counting and measuring; eating; horrific experience at sea

Symbols: the footprint; the cross; Crusoe's bower



Comprehension questions:

1. What are the defining characteristics of an adventure novel?
2. Who is the protagonist of *Robinson Crusoe*, and what challenges does he face throughout the narrative?
3. How does *Robinson Crusoe* embody both the adventure and survival novel genres?
4. Who is Alexander Selkirk, and how does his story relate to the creation of *Robinson Crusoe*?
5. What is the real-life counterpart in the case of Robinson Crusoe?

UNIT XV. Samuel Richardson. *Clarissa*

Samuel Richardson's biography



Born in 1689 in Mackworth, Derbyshire, Samuel Richardson was the son of a carpenter and had little formal education. Although his parents hoped he would enter the priesthood, financial troubles forced him to find paid work in the printing business. Richardson joined the trade as an apprentice in 1706 and set up his own printing shop thirteen years later. He printed several periodicals, most of which were political in nature, such as the Tory publication the *True Britain*, newspapers the *Daily Gazetteer*, and the

Daily Journals, as well as the *House of Commons' Journals*.

Richardson married in 1721 and, after the deaths of five children, lost his wife ten years later. In 1733, he remarried and had four surviving children with his second wife. That same year, he published *The Apprentice's Vade Mecum*, a guide to moral behavior for men who worked as apprentices. Richardson's first novel was written almost by accident.

As a printer, Richardson was asked to construct a set of "familiar letters," models to help country people write to their families. Richardson's friends enjoyed this plot and asked for more of it, and he published *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* in 1740. According to Richardson, *Pamela* was a new form of fiction writing altogether, an exercise in instruction through entertainment. The novel was an instant sensation. Its moral precepts formed the themes of church sermons as well as newspaper debates, while its plot and characters inspired musical adaptations, continuations, operas, and even waxworks. *Pamela* also received its share of criticism and parodies, most notably Fielding's *Shamela* and Haywood's *Anti-Pamela*.

Following this success, Richardson undertook a more ambitious project when he began *Clarissa*. While almost all of the letters in *Pamela* are written by Pamela, there are four principal writers in *Clarissa*, resulting in a more complex plot as well as a much longer novel.

Along with revising *Clarissa*, Richardson rounded out his novelist's career by publishing a book with a male protagonist, *The History of Sir Charles Grandison*, in 1753–1754. This book was admired by such readers as Jane Austen, but it has proved much less influential over time than either *Pamela* or *Clarissa*.

Richardson died in 1761 in London, leaving a bold mark on the British novel and on European culture as well. In the year of Richardson's death, Jean-Jacques Rousseau published *Julie, ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*, explicitly modeled on *Clarissa*, and Diderot an *Éloge de Richardson*.

To this date, *Clarissa* is believed to be the longest novel written in the English language. Internationally, it comes in below Proust's *In Search of Lost Time* but well above Tolstoy's *War and Peace*.



Comprehension questions:

1. Where was Samuel Richardson born, and what was his family background?
2. What forced Richardson to pursue paid work in the printing business?
3. What were some of the periodicals that Richardson printed, and what were their main focuses?
4. How many children did Richardson have with his first wife, and what tragedy befell their family?
5. What was the title of Richardson's first published novel, and how did he come to write it?
6. What was Richardson's next major literary project after "Pamela," and how did it differ from his first novel?
7. What other significant novel did Richardson publish, and how did it compare in influence to "Pamela" and "Clarissa"?
8. When and where did Richardson die, and what was his legacy in the literary world?

The epistolary novel. *Clarissa Harlowe*

Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady is an epistolary novel by Samuel Richardson, published in 1748. It is regarded as the longest novel in English (based on estimated word count).

An epistolary novel is a novel written as a series of documents. The usual form is letters, although diary entries, newspaper clippings, and other documents are sometimes used. Recently, electronic “documents” such as recordings, radio, blogs, and e-mails have also come into use.

The word “epistolary” is derived from the Greek word ἐπιστολή (epistolē), meaning a letter.

There are three types of epistolary novels: *monologic* (giving the letters of only one character, like *Letters of a Portuguese Nun* by Claude Barbin and *The Sorrows of Young Werther* by Johann Wolfgang Goethe), *dialogic* (giving the letters of two characters, like Mme Marie Jeanne Riccoboni’s *Letters of Fanni Butlerd* (1757)), and *polylogic* (with three or more letter-writing characters, such as in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula*). In addition, a crucial element in polylogic epistolary novels like Richardson’s *Clarissa* and Laclos’ *Dangerous Liaisons* is the dramatic device of ‘discrepant awareness’: the simultaneous but separate correspondences of the heroines and the villains creating dramatic tension.

Clarissa Harlowe

Clarissa Harlowe, by Samuel Richardson, was published in 1751, ten years after *Pamela*, when Richardson was over sixty years old. In *Pamela*, he tried to draw the portrait of a girl of humble class in distress; in *Clarissa*, he tried to do the same thing for a young woman of gentility.

It tells the tragic story of a heroine whose quest for virtue is continually blocked by her family and is regarded as the longest novel in the English language (circa 1,960,000 words). It is generally regarded as Richardson’s masterpiece.

Full Title: Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady

Author: Samuel Richardson

Type of Work: novel

Genre: epistolary, realist, psychological

Time and Place Written: 1740s, London

Date of first publication: 1747–1748 (7 serial volumes)

Narrator: none. The plot is presented in a series of letters written by the characters.

Point of View: the story is told in a series of letters, giving the point of view of several characters. The characters provide information about one another, but there is no omniscient or objective narrator.

Tone: varies; Clarissa and Belford’s letters tend to be serious, while Lovelace and Anna’s are humorous and sometimes ironic.

Tense: present

Setting (time): mid-eighteenth century

Setting (place): the English countryside; London

Protagonist: Clarissa Harlowe

Major Conflict: Clarissa struggles to maintain her virtue against Lovelace's plots and violence.

Rising Action: the Harlowe family, by trying to force Clarissa into a bad marriage, propels her into Lovelace's control.

Climax: Lovelace's rape of Clarissa determines the final outcome of the plot, including her death and his downfall.

Falling action: after the rape Clarissa escapes Lovelace and begins to prepare herself for death and heaven.

Themes: the danger of rakes, virtue is rewarded eventually, a single false step brings disaster

Motifs: enclosure, dreams, money

Quotes about *Clarissa Harlowe*

Samuel Johnson called *Clarissa* “the first book in the world for the knowledge it displays of the human heart,” but he also noted that “if you were to read Richardson for the story, your impatience would be so much fretted that you would hang yourself.”

John Carroll: Richardson portrays “the dark, hidden drives of the human soul.”

Alan Dugald McKillop: Richardson is “a pioneer in the analytical study of behavior under the pressure of a social code.” He presents “the minds of his characters in the very moment of thinking and feeling.”

John Adams declared in 1804 that “democracy is Lovelace and the people is Clarissa.”



Comprehension questions:

1. What is the primary literary form used in *Clarissa*?
2. Define the term “epistolary novel” and provide examples of different types.

3. What is the origin of the term epistolary novel?
4. When was *Clarissa Harlowe* published, and how does it compare to Richardson's previous work *Pamela* in terms of publication timing and protagonist portrayal?
5. What is the central theme or focus of *Clarissa Harlowe*?

Exercise. Provide the number of letter-writing characters for each type of epistolary novel: Monologic, Dialogic, Polylogic

UNIT XVI: Jonathan Swift. Gulliver's travels

Jonathan Swift's biography



Jonathan Swift, an Irish clergyman and satirist born on November 30, 1667, in Dublin, left an impressive mark on the literary landscape of the 18th century.

Renowned for his razor-sharp wit and keen observations, Swift's works, including *Gulliver's Travels* and *A Modest Proposal*, continue to captivate readers and scholars alike, showcasing a blend of humor, irony, and social criticism.

Swift's early life was marked by difficulties. Orphaned at a young age, he was sent to live with his uncle, and his education was funded by a wealthy relative. He attended Kilkenny Grammar School before enrolling at Trinity College in Dublin. Swift's time at Trinity was influential, exposing him to classical literature and refining his intellectual abilities.

However, financial constraints forced him to leave without completing his degree. Swift's entry into the world of literature began with his employment as a secretary to Sir William Temple, a diplomat. This association proved crucial in shaping Swift's literary inclinations and political perspectives.

He became well-versed in political affairs and diplomacy, experiences that would later find expression in his satirical works. One of Swift's earliest notable works is *A Tale of a Tub*, published anonymously in 1704. The satirical prose piece is a mock-religious narrative that explores the excesses and abuses of religious institutions. Swift's clever use of allegory and satire lays bare the hypocrisy and corruption prevalent in the church and society at large.

However, it was with *Gulliver's Travels*, published in 1726, that Swift achieved enduring fame. The novel recounts the fantastical voyages of Lemuel Gulliver to remote lands inhabited by strange civilizations. Swift skillfully employs the appearance of a traveler's tale to critique various aspects of human nature, politics, and society. Through Gulliver's encounters with the Lilliputians, Brobdingnagians, and Laputians, Swift delivers sharp satirical commentary on power, human folly, and the absurdities of contemporary culture.

In the world of Lilliput, Swift satirizes the pettiness of political conflicts by depicting the absurdity of the Lilliputian war waged over the correct way to crack eggs. The portrayal of the Brobdingnagians, giants compared to Gulliver, allows Swift to highlight the flaws and vices of humanity when viewed through the lens of magnification.

Another work that exemplifies Swift's biting satire is *A Modest Proposal*, published in 1729. In this pamphlet, Swift adopts a shockingly ironic tone to propose a solution to the poverty and overpopulation issues in Ireland: the consumption of infants. While Swift's proposal is entirely satirical and meant to highlight the lack of empathy of British policies toward the Irish, the piece showcases his ability to use dark humor to address serious social and political issues.

Swift's satirical prowess was not confined to the literary realm; he also engaged in political commentary through his *Drapier's Letters*. Written in response to the Irish government's attempt to introduce a new coinage, these letters, published in 1724, vehemently opposed the measure, rallying public support against it. Swift's use of satire extended beyond entertainment; it became a powerful tool for social and political critique.

Despite his literary achievements, Swift's personal life was marked by periods of melancholy and frustration. As he aged, he grappled with various health issues, including Meniere's disease, which affected his hearing.

Jonathan Swift passed away on October 19, 1745, leaving behind a legacy that transcends time. His satirical works, characterized by wit, irony, and keen observation, continue to resonate with readers and scholars. Jonathan Swift, the master of satire, remains an influential figure in the literary canon, his works serving as a mirror reflecting the follies and weaknesses of the world he inhabited.



Comprehension questions

1. When and where was Jonathan Swift born?
2. What were some challenges Swift faced in his early life?
3. How did Swift's time at Trinity College influence him?
4. Who was Sir William Temple, and what role did he play in Swift's life?
5. What is the significance of Swift's work *A Tale of a Tub* in his literary career?

6. Describe the key themes in *Gulliver's Travels* that contributed to Swift's enduring fame.
7. In the world of Lilliput, what aspect of human nature and politics does Swift satirize?
8. What is the shocking proposal presented in *A Modest Proposal*, and what is its intended purpose?
9. What were some of the challenges and health issues that Swift faced in his later life?

Exercise. Match the Literary Work with its Summary:

1. A Tale of a Tub ; 2. Gulliver's Travels ; 3. A Modest Proposal ; 4. Drapier's Letters
 - a. A satirical pamphlet published in 1729, where Swift adopts a shockingly ironic tone to propose a satirical solution to the poverty and overpopulation issues in Ireland.
 - b. In response to the Irish government's attempt to introduce new coinage in 1724, Swift wrote these letters, using satire to rally public support against the measure.
 - c. Swift's influential work, published in 1726, where the protagonist embarks on fantastical voyages to remote lands, serving as a vehicle for satirical commentary on human nature, politics, and society.
 - d. Published anonymously in 1704, this work is a mock-religious narrative that exposes the excesses and abuses of religious institutions.

Satirical novel. Gulliver's Travels

A *satirical novel* is a work of fiction that uses humor, irony, exaggeration, or ridicule to criticize and comment on societal issues, political ideologies, or human behavior. Satirical novels often employ fictional characters and settings to indirectly address real-world issues in a way that prompts readers to reflect on the absurdities or flaws within society.

Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* is a prime example of a satirical novel. Published in 1726, it follows the travels of Lemuel Gulliver to four different imaginary lands: Lilliput, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the land of the Houyhnhnms. Each of these lands represents a different aspect of society or human nature that Swift wished to criticize.

In Lilliput, for example, Gulliver encounters a society where petty politics and absurd rituals take precedence over common sense, satirizing the political and social norms of Swift's time.

In Brobdingnag, Gulliver becomes a tiny curiosity in a land of giants, allowing Swift to comment on the human condition and the flaws of humanity when viewed from an outsider's perspective.

Laputa satirizes the intellectual and scientific community, portraying scholars so absorbed in their abstract theories that they are completely disconnected from reality.

Finally, the land of the Houyhnhnms serves as a critique of human nature itself, as Gulliver encounters a race of rational horses who view humans (represented by the Yahoos) as brutish and irrational creatures.

Through these fantastical adventures, Swift uses humor and exaggeration to highlight the shortcomings and follies of human society, making *Gulliver's Travels* a classic example of a satirical novel.

Full Title: Gulliver's Travels, or, Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World, by Lemuel Gulliver

Author: Jonathan Swift

Type of Work: novel

Genre: satire

Time and Place written: approximately 1712–1726, London and Dublin

Date of First Publication: 1726 (1735 unabridged)

Narrator: Lemuel Gulliver

Point of View: Gulliver speaks in the first person. He describes other characters and actions as they appear to him.

Tone: Gulliver's tone is gullible and naïve during the first three voyages; in the fourth, it turns cynical and bitter.

Setting (Time): early eighteenth century

Setting (Place): primarily England and the imaginary countries of Lilliput, Blefuscu, Brobdingnag, Laputa, and the land of the Houyhnhnms

Protagonist: Lemuel Gulliver

Major Conflict: on the surface, Gulliver strives to understand the various societies with which he comes into contact and to have these societies understand his native England. Below the surface, Swift is engaged in a conflict with the English society he is satirizing.

Themes: might versus right; the individual versus society; the limits of human understanding



Comprehension questions

1. What is the primary literary technique Jonathan Swift uses in *Gulliver's Travels* to criticize societal issues?
2. Identify the four fictional lands visited by Lemuel Gulliver in the novel. What aspects of society do these lands represent?

Exercise. What is the central theme of Gulliver's Travels?

- a) Exploration of love and romance;
- c) Advocacy for economic reform;
- b) Critique of political and social aspects of human nature;
- d) Exploration of scientific advancements.

In Gulliver's Travels, what does Swift satirize in the world of Lilliput?

- a) Economic inequality; b) Political conflicts and absurdities;
- c) Religious dogma; d) Scientific advancements.

What aspect of human nature does Swift satirize in Brobdingnag?

- a) Political conflicts and power struggles;
- b) Economic inequality and social class distinctions;
- c) The pettiness of religious institutions;
- d) Flaws and vices when viewed through magnification.

What does Jonathan Swift primarily satirize in Laputa?

- a) Political corruption and nepotism; b) Intellectual arrogance and impracticality;
- c) Religious fanaticism and dogma; d) Social inequality and class distinctions.

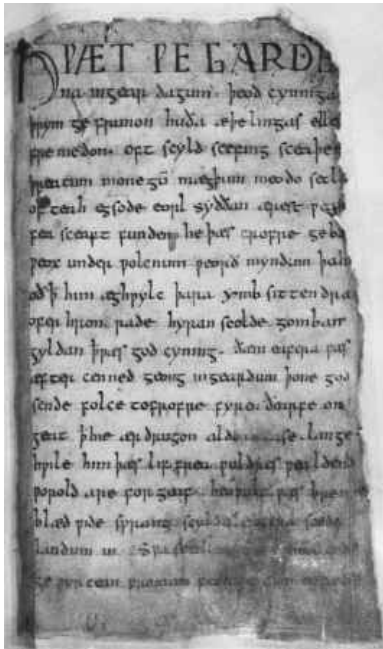
What does Jonathan Swift primarily satirize in Houyhnhnmland?

- a) Human intelligence and rationality; b) Political corruption and despotism;
- c) Religious fanaticism and extremism; d) Human behavior and societal norms.

PART II: READER

OLD ENGLISH LITERATURE

Beowulf



Old English

Hwæt! We Gardena in geardagum,
þeodcýninga, þrym gefrunon,
hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
Oft Scyld Scefing sceapena þreatum,
monegum mægþum, meodosetla ofteah,
egsode eorlas. Syððan ærest wearð
feasceaft funden, he þæs frofre gebad,
weox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þah,
oðþæt him æghwylc þara ymsbittendra
ofer hronrade hyran scolde,
gomban gyltan. þæt wæs god cýning!

Modern English

LO, honor of the ability of people-kings
of spear-armed Danes, in days long sped,
we have heard, and what honor the athelings won!
Oft Scyld the Scefing from squadroned foes,
from many a tribe, the mead-bench tore,
awing the earls. Since erst he lay
friendless, a foundling, fate repaid him:
for he waxed under welkin, in wealth he throve,
till before him the folk, both far and near,
who house by the whale-path, heard his mandate,
gave him gifts: a good king he!

PROLOGUE

Early History of the Danes

Listen:

You have heard of the Danish Kings
in the old days and how
they were great warriors.

Shield, the son of Sheaf,
took many an enemy's chair,
and terrified many a warrior
after he was found an orphan.
He prospered under the sky
until people everywhere
listened when he spoke.
He was a good king!

Shield had a son,
a child for his yard,
sent by God
to comfort the people,
to keep them from fear [----]

Shield died at his fated hour,
went to God still strong.
His people carried him to the sea,
which was his last request.
In the harbor stood
a well-built ship,
icy but ready for the sea.
They laid Shield there,
propped him against the mast
surrounded by gold
and treasure from distant lands.
I've never heard
of a more beautiful ship,
filled with shields, swords,

and coats of mail, gifts
to him for his long trip.
No doubt he had a little more
than he did as a child
when he was sent out,
a naked orphan in an empty boat.
[----] The wisest alive can't tell
where a death ship goes.

Grain ruled the Danes
a long time after his father's death,
and to him was born
the great Healfdene, fierce in battle,
who ruled until he was old.
Healfdene had four children--
Heorogar, Hrothgar, Halga the Good,
and a daughter who married
Onela, King of the Swedes.



Hrothgar Becomes King of the Danes

After Hrothgar became king
he won many battles:
his friends and family
willingly obeyed him;
his childhood friends
became famous soldiers.

So Hrothgar decided
he would build a mead-hall,
the greatest the world had
ever seen, or even imagined. [--]
Hrothgar's people lived in joy,
happy until that wanderer
of the wasteland,
Grendel the demon, possessor
of the moors,
began his crimes.



He was of a race of monsters
exiled from mankind by God--
He was of the race of Cain,
that man punished for
murdering his brother.
From that family comes
all evil beings [----]

PART ONE: GRENDEL Grendel Attacks

One night, after a beer party,
the Danes settled in the hall
for sleep; they knew no sorrows.
The evil creature, grim and hungry,
grabbed thirty warriors
and went home laughing.

At dawn, when the Danes learned
of Grendel's strength,
there was great weeping.
The old king sat sadly,
crying for his men.
Bloody footprints were found.
That was bad enough,
but the following night
Grendel killed more--
blinded by sin,
he felt no remorse.
[----] Twelve years this went on,
Hrothgar suffering
the greatest of sorrows.

Poets sang sad songs
throughout the world,
how Grendel tormented Hrothgar;
[----]No counselor, no warrior
could destroy the evil.
They wept and seethed.

Beowulf Hears of Grendel

But a warrior of Hygelac's
heard of Grendel's doings;
he was the strongest of men
alive on that day, mighty and noble.

That man called for a ship
 and said he would cross the ocean
 and help the king who needed help.
 [----] So the good Geat chose
 the bravest warriors,
 fourteen of them,
 and that crafty sailor
 led them to the land's edge,
 to the ship. [----]



From his wall the sea-guard of the
 Danes,
 protector of the cliffs,
 saw bright shields
 and ready war dress
 coming over the gangplank
 and he wondered
 who those men were.
 Hrothgar's warrior rode
 to shore on his horse.
 Shaking a mighty spear, he spoke:
 "Who are you, in armor,
 who come over the sea-road
 in that steep keel?" [----]
 Beowulf, leader of the host
 unlatched his word-board:
 "As to kin, we are of the Geat nation,
 Hygelac's hearth-companions.
 My father was a leader well known

among the people: Edgtheow.
 [---] We have come with friendly
 hearts
 to see your lord, Healfdene's son,
 protector of the people.
 Be good counsel to us:
 we have come on a great duty
 to the king of the Danes.
 I think it foolish
 to keep secrets. You know
 if it is true what we have heard,
 that a dark enemy in the nights
 works violence and slaughter
 on the Danes." [----]



The protector of the coast,
 still on his horse, spoke [----]:
 "I see that you are a band
 friendly to the lord of the Danes.
 Go forth, bearing arms and
 equipment.
 I will guide you. [----]"

They left then the well-made ship
 [----]
 The men excitedly marched until
 they saw that ornamented hall,
 the finest building on earth,
 that glittered light over many lands,
 where the mighty one waited. [----]

Beowulf Comes to Herot

[----]

Then a proud Danish warrior asked them:

“From where have you carried? [---]

I am Hrothgar’s messenger and officer. [----].”

The brave one answered him, he of the proud Geats tribe, hard under his helmet:

“We are Hygelac’s table companions.

Beowulf is my name.

I will declare to the great lord, Healfdene’s son, my duty, if your prince will greet us.”

Wulfgar spoke--he was of the Wendla tribe and known to many for fighting and wisdom [----]”

Wulfgar went quickly to where Hrothgar sat, old and gray, with his most trusted men. He went before the face of the Dane’s lord, knowing the customs of warriors. Wulfgar spoke to his friendly lord: “From far over the sea’s expanse has come a man of the Geats, a chief of warriors named Beowulf. He and his men have, my lord, asked to exchange words with you. Do not refuse the request, Hrothgar! These men look worthy of a warrior’s esteem. Indeed,

the chief among them, he who guides them, is strong.”

Hrothgar, guard of the Danes, spoke:

“I knew him when he was a boy.

His father is called Edgtheow.

[----]Be you in haste: go, call in this band of kinsmen.

Say to them that they are welcome to the Danish people.”

Wulfgar, the famous warrior, went to the door:

“My victorious lord, prince of the Danes, bids me say he knows your noble descent and that brave men who come over the sea swells are welcome to him. [----]”

Beowulf spoke:

“[----] I ask you, lord of the Danes, protector of this people, for only one favor: [----]I shall seize my enemy in my hand grip and fight, enemy against enemy, and let God decide who shall be taken by death. [---]

Hrothgar, protector of the Danes, spoke:” [----]

It is a sorrow for me to say to any man what Grendel has done-- humiliations in Herot [----].

God may easily put an end
to that mad ravager's deeds.
[----] Sit now and feast,
the glory of warriors,
and speak your thoughts
as your heart tells you."
So a bench was cleared for
the Geats and the brave men
sat down proud of their strength. [----]

Unferth, Ecglaf's son,
who sat at the feet
of the king of the Danes,
spoke, unloosing a battle-rune
(The bravery of Beowulf
was a vexation to him
because he envied any man
on this middle-earth who had
more glory than himself):
"Are you that Beowulf
who struggled with Brecca
in the broad sea
in a swimming contest?
The one who, out of pride,
risked his life in the deep water
though both friends and enemies
told you it was too dangerous?
[----] You and Brecca toiled
seven nights in the sea,
and he, with more strength,
overcame you. And
in the morning the waves
bore him [----]
I don't expect much from you
if you dare await
Grendel in the night."



Beowulf spoke:
"Well, my friend Unferth, you
have said a good many things
about Brecca and that trip,
drunk on beer as you are.
Truth to tell, I had more strength
but also more hardships in the waves.
He and I were both boys
and boasted out of our youth
that we two would risk
our lives in the sea.
And so we did.
With naked swords in hand,
to ward off whales,
we swam. Brecca could not
out-swim me, nor could I
out-distance him. And thus
we were, for five nights.
It was cold weather and
the waves surged, driving us
apart, and the North wind came
like a battle in the night.
Fierce were the waves
and the anger of the sea fish
stirred. My coat of mail,
adorned in gold
and locked hard by hand,
helped against those foes.

[----] And on and on evil
things threatened me.
I served them with my sword
as it was right to do.

[----] my sword had put
many to sleep, [----]
I saw cliffs, the windy
walls of the sea.

Fate often saves
an doomed man if
his courage holds.
[----] I have not heard
anything about you
surviving such battles,
such terrors of the sword.
Neither Brecca nor you have
performed such deeds in
war sport or with shining swords.
Yet I don't boast about it.

But you, your own brother's
murderer, shall be damned
and burn in Hell no matter
how strong your intelligence is.
I say to you truly,
son of Ecglaf, that wretch
Grendel would never have done
such horrors, such humiliations
on your chief, if you were so
fierce as you suppose. [----]"

Grendel Attacks Again

In that gabled hall
the warriors slept,
those who guarded the hall. . .
all but one.

[----] Beowulf watched
in anger, waiting for
the battle's outcome.

Came then from the moor
under the misty hills
Grendel stalking under
the weight of God's anger.
That wicked ravager
planned to catch
many of the race of men
in the high hall. [----]



Forward Grendel came,
stepping nearer. Then
he reached for Beowulf.
Beowulf grasped his arm
and sat up. The criminal
knew he had not met
in this middle-earth
another with such a grip.

Grendel's spirit was afraid
and his heart eager
to get away, to flee
to his hiding place, flee
to the devils he kept

for company. Never had he met
a man such as this.

The monster strove to escape.
Beowulf stepped closer. That
famous monster suddenly wanted
to disappear into the fens.
He realized the power of those
hands,
the furious seizure he was in.
Grendel felt sorry
he had made a trip to Herot. [---]
The end of Grendel's life was
miserable, and he would travel
far into the hands of fiends. [----]
The horrible monster endured
a wound: the bone-locks
of his shoulder gave way,
and his sinews sprang out.
The glory of battle went to
Beowulf, and Grendel,
mortally wounded,
sought his sad home
under the fen slope.
He knew surely that
his life had reached its end,
the number of his days gone.

[----] Beowulf had
fulfilled his promise
to the Danes and all
the distress they had endured,
all the trouble and sorrow,
had reached an end.
The fact was plain when
Beowulf laid that arm
and shoulder down, there

altogether, Grendel's claw,
under the arched roof.

The Warriors Rejoice

I have heard say that
on that morning warriors
came from near and far
to look at the wonder.
Grendel's death made
no warrior sad. [----]



Entertainment in Herot

Then it was ordered
that Herot be decorated.
Many there were,
men and women, who
prepared that guest-hall.
Gold ornaments shone,
marvelous sights on the walls,
for people to look at.
[----] Then came the time
that Hrothgar himself
went to the feast.
Never have I heard
of a greater company
gathered around a treasure giver. [----]



Study Questions on “Beowulf”:

1. When was Beowulf written? By whom? What historical period does the poem describe? Where does the action take place?
2. What are the poem’s most important values of the heroic warrior society?
3. Why does the poem begin with the story of Scyld Scefing?
4. As you read, find some statements about fate in the poem. What attitude toward fate do these statements suggest?
5. What special meaning does a hall like Heorot have to warriors?
6. Why does Grendel attack the hall? What does he look like?
7. Who is Beowulf’s father? His mother? What is his relation to Hrothgar?
8. What does the name Beowulf mean in Anglo-Saxon when we look at the roots *Beo* and *Wulf*?
9. What do we know about the probable religious background of the individual who copied down Beowulf?
10. Is Beowulf a Christian hero or is he a pagan? Is the worldview of the poem positive or dark?
11. What dialect of Old English was Beowulf written in?
12. Describe the fight between Grendel and Beowulf. Speculate about why it occurs as it does.
13. Grendel appears not angered until after Heorot was built. What does Heorot represent? What is the relationship between the building of Heorot and Grendel’s
14. How is Grendel described? Describe Grendel. Why does he hate Heorot?
15. Why does Beowulf want to help Hrothgar? Explain the motivations you find.
16. List the qualities mentioned in the poem that make Beowulf admired as a hero or worthy man.
17. Discuss the presentation of Grendel. Is he allied with a Christian view of evil? Is he a symbol in the context of the poem? Find passages that support your claim.
18. Point out at least three kennings in the text.
19. Describe Beowulf’s character. How do you compare him with Hrothgar as the king?
20. What has been your experience in reading Beowulf?

Theme for discussion:

Beowulf has been called a Pagan story composed (or at least written down) by a Christian poet. Name some of the Christian or Old Testament allusions in the poem.

- What Christian and pre-Christian (Germanic, Anglo-Saxon, or epic-heroic) elements can you identify?
- To what extent are God and Fate the same thing in the poem? To what extent are they in conflict?
- What about the representation of evil? What is the significance of Grendel belonging to the “race of Cain”?
- Is Beowulf a savior figure? What motivates his heroism?
- Do you see the Christian influence as strong or weak?

Explain quotes found in the poem:

The wisest alive can't tell where a death ship goes.

Let God decide who shall be taken by death.

Fate often saves an undoomed man if his courage holds.

Part 1 Analysis.

Protagonist vs. Antagonist:

Provide the literary portrait of *Beowulf*.

Provide the literary portrait of *the main antagonist*.

Epic hero cycle:

- 1) The hero is charged with a quest. (What quest?)
- 2) The hero travels to an unreal world, unable to be visited by an ordinary human. (Where?)
- 3) The presence of numerous mythical beings, and human helpers and companions. (Who?)
- 4) The hero nearly gives up his quest or appears defeated. (Describe the moment)
- 5) Restitution. The hero regains his rightful place (denouement)

Pagan elements in the poem. (Provide examples)

Christian elements in the poem. (Provide examples)

Topics for the Essays:

1. Beowulf as a Heroic Archetype in Old English Literature.
2. The motive of revenge in the Epic adventure of *Beowulf*.

3. The Superhuman Powers of the Anglo-Saxon warrior Beowulf.
4. Paganism and Christian elements in *Beowulf*.
5. Anglo-Saxon Customs and Values Reflected in *Beowulf*.
6. Grendel - an evil symbol in *Beowulf*.

Individual work no. 1

Reread the fragments with the death of Shield in the *Prologue* and the *Funeral of Beowulf, the Prince of the Geats* at the end of the epic poem.

The Funeral



The sad troops rose,
went in tears.
That was the last day
of the prince of the Geats;
he died a wondrous death.

There too on the ground
was the strange thing,
the hateful dead dragon,
the fire-thrower,
in his horrible colors,
scorched by flames.
He measured fifty feet,
he who had
joyed in the sky,
flown at night,
then hidden in his lair.
[----] Beside him lay
cups and pitchers,

dishes and swords
eaten through with rust
as if the earth had embraced
them a thousand winters. [----]

Wiglaf called seven warriors,
the very best,
and made the eighth himself.
[----] The Geats built a mound,
in ten days, high and broad
on the hill, a beacon
for the warrior
widely seen by sailors.
They surrounded the ashes
by a wall, as splendid
as the cleverest
men could make.
In the mound they placed
rings and bracelets
and all such things as
they'd found in the hoard.
They left that treasure
in the hands of the earth,
as it lies still,
as useless to men
as it had been before.

Then twelve warriors
rode round the grave
speaking their sorrow,
reciting praises
for their lord's
courageous deeds.
(A warrior should do so
when his lord dies.)

Thus the Geats
mourned their great lord,
saying he was,
among this world's kings,
the mildest, the gentlest,
the kindest to his people,
and the most eager
for eternal fame.

Task 1. Comparative Analysis Essay:

Compare and contrast the themes of heroism and mortality. Discuss how the deaths of Shield and the prince of the Geats are depicted, analyzing the cultural and literary significance of their respective funerals and the symbolism surrounding them.

Task 2. Character Study:

Choose one character from each text (e.g., Shield and the Prince of the Geats) and analyze their characteristics, motivations, and roles within their respective narratives. Consider how they embody the values of their societies and the impact of their deaths on their communities.

Task 3. Symbolism and Imagery Analysis:

Explore the use of symbolism and imagery in both texts. Discuss the significance of the ship, the dragon, the mound, and the treasure. How do these symbols contribute to the overall themes and messages of the texts?

Task 4. Christian and pagan elements:

Create a comparison chart highlighting the differences between the King's funeral at the beginning and end of *Beowulf*. Include details about the rituals, religious elements, participants, and overall atmosphere of each procession. How do the differences reflect the cultural transition from paganism to Christianity? What impact do they have on the themes of the poem?

Task 5. Identifying stylistic devices

a) Analyzing Metaphors:

Select metaphors from each text (e.g., "icy but ready for the sea"). Analyze their meaning and significance within the context of the narratives.

b) Exploring Personification:

Identify instances of personification in the text (e.g., "the earth had embraced

them”, “eaten through with rust”). Discuss how the use of personification enhances the descriptions and creates vivid imagery.

c) Examining Similes:

Provide examples of similes from the text (e.g., “as a child when he was sent out, a naked orphan in an empty boat”). Analyze their effectiveness in conveying the author’s intended meaning.

d) Interpreting Symbolism:

Select symbolic elements from each text (e.g., the ship, the mound). Interpret their symbolic significance. Consider how these symbols represent broader themes and ideas.

e) Analyzing Imagery:

Provide excerpts containing vivid imagery from the text. Analyze the sensory details and their impact on the reader.

f) Identifying Hyperbole:

Identify examples of hyperbole in the texts (e.g., “the most eager for eternal fame”) and discuss their rhetorical effect. Consider how hyperbolic language contributes to characterization and emphasizes key themes and ideas.

CLASSICAL ENGLISH BALLAD
Robin Hood and the golden arrow



When as the sheriff of Nottingham
Was come with mickle grief,
He talkd no good of Robin Hood,
That strong and sturdy thief.

So unto London-road he past,
His losses to unfold
To King Richard, who did regard
The tale that he had told.

“Why,” quoth the king, “what shall
I do?
Art thou not sheriff for me?
The law is in force, go take
thy course,
Of them that injure thee.

“Go get thee gone, and by thyself
Devise some tricking game
For to enthral yon rebels all;
Go take thy course with them.”

So away the sheriff he returnd,
And by the way he thought

Of the words of the king, and how
the thing
To pass might well be brought.

For within his mind he imagined
That when such matches were,
Those outlaws stout, without doubt,
Would be the bowmen there.

So an arrow with a golden head
And shaft of silver white,
Who won the day should bear away,
For his own proper right.

Tidings came to brave Robin Hood,
Under the green-wood tree.
“Come prepare you then,

my merry men,
We’ll go yon sport to see.”

With that stept forth a brave
young man,

David of Doncaster.

“Master,” he said, “be ruld by me,
From the green-wood we’ll not stir.

Middle English words found in the text, along with their modern English equivalents:

Grief - Sorrow or trouble
Quoth - said or spoke
Art - Are
Thy - Your
Devise - Plan or scheme
Tidings - News
Stept - Stepped
Ruld - Ruled
On't - On it
Hither - Here
Whateer - Whatever

Mantles - Cloaks
Whateer - Whatever
Gang - Go
Kend - Known
Trow - Think or believe
Wen - When
Pugh - An interjection expressing dislike
Pend - Write or compose
Rav'd - Raved or ranted



Study Questions:

1. What is the central conflict in the ballad “Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham”?
2. How does King Richard respond to the sheriff’s complaints, and what does he instruct the sheriff to do?
3. Describe Robin Hood and his merry men’s plan to participate in the archery contest without revealing their identities.
4. What are some examples of foreshadowing in the ballad that hint at Robin Hood’s involvement in the archery contest?
5. How does the sheriff react when he realizes that Robin Hood has won the contest?
6. Analyze the role of disguise in the ballad and how it contributes to the plot.
7. Discuss the significance of the letter sent by Robin Hood to the sheriff. How does it impact the resolution of the story?
8. How does the ballad portray themes of justice, cunning, and heroism?
9. Compare and contrast the personalities and actions of Robin Hood, Little John, and the sheriff throughout the story.

Explain quotes found in the poem:

He talkd no good of Robin Hood, That strong and sturdy thief.
“O thou smells of a coward,” said Robin Hood.

Theme for discussion:

Justice and Outlawry: Explore the theme of justice as depicted in the ballad,

particularly in the actions of Robin Hood and the sheriff. Discuss how Robin Hood's defiance of authority raises questions about the legitimacy of the law and the concept of justice.

The ballad analysis:

In the ballad *Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham*, the characters of Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham are portrayed as antithetical figures, representing opposing forces within the narrative. The task is to analyze this antithesis and explore the contrasting attributes, motivations, and actions of these two characters.

Make an analysis that compares and contrasts Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham based on the following aspects:

- a. *Character traits:* Describe the personality traits and qualities of Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham. How do their characteristics shape their actions and decisions throughout the ballad?
- b. *Motivations:* Explore the underlying motivations driving Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham. What do they seek to achieve, and how do their goals differ?
- c. *Moral codes:* Discuss the moral codes or principles that guide Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham. How do their ethical frameworks influence their behavior and interactions with others?
- d. *Interactions with other characters:* Analyze how Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham interact with other characters in the ballad. How do they treat allies, enemies, and those they encounter in their respective roles?

Topics for the Essays:

1. **Social Justice in the Robin Hood Mythos:** Analyze the theme of social justice in the Robin Hood mythos, considering how Robin Hood's actions challenge class inequality and advocate for the rights of the oppressed.
2. **Contrasting Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham:** Analyze the divergent characterizations of Robin Hood and the Sheriff of Nottingham in the ballad, examining their contrasting attributes, motivations, and moral codes, and how they represent opposing forces within the narrative.

GEOFFREY CHAUCER

The general Prologue from *The Canterbury Tales*

The following is the beginning of the general Prologue from *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer. The text was written in a dialect associated with London and spellings associated with the then emergent chancery standard (a term used to refer to the 15c written usage of the clerks of Chancery in London, who prepared the king's documents).

Original in Middle English:	Translation into Modern English: (by Nevill Coghill)
<p>Whan that Aueryh̄t wt his shoures soote, The droghte of March, hath perced to the roote; And bathed euery veyne in swich lycour, Of which vertu engendred is the flour; Whan zephirus eek wt his sweete breeth, Inspired hath in euery holt and heeth; The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne, Hath in the Ram, his half cours yronne; And smale foweles, maken melodye, That slepen al the nyght with open iye; So priketh hem nature, in hir corages, Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages; And Palmeres for to seeken straunge strondes, To ferne halwes, kouthe in sondry londes; And specially, from euery shyres ende, Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende; The holy blisful martir for to seke, That hem hath holpen whan þt they weere seeke.</p>	<p>When in April the sweet showers fall And pierce the drought of March to the root, and all The veins are bathed in liquor of such power As brings about the engendering of the flower, When also Zephyrus with his sweet breath Exhales an air in every grove and heath Upon the tender shoots, and the young sun His half course in the sign of the <i>Ram</i> has run And the small fowl are making melody That sleep away the night with open eye, (So nature pricks them and their heart engages) Then folk long to go on pilgrimages, And palmeres long to seek the stranger strands Of far off saints, hallowed in sundry lands, And specially from every shires' end Of England, down to Canterbury they wend The holy blissful martyr, quick To give his help to them when they were sick</p>



Notes:

Zephyrus: the Greek god of the west wind.

the Ram: Aries—the first sign of the zodiac. The time is mid-April.

palmer: people journeying to religious shrines; pilgrims.

strands: shores.

sundry: various.

shire's: county's.

martyr: St. Thomas à Becket.



Study Questions:

1. What seasonal changes are described in the passage from “The Canterbury Tales”?
2. How does the narrator describe the effect of April’s showers on the environment?
3. Who or what is Zephyrus, and what role does he play in the passage?
4. Why do people long to go on pilgrimages?
5. Where are pilgrims heading to in this passage, and why?
6. Who or what is the “holy blissful martyr”, and why are people seeking him?

Exercise 1. Middle English

Compare and contrast the Middle English and Modern English versions of the text. Identify differences in vocabulary, spelling, and grammatical structure.

Exercise 2. Imagery and symbolism

Analyze the imagery and symbolism used in the text. What do elements like April showers, Zephyrus, and pilgrimages represent in both a literal and metaphorical sense?

Exercise 3. Literary Devices:

Identify and explain one example of imagery used in the passage. How does this imagery contribute to the overall mood or theme of the text?

Exercise 4. Match each Middle English term with its corresponding Modern English equivalent:

Middle English:	Modern English:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. Aueryȝt • 2. tendre croppes • 3. droghte • 4. smale foweles • 5. Palmeres • 6. straunge strondes • 7. ferne halwes • 8. halwes • 9. shoures soote 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. April b. holy places c. sweet showers d. drought e. tender crops f. small birds g. pilgrims h. strange shores i. distant holy places

The legend of good women. Prologue

I delight in books and in my heart admire them. In them, I have such joy and trust that there is scarce any sport to draw me from my books, unless it is some festival or the lovely time of May; but when I hear the little birds singing, and when the flowers begin to put forth, then farewell my studies for that season!

Of all the flowers in the meadow, I most love those white and red flowers which men in our town call daisies. To them, I have such affection, as I have said, that when May has come, I am up and walking in the mead to see these flowers opening to the sun as it rises, and through the long day, thus I walk in the green. And when the sun draws toward the west, then they close. This daisy, flower of all flowers, filled with all excellence and honor, fresh in winter as well as in summer.

When the month of May was almost past, and I had wandered all the summer's day over the green meadow of which I have told you, to gaze upon the fresh daisy, and when the sun out of the south drew towards the west, and the flower was closed and gone to sleep for fear of the darkness of the night, I sped quickly to my house. In a little shady bower that I have, I bade folk lay on my couch, and flowers to be spread everywhere, for joy of the new summer. When I had laid myself down and closed my eyes, I fell asleep within an hour.

Then I dreamed that I was in the meadow, and was roaming about to see that flower, even as you have heard me tell. Fair was this meadow, all multicolored with sweet flowers. No herbs or trees could compare with it; for it completely surpassed all odors. The earth had forgotten its poor estate of winter. Now the mild sun had calmed all that, and clothed it in green. Rejoicing in the season, the little birds had escaped the trap and the net, mocked the fowler who had frightened them in winter, and destroyed their children, and eased

their hearts to sing of him in disrespect. This was their song, 'We defy the fowler!' Some sang on the branches, and it was a joy to listen; and for the new, joyous summer, they sang, 'Blessed be Saint Valentine! For upon his day I chose you, my dear heart, and never have I regretted.' And then they joined their beaks, and they paid honor and tenderness to each other, and then did other ceremonies pleasing to love and nature.

I gave myself to hearing their song (for I dreamed I understood their meaning) till at last a lark sang on high. 'I see the mighty god of love! Listen, he comes! I see his wings spread!' Then I looked along the meadow and saw him come, leading by the hand a lady clothed in a royal habit of green. She had a net of gold around her hair, and over that a white crown with many flowers; for all the world, even as the flower of the daisy is crowned with little white leaves, such were the flowers of her white crown, for it was made all of one fine orient pearl; wherefore the white crown above the green, with the golden ornament in her hair, made her appear like a daisy.

This mighty god of love was clothed in silk; on his head was a garland of rose-leaves, all set with fresh lilies. But the tone of his face I cannot tell, for truly his face shone so bright that the eye was astonished with the gleam. For a season, I could not look at him, but at last, I saw that he held in his hands two red burning darts. And he spread his wings like an angel. Although men say he is blind, he could see well enough; for he looked strictly upon me, so that his look even yet makes my heart cold.

He held by the hand this noble lady, crowned with white and clothed all in green, who was so womanly, kind, and gentle that though men should seek throughout this world, they should not find half her beauty in any being formed by nature. Her name was Alceste the gentle, fair fortune, I pray God! For had it not been for the comfort of her presence, I would have been dead without help, for love of her.

On the grass, behind this god of love, I saw a company of nineteen ladies in royal garb coming at a right gentle pace, and after them came such a train of women that I could not have thought that by any possibility the third part of them or the fourth had ever lived in this world since God made Adam of earth. And every one of these women was true in love. For as soon as they noticed this flower which I call the daisy, right quickly they stopped all together and kneeled down by that very flower; and after that, they went in a circle, slowly dancing about it, and sang a ballad.



Edward Burne Jones, Amor and Alcestis (1864)

When the ballad was all sung, they sat full gently down upon the sweet and soft green grass, in order all in a circle about. First sat the god of Love, and then this lady dressed in green with the white crown; and then all the rest according to their station. And then, while a man might walk a furlong, in the entire place not a word was spoken.

I waited, still like any stone, to learn what this folk had proposed; till at last the god of love turned his eyes on me and said, 'Who is it rests there?' And I answered his question and said, 'Sir, it is I.' And I came nearer and saluted him. 'What do you here in my presence, and so courageously? For truly a worm was more worthy to come into my sight than you.' 'And why, sir?'

'Because you are not wise. My servants are all wise and honorable; you are my mortal enemy, and war against me, and speak evil of mine old servants, and with your works of translation curse them. You cannot deny it; [...] Have you not made in English the poem which tells how women have gone astray? But nevertheless answer me this now, why would you not also speak well of women, as you have said evil? [...] But there are pure maidens and faithful wives, dedicated widows; I dare say a hundred in succession. For they were so true to their love that, rather than take a new mate, they chose death in different manners, and died even as the story will relate. Some were burned, some had their throats cut, and some were drowned, because they would not be false. [...] you have abjured my faith, you shall be sorry about it.'

Then spoke Alceste: 'God, of very courtesy you must hearken and see whether he can make a reply to these accusations that you have made against him. A god should not thus be moved to anger, but being a deity, he should be stable, moral, and merciful. This man may be accused wrongly. [...] In translating what old clerks have written, he has not sinned so dangerously as if he would create his own writings.'

'A moral lord should have this in mind, and not be like Lombard tyrants who practice tyranny; for a king or lord by natural right ought not to be tyrannical or cruel like a farmer of taxes, doing all the harm he can. [...] For the noble nature of the lion! When a fly annoys or bites him, he gently drives the fly away with his tail; for in his noble nature he deigns not to avenge himself upon a fly. A noble nature should show self-control, and weigh all things by equity, and never regard his own high station. For, sir, it is no noble act for a lord to condemn a man without speech or answer.'

[...] 'Now, I, Alceste, once queen of Thrace, ask you of your mercy never to harm this man so long as he lives. And he shall swear to thee, that he will sin no more thus; but he shall write of women faithful in love, maidens or wives.'

Immediately the god of love answered her thus: 'Madame, it is long that I have known you to be so generous and faithful that never. Therefore, if I will safeguard mine honor, I neither may nor will refuse your implore. [...] Go now, thank my lady here,' said he.

I rose, and then got me down on my knee and said: 'Madame, may God on high reward you because you have made the god of love give over his anger against me; and may He grant me the grace to live so long until I may truly know who you are that have helped me and put me in such a hopeful case. But truly in this matter, I thought not to have sinned against love. God wants to exalt faithfulness in love and to cherish it; and to warn folk from falseness and evil. This was mine intent.'

And she answered, '[...] You have your pardon. [...] As long as you live, year by year you shall spend the most part of your life in writing a glorious legend of good women, maidens, and wives, who were ever faithful in love, and you shall tell of the false men who betrayed them, men who all their life do not do anything but try how many women they can shame. And though you are not a lover, speak well of love. This self-punishment I give you. And I will so pray to the god of love that he shall accuse his servants if they will aid you. Now go your way; your self-punishment is but small.'

Love said, ‘In a book which lies in your chest have you not the story of the great goodness of Queen Alcestis, who was turned into a daisy, she who chose to die for her husband and to go to hell; and Hercules rescued her, and brought her out of hell back to happiness?’

And I replied, ‘Yes, I now know her! And is this the good Alceste, the daisy, mine own heart’s repose? Now I feel well this woman’s goodness, that both in her life and after her death her great goodness makes her renown double. Well has she avenged me for mine affection which I bear toward her flower, the daisy. [...] In remembrance and honor of her, Cybele created the daisy, the flower all crowned with white, as men can see; and Mars gave its redness to her crown, set amidst the white instead of rubies.’

At this, the queen waxed somewhat red from modesty when she was so admired in her presence. Then Love said, ‘It was a full great negligence to write about the unsteadiness of women, since you know their goodness by experience and by old stories. Why would you not write of Alceste? For your writing should be of Alceste, since you know that she is a calendar of goodness; for she taught noble love, and especially how a wife ought to live. But now I charge you in your life that in your Legend you write of this woman, after you have written of other lesser ones. And now farewell, I charge you no more. I will that you begin with Cleopatra; and so continue. And so you shall gain my love.’



Study Questions:

1. What request does Alceste make of the god of love, and how does he respond?
2. Describe Alceste’s punishment for the narrator. What does she instruct him to do?
3. What significance does Alceste hold in the narrative? How is she described?
4. What symbolic elements are associated with Alceste, particularly concerning the daisy?
5. How does Love respond to the narrator’s previous writings about women? What does he instruct the narrator to do in the future?

Exercise 1: Character Analysis:

Choose one character from the text (e.g., Alceste, the narrator, the god of love) and write a character analysis highlighting their traits, motivations, and significance to the narrative.

Exercise 2: Theme Exploration:

- a) Reflect on the theme of redemption and forgiveness in the passage. How does it manifest through Alceste's actions and the dialogue between the characters?
- b) Discuss the importance of noble love and faithfulness as portrayed in the text.

Exercise 3: Symbolism Interpretation:

Analyze the symbolic elements mentioned in the text, such as the daisy and the colors associated with it. What do they represent, and how do they contribute to the deeper meaning of the narrative?

Exercise 4: Moral Dilemma:

Imagine you are in the narrator's position when confronted by the god of love. Write a short essay discussing whether you would agree to the god's terms and why or why not.

Exercise 5: Conflict Analysis:

Identify the primary conflict present in the passage. Discuss how this conflict drives the plot forward and shapes the characters' actions and decisions.

Exercise 6: Metaphor Analysis:

The narrator is compared to a "worm" in the eyes of the god of love. Explain its figurative meaning. Discuss how this metaphor contributes to the overall context of the passage.

Exercise 7: Imagery Identification:

Descriptions of the green meadow is an example of imagery. Describe how the author uses sensory details to create vivid mental images for the reader.

Individual work no. 2

Reread *Chaucer's dream vision* and provide excerpts from the text that correspond to each stage of a dream narrative.

- I. **Initiation:** The narrator falls asleep, entering the dream state.
- II. **Exploration:** The narrator dreams, experiencing the events and scenarios within the dream.
- III. **Encounter with the Guide:** In the dream, there is usually a guide (e.g. a god) who appears to the narrator.
- IV. **Revelation by the Guide:** The guide imparts knowledge, often related to religion or love, which the dreamer couldn't have acquired otherwise.
- V. **Return / Awakening:** The narrator awakens from the dream, leaving the dream state.
- VI. **Resolution / Sharing:** The narrator resolves to share the knowledge gained from the dream with other people.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Sonnet 18

Theme: The enduring nature of beauty, love, and art in contrast to the transience of the natural world is the central theme of William Shakespeare's "Sonnet 18."

Stanza 1 (Quatrain 1): Comparison to a Summer's Day

The speaker contemplates comparing the beloved to a summer's day, highlighting the shortcomings of summer such as rough winds, excessive heat, and the fleeting nature of its beauty.

Stanza 2 (Quatrain 2): Imperfections of Summer

Continuing the exploration of summer's flaws, the speaker mentions how it can be too hot or obscured by clouds ("eye of heaven"). This stanza emphasizes the transient and changeable nature of summer.

Stanza 3 (Quatrain 3): Immortality of the Beloved's Beauty

Introducing the concept of immortality, the speaker asserts that the beloved's beauty will never fade or lose its allure, contrasting with the natural world's tendency to diminish and change. The focus is on the timeless and unchanging nature of the subject's beauty.

Stanza 4 (Couplet): The Permanence of the Poem

The poet expresses the belief that the poem itself will ensure the immortality of the beloved. As long as people can read the poem, the beloved's beauty will live on, defying the passage of time and even death.

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

Notes:

*thou - you (subject form), thee - you (object form), thy - your, thine - yours
art - are, hath - has, doth - does, shalt - shall*

owest - own, growest - grow

temperate - moderate and balanced

lease - temporary, limited duration,

*complexion - the natural appearance of the skin, especially the skin
of the face*

fair - exceptionally beautiful

untrimmed - lack of decay or deterioration

possession - ownership or control over something

Paraphrase

Shall I compare you to a summer's day?

You are more lovely and more delightful:

Rough winds shake the much loved buds of May

And summer is far too short:

At times the sun is too hot,

Or often goes behind the clouds;

And everything that is beautiful will lose its beauty,

By chance or by nature's planned out course;

But your youth shall not fade,

Nor lose the beauty that you possess;

Nor will death claim you for his own,

Because in my eternal verse you will live forever:

So long as there are people on this earth,

So long will this poem live on, giving you immortality.

Exercise 1: Sonnet Structure Identification:

Identify the structure of the sonnet. Note the stanzaic pattern, the rhyme scheme, the rhythmic meter.

Exercise 2. Rhythmic meter Analysis:

Mark the stressed (—) and unstressed (◡) syllables of the Sonnet 18 lines. An exception occurs in line 3, which begins with a spondee (— —), an unusual variation:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May

Exercise 3. Identification Exercise:

Identify the stylistic device used in each excerpt and explain its significance in the context of the sonnet. Stylistic devices: Metaphor, Imagery, Repetition, Simile, Personification

- a) “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?”
- b) “Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May”
- c) “And summer’s lease hath all too short a date”
- d) “the eye of heaven,” “darling buds of May,” “eternal summer”
- e) “fair from fair,” “So long ... So long ...,”

Exercise 4. The eye of heaven

What does the phrase “the eye of heaven” refer to? What role does “the eye of heaven” play in the imagery of the sonnet? What characteristics or qualities does “the eye of heaven” having a “gold complexion” possess as a personified entity?

Exercise 5. The first line of the sonnet

What type of question is the first line of Sonnet 18?

- a) A rhetorical question; b) A direct question;
- c) A declarative statement; d) An exclamatory question.

How does the first line set the tone and establish the central theme of the sonnet?

Exercise 6. Theme Exploration:

Identify the central themes present in Sonnet 18, such as love, beauty, mortality, and immortality. Choose one theme and provide evidence from the text that highlights it.

Exercise 7. Content interpretation:

Quatrain 1:

1. How does the speaker compare the subject to a summer’s day, and what does this comparison reveal about the subject’s beauty?

Quatrain 2:

2. What natural phenomena are described, and how do they contrast with the subject’s beauty?

Quatrain 3:

3. How does the speaker reassure the subject of their eternal beauty, and what imagery is used to convey this reassurance?

Exercise 7: Couplet interpretation.

How does the couplet contribute to the overall theme of the sonnet regarding the enduring legacy of beauty and love?

How does the couplet serve as a conclusion or summary of the themes explored throughout Sonnet 18?

***Sonnet 75*, by Edmund Spenser**

The poem is from the sonnet sequence Amoretti

One day I wrote her name upon the strand,
But came the waves and washed it away:
Again I wrote it with a second hand,
But came the tide, and made my pains his prey.
 Vain man, said she, that doest in vain assay
 A mortal thing so to immortalize,
 For I myself shall like to this decay,
 And eek my name be wiped out likewise.
Not so (quoth I), let baser things devise
To die in dust, but you shall live by fame:
My verse your virtues rare shall eternize,
And in the heavens write your glorious name.
 Where whenas Death shall all the world subdue,
 Out love shall live, and later life renew.

notes:

*line 3: second hand = handwriting; line 5: assay = try;
line 8: eek = also; line 9: quoth = said*

Exercise 1: Sonnet Structure Identification:

Identify the structure of the sonnet. Note the stanzaic pattern, the rhyme scheme, the rhythmic meter. Mark the stressed (—) and unstressed (∪) syllables of the sonnet lines.

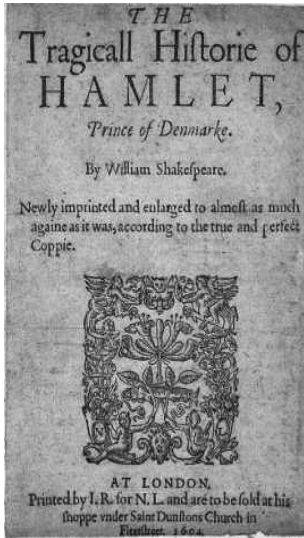
Exercise 2: Structural Elements:

Examine the structural differences between Sonnet 75 and Sonnet 18. Discuss how Spenser's use of the Spenserian sonnet form differs from Shakespeare's use of the traditional Shakespearean sonnet form.

Exercise 3: Characterization of Beloved:

Analyze how the beloved is characterized in each sonnet. How does Spenser depict his beloved in Sonnet 75, and how does this compare to Shakespeare's portrayal of the beloved in Sonnet 18?

Tragedy of Hamlet



the people in the story

Claudius, King of Denmark.

Hamlet, son of the late King Hamlet, nephew of the present king.

Horatio, friend of Hamlet.

Polonius, Minister of State.

Laertes, his son.

Marcellus, an officer of the guard.

Ghost of Hamlet's father.

A group of actors.

Gertrude, Queen of Denmark and mother of Hamlet.

Ophelia, daughter of Polonius.

Part I. The crowned Serpent: The weight of a throne

Gertrude, queen of Denmark, becoming a widow by the sudden death of King Hamlet, in less than two months after his death married his brother Claudius. This was noted by people at that time as a strangely unwise or unfeeling act, or even worse.

This Claudius was in no way like her late husband, either in the qualities of his person or his mind. [1] He was as unpleasant in outward appearance as he was evil in character. Indeed, some people soon suspected that he had killed his brother, the late king, so that he might marry his widow and become the king of Denmark himself, thus excluding young Hamlet, the son of the buried king, and lawful heir.

This unwise action of the queen had a very great effect on this young prince, who loved and worshiped the memory of his dead father. Being of a most honorable character himself, he was greatly troubled by the shame of his mother's marriage. This, together with his grief for his father's death, made him lose all his gaiety, and fall into a state of deep melancholy. He no longer found any pleasure in his books, his princely exercises or his sports. He became tired of the world, which seemed to him like an uncared for garden, [2] where all the best flowers died for lack of space, and nothing but weeds would grow.

Although the loss of the throne was a bitter wound to this young prince, it was not this that really troubled him and took away all his cheerful spirits. It was

the fact that his mother had shown herself so forgetful of his father's memory; and such a father! And he had been so loving and so gentle a husband to her, and she had always appeared to be a loving and obedient wife to him. Yet, in less than two months she had married her dear husband's brother, young Hamlet's uncle. This in itself was a very improper and unlawful marriage, as they were such close relations, but it was made much worse by the haste with which it was done and by the unkind character of the man whom she had chosen. It was this, much more than the loss of ten kingdoms, which made this honorable young prince lose all his high spirits, and darkened his mind. [3]

Everything that his mother Gertrude or the king could do to try to turn him from his melancholy was useless. In memory of his father, he still appeared in court in a black suit. He did not even take it off on the day his mother was married.

What mostly troubled him was uncertainty about the manner of his father's death. Claudius had made it known that a snake had bitten him. Young Hamlet, however, had strong suspicions that Claudius himself was the snake who had murdered King Hamlet for his crown, and that the snake that had bitten his father now sat on the throne.

How right was this guess? What ought he to think of his mother? Had she known of this murder, and perhaps even agreed that it should be done? These were the doubts which continually worried him and almost drove him mad.

Part 2. The Ghostly King: Hamlet's Promise of Revenge

A story had reached the ear of young Hamlet that a ghost, exactly like the dead king, had been seen by the soldiers on guard in front of the palace at midnight, for two or three nights, one after the other. The figure was always dressed in the suit of armor [4] which the dead king used to wear. They who saw it (Hamlet's close friend Horatio was one) agreed about the time and manner of its appearance. It came just as the clock struck midnight. It looked pale, with a face more of sorrow, than of anger. Its beard was gray. It made no answer when they spoke to it. Once they thought it lifted up its head, and was about to speak; but at that moment the morning clock struck twelve and it went quickly away, for morning was coming and disappeared from their sight.

The young prince, strangely amazed at their story, believed that it was his father's ghost which they had seen. He was determined to join the soldiers on

guard that night so that he might have a chance of seeing it. He thought that the ghost might want to tell him something. Though it had been silent till now, yet it would speak to him; and he waited with impatience for the coming of the night.



When night fell, Hamlet joined Horatio and Marcellus, one of the guards, outside the palace where they believed the ghost of King Hamlet appeared. As they conversed about the coldness of the night, Horatio abruptly announced the ghost's presence. The sight of his father's spirit filled Hamlet with shock and dread. Although the ghost remained silent, Marcellus, sensing an ominous presence, exclaimed, "Something is rotten in the state of Denmark."

Hamlet called upon the heavenly angels to defend them, for he did not know whether it was a good spirit or bad, whether it came for good or for evil. Gradually, however, he became braver. His father (as it seemed to him) looked at him sadly, as if he wanted to talk with him. He appeared so exactly as he was when he was alive, that Hamlet could not help speaking to him. He called him by his name, "Hamlet, King, Father!" and begged him to tell the reason why he had left his grave, where they had seen him quietly buried, to come again to visit the earth and the moonlight. "Was there anything which they could do to give peace to his spirit?" he asked.

The ghost made a sign to Hamlet, that he should go with him to some place farther away, where they might be alone. Horatio and Marcellus tried to stop the young prince from following the ghost. for they were afraid that it might be some evil spirit, that would tempt him to the neighboring sea, or to the top of a fearful cliff, and they put on some horrible shape [5] that might drive the prince mad. "Hamlet, don't go with that apparition! It could lead

you to danger,” they warned urgently. However, their admonitions fell on deaf ears. Hamlet cared too little about life. He felt as brave as a lion and, settling himself free from his companions, followed where the spirit led him.

When they were alone together, the spirit broke his silence and told him that he was the ghost of Hamlet, his father, who had been cruelly murdered. “Son,” he began, “it is I, your father, who speaks from beyond the grave. I was murdered by my own brother, Claudius.” Hamlet listened closely, his suspicions confirmed. “It was he who sought my crown and your mother’s hand,” the ghost continued. “As I slept in my garden, as was my custom in the afternoons, Claudius crept upon me and poured the poisonous juice of a plant into my ears. Thus, in my sleep, I was robbed of my crown, my queen, and my very life, by the hand of my own brother.” The ghost implored Hamlet, his voice filled with sorrow, “My son, if you ever loved me, you must avenge this dreadful murder.”

The ghost spoke sadly to his son about his mother. “Hamlet,” he said, “your mother has betrayed the sacred vows of her marriage and wedded my murderer. But as you seek revenge against your wicked uncle, remember this: do not harm your mother. Leave her fate to heaven, and to the stings and thorns of conscience”. [6] Hamlet promised to obey the ghost’s orders in all things, and the ghost disappeared.

When Hamlet was left alone, he made a solemn promise that he would forget all that he had in his memory and all he had ever learnt from books. Nothing should live in his brain except the memory of what the ghost had told him, and had commanded him to do. He told the details of the conversation to none but his dear friend Horatio, and commanded both him and Marcellus to keep secret what they had seen that night.

Part 3. Love and Madness: Hamlet’s Sacrifice for Revenge

The terror that the sight of the ghost had left in Hamlet’s mind almost drove him mad. He feared that it would continue to have this effect, and that this might put his uncle on his guard. [7] The king might suspect that Hamlet was planning something against him, or that he really knew more about his father’s death than he appeared to do. So, from that time, the young prince was determined to act as if he were really and truly mad. His dress, speech and behavior became wild and strange, and he pretended to be a madman so excellently that the king and queen were both deceived. Not thinking that his grief for his father’s death could produce such a disease in his mind, for they

did not know of the appearance of the ghost, they believed that it was caused by love, and they thought that they knew its object.

Before Hamlet fell into this melancholy, he had dearly loved a beautiful girl called Ophelia, the daughter of Polonius, the king's chief minister. He had sent her letters and rings, and made many offers of love to her; and she had believed him. But the melancholy into which he fell made him neglect her, and from the time that he began to imitate the madman, he seemed to treat her with unkindness, and a sort of rudeness.

She, a good lady, rather than reproach him for being false to her, persuaded herself that it was only the disease in his mind that made him take less notice of her than before.



Although the business which Hamlet had in his mind, the revenge of his father's death upon his murderer, prevented him from thinking of love, yet there were times when soft thoughts of his Ophelia came between. In one of these moments, when it seemed to him that his treatment of this gentle lady had been too cruel, he wrote her a letter full of wild expressions which agreed with his supposed madness, but mixed with some gentle touches. [8] These showed this honored lady that a deep love for her still lay at the bottom of his heart. He told her to doubt that the stars were fire and to doubt that the sun did move, to doubt the truth to be a liar, but never to doubt that he loved. [9]

Ophelia showed this letter to her father, and he felt it was his duty to show it to the king and queen. From that moment they supposed that the true cause of Hamlet's madness was love. The queen wished that the good beauties of Ophelia might be the happy cause of his wildness, and hoped that her good qualities might bring him back to his accustomed way of life again.

Part 4. Confronting Conscience: Hamlet's Soliloquy

Hamlet's trouble, however, lay deeper than Ophelia supposed. Nor could it be cured by love. His father's ghost still filled his imagination, and the solemn command to avenge his murder gave him no rest. Every hour of delay seemed to him a crime. Yet it was not an easy thing to cause the death of the king, as he was always surrounded by his guards. Or, if the guards were not present, Hamlet's mother was usually with the king, and this prevented Hamlet from doing what he wanted to do.

One evening, Hamlet discovers Claudius alone, deeply absorbed by prayer, he stands over his uncle, sword in hand, with the opportunity for vengeance. Yet, despite his intense desire for payback, Hamlet hesitates. He wrestles with his conscience, torn between the thirst for justice and the fear of sending Claudius's soul to heaven with his sins absolved. Ultimately, Hamlet refrains from acting, convinced that killing Claudius while he prays would grant him a passage to heaven, a fate he considers unjust for a murderer.

Hamlet decides, then, that he would try to get more certain proof that his father was murdered than that of a spirit, or ghost, which might be false.

As Hamlet reflected on the troubles weighing upon his mind, he found himself alone, deep in thought. With a heavy heart, he began to speak softly to himself, contemplating the profound question of existence. "To be or not to be," he thought aloud, his voice filled with uncertainty. "That is the question: whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune." [10]

Part 5. The Play Within a Play: Unveiling the Truth

While he was in this undetermined state of mind, [11] some actors, who had often given Hamlet great pleasure in the past, came to the court.

Hamlet began to think about actors and acting, and the powerful effect that a good play has on the audience. He remembered the case of a murderer who, seeing a murder on the stage, was so moved by the force of the scene that he immediately confessed the crime which he had done. So Hamlet determined that these actors should play something like the murder of his father before his uncle, and he would watch closely to see what effect it might have on the king, so that he could make up his mind with more certainty if he were the murderer or not. He ordered such a play to be prepared, and invited the king and queen to attend its performance.

The story of the play was of the murder of a duke in Vienna. The duke's name was Gonzago, his wife's Baptista. The play showed how a certain Lucianus, a

near relation of the duke's, poisoned him in his garden to get his property, and how the murderer soon afterwards won the love of Gonzago's wife.

At the performance of this play, the king, who did not know the trap which was set for him, was present, with his queen and the whole court. Hamlet sat attentively near him to see what effect the play had on him. The play began with a conversation between Gonzago and his wife. The lady makes many solemn promises of love, and says that she will never marry a second husband if she would live longer than Gonzago. "Indeed," she exclaimed, "may I be cursed if I ever take a second husband," and adds that no woman ever did so except those wicked women who kill their first husbands.

Hamlet saw the king change color at these words, and knew that they were hateful both to him and to the queen. But when Lucianus, according to the story, came to poison Gonzago sleeping in his garden, which was so much like his own wicked act upon the late king, Claudius's conscience was so troubled that he was unable to sit through the rest of the play. Calling for lights, [12] and pretending or feeling a sudden sickness, he hastily left the theater. As the king had gone, the play was stopped.

Now Hamlet had seen enough to be satisfied that the words of the ghost were true. "I swear to you, my friend, that I believe every word it uttered." Hamlet declared solemnly to Horatio. Before, however, he could make up his mind what means of revenge he should take now that he knew his uncle to be his father's murderer; he was sent for by the queen, his mother, to a private meeting in her room.

Part 6. Tragedy Unveiled: The bloody deed

It was the king's wish that the queen should send for Hamlet, so that she might inform her son how much his recent behavior had displeased them both; The king, wishing to know all that happened at this meeting, and thinking that Hamlet's mother might not tell him everything that her son said, ordered old Polonius to hide himself behind the hangings in the queen's room, where, unseen, he might hear all their conversation.

As soon as Hamlet came, his mother began to accuse him of having behaved badly. She told him that he had given great offense to his father. She spoke about the king, Hamlet's uncle, whom she had married.

Hamlet was angry that she should give such a dear and honored name as father to the murderer. So he replied, sharply, "Mother, you have much offended my father."

The queen said that that was an idle answer.

“It was as good as the question deserved,” said Hamlet.

The queen asked him if he had forgotten to whom he was speaking.

“Alas!” replied Hamlet, “I wish I could forget. You are the queen, your husband’s brother’s wife; and you are my mother. I wish you were not what you are.”

“Then,” said the queen, “if you show me so little respect, I will bring those to you who can speak,” and she got up to send the king or Polonius to him.

But Hamlet would not let her go, now that he was alone with her, till he had tried to see if his words could make her understand the wicked life she was living. Taking her by the wrist, he held her fast, and made her sit down.

She, frightened by his earnest manner, and fearful that, in his madness, he might do her some harm, cried out; and a voice was heard from behind the hangings, “Help, help, the queen!”

When Hamlet heard this, he thought it was the king himself who was hidden there. He drew his sword and struck at the place where the voice came from, as he would have struck at a rat. The voice ceased and he decided the person was dead. When, however, he pulled out the body, he found that it was not the king, but Polonius, the old minister, who had hidden there to listen to the conversation.

“Oh me!” exclaimed the queen, “what a mad and bloody deed you have done!”

“A bloody deed, mother,” replied Hamlet, “but not so bad as yours, who killed a king, and married his brother.”

He showed her two pictures, one of the late king, her first husband, and the other of the present king, her second husband, and he told her to notice the difference. Notice the difference, Mother. “See the grace upon my father’s face, how he shines like a god.” Then, with a pained expression, he gestured towards the portrait of Claudius. “And look at the man who replaced him,” he continued, his voice filled with disgust. “See how ugly and diseased he appears, for he is the one who betrayed and murdered his own kin.”

Then Hamlet asked her how she could continue to live with this man and be a wife to him, who had murdered her first husband, and got the crown by the same false means as a thief..

And just as he spoke, the ghost of his father, as he was in his lifetime, and as he had recently seen it, entered the room. Hamlet, in great fear, asked what it wanted. The ghost said that it came to remind him of the revenge which

Hamlet had promised but seemed to have forgotten. “Hamlet, my son,” the ghost’s voice echoed, “as you seek justice for my murder, I implore you to protect your mother from harm.” With a heartfelt urgency, he continued, “Do not let your anger extend to her. Leave her fate to heaven’s judgment, and let her conscience bear the weight of her deeds.” Then it disappeared, and was only seen by Hamlet.

She, however, was terribly frightened all this time as she listened to him speaking, for it appeared to her as if he were addressing nothingness; she believed it to be the result of the disorder in his mind. Hamlet begged her not to be so wicked as to think that it was his madness, and not her own offenses, [13] which had brought his father’s spirit again on the earth. He told her to feel the beating of his heart, how regular it was, not like a madman’s. And he begged her, with tears in his eyes, in future to avoid the company of the king and no longer be a wife to him. She promised to do what he asked, and they parted.

Part 7. The Twists of Fate: Hamlet’s Failed Exile

Now Hamlet had time to consider who it was that he had unfortunately and unwisely killed. It was Polonius, the father of the lady Ophelia, whom he so dearly loved, and he wept for what he had done.

The death of Polonius gave the king an excuse to send Hamlet out of the kingdom. He would willingly have put him to death, fearing him as dangerous; but he also feared the people, who loved Hamlet, and the queen who, in spite of all her faults, really loved the prince, her son. Pretending to provide for Hamlet’s safety, so that he might not be punished for Polonius’ death he sent him on board a ship going to England in the care of two courtiers. He sent letters by them to the English court (which at that time was ruled by Denmark), giving orders that Hamlet should be put to death for special reasons which he gave, as soon as the prince landed on English ground.

Hamlet, suspecting some treachery, found the letters secretly in the night. He rubbed out his own name and instead put the names of the two courtiers who were in charge of him, [14] so that they might be put to death in his place. Then, he put up the letters back where he had found them.

Soon after this, the ship was attacked by pirates and a sea-fight began. During this fight, Hamlet wanting to show his courage, jumped quite alone, with his sword in hand, onto the enemy’s ship. His own ship, in a cowardly manner, sailed off, leaving him to his fate. The two courtiers went to England carrying those letters which Hamlet had changed to cause their own destruction.



The pirates proved to be gentle enemies. Knowing that their prisoner was the prince, and hoping that he might do good for them at court in return for any favor they might show him, [15] they put Hamlet on shore at the nearest harbor in Denmark. From this place, he wrote to the king, telling him of the strange chance which had brought him back to his own country, and saying that he would return to the court the next day.

Part 8. Love and Loss: Sorrow over Ophelia's Fate

When he arrived home, Hamlet stumbled upon a poignant reminder of mortality: the skull of Yorick, the court jester. Holding the skull in his hand, Hamlet reflected on the fleeting nature of life and the inevitability of death, contemplating the absurdity and fragility of human existence. "Alas, poor Yorick," he murmured softly, "I knew him well."

The next thing that met his eyes was a very sad sight. This was the funeral of the young and beautiful Ophelia, once his dear lady. From the time of her father's death, this young lady had begun to lose her mind. [16] She suffered so much because her father had been cruelly killed by the prince whom she loved, that in a little time she became quite mad. She went about giving flowers away to the ladies of the court, saying that they were for her father's burial, and singing songs about love and death, and sometimes songs without any meaning at all, as if she had no memory of what had happened to her.

There was a willow that grew over a stream, and its leaves were reflected in the water. Ophelia came here one day when she was unwatched, with wreaths of leaves and flowers made by her. She was climbing up to hang these in the tree when a branch broke, and she was thrown into the water. Her clothes held her up for a time, during which she sang bits of old songs, like one insensible

to her own distress. [17] It was not long, however, before her garments, heavy with water, pulled her down to a muddy and miserable death. [18]

It was this beautiful lady's funeral, attended by her brother Laertes, the king, the queen and the whole court, which was taking place when Hamlet arrived. He did not know what all this ceremony meant at first, but stood on one side, unwilling to interrupt. He saw the flowers on the grave, which the queen herself threw in; and as she did so she said, "Sweets to the sweet! I thought I would spread them on your marriage-bed, sweet maiden, not on your grave. You should have been Hamlet's wife."



Hamlet and Laertes

Hamlet saw Ophelia's brother Laertes jump into the grave, mad with grief, and tell the grave-digger to pile mountains of earth upon him so that he might be buried with her.

Then Hamlet's love for this fair maiden came back to him, and he could not bear that a brother should show such grief, for he thought that he loved Ophelia better than forty thousand brothers. He came out from where he stood and jumped into the grave where Laertes was, as mad as, or even madder than he. Laertes, seeing it was Hamlet, who had been the cause of his father's and his sister's death, seized him by throat as an enemy, until they were separated.

After the funeral, Hamlet apologized to Laertes for having thrown himself into the grave. He said that he could not bear that anyone should show more

grief than himself for the death of the beautiful Ophelia. And, for a time, these two noble youths seemed to be friends again.

Part 9. The Fall of Kings: Hamlet's Final Hour

The king, Hamlet's wicked uncle, planned to use the grief and anger of Laertes for the death of his father and Ophelia, to destroy Hamlet. He persuaded Laertes to invite Hamlet to a friendly fencing match to see which of them was the more skilful. Hamlet accepted, and a day was fixed for the match.

All the court was present at this match, and Laertes, by order of the king, prepared a poisoned weapon. Hamlet chose a sword, never suspecting Laertes of treachery. Nor did he examine Laertes' weapon: who instead of a sword without a point, which the laws demanded, made use of one with a point and poisoned.

At first Laertes only played with Hamlet, and allowed him to gain some advantage. The king, pretending to be pleased with this, praised Hamlet's success. But soon, Laertes, growling angry, made a deadly stroke at Hamlet with his poisoned weapon, and gave him a death wound. Hamlet, in anger not knowing the truth of the treachery, exchanged in the fight his own weapon for Laertes' poisoned one. With this, he repaid Laertes for the stroke he had given him, so that Laertes was justly caught in his own treachery.

At this instant the queen cried out that she was poisoned. She had accidentally drunk out of a bowl which the king had prepared for Hamlet, in case, getting warm while fencing, he should call for a drink. Into this the wicked king had put a deadly poison, to make sure of Hamlet's death, if Laertes failed. He had forgotten to warn the queen about this bowl, from which she drank. She immediately died.

Hamlet, now suspecting some treachery, ordered the doors to be shut, while he tried to discover who was the cause of it. Laertes, feeling his life going away with the wound which Hamlet had given him, confessed of all he had done. "I am fading fast," he admitted, his voice weak. "I should confess. The point of my blade was poisoned, and you, Hamlet, have not long to live. No medicine can save you now." With his final breaths, he accused Claudius. "It was the king's plot," he said. "He orchestrated these vile deeds." Then, begging Hamlet's forgiveness, he died.

When Hamlet understood that his end was near, and knowing that there was still some poison left upon the sword, he suddenly turned on his false uncle and pushed the point of it to his heart. Thus the promise which he had made

to his father's spirit was fulfilled, his wicked murder was revenged upon the murderer.

As Hamlet felt like he was losing his breath and that his life was slipping away, he turned to his close friend Horatio, who had seen all the sad events happening. Hamlet then said, "The rest is silence," meaning that everything else after death is quiet and peaceful. Horatio, feeling very sad, stood quietly beside Hamlet until the end, being a loyal friend. Horatio had made a movement as if he would kill himself and meet death with the prince, but Hamlet begged him to live so that he might tell the story to the world. Horatio promised that he would make a true report, as one who knew the truth of everything that had happened. Thus satisfied, the noble heart of Hamlet stopped beating

"Good night, sweet prince. May the angels watch over the spirit of this sweet prince." Horatio told, overcome with emotion, before continuing, "Hamlet was a prince of unmatched kindness and gentleness, admired for his countless princely virtues." Wiping away his tears, he mused, "Had he lived, undoubtedly he would have become a truly magnificent and benevolent king of Denmark."

Translation notes:

- [1] either in the qualities of his person or his mind, — prin calitățile sale personale precum și prin fapte
- [2] uncared for garden — o grădină neângrijită
- [3] which made this honourable young prince lose all his high spirits, and darkened his mind — și din cauza aceasta tânărul s-a întristat, și a pierdut buna dispoziție pe care o avea
- [4] in the suit of armour — în armura cavaleriească
- [5] and put on some horrible shape — va prelua o formă oribilă
- [6] He should leave her to heaven, and to the stings and thorns of conscience — îi e deajuns cât are mila dumnezeiască și cea satanică în pieptul său
- [7] put his uncle on his guard — a pus pe unchiul să în gardă
- [8] which agreed with his supposed madness, but mixed with some gentle touches — ce se potrivea cu presupusă lui nebunie, dar aplanată de politete
- [9] He told her to doubt that the stars were fire and to doubt that the sun did move, to doubt truth to be a liar, but never to doubt that he loved — El a zis: «Nu crede, că soarele strălucește, că stelele sunt un roi de lumini, că adevărul nu minte, nu crede în dragostea mea».

- [10] whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune — dacă este mai nobil în minte să suferi prăștiile și săgețile unei sorți nedrepte.
- [11] While he was in this undetermined state of mind — în timp ce era într-o situație depresivă, stresantă.
- [12] Calling for lights — Ordonând să se aprindă lumina
- [13] and not her own offences — și nu faptele sale neplauzibile
- [14] who were in charge of him — care erau responsabili de el
- [15] in return for any favour they might show him — ca răspuns la orice serviciu oferit lui
- [16] to lose mind — a ieși din minți
- [17] she sang bits of old songs, like one insensible to her own distress — ea cânta fragmente din cântecele vechi, asemeni unei disperate ce deplângea soarta ei
- [18] pulled her down to a muddy and miserable death — au ademenit-o în mlaștina morții



Study questions:

Part 1

1. What is the significance of Gertrude's quick marriage to Claudius after the death of King Hamlet?
2. How does the marriage between Gertrude and Claudius affect young Hamlet's mental state?
3. Describe young Hamlet's character and his relationship with his father.

Exercise 1. Character Analysis:

Describe the characters of Gertrude, Claudius, and Hamlet based on the information provided in the text. What are their personalities like? How do they behave in the story?

Exercise 2. Identifying Similes and Metaphors:

Through the passage and identify any similes or metaphors used by the author. Explain the comparison being made in each example.

Example: "the world, which seemed to him like an uncared-for garden"

Stylistic Device: Simile

Explanation: The author compares the world to an uncared-for garden to convey the idea that everything seems neglected and without beauty.

Exercise 3. Identifying Irony:

Discuss how the author uses irony to convey deeper meaning or to create contrast.

Example: “the snake that had bitten his father now sat on the throne.”

Explanation: This statement is ironic because ...

Exercise 4. Identifying Symbolism:

Discuss the symbolic significance of the symbols and how they contribute to the overall meaning of the text.

Example: “the black suit”

Symbolism: The black suit symbolizes mourning and grief, reflecting Hamlet’s deep sorrow over his father’s death and his disapproval of his mother’s hasty marriage to Claudius.

Other symbols: the snake, the crown, the garden.

Part 2

4. Describe young Hamlet’s initial reaction upon seeing his father’s ghost.
5. Why do Horatio and Marcellus try to dissuade Hamlet from following the ghost?
6. What does the ghost reveal to Hamlet about the circumstances of his death and the perpetrator?
7. How does the ghost advise Hamlet regarding his mother, Gertrude?
8. What promise does Hamlet make to the ghost before it disappears?
9. Why does Hamlet decide to keep the details of his encounter with the ghost a secret?
10. How does the ghost’s revelation affect Hamlet’s perception of his uncle, Claudius, and his mother, Gertrude?

Exercise 5. Character Analysis:

Write a detailed character analysis of the Ghost focusing on its motivations, actions, and relationships with other characters.

Exercise 6. Ethical Dilemmas:

Discuss the ethical implications of Hamlet’s vow to avenge his father’s murder. Is revenge justified in this situation? Why or why not?

Part 3

11. Why does Hamlet decide to feign madness?
12. How does Ophelia interpret Hamlet's changed behavior towards her?
13. What prompts Hamlet to write a letter to Ophelia, and what does he express in it?
14. How does Polonius react upon learning about the letter Hamlet wrote to Ophelia?
15. How does the queen hope that Ophelia's influence might help Hamlet return to his normal state of mind?
16. Despite his feigned madness, what evidence suggests that Hamlet still deeply cares for Ophelia?

Exercise 7. Character Analysis:

Write a detailed character analysis of Ophelia. Provide details about Ophelia's family, social status, and relationships. Describe Ophelia's personality based on her actions, dialogue, and interactions with others.

Exercise 8. Symbolism Analysis:

Explore the symbolism of the letters and rings exchanged between Hamlet and Ophelia. What do these objects represent, and how do they contribute to the development of the characters and themes?

Part 4

17. Why does Hamlet find it difficult to fulfill his father's command to avenge his murder?
18. What dilemma does Hamlet face when he has the opportunity to kill Claudius while he is praying?
19. Why does Hamlet ultimately decide not to kill Claudius while he is praying?
20. How does Hamlet express his inner turmoil and contemplation of existence in his famous soliloquy, "To be or not to be"?

Exercise 9. Claudius's Prayer scene:

There's hesitation to kill Claudius while he prays. Discuss on the outcomes of Hamlet's decision not to kill Claudius during his prayer. How does this choice affect the plot and the dynamics between the characters? Explore alternative scenarios and their potential implications.

Exercise 10. Monologue and Soliloquy

Distinguish between monologue and soliloquy in dramatic literature.

Exercise 11. Critical Analysis:

Write a critical analysis discussing the significance of Hamlet's famous soliloquy ("To be or not to be") in the context of his internal struggles and the themes of the play as a whole.

Exercise 12. Personification:

"outrageous fortune." Fortune, typically an abstract concept, is personified. What is the significance of personifying fortune in the context of the play?

Part 5

21. What method does Hamlet devise to confirm his suspicions about his uncle's guilt?
22. Describe the plot of the play that Hamlet chooses to stage.
23. How does Claudius react during the performance of the play?
24. What specific moment in the play causes Claudius to react strongly?
25. What conclusion does Hamlet draw after observing Claudius's reaction to the play?
26. What is the purpose of the private meeting between Hamlet and the queen?

Exercise 13. Theme Exploration - Revenge:

Explore the theme of revenge in "Hamlet" by examining how different characters seek vengeance and the consequences of their actions. Consider whether revenge ultimately brings resolution or perpetuates a cycle of violence. Support your argument with textual evidence.

Exercise 14. Symbolism:

The play within the play, "The Murder of Gonzago," symbolizes Hamlet's attempt to uncover the truth about his father's murder and Claudius's guilt. In what ways does the play within the play mirror the events unfolding in the main plot of "Hamlet"?

Exercise 15. Irony

Dramatic irony is present as the audience knows the true identity of the murderer (Claudius) while the characters in the play within the play remain unaware.

What is dramatic irony, and how does it differ from other forms of irony?

Part 6

27. Why does the king wish for the queen to confront Hamlet about his recent behavior?
28. How does Hamlet respond to the queen's accusation that he has offended his father?
29. Who is hiding behind the hangings in the queen's room, and why?
30. What does Hamlet mistake Polonius for, and what does he do in response?
31. How does Hamlet compare King Hamlet to King Claudius using the portraits?
32. Describe the appearance of the ghost when it appears to Hamlet and what message it delivers.
33. How does the queen interpret Hamlet's interaction with the ghost, and how does Hamlet respond?

Exercise 16. Character analysis:

Explore Polonius as a character, understanding his motivations, actions, and relationships with other characters. What drives him to act the way he does? Is he primarily concerned with his own advancement, the well-being of his family, or the stability of the kingdom?

Exercise 17. Setting description:

Depict the setting of a key scene, such as the Queen's chamber where Hamlet confronts his mother. Focus on creating vivid imagery and atmosphere to enhance the scene's significance.

Exercise 18. Exclamation analysis:

What is the significance of the exclamation "Help, help, the queen!?"? What stylistic device is used? What does it convey? Discuss the emotions conveyed through the exclamation.

Exercise 19. Exploring antithesis:

Analyze the use of antithesis in the description of two portraits. Identify the antithetical elements present in the description of the two portraits. Pay attention to contrasting qualities, appearances, and symbolic meanings associated with each portrait.

How does this literary device enhance the contrast between characters?

Part 7

34. Why does King Claudius decide to send Hamlet to England?
35. How does Hamlet alter the letters that King Claudius sends to the English court?
36. What unexpected event occurs while Hamlet is en route to England?
37. How does Hamlet end up back in Denmark after the encounter with the pirates?

Exercise 20. Analyzing Irony:

Passage: “His own ship, in a cowardly manner, sailed off, leaving him to his fate.”
Discuss the irony of Hamlet being abandoned by his own ship when he was trying to demonstrate bravery.

Exercise 21. Analyzing Personification:

Discuss the personification of the ship and its impact on characterizing the vessel’s actions.

Passage: “His own ship, in a cowardly manner, sailed off...”

Part 8

38. What poignant reminder of mortality does Hamlet encounter upon his return home?
39. Describe Ophelia’s mental state following her father’s death.
40. What tragic fate befalls Ophelia, and how does she meet her end?
41. Who attends Ophelia’s funeral, and what does the queen say as she throws flowers into the grave?
42. How does Laertes react to Ophelia’s death during the funeral?
43. Why does Hamlet jump into Ophelia’s grave, and what is his motive?
44. How does Laertes initially react to Hamlet’s presence in the grave?
45. How do Hamlet and Laertes resolve their differences temporarily after the funeral?

Exercise 22: Ophelia’s death

The circumstances surrounding Ophelia’s death in Shakespeare’s Hamlet are open to interpretation, and scholars have debated whether it was a deliberate suicide or an accidental death. The text itself does not explicitly state Ophelia’s intentions, leaving room for different interpretations.

Was it a suicide or an accidental death?

Reflect on the factors that may have influenced Ophelia's decision to take her own life.

Reflect on the various factors that indicate Ophelia's death was accidental.

Exercise 23: Hyperbole Exploration

Hyperbolic statement: "He loved Ophelia better than forty thousand brothers."

Explain the exaggerated claim and its significance within the context of the story.

Exercise 24. Symbolism Exploration:

Identify and analyze the symbolism in the text, such as Yorick's skull, Ophelia's flowers, or the willow tree. What do they symbolize?

Exercise 25. Symbolism Analysis - Yorick's Skull and the Ghost:

Reflect on the symbolic meanings attributed to each of these elements. Consider how these symbols interact and complement each other as two aspects of human existence: the physical and the spiritual.

Part 9

46. How does King Claudius plan to use Laertes' grief and anger to destroy Hamlet?

47. What treacherous act does Laertes commit during the fencing match?

48. How does Queen Gertrude inadvertently become a victim of the king's treachery?

49. How does Hamlet ultimately fulfill his promise to his father's spirit?

50. What does Horatio promise to do for Hamlet before the prince dies?

Exercise 26. Revenge Tragedy Elements:

List the key characteristics of a revenge tragedy. How does Hamlet's ending demonstrate that it is a revenge tragedy?

Exercise 27. Laertes' Role:

Discuss Laertes' involvement in the revenge plot orchestrated by Claudius. Analyze how Laertes' desire for vengeance for his father's and sister's deaths parallels Hamlet's quest for justice, and how his actions contribute to the tragic outcome.

Exercise 28. The denouement of *Hamlet*:

Identify the key characters involved in the denouement, including Hamlet, Claudius, Laertes, Gertrude, and Horatio.

Analyze how each character's desires, and actions contribute to the resolution of the plot.

Exercise 29: Hamlet's Revenge and its Consequences:

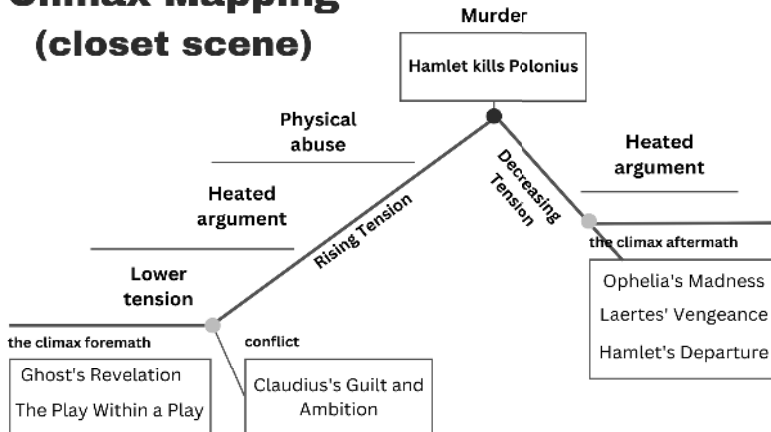
Is revenge justified in certain circumstances? Did Hamlet's actions lead to more harm than good? Was Hamlet's revenge worth his life?

Individual work no. 3

Decoding dramatic tension: the climax of tragedy in Shakespeare's Hamlet

According to the mapping of the climax scene in Hamlet, there are five escalating events leading to the death of Polonius.

Climax Mapping (closet scene)



In the provided text, identify and underline the phrases that highlight each of the five events.

In the adjacent column, provide concise notes characterizing each event, including its significance and impact on the plot development.

<p>It was the king's wish that the queen should send for Hamlet, so that she might inform her son how much his recent behavior had displeased them both; The king, wishing to know all that happened at this meeting, and thinking that Hamlet's mother might not tell him everything that her son said, ordered old Polonius to hide himself behind the hangings in the queen's room, where, unseen, he might hear all their conversation.</p>	<p>Level one: Lower tension</p>
<p>As soon as Hamlet came, his mother began to accuse him of having behaved badly. She told him that he had given great offense to his father. She spoke about the king, Hamlet's uncle, whom she had married.</p>	<p>Level two: Heated argument</p>

<p>Hamlet was angry that she should give such a dear and honored name as father to the murderer. So he replied, sharply, “Mother, you have much offended my father.”</p> <p>The queen said that that was an idle answer.</p> <p>“It was as good as the question deserved,” said Hamlet.</p> <p>The queen asked him if he had forgotten to whom he was speaking.</p> <p>“Alas!” replied Hamlet, “I wish I could forget. You are the queen, your husband’s brother’s wife; and you are my mother. I wish you were not what you are.”</p> <p>“Then,” said the queen, “if you show me so little respect, I will bring those to you who can speak,” and she got up to send the king or Polonius to him.</p>	
<p>But Hamlet would not let her go, now that he was alone with her, till he had tried to see if his words could make her understand the wicked life she was living. Taking her by the wrist, he held her fast, and made her sit down.</p> <p>She, frightened by his earnest manner, and fearful that, in his madness, he might do her some harm, cried out; and a voice was heard from behind the hangings, “Help, help, the queen!”</p>	<p>Level three: Physical abuse</p>
<p>When Hamlet heard this, he thought it was the king himself who was hidden there. He drew his sword and struck at the place where the voice came from, as he would have struck at a rat. The voice ceased and he decided the person was dead. When, however, he pulled out the body, he found that it was not the king, but Polonius, the old minister, who had hidden there to listen to the conversation.</p> <p>“Oh me!” exclaimed the queen, “what a mad and bloody deed you have done!”</p> <p>“A bloody deed, mother,” replied Hamlet, “but not so bad as yours, who killed a king, and married his brother.”</p>	<p>Level four: The murder</p>

He showed her two pictures, one of the late king, her first husband, and the other of the present king, her second husband, and he told her to notice the difference. Notice the difference, Mother. “See the grace upon my father’s face, how he shines like a god.” Then, with a pained expression, he gestured towards the portrait of Claudius. “And look at the man who replaced him,” he continued, his voice filled with disgust. “See how ugly and diseased he appears, for he is the one who betrayed and murdered his own kin.”

Decreasing tension.

DANIEL DEFOE

The Fortunes & Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders &c.

In the following text, we explore the extraordinary life of a woman named Moll Flanders. Through her own memoirs, we learn of her diverse experiences spanning threescore years, including periods of hardship, crime, and eventual redemption. This captivating tale offers insights into human resilience, moral complexities, and the pursuit of a better life.

My true name is so well known in the records or registers at Newgate, and in the Old Bailey, and there are some things relating to my particular conduct, that it is not to be expected I should set my name or the account of my family to this work; perhaps, after my death, it may be better known; at present it would not be proper, no not though a general pardon should be issued, even without exceptions and reserve of persons or crimes.

It is enough to tell you that some of my worst comrades, who are no longer alive (having been executed), knew me by the name Moll Flanders. So, until I feel comfortable revealing my true identity and all about my past, please allow me to refer to myself by that name.

I have been told that in one of our neighbor nations, whether it be in France or where else I know not, they have an order from the king, that when any criminal is condemned, either to die, or to the galleys, or to be transported, if they leave any children, so they are immediately taken into the care of the Government, and put into a hospital called the House of Orphans, where they are bred up, clothed, fed, taught, and when fit to go out, are placed out to trades or to services, so as to be well able to provide for themselves by an honest, industrious behavior.

If this had been the practice in our country, I wouldn't have ended up as a lonely, impoverished girl with no friends, no clothes, and no one to support me, like I did. This situation caused me a lot of suffering even before I fully understood what was happening or how to make things better. It led me into a way of life that was not only considered disgraceful, but also harmful to both my physical and emotional well-being.

However, the situation was different in my case. My mother was convicted of a minor theft, hardly worth mentioning. Specifically, she was accused of borrowing three pieces of fine holland fabric from a draper in Cheapside without returning them. The details of what exactly happened are too complex

to go into, and I've heard different versions of the story so many times that I'm not sure which one is accurate.

Regardless of the specific details, everyone agrees that my mother pleaded her belly when she was convicted. After it was confirmed that she was indeed expecting a child, her punishment was postponed for about seven months. During this time, she gave birth to me, and once she had recovered, she was brought back to face her original sentence. However, she was fortunate enough to receive a pardon that allowed her to be sent to the colonies instead. I was only about six months old at the time, and unfortunately, I was left in the care of unreliable people.

I was too young to remember anything from the earliest hours of my life, so everything I know about that time is based on what I've heard from others. What I do know is that I was born in unfortunate circumstances, and because of that, there was no local parish available to provide me with the care I needed as a baby. I have no idea how I managed to survive during that time, but I've been told that a relative of my mother's took me in as a nurse for a short period. However, I have no information about who paid for this or who arranged it.

The earliest memory I have of myself is being among a group of people known as gypsies or Egyptians. Unfortunately, I can't recall how I ended up with them or how I eventually left their company.

It was in Colchester, Essex, that I was abandoned by the group of people I had been with. I have a vague memory that I might have intentionally left them there, hiding myself and refusing to go any further with them. However, I can't be certain about this account. What I do remember is that when I was picked up by some parish officers of Colchester, I explained that I had arrived in the town with the gypsies but chose not to continue with them. They left me behind, and I had no idea where they had gone. Despite efforts to locate them, they couldn't be found.

Fortunately, I was now in a position to receive care. Although I wasn't officially a responsibility of any particular parish within the town, once my situation became known and it was clear that I was too young to work (only about three years old), the compassion of the town magistrates led them to arrange for my care. I was treated as if I were one of their own, despite not being born in the area.

I was fortunate enough to be placed with a woman who took me in as a nurse. She wasn't wealthy, but she had experienced better times in the past. She earned a modest living by caring for children like me, providing everything

we needed until we reached an age where we could either start working or support ourselves.

This woman also ran a small school where she taught children to read and do basic tasks. Despite her humble circumstances, she had a talent for nurturing children, imparting both practical skills and good manners. What set her apart was her strong religious devotion and her exemplary conduct. She was a sober, pious woman who kept a clean household and behaved with utmost respect. As a result, despite our simple meals, basic accommodations, and plain clothing, we were raised with the same level of manners and refinement as if we had attended a prestigious dancing school.

When I reached the age of eight, I received unsettling news that the local authorities, whom I think they called magistrates, had decided I should enter into service. Although I was still very young, I was expected to perform tasks such as running errands and assisting a cookmaid, which filled me with dread. I had a strong dislike for the idea of being a servant, and I expressed this fear to my nurse, who had cared for me. I believed I could support myself without entering service because she had taught me how to sew and spin wool, which were common trades in our city. I pleaded with her to let me stay with her, promising to work hard if she allowed me to. I spoke to her about this almost every day, and as a result, I spent my time working and crying, much to the distress of the kind-hearted woman who cared for me deeply.

One day, my nurse entered the room where all of us children were working. Instead of taking her usual place as the supervisor, she deliberately sat across from me, as if she wanted to observe me closely. I was busy with a task she had assigned me, which involved marking some shirts she intended to make. After a while, she initiated a conversation with me.

“You silly child,” she began, noticing my tears. “Why are you always crying?” I sobbed, “Because they will take me away and make me work as a servant, but I can’t do household chores.” She tried to reassure me, saying, “Don’t worry, you’ll learn how to do it in time. They won’t give you difficult tasks right away.” But I insisted, “Yes, they will, and if I can’t do it, they’ll punish me. The maids will beat me to make me work hard, but I’m just a little girl and I can’t do it.” Overwhelmed with emotion, I burst into tears again and couldn’t speak any further.

My kind nurse was deeply moved by my distress, and from that moment on, she decided that I wouldn’t be sent into service just yet. She comforted me, telling me not to cry, and assured me that she would speak to the mayor about it. She promised that I wouldn’t have to go into service until I was older.

However, this assurance didn't ease my fears. The thought of going into service terrified me so much that even if she had promised I wouldn't go until I was twenty years old, it wouldn't have made a difference. I would have continued crying, consumed by the fear of it happening eventually.

When my nurse realized that I was still upset, she became frustrated with me. "What more do you want?" she asked. "Haven't I told you that you won't have to go into service until you're older?" "Yes," I replied, "but eventually I'll have to go." "What?" she exclaimed, "Are you out of your mind? Do you want to be a gentlewoman?" "Yes," I said, crying loudly again.

This made my nurse laugh at me, teasing me by pretending to speak in a fancy manner. "Oh, you want to be a gentlewoman, do you? And how do you plan to become one? By working with your fingers?" she mocked.

I innocently replied, "Yes." She asked me how much I could earn with my work. I told her that I earned threepence when I spun wool and fourpence when I did plain sewing. She laughed again, saying that such a small amount wouldn't be enough for me.

I pleaded with her, saying that if she let me live with her, I would work harder and give her all the money I earned. Moved by my sincerity, she smiled and gently explained that even if I worked harder, the money I earned wouldn't be sufficient to provide for all my needs.

I insisted that I didn't mind going without food if it meant I could stay with her. She asked if I could really live without food, and I replied, "Yes," still crying.

I didn't have any strategy or plan in all of this; you can see it was all natural. But my actions were filled with innocence and passion to such an extent that it moved the kind motherly woman to tears as well. Eventually, she cried just as much as I did. She then took me by the hand and led me out of the teaching-room, saying, "Come, you won't go into service; you'll stay with me." This reassured me, at least for the present.



Study questions:

1. What pseudonym does the narrator use to conceal their true identity?
2. What is the Moll's opinion on the practice of caring for orphaned children, as mentioned in a neighboring nation?
3. What crime was Moll's mother convicted of, and what was her punishment?

4. Describe the circumstances of Moll's early life, including their time with the gypsies.
5. How did the town magistrates of Colchester respond to Moll's situation?
6. Who took Moll in as a nurse, and what kind of person was she?
7. What task did Moll fear being assigned to as a servant, and how did their nurse react to her distress?
8. How did the nurse reassure Moll regarding their fear of going into service?
9. What was Moll's desire regarding their future occupation, and how did their nurse respond to it?

Exercise 1: Character Analysis of Moll Flanders

Describe Moll Flanders' personality traits as revealed in the excerpt. Consider her emotional state, fears, desires, and behavior towards others. Focus on Moll' early life and interactions with her nurse.

Exercise 2: Identifying Point of View

Identify instances that demonstrate the first-person point of view. Highlight or underline the extracts and explain why they demonstrate this characteristic.

Exercise 3: Setting Description

Choose one setting described in the text (e.g., prison, Colchester, the nurse's home) and write a detailed description of it. Try to capture the essence of the place as it is portrayed in the text.

Essays for *Moll Flanders*:

1. The plight of women in Defoe's novels. *Moll Flanders* as an early feminist novel.
2. Social Injustice and the Plight of Orphaned Children in the 18th Century.
3. The Role of Compassion and Kindness in Shaping Childhood Experiences.

Individual work no. 4

Read the text and answer the questions.

Moll steals for the first time, by Daniel Defoe

I went out now by daylight, and wandered about I knew not whither, and in search of I knew not what, when the devil put a snare in my way of a dreadful nature indeed, and such a one as I have never had before or since. Going through Aldersgate Street, there was a pretty little child who had been at a dancing-school, and was going home all alone; and my prompter, like a true devil, set me upon this innocent creature. I talked to it, and it prattled to me again, and I took it by the hand and led it along till I came to a paved alley that goes into Bartholomew Close, and I led it in there.

The child said that was not its way home. I said, 'Yes, my dear, it is; I'll show you the way home.' The child had a little necklace on of gold beads, and I had my eye upon that, and in the dark of the alley I stooped, pretending to mend the child's clog that was loose, and took off her necklace, and the child never felt it, and so led the child on again. Here, I say, the devil put me upon killing the child in the dark alley, that it might not cry, but the very thought frightened me so that I was ready to drop down; but I turned the child about and bade it go back again, for that was not its way home; the child said, so she would.

The thoughts of this booty put out all the thoughts of the first, and the reflections I had made wore quickly off; poverty hardened my heart, and my own necessities made me regardless of anything. The last affair left no great concern upon me, for as I did the poor child no harm, I only thought I had given the parents a just reproof for their negligence, in leaving the poor lamb to come home by itself, and it would teach them to take more care another time.

This string of beads was worth about £12 or £14. I suppose it might have been formerly the mother's, for it was too big for the child's wear, but that, perhaps, the vanity of the mother to have her child look fine at the dancing-school had made her let the child wear it; and no doubt the child had a maid sent to take care of it, but she, like a careless jade, was taken up perhaps with some fellow that had met her, and so the poor baby wandered till it fell into my hands.

This string of beads was worth about twelve or fourteen pounds. I suppose it might have been formerly the mother's, for it was too big for the child's wear. However, I did the child no harm; I did not so much as fright it.

- 1. Moll considers the devil pushed her to thievery and often remembers its name, “when the devil put a snare in my way”, “like a true devil”, “the devil put me upon killing the child in the dark alley”. Is that an excuse? (one paragraph)**
- 2. List the metaphors/epithets given by the author to the little girl:**
- 3. Was Moll remorseful or remorseless when she stole Yes / No. Prove it with a fragment from the text. (one paragraph)**
- 4. Moll says that she gave a lesson to the girl's parents. Is this lesson worth a golden necklace, or a girl's fright? (one paragraph)**
- 5. How does Moll motivate the fact that she began to steal? Give an extract from the text. (one paragraph)**

Robinson Crusoe's Solitude

In the year 1659, a man named Robinson Crusoe embarked on a sea voyage against his father's advice. Little did he know that this decision would lead to a life-changing adventure. Robinson was shipwrecked on a deserted island, and the challenges he faced became a testament to human resilience and survival.

Robinson Crusoe's isolation on the island was both a curse and a blessing. In the beginning, solitude weighed heavily on his spirit. The vastness of the ocean surrounding him seemed to mock his loneliness. However, as time passed, he discovered the potential within himself to adapt and thrive in the harshest of conditions.

One day, as Robinson explored the island, he stumbled upon a mysterious cave. To his surprise, he found a cache of supplies that had washed ashore from the wrecked ship. Among the salvaged items were tools, weapons, and, most importantly, a Bible. The discovery brought a spark of hope to Robinson's heart, and he realized that he could utilize these resources to build a life for himself on the island.

Here is an extract from Robinson Crusoe's journal, where he reflects on his newfound circumstances:

“With no companions but the echoes of the waves and the rustling of the palm trees, I began to build a shelter from the remnants of the ship. As I toiled under the scorching sun, my mind wandered to the lessons my father had tried to impart. ‘Patience, my son,’ he used to say. ‘Patience is the key to overcoming any adversity.’ How true those words proved to be in my current predicament.

The days turned into weeks, and weeks into months. I fashioned tools from the ship's debris and, little by little, transformed my island refuge into a semblance of a home. The Bible I found became my solace, offering comfort and guidance in the darkest hours. I began to cultivate the land, growing crops that would sustain me through the changing seasons.

Yet, the island was not without its challenges. Fierce storms would batter the shores, threatening to undo my humble abode. Wild animals lurked in the dense vegetation, and I had to learn the art of survival, not as a choice but as a necessity.

In the solitude of the island, I found strength within myself that I never knew existed. Each trial became a lesson, each setback an opportunity to

persevere. The sound of the waves, once a taunt, became a companion, a constant reminder that life, even in isolation, is a journey worth undertaking.

And so, I etched a calendar on a rock, marking each passing day. The tally grew, and with it, my sense of accomplishment. As the sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky with hues of orange and purple, I would sit by my makeshift fire, grateful for the warmth and the lessons learned.

My island existence was a paradox—lonely yet liberating. In the absence of society’s demands, I found the freedom to rediscover myself. The echoes of my father’s wisdom resonated in the rustle of the palm leaves, reminding me that patience and resilience were the true companions in my solitary sojourn.”



Study questions:

1. What led Robinson Crusoe to embark on a sea voyage against his father’s advice?
2. How did Robinson initially feel about his solitude on the deserted island?
3. What items did Robinson find among the salvaged supplies, and how did they contribute to his survival on the island?
4. According to the extract from Robinson’s journal, what lessons did his father try to impart to him, and how did they prove true?
5. How did Robinson transform the remnants of the ship into a shelter and tools for survival?
6. What role did the Bible play in Robinson’s life on the island, and how did it provide comfort and guidance?
7. What were some of the challenges Robinson faced on the island, and how did he learn to overcome them?

Exercise 1. Comparative Analysis:

Compare and contrast Robinson’s initial feelings about solitude with his perspective on it as time passes.

Exercise 2. Identifying stylistic devices

Name the stylistic devices used in these sentences: Imagery – Metaphor – Alliteration – Comparison – Personification – Symbolism – Repetition – Antithesis

1. The sound of the waves, once a taunt, became a companion...
2. As the sun dipped below the horizon, painting the sky with hues of orange and purple...
3. Solitude weighed heavily on his spirit.
4. Fierce storms would batter the shores...
5. The days turned into weeks, and weeks into months.
6. In the solitude of the island, I found strength within myself like a hidden treasure.
7. The vastness of the ocean surrounding him seemed to mock his loneliness.
8. The echoes of my father's wisdom resonated in the rustle of the palm leaves...
9. The Bible as a symbol of hope and guidance.
10. The makeshift calendar as a symbol of time passing.
11. "Patience, my son," he used to say. "Patience is the key to overcoming any adversity."
12. "Each trial became a lesson, each setback an opportunity to persevere.

Exercise 3. Explain the parallelism using the following example:

The days turned into weeks, and weeks into months.

SAMUEL RICHARDSON

Clarissa Harlowe

LETTER I. Miss Howe to Miss Clarissa Harlowe JAN 10.—Miss Howe asks for details about the confrontation between Mr. Lovelace and Clarissa's brother, as well as how Clarissa was treated afterward. She also wants to know the entire story of Clarissa's relationship with Lovelace from the time he became interested in her sister Arabella. Miss Howe praises Clarissa's admirable qualities and celebrates their friendship.

My dearest friend,

I hope this letter finds you well, despite the recent disturbances in your family. I can only imagine how challenging it must be for you to be the subject of public scrutiny. In times like these, it's natural for people to be curious about the details, but I am more interested in hearing the truth directly from you. I want to understand the situation and the treatment you are said to have received during an unfortunate incident that was beyond your control.

I reached out to Mr. Diggs, the surgeon, to inquire about your brother's condition. Thankfully, he assured me that there is no danger from the wound itself, but your brother's spirits seem to be affected, possibly due to the recent events. I am genuinely concerned for your well-being, and I hope you are finding the strength to cope with this difficult situation.

I had the opportunity to speak with Mr. Wyerley yesterday, and despite his lack of favoritism towards Mr. Lovelace, he and Mr. Symmes expressed disapproval of how your family treated Mr. Lovelace when he personally inquired about your brother's health. According to them, Mr. Lovelace could not have avoided drawing his sword, and your brother's actions may have left him at a disadvantage. Some even suggest that your brother's passion or lack of skill led to Mr. Lovelace gaining the upper hand.

Regardless of the differing opinions, it's evident that you are at the center of this unfortunate situation. People are quick to pass judgment, but I want you to know that many of us pity you for the undeserved blame you are facing. Your steadfastness, prudence, and desire to lead a quiet life have always been admirable qualities. It's disheartening to see your virtue overshadowed by the actions of others.

As your friends outside the family worry about the potential for further conflict, I want to be able to defend you based on your own account of the

events. Please share with me the full story, starting from Mr. Lovelace's introduction into your family. Include details about his interactions with your sister, as there are conflicting reports circulating. This information will help me advocate for you and provide a more accurate picture to those who may not be fully aware of the circumstances.

I understand that your family is concerned about potential consequences and may advise against any association with Mr. Lovelace. If you can, shed light on the situation so that I can better comprehend your perspective and offer support accordingly. Your mother, influenced by your uncle Antony, seems to believe that any connection with Mr. Lovelace would be inappropriate, especially given the recent altercation.

In conclusion, my dear friend, I ask for your trust and openness. Your concerns are my concerns, and your honor is my honor. I am devoted to you and have considered you a close friend for many years. Please share your story with me so that I may better understand and support you during this challenging time.

*With unwavering affection,
Anna Howe*

P.S. If possible, could you provide me with a copy of the preamble to the clauses in your grandfather's will that favor you? My aunt Harman is eager to see it, and your character has left such a positive impression on her that she supports your preference in the will even without knowing the specific reasons behind it.



Study questions

1. Who is the author of the letter, and who is the intended recipient?
2. What aspect of Clarissa's well-being does Miss Howe express concern about?
3. According to Mr. Diggs, what is the condition of Clarissa's brother following the altercation with Mr. Lovelace?
4. How do Mr. Wyerley and Mr. Symmes view Mr. Lovelace's involvement in the altercation, and what criticism do they have of Clarissa's family's treatment of him afterward?
5. What qualities of Clarissa does Miss Howe admire and emphasize in her letter?

6. Why does Miss Howe want Clarissa to share the full story of her relationship with Mr. Lovelace, including his interactions with her sister?
7. How does Miss Howe demonstrate her devotion and support for Clarissa throughout the letter?
8. Why does Miss Howe request a copy of the preamble to the clauses in Clarissa's grandfather's will?

Exercise 1: Epistolary novel

Identify the features of the text that indicate it is a letter written as part of an epistolary novel. Consider how the format of the letter allows for direct communication of thoughts, feelings, and perspectives between the characters.

Exercise 2: Character Analysis

Choose one character mentioned in the letter (e.g., Miss Howe, Clarissa, Mr. Lovelace) and describe their personality traits, actions, and motivations based on the information provided in the letter. Use evidence from the text to support your analysis.

Exercise 3: Match the following terms with their corresponding descriptions:

1. Mr. Diggs, 2. Mr. Wyerley and Mr. Symmes, 3. Miss Howe, 4. Mr. Lovelace, 5. Clarissa Harlowe.
- a) A surgeon who provides updates on Clarissa's brother's condition.
 - b) A friend who should bring clarification about recent events.
 - c) Acquaintances who disapprove of Clarissa's family's treatment of Mr. Lovelace.
 - d) A loyal friend who seeks to understand the full story of Clarissa's relationship with Mr. Lovelace.
 - e) The central character who is at the center of recent disturbances within her family.

Exercise 4: Symbol interpretation

Explain why Mr. Wyerley and Mr. Symmes can be interpreted as symbols of gossip within the context of the text. Discuss their impact on other characters, particularly Clarissa and her family.

Exercise 5: Theme Exploration

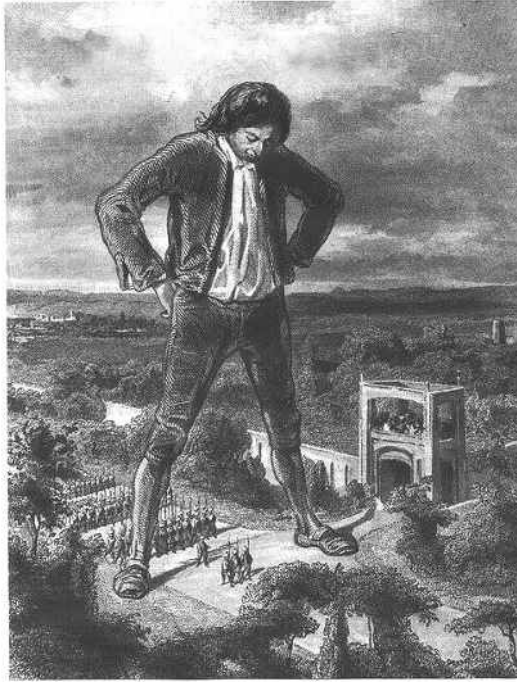
Explore the theme of friendship as depicted in the letter. Discuss how the friendship between Miss Howe and Clarissa is portrayed, including the loyalty, support, and understanding demonstrated by Miss Howe.

Exercise 6: Conflict

Examine the conflicts presented in the letter, such as the altercation involving Mr. Lovelace and Clarissa's family's treatment of him. Discuss potential resolutions to these conflicts.

JONATHAN SWIFT

A Voyage to Lilliput



In the year 1699, I took a short voyage to the country of Lilliput. My ship was tossed about by a violent storm, and at last, I found myself cast ashore on an unknown land. As I regained my senses, I realized that I was surrounded by people of extraordinary size, not more than six inches tall. To my amazement, these tiny creatures were the inhabitants of Lilliput.

As I lay there on the beach, the Lilliputians discovered me and soon swarmed around me like ants. Their voices, though small, were filled with urgency and excitement. I tried to communicate with them, but our languages were so different that we could not understand each other. However, it became apparent that they were not hostile, and some of them offered me food and water.

After a while, they devised a way to transport me to their city. Hundreds of Lilliputians tied together numerous small threads, which they fastened to my clothes. With great care and effort, they managed to lift me from the ground and carry me to the city, where I was presented to their emperor.

The emperor, whose name was Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Ullly Gue, was seated on a throne made of a single piece of ivory. He

examined me with curiosity, his small eyes squinting as he measured me from head to toe. I, in turn, gazed down at the Lilliputians with wonder, marveling at the complexity of their miniature civilization.

The emperor, after consulting with his advisors, decided that I could be of use to the Lilliputians. They were in the midst of a conflict with the neighboring island of Blefuscu, and my size and strength were seen as valuable assets. I was given a small dwelling and treated with kindness, but I soon realized the complexities of Lilliputian politics.

The conflict between Lilliput and Blefuscu, it seemed, stemmed from a long-standing dispute over the proper way to crack eggs. The Lilliputians, known for their meticulous nature, believed that eggs should be cracked at the smaller end, while the people of Blefuscu insisted on the larger end. This seemingly trivial disagreement had escalated into a full-blown war, with lives lost and territories disputed.

I was asked to swear loyalty to the emperor and support the Lilliputian cause. I, however, could not comprehend how such a trivial matter could lead to such strife. Nevertheless, I agreed to help in any way I could, hoping to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict.

Being a man of reason and practicality, I opted for a compromise. I proposed a new method of egg-breaking, suggesting that one should crack the egg in the middle, thereby satisfying both parties. The emperor, however, was not amused by my attempt at diplomacy. The Tramecksan and Slamecksan representatives erupted into a fervent debate, each accusing the other of heresy and treachery.

As the chaos unfolded, I realized the gravity of my mistake. I had inadvertently created a third faction, the Middercrackers. The Middercrackers introduced a novel and unconventional approach to egg-breaking in an effort to foster unity and reconciliation among the divided factions in Lilliput. They advocated for breaking the egg in the middle.

As I continued my journey through Lilliput, I couldn't help but reflect on the absurdity of their disputes. The war over the proper way to crack eggs meant the irrationality that can underlie human conflicts. Despite their small stature, the Lilliputians were not immune to the flaws that plagued larger societies. Little did I know that my adventures were just beginning, and that the lands beyond Lilliput held even stranger and more fantastical wonders.



Study questions:

1. Describe Gulliver's initial encounter with the Lilliputians. How did they react to his presence, and what efforts did they make to communicate with him?
2. What was the cause of the conflict between Lilliput and Blefuscu? How did this seemingly trivial disagreement escalate into a full-blown war?
3. How did Gulliver propose to resolve the conflict between Lilliput and Blefuscu? What unintended consequence did his proposal lead to?
4. What was the reaction of the Lilliputian emperor and his advisors to the protagonist's proposal? How did this further complicate the situation?
5. Discuss the emergence of the Middercrackers as a third faction in the conflict. What was their proposed solution, and how did it impact the ongoing debate?

Exercise 1. What stylistic devices are used in these examples?

Metaphor – Hyperbole - Personification - Comparison

1. The war over the way to crack eggs meant the irrationality that can underlie human conflicts.
2. The Lilliputians discovered me and soon swarmed around me like ants.
3. Golbasto Momarem Evlame Gurdilo Shefin Mully Uly Gue
4. Their voices, though small, were filled with urgency and excitement.
5. people of extraordinary size, not more than six inches tall
6. I gazed down at the Lilliputians with wonder, marveling at the intricacy of their miniature civilization

Exercise 2. Arrange the following events in the order they occurred in the text:

- a. The narrator proposes a compromise on egg-cracking.
- b. The Lilliputians discover the narrator on the beach.
- c. The narrator is presented to the emperor of Lilliput.
- d. The Middercrackers introduce a new approach to egg-breaking.

A Voyage to Brobdingnag



In the midst of my wonder and apprehension, I observed a huge creature walking towards me. It was a man, but of gigantic proportions. His steps were so vast that I could scarcely believe my eyes. I, Gulliver, found myself in the land of Brobdingnag, surrounded by beings that made me feel like a Lilliputian.

The giant, whose name I later learned was Glumdalclitch, approached with a gentle curiosity. To him, I was a small particle, a tiny being that had stumbled into his colossal world. Glumdalclitch's face, though immense, wore an expression of kindness and fascination. His eyes, like two vast spheres, fixed upon me as he stooped down to examine this miniature creature that had suddenly appeared before him.

As he inspected me, I marveled at the details of his colossal frame. The wrinkles on his forehead were like deep valleys, and the strands of his beard were as thick as the ropes on a ship. I could not help but feel a sense of vulnerability in the presence of this Brobdingnagian being.

Glumdalclitch, with a voice that rumbled like distant thunder, spoke to me in a language that resembled the rolling waves of the ocean. I, being a stranger in this land of giants, struggled to understand his words. However, his gestures and expressions conveyed a warmth and friendliness that reassured me.

Having quickly grasped the situation, Glumdalclitch decided to take me under his care. With gentle hands that could have easily crushed me, he lifted

me from the ground and placed me on the palm of his massive hand. From this vantage point, I gazed upon the vast landscape of Brobdingnag, a world that now appeared more grand and imposing than ever.

Life in Brobdingnag presented both marvels and challenges. The simplest objects, like a grain of sand or a blade of grass, became towering monuments in my diminutive perspective. The everyday activities of the Brobdingnagians, such as eating and drinking, resembled monumental feasts, and their dwellings were like magnificent palaces.

Yet, with the grandeur of this colossal realm came the perils of my newfound existence. I had to be wary of the giant insects that buzzed around me, their wings creating gusts of wind that threatened to sweep me away. A simple rain shower became a torrential downpour, and I sought refuge in the shelter of Glumdalclitch's enormous pockets, where I clung to the fabric like a sailor in a storm.

Despite the challenges, I soon discovered the kindness of my giant companions. Glumdalclitch, in particular, became my guardian and friend. She, for Brobdingnagians had gender distinctions too, crafted a miniature dwelling for me, complete with furnishings that, to them, were mere trifles but to me were like opulent treasures.

In the evenings, I would sit by the hearth in my Lilliputian abode, marveling at the dancing flames that seemed to reach the heavens. Glumdalclitch would join me, and we would communicate through gestures and expressions. Though our languages were worlds apart, a silent understanding and friendship blossomed between us.

As the days turned into weeks, I found myself adapting to the rhythm of life in Brobdingnag. The vast landscapes, once overwhelming, became familiar, and the giant beings around me transformed from intimidating figures into friends. I learned to navigate the intricate tapestry of their society, discovering the nuances of their customs and traditions.

My sojourn in Brobdingnag became a remarkable chapter in my travels. The giants, with their colossal kindness, taught me lessons of humility and resilience. In their towering presence, I, Gulliver, discovered that size was not the measure of greatness. The true essence of humanity transcended physical dimensions, and in the land of giants, I found a home among hearts that beat with compassion.

And so, my journey in Brobdingnag continued, an odyssey filled with wonders and challenges, as I navigated the colossal realms of this extraordinary land.



Study questions

1. How does Gulliver initially feel upon encountering Glumdalclitch and the other inhabitants of Brobdingnag?
2. Describe Glumdalclitch's attitude and actions towards Gulliver when they first meet. How does this interaction shape Gulliver's perception of the giant?
3. How does Gulliver describe the physical appearance of Glumdalclitch and the other Brobdingnagians?
4. What challenges does Gulliver face in adapting to life in Brobdingnag? Provide examples.
5. How does Gulliver cope with the monumental scale of objects and activities in Brobdingnag? Provide examples of his experiences.
6. How does Gulliver communicate and interact with the Brobdingnagians, considering the language barrier?

Exercise 1. What stylistic devices are used in these examples?

Metaphor – Hyperbole - Personification – Comparison - Imagery

1. His eyes, like two vast spheres...
2. The wrinkles on his forehead were like deep valleys...
3. Life in Brobdingnag presented both marvels and challenges.
4. The dancing flames that seemed to reach the heavens
5. His steps were so vast that I could scarcely believe my eyes.
6. The strands of his beard were as thick as the ropes on a ship.
7. I gazed upon the vast landscape of Brobdingnag, a world that now appeared more grand and imposing than ever.
8. I sought refuge in the shelter of Glumdalclitch's enormous pockets...
9. His eyes, like two vast spheres...
10. ... surrounded by beings that made me feel like a Lilliputian.

Exercise 2. Arrange the following events in the order they occurred in the text:

Gulliver adapts to life in Brobdingnag, discovering the marvels and challenges of the colossal realm.

Glumdalclitch becomes Gulliver's guardian and friend, and they communicate through gestures and expressions.

Gulliver finds himself in the land of Brobdingnag.

Glumdalclitch lifts Gulliver and places him on the palm of his massive hand.

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