Introduction to Literature and Its Forms

Unit-I: Literature: Culture, Context, Convention, its Practice and Relevance

1.1 Objectives
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1.1 Objectives

- By the end of this unit, you should be able to define literature
- Evaluate the different definitions of literature
- give different forms of literature

1.2 Introduction

In this unit you will be introduced to the world of literature. As a student of English, you must have studied literature, especially in English at a lower level than the present one. That means to some of you, what you are going to learn in the early part of this course may not be entirely new. There is therefore a need to bring your previous knowledge to bear on the new knowledge that you acquire in the course.

In this unit, you will learn about the definitions of literature and its characteristics. Literature is a study that concerns a whole range of human life and activities. Thus, literature concerns you and me.

1.3 What is literature?

Popularly, literature means anything that is printed in a book. But actually literature means that which is of universal interest to man. What applies to a local or professional or merely personal interest will not belong to literature. Charles Lamp went to the extreme of excluding the works of Gibbon, Hume and Flavius Josephus, together with directories and almanacs. Hallam comprised Jurisprudence, theology and medicine under the general head of literature. Both the points of view are wrong. Literature is composed of those books which by reason of their subject-matter and style are of general human interest. Literature is mainly mean for giving pleasure. The weekly sermons of Christianity which have extensive influence on the popular mind do not belong to literature, while Shakespeare's drama on Greek drama is literature because it fulfils the primary function of aesthetic satisfaction by reason of its subject-matter and the manner of treatment. Literature whether it imparts knowledge of not is of lasting human significance, because it continues to appeal to men for its subject-matter of enduring interest and the attractive mode of treatment. So in judging the merit of a piece of literature, both matter and manner have to be taken into account. Fundamentally, literature is the representation of life through the medium of language. It is however, not an exact replica of life; it is an interpretation of life as life shapes itself in the mind of the writer. Thus the imagination of the writer is an important factor presentation of life that literature offers and appeal to a particular class of readers, but literature yields aesthetic pleasure and appeals to people of all ages and climes. It lives by virtue of the life which it embodies and the way in which it is presented.

There is no real consensus or one all embracing definition of the term literature. Most of the definitions of literature are given by scholars according to their subjective experience and their context. Some scholars have defined it in broad sense as anything that is written. Rees sees it in the narrow sense of "writing which expresses and communicates thought, feelings and attitudes towards life."

The broad definition of literature appears to be vague and amorphous in that it includes works that are not literature per se, like works in fields of Education, Biology, History and a host of others by virtue of the fact that they are written. However, they cannot qualify as real literature. The narrow definition delineates literature from its general purview to what can be called literature as a subject of study. A perusal of some more definitions will provide a clearer light on the real nature of literature.

According to Moody, literature springs from our in born love of telling a story, of arranging words in pleasing patterns, of expression in words some special aspects of our human experience.

Boulton defines literature from functional perspective as the imaginative work that gives us four R's: Recreation, Recognition, Revelation and Redemption

Rees described literature as the permanent expression in words of some thoughts or feelings in ideas about life and the world.

An analysis of the above definitions reveals that certain things are common to all the definitions. They all recognize the fact that:

i. Literature is imaginative
ii. Literature expresses thoughts and feelings
iii. Literature deals with life experiences
iv. Literatures uses words in a powerful, effective and yet captivating manner
v. Literature promotes recreation and revelation of hidden facts

Literature can thus be summed up as permanent expressions in words, especially arranged in pleasing accepted patterns or forms conveying thoughts, feelings, ideas or other special aspects of human experiences.

De Quincey distinguishes two types of literature. The distinction between the two types depends upon the difference of function which they fulfil. The literature of knowledge is meant for teaching; while the literature of power has the function is moving and inspiring the readers. The literature of knowledge appeals to the reasoning faculties while the literature of power appeals to higher understanding through the emotions of pleasure and sympathy, ultimately it makes for wisdom, but it works through human passions and genial emotions. Literature of knowledge gives us information which is new but literature of power gives us information which is new but literature of power gives us the highest truth which is eternal. The literature of knowledge has a provisional appeal, but the literature of power has a permanent interest. *The Principia* of Issac Newton which was revolutionary in the matter of giving information had to give way to other books which appeared with newer knowledge and more fresh information. The appeal of this book was destroyed in course of time. On the contrary, *The Illiad, The Prometheus of Aeschylus, King Lear* and *Paradise Lost* are eternal in their appeal. They remain unique and distinct. This uniqueness, this permanence of appeal is the first and foremost quality of a piece of literature.

Literature deals with life as it is seen and experienced by the individual writer. It may be described as imaginative reconstruction of life. It is a form of art, and as such imagination plays a vital part in the presentation of life in literature. It has been rightly said, "personal experience is the basis of all real literature." Aristotle hits the mark in his use of the word *mimesis.* He stresses the representation of universal patterns of human behaviour and of an action embodying these. Moreover an artist has to shape his plot or structure of emotions and events as the case may be. He is a creator, and his creative activity lies as much in his imaginative selection of life as in his rendering the same with the help of linguistic tools.

Thus the term literature is limited to imaginative literature—poetry, drama, fiction, etc. It yields aesthetic pleasure by reason of its eternal appeal of subject-matter and style. It treats of personal reading of life but it is elevated to a work of universal interest by virtue of its mode of treatment. Its language is connotative and evocative rather than referential and demonstrative. It creates an atmosphere of mind through the use of metaphors, images, metre, alliteration and patterns of sound. It takes the readers into an

intimate and profound sense of things through various suggestions, nuances, and resonances. This explains why literature like other forms of art affects us subtly and profoundly.

In lyric, drama, epic and the novel, the reference is to a world of imagination and of fiction. The statements in a novel, in a poem or in drama are not literally true. There is a central and important difference between a statement in a novel by Balzac or even in a historical novel and the statement in a book of history or sociology. Even in the subjective lyric, the "I" of the poet is a fictional, dramatic "I." Time and space in a novel are not those of real life. The dramatist or the novelist creates his own and structure of events according to the law of probability. Even an apparently most realistic drama or novel, the very 'slice of life' is constructed according to certain artistic conventions. Thus literary artists observe certain conventions which impose an order, an organisation on their works and which life the works out of the matter-of-fact statements of the world of reality. 'Fictionality' or imagination is another distinguishing trait of literature and this is evident as much in the selection of life as in the organisation of that life in the work. In these respects, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Keats and Rabindranath are different from Cicero, Montaigne, Emerson, Gibbon, Hume, etc. Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* or Burke's *Speeches on America* have good style and general force of presentation, but they do not create a fictional world, nor do they use imaginative qualities of suggestive language. In short, their words do not provide the aesthetic satisfaction by taking the readers into a fictional world of joys and sorrows. In all forms of literature, there is an expression of the writer's own vision, his own sense of fact, his won intellectual and emotional reaction to men and things. History, Economics, Philosophy, Science are all objective presentation in which the writer's own sense of fact is rigidly kept out. The writer's vision shapes the work of literature and it becomes a thing of beauty of reason of its exquisite mode of presentation and expression. The personal vision becomes a thing of eternal interest by virtue of the manner of treatment.

Thus in a work of literature, both matter and manner are important. It if deals with any subject trivial and drab, it cannot evoke the response of the readers. Again if its treatment is commonplace and banal, it cannot attract the readers. Again if its treatment is commonplace and banal, it cannot attract the readers. The human value of a work of art depends upon the nature of its theme. A poem, however, well-written on a trivial subject like a pair of scissors cannot be as interesting as one on the Fall of Man or on the ingratitude of human beings. A *Paradise Lost* or *King Lear* cannot be written on the death of a lap dog or the glide of an aeroplane. It is not always lofty theme or elevated thought that is important in a work of literature. It is the range and intensity of experiences that determine the place of the writer. *King Lear* is built on the common theme of the ingratitude of daughters; *Othello* is a drama of jealousy: but they become immortal creations because they fathom the depths of human experiences and carry out rich suggestions about eternal truths of life. A novel of Dostoevsky or Hardy stirs the depths of human heat because it renders enduring facts of life in moving language and pictures. Keat's *Ode to Autumn* or *Ode to a Nightingale* is no mere objective rendering of Nature's beauty, it appeals to the human heart for its imaginative surrender to Nature and for its beautiful images and melody. Wordsworth's *Tintern Abbey* is a greater poem that Davies' *Leisure* because of deeper significance and greater suggestiveness. Wizardry of sounds or sheer music does not make good poetry just as lofty thoughts alone do not make good drama or a good poem. It is the harmonious combination of thought and style that gives rise to good literature. Keats is a greater poet that Swinburne because Keats aims at complete satisfaction; Shakespeare is a greater dramatist than Shaw because Shakespeare gives the eternal verity of life; Hardy is a greater novelist than Dickens because he takes us to the deeper depths of life. Greatness of an artist is determined by the richness and intensity of moments in life. A great work of art takes the readers to the very heart of truth, and is therefore eternally true. It does not deal with what is evanescent, transitory and trivial. Keats is right when he says: "Beauty is truth, truth beauty."

1.4 Why we read Literature?

Literature is a vital record of what men have seen in life, what they have experienced of it, what they have thought and felt about those aspects of it which have the most immediate and enduring interest for all of us. It is the interpretation of life and life shapes itself in the mind of the interpreter. We care for literature because we care for life, because we are interested in knowing the varied aspects of it, because we like to know how men and women live life and think about life.

Pleasure and profit are the two motives of the reading of literature. Literature is sweet and useful—this is the Horatian formula of *dulce* and *utile*. All art is sweet and useful to the appropriate users. What it articulates is superior to the self-induced reflections of the readers; and it gives them pleasure by the skill with which it articulates. But the pleasure of literature is 'higher pleasure' because it is pleasure in a higher kind of activity i.e., non-acquisitive contemplation. And the utility—the seriousness, the instructiveness—of literature is a pleasurable seriousness, i.e., not the seriousness of a duty which must be done or of a lesson to be learned but an aesthetic seriousness, a seriousness of perception.

Emerson says, "Beauty is its own for being." Apart from any useful value of literature which is stressed by the utilitarians and moralists, literature mainly appeals to us for the beautiful forms it creates. The good writer ushers men into a world of beauty and joy away from the harsh reality of everyday existence. By nature, man is a dreamer of happy dreams, a creator of unsubstantial visions. He feels happy when he is taken into the fictitious world of men and women suffering, struggling, and enjoying also. He finds fictional characters realising their dreams and desires and he gets the pleasure of wish fulfilment. Even tragedy pleases him because in tragedy there is an artistic conquest of the sorrow and pain of real life. It is not, however, true to say that literature makes us forget the problems of real life. We see in literature the problems of life in broader perspective. Literature enlarges our sympathies and the pleasure is derived from the amplification of experience and enlargement of sympathies. Romantic literature is a reflection of the deepest aspirations of men which are more real than the actual living of men and women. We are attracted to Keat's *Ode to a Nightingale* or Shelley's *Ode to a Skylark*, because it expresses our deepest desires and emancipates us from the prison of actuality.

Literature is a form of knowledge. Aristotle had seemed to say something like this in this famous dictum that poetry is more philosophical than history. But the prime office of a writer is not to discover and communicate knowledge. His real, function is to make us perceive what we see, imagine what we already, conceptually or practically know. Imaginative literature is a 'fiction,' an 'artistic,' verbal 'imitation of life.' Aristotle called this mimesis. It imitates the universals which include the 'marvellous.' Imaginative writers are discoverers of new 'perceptual values' or new aesthetic qualities in the things existing in reality. The pleasures of literature are thus derived from the discovery of these aesthetic qualities. Keats in his poem on Reading Chapman's Homer says great poetry reveals to him a new realm. It is the re-discovery of life.

The reading of literature may be profitable only when it is done properly. Literature is a complex organism and it is necessary for the readers to probe into it. A careful reading of the play, *Hamlet* will reveal various thematic elements and how they are related at the same time the glorious intricacy of the design. The best literature is carefully written records of the kinds of experience that men have found significant, and literature that has endured has done so because men in different generations and in a variety of circumstances have felt that significance. Literature as vicarious experience has one great

advantage. The imaginative reader can life in words attainable in no other way; he can discover what it means to a young man who has been betrayed by his mother's over-hasty marriage to his father's murderer, or what it means to be obsessed by a white whale that has come to symbolise all of the arbitrary and hostile forces in the universe (*Moby Dick)*. Literature is designed to point up the significance of experience. Reading *Moby Dick* may be vicarious experience, but it is experience in which every detail has been calculated to have maximum significance. The experience that grows with the careful but imaginative reading of a literary work is organised to produce the greatest possible impact.

W. K. Wimsatt once defined a poem as 'a feat of style by which a complex meaning is handled all at once.' This definition is true of all worthwhile literature with certain qualifications. The problem for the reader is to understand the full complexity of the meaning i.e., to experience as fully as possible the total work. Here literary criticism may help the readers to a considerable extent to read the work properly and in a worthwhile manner.

1.5 Literature and Society

Literature, according to M. Arnold's much-discussed definition of it, "is at bottom, a criticism of life." It is a record in forms of beauty, of the literary artist's impression or vision of the social life in which he lives. It is thus a reflection of life with a perfect fidelity to truth, without any preconceived object or philosophy. The supreme literary artist is he who has seen much of life and has a wonderfully varied experience of the men and women around him. This knowledge of life is fashioned into beauty by the artist's imagination, feeling, and language and so on. Herein lays the difference between great and small literary artists. Great literature expresses in a profound and interesting manner the aspects of life which are not merely local and ephemeral but are of universal interest. Literature is not history representing facts of life with truth and accuracy, so that men of later generations can acquire their knowledge of the past times by the study of the literature of the times. Though literature and life are vitally linked up, mere photographic representation of life does not constitute true literature. The creative artist shares his intellectual pleasures with the readers through his artistic or imaginative presentment of the life that has moved him to his depth of feeling and thought. The world of imagination is often wrongly supposed to be one of mere abstractions or shadows, which have little to do with life or reality but is a world conjured up by the imagination of the artist out of the crude mass of reality and presented with true proportion and sense of beauty.

Of late there has been a good deal of controversy over the rivals' claims of the two modes of approach to life, termed as realism and romance. The zealous advocates of these attitudes have often gone too far, making literature into something which hardly deserves the name. Thus in the literature into something which hardly deserves the name. Thus in the name of realism some artists have depicted all that is bare, trivial and ugly in life; and their pictures, though accurate in presentation of details, have completely thrown them out of perspective to truth. A true artist must no doubt, come into close grips with life; yet there must be some element of idealism or romance in his presentation of life through the medium of art. As it has been said finely, "Realism must be kept within the sphere of art by the presence of the ideal element. Romance must be saved from extravagance by the presence of poetic truth."

The true creative artist cannot afford to live, like the Lady of Shallot in Tennyson's poem of the same name, in a world of shadows and weave the shadow of life into his magic web of art, from the reflection of life cast on the magic mirror of imagination. Literature conceived in this spirit in complete isolation from the actual, breathing life of the contemporaries is apt to become pale, colourless and lifeless. Indeed, by the test of life such literature is found wanting and it flies into the thin air like the magic web of the Lady. Literature must have a deep human interest. Its appeal lies in the fact that in true literature men and women find true reflections of themselves in the characters depicted in the books who voice the ideals,

hopes, fears, aspirations etc that move men in real life. Thus a sort of intellectual bond is established between the creatures of art and the actual creatures of flesh and blood living on earth. Besides, its appeal must be universal. Literature should not be pinned down to the living present but extend its vision beyond this limit of time and place and give something to delight and feed the minds of all ages.
Literature grows out of social forces, and social forces again shape and mould literature. Taine in his famous formula of the race, the milieu and the moment stressed the importance of the social condition and physical environment as moulding the literature of a nation. But Taine ignores the fact that the literature in its turn shapes and influences the social conditions. The relation of literature and life is a double sided relation; while the work of a great author is fed by the combined influences of his epoch, it enters again into that epoch as one of its most potent seminal elements. We cannot understand Victorian literature unless we connect it with the large social and intellectual movements of Victorian civilisation, neither can we understand these movements themselves unless we realise how they were stimulated, or guided, or checked by contemporary literature. Tennyson, Carlyle, Dickens and Thackeray were the products of their age, and at the same time creators of their time. They reflected the aspirations, the tensions, and the problems of the age, and at the same time they developed the time-spirit of the world in which they lived by their idealistic reactions to the social condition of their age.

Every good work of literature reflects the age. We know the heroic age from the epics—*Iliad*, *Aenied*, *Ramayana*, and *Mahabharata*. We become acquainted with the aspirations and ambitions of the Renaissance from the literature of the Renaissance. As a matter of the fact, literature gives the spiritual history of time. We get an intimate knowledge of the social forces from the study of literature. History gives the bare facts; sociology gives the external forces, but literature shows how men and women react to these forces and are moulded by them. Literature gives the picture of common men and women suffering, struggling, and striving under the impact of the physical environments and social forces of the time. An in-depth study of the society is provided by Tolstoy in his *War and Peace* or by Thomas Mann in his *The Magic Mountain.* The social conditions of the Victorian age are furnished by Dickens and Thackeray in their novels. The Marxist literature underlines the deep-rooted social malady of the capitalist civilisation.

The responses and relations involving the writers and society are many and varied. Poets have written patriotic poetry, and the social value of such poetry can hardly be overemphasized. War poetry has inspired young men to noble self-sacrifices. The poets have sought the unity of a people. In a divided society, the writers have chosen distinct sides as in the Augustan age of Rome and in the age of Dryden and Pope in English literature. In a society threatened by social decay or cataclysm, writers respond in a variety of ways. All tragedy envisions society as fearfully unstable, Shakespeare, in *King Lear* and *Hamlet* sees the overturn of social hierarchy re-echoed in nature. The poets of Romantic Revival rebelled against social customs and political institutions. Modern literature shows poets and writers reacting cynically and sometime bitterly to society to which they belong.

1.6 Further Readings

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Unit- II: Genres of Literature: Poetry, Fiction, and Drama

2.1 Objectives
2.2 Introduction
2.3 Concept of Genre
2.4 Poetry
2.5 Fiction
2.6 Drama
2.7 Let Us Sum Up
2.8 Further Readings

2.1 Objectives

In this unit we are going to study the three major departments of literature called genres, namely, poetry, fiction and drama.

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Concept of Genre

Genre is a French word which literally means kind, sort or style. The term is used in literary discourse to denote types or classes of literature, for example, poetry, fiction and drama. A literary genre follows certain common compositions which distinguish it from another literary genre. These common conventions enable a reader to recognise a literary composition as belonging to a certain literary genre and prevent him from mistaking it for any other kind.

When we see a written composition using line-breaks and containing sentences that do not run to the right margin of the page we immediately recognize the composition as belonging to the class of literature called poetry. This is a convention which is more or less common to all poems and hence functions as identification marker for the genre poetry. Lineation

A literary genre is a recognizable and established category of written work which employs certain identifiable conventions which prevent readers from mistaking it for another genre.

2.4 Poetry

Poetry is the oldest of the three major forms of literature with roots deep in the rituals and religious observances of antiquity. Hence, it was primarily oral, performance-oriented and public as it was, more often than not, a tool for supplication, communal tribal celebration and celebration of the supernatural as well as appreciation of the gifts of nature. From these early forms developed the personal and impersonal forms of poetry represented by the lyric on the one hand and the traditional epic and ballad

on the other. As we will deal with forms of poetry in more detail in later units, we shal now move on to explicate the distinguishing characteristics of poetry, namely: imagery, sound, rhythm and diction.

• Imagery refers to the use of sensory language in poetry. Sensory language is the use of words and descriptions which appeal the five senses of the reader or audience.

• Sound is another important aspect of poetry. How the poem sounds is as much important as what the poem means. The sound of the words used in poetry is as important as the meaning of words. Sometimes the sounds of the words add or modify the ordinary meaning of the words. Poetry unlike prose is meant to be heard and its original form was sung.

• Rhythm refers to the pattern of sounds perceived as the recurrence of equivalent 'beats' at equal intervals. It not only adds to the musical quality of a poem but also shapes the overall meaning and effect of a poem.

• Diction refers to the choice or selection of words used by the poet in his poem.

Irrespective of these distinguishing qualities, poetry as a form of literary expression embodies all the defining qualities of literature such as imagination, creativity, suggestiveness or indirection and as a mirror reflecting the individual's perception of the world. These poetical and literary qualities apply to both oral and written forms of poetry except that the medium of expression and transmission are different. Nevertheless, both the manifestations of poetry share identical content, form and effect. In other words, the obvious difference between these forms of poetry their sources and end-purpose are the emotions and imagination of the writer on the one hand and the reader or audience on the other; they convey significant truths about the human condition and they employ a language that is deliberately adorned by the use of figurative expressions.

Now, poetry means different things to different people and therefore it is not possible to provide a single definition of poetry. In other words, there is no standard definition of poetry. The following are a few popular definitions of poetry from poets and critics:

- I would define poetry of words as the rhythmical creation of beauty. Its sole arbiter is taste. With the intellect or with the conscience it has only collateral relations. Unless incidentally, it has no concern whatever either with duty or with truth. – *Edgar Allan Poe*
- Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings recollected in tranquility. –*William Wordsworth*
- Poetry is the record of the best and happiest moments of the best and happiest minds. –*Percy Bysshe Shelley*
- The proper and immediate object of Science is the acquirement or communication of truth; the proper and immediate object of Poetry is the communication of pleasure. – Samuel Taylor Coleridge
- An actual poem is the succession of experiences –sounds, images, thoughts, emotions –through which we pass when we are reading as poetically as we can. – Andrew Bradley

- …the rhythmic, inevitably narrative, movement from an overclothed blindness to a naked vision. — Dylan Thomas
- Poetry is the language that tells us, through a more or less emotional reaction, something that cannot be said. All poetry, great or small does this. *–Edwin Arlington Robinson*

A perusal of the above definitions make it clear that there cannot be a single definition that will be comprehensive enough to accommodate the various shades of opinions and schools of thought regarding the exact nature of the genre. We cannot say that one definition is superior, better or more comprehensive or authoritative that another. However, we can certainly say that each of them has its point of emphasis which in turn places it in one or the other of the great literary debate over content, style and effect. It is apparent that Poe's idea of poetry as stated above emphasizes style or form over content and effect while, on the other hand, both Wordsworth and Robinson focus more attention on content and effect in their definitions.

Further, we should note the recurrence of some common words and phrases such as emotions, feelings, rhythm, rhythmical, truth, pleasure, imaginative expression, language, etc which underscore the protean nature of poetry and which make it susceptible to being conceived of variously by definers the way the proverbial blind men saw and defined the elephant.

To sum up all the definitions: Poetry is a genre of composition in verse form which expresses deep feelings, noble thought in a rhythmic, beautiful and embellished language written with the aim of communicating an experience.

Now, we will discuss in detail the elements or salient features which differentiate or distinguish poetry from the other two literary genres – prose and drama. These elements constitute the tools by which poets convey the thoughts and experiences they wish to communicate. Although there are many elements or tools which poets use to convey thoughts and experiences, those almost used exclusively in poetry are: imagery; rhythm; sound; and diction.

In its simplest sense, imagery is a term used to refer to the images in a poem or all the objects and qualities of sense perception in a poem. In other words, it the representation of the five kinds of sense perception as opposed to abstract conception. Thus it is the sensory content of a poem or literary work which appeals to our five sensory faculties. Sometimes when we read poems, images or pictures of objects described in the lines appear before our mind's eyes , it seems as if we are seeing the images or pictures right before us.

The word rhythm is derived from the Greek word which translates in English into 'flow'. As one of the elements of poetry, it is considered as the most important of a poet's technical resources. According to Reeves, rhythm is a "is a form of repetition – the repetition of a particular pattern of light and heavy syllables" whereas Abrams defines it as "a recognizable though variable pattern in the beat of the stresses in the stream of sound."

Sound is the third distinguishing feature of poetry. Along with rhythm, it constitutes the foundation of the musical quality that is associated with poetry as a form of literature. Its functions in a poem are similar to those of rhythm. The significance of sound in a poem can be better appreciated when the poem is read aloud. The sound qualities of a poem are also experienced when read silently through the mind's ear. When efficiently deployed in a poem, sound effects enable the reader or auditor to obtain a state of mind in which he can more easily appreciate the emotions and meanings conveyed in the poem by the writer. According to Heese and Lawton, "mush of the delight to be derived from the reading of poetry stems from the pleasure experienced in contemplating patterns which are not only decorative but significant."

Diction refers to the peculiar choice of words used by the poet or his vocabulary. In the words of Abrams, "the selection of words in a work of literature. A writer's diction can be analysed under such categories as the degree to which his vocabulary is abstract or concrete, Latinate or Anglo-Saxon in origin, colloquial or formal, technical or common, literal or figurative." The diction of a poet indicates the interests, habit of mind and the period of the poet. A poet's diction can also be described as plain or ornate, homely or exotic, contemporary or archaic, familiar or cryptic, etc.

2.5 Fiction

The word Prose refers to the ordinary or everyday use of language and is derived from the Latin word *prosa* which literally means 'straight-forward.' It basically means saying something in a straight-forward way and not in a poetic way. Thus what we speak and write for our ordinary purposes in a straight-forward manner without any embellishment and regard for diction, imagery, sound and rhythm is prose.

Fiction comes from the Latin word *fictum* which means "created". Fiction is a term used to denote anything, mainly stories or accounts that are imagined and are not real. Hence, fairly takes or other stories that our mother or grandmother used to tell us about animals, monsters or even human beings that existed in far away countries are fictional narratives. Thus, fiction is therefore any form of narrative which deals, in part or in whole, with events that are not factual, but rather, are imaginary and invented by its author.

Both poetry and prose can be fictional or factual. However, the word fiction usually refers to prose fiction, that is, fiction written in neither prose nor poetry. Now, we have discussed the terms "prose" and "fiction." Prose fiction refers literary works which are fictional and are presented in a narrative form. Fiction and narrative are words that distinguish prose fiction from any other form of narrative or fictional work. For example, drama is fiction but it is presented in dialogue and enacted on the stage and not narrated. The genre of prose fiction consists of the short story, the novella and the novel.

In the words of Frank Kermode, a prose fiction is a literary work that "has a personal narrative, a hero to identify with fictional inventions, style, and suspense – in short anything that might be handled with the rather personal ventures of creativity and artistic freedom." Prose fiction may exaggerate or distort facts or the story may be completely an invention of the writer. It depends on the style of the writer and or what the writer wants to achieve. Although the story in prose fiction is invented by the writer, it is presented in a realistic manner.

Usually, prose fiction treats essentially personal subject matter which is open to various interpretations by the reader. What we read in prose fiction are events, incidents, and experiences that affect human beings. It relays human experience from the writer's imagination and is seen as a field of cultural significance to be explored with a critical and didactic interest in the subjective perceptions both of artists and their readers.

The origin of modern prose fiction in its present form particularly the novel is traced to the development of letter-writing which is associated with elegance and style. They included an amalgam of genres that included history and science in vernaculars, personal memoirs, fiction and poetry. Gradually, prose fiction in this wider spectrum soon became a prominent medium for the creation of a distinct style of writing and communication. The style gave the artist an opportunity for artistic experimentation and originality needed to exhibit and markets his or her style. The reading of prose fiction later became fashionable and it remained close to everyday language.

Prose Fiction and History

There is a marked similarity between prose fiction and historical narratives, as both present human experiences. However, it is important to notice the relationship between the two. Both are narrative projects but history is based on actual events and real names of the participants, actual dates and places are mentioned. History is therefore an empirical social experience because the historian is concerned with empirical data, operating as much as possible at the level of facts in pursuit of specific truths. It is a factual documentation with the sole aim of education and preservation for posterity. Early historians could include inventions in the factual account as long as they were rooted in traditional knowledge or in order to orchestrate a certain passage.

To the contrary, the literary artist is concerned with historical data as long as they provide him with the experiences he intends to present in his art. However, the language of the literary artist does not subsist on hard facts. He mediates facts in pursuit of both specific and universal truths while trying to please in the process. In the words of Chidi Amuta, the literary artist is "faced with the problem of disciplining history to obey artistic purpose."

There is a difference between the depiction of historians and novelists. Novelists depict the social, political, and personal realities of a place and period with clarity and details more than historians. History is factual documentation while prose fiction is a work of art. Prose fiction can very well be based on history but the author uses vivid and graphic representations of characters and incidents to present an entertaining story.

Authors of prose fiction like historians could document and present facts but not as accurately as the historians because whereas historians present real names of the people involved, places , and dates, in prose fiction real names are not used though known places and dates could be mentioned. This means that historical event could be presented in prose fiction but the writer manipulates the story in an artistically satisfying manner. The writer here uses fictitious names to avoid litigation. In many works of prose fiction, the author/publishers indicates that the names are fictitious and regrets resemblance of any known person.

Characteristics of Prose Fiction

Verimsimilitude

The foremost characteristic of Prose fiction is verisimilitude, that is, a quality whereby the story is presented in such a way that the vents are realistic. In other words, it gives the sense that what one reads is “real” or at least realistic and believable. For instance, the reader possesses a sense of verisimilitude when reading a story in which a character cuts his finger, and the finger bleeds. If the character’s cut finger had produced sparks of fire rather than blood, the story would not possess verisimilitude. It is difficult therefore for fantasy and science fiction stories that present impossible events to have verisimilitude. However, it is possible that the reader is able to read them believing what is presented to be true though he knows that it is imaginary. This is known as the willing suspension of disbelief.

Time and Space

Another characteristic of prose fiction which differentiates it from plays is that the playwright is expected to condense the story within a limited time and place in a dialogue. This means that the writer has the liberty to present graphic details about the character and action. This aids the writer’s ability to describe the environment, the actions of the characters and even their innermost thoughts and feelings. Similarly, time and space are very important in prose fiction because every action in which people are involved is concerned with the passage of time in space. Time in prose fiction can be chronological time as well as functional time. Chronological time can be measured and quantified; for example, John began work at 18; at 22 he left home; and he married at 25. Functional time on the other hand is not measured or quantified. It is development from one level of situation to another. Time is here determined by how much experience has been gained; not by how much time has elapsed or passed. Time is therefore important both chronologically and functionally. The time and space range helps to determine the ‘goodness’ or progress of characters of otherwise. Characters finally become what they are as they are assessed based on the experiences they have undergone as they pass through time and space.

Volume

Volume refers to the size of the work. In other words, it is the length of the work which is in turn evaluated by the number of pages of a particular type of prose fiction. In terms of volume, the novel is the longest genre of narrative prose fiction followed by the novella and the short story. However, it is difficult to set a definite length for each of these forms. Nevertheless, the following can used to from an idea of the differences of length between the forms we are talking about:

- Short story is a work of at least 2,000 words but under 7,500 words. (5-25 pages)
- Novelette is a work of at least 7,500 words but under 17,500 words. (25-60 pages)
- Novella is a work of at least 17,500 words but under 50,000 words. (60-170 pages)
- Novel is a work of 50,000 words or more. (about 170+ pages)

Atmosphere

The term atmosphere refers to the emotion that pervades the work. It is the emotional feeling that gets as one reads a particular work. This feeling is stronger in some works than in others. The intensity of emotion in any particular work depends largely on the ability of the author to employ descriptive details that heighten the intensity of atmosphere. Language plays an important role here. The choice of words by the author helps to convey the desired atmosphere. The atmosphere is further heightened by the tempo of the action, the quality and clarity of the dialogue. Many novelists evoke atmosphere very well in their works.

Tone

The tone of a work of prose fiction is closely related to atmosphere but is not as obvious as atmosphere. It is the writer's attitude to theme that is being explored. It is usually elicited in the narration without the writer pointing it out or making direct comment. A good writer presents the story objectively without taking sides but the tone is clear. The tone could be that of contempt, ridicule, condemnation, admiration, exhortation and so on. Like in atmosphere, tone could change in the course of a narration. For instance, a writer's tone for the good characters may be that of admiration and that of condemnation for the villain.

Drama

Drama is a literary genre which is realized in performance and can be described as a "staged art." As a literary form, it is designed for the theatre because characters are assigned roles and they act out their roles as the action is enacted on stage. These characters can be human beings, dead or spiritual beings, animals, or abstract qualities. Drama is an adaptation, recreation and reflection of reality on stage.

Drama is different from other genres of literature like poetry and prose fiction. It has unique characteristic that have come about in response to its peculiar nature. It is difficult to separate drama from performance because during the stage performance of a play, drama brings life experiences realistically to the audience. It is the most concrete of all genres of literature. In dramatic work, the characters/actors talk to themselves and react to issues according to the impulse of the moment. Drama is presented in the form of dialogue. In comparison to other forms of literature, drama has an immediate impact on the audience. It is used to inform, to educate, to entertain and in some cases to mobilize the audience.

How to define drama? Drama has been defined as an imitation of life. Drama is different from other forms of literature because of its unique characteristics. It is read, but basically, it is composed to be performed, so the ultimate aim of dramatic composition is for it to be performed, so the ultimate aim of dramatic composition is for it to be presented on stage before an audience. This makes it a medium of communication.

The term drama is used in three different senses: (1) Performance (2) Composition (3) Branch of Literature. The word drama is generally used for plays that are acted on stage or screen. These plays are

different from musical performances because they must tell stories which are acted out by actors and actresses. These actors and actresses must be playing roles by imitating other characters. It means, therefore, that they must assume other people's personalities by bearing different names, ages, occupation, nationalities, etc. Finally, they must be conscious of themselves as actors by trying hard to pretend that they are characters they are representing.

Composition

Drama is used to describe a dramatic composition which employs language and pantomime to present a story or series of events intended to be performed. Sometimes, especially with written compositions, they may not be presented on stage but this does not stop it from being drama. In as much as a play is enjoyed more when it is performed, you can still read a play and be entertained by it.

Branch of Literature

The word drama is a term used for that branch of literature that covers dramatic composition. You know already that drama is a literary art. The basic difference between drama and other forms of literature (prose and poetry) is that drama and other forms of literature (prose and poetry) is that drama is presented in dialogue from the beginning to the end. Any information by the playwright is given in stage-direction. We have dialogue in prose and poetry but they are interjected in the course of the story.

Definition of Drama

In *Anatomy of Drama* Martin Esslin has given the following definitions of drama:

1. Drama can be seen as a manifestation of the play instinct as in children who are playing mother and father.

2. Drama is something one goes to see, which is organized as something to be seen.

3. It is an enacted fiction an art form based on mimetic action.

4. In arts, drama is the most elegant expression of thought nearest to the truth (reality).

5. It is the most concrete form in which art can recreate human situation, human relationship.

Aristotle's defines drama simply as an imitation of an action. In his view, human beings take pleasure in imitation like children playing father and mother in a childhood play. This means that imitation is part of life. Thus, human beings have the desire to imitate others, situations or events.

However, according to Bertolt Brecht, drama is not just an imitation of action, but a tool for the demonstration of social conditions. It is not just an entertainment but an instrument of political and social change. From these definitions, we can conclude that drama is a way of creating or recreating a situation, an articulation of reality through impersonation or re-enactment.

The term drama comes from the Greek verb “dran” which means ‘to act’ or to perform. Many scholars trace the origin of drama to wordless actions like ritual dances and mimes performed by dances, masked players or priests during traditional festivals or ceremonies. One account traces the origin to ritual. In the traditional society or in the primordial times, sometimes, the seasons did not come as expected. When this happened, men felt that they had offended the gods, so they devised means of appeasing these gods. That act of appeasing the gods is what we refer to as ritual. Ritual, as expected, involved a ceremony in which the priest played an important role at a designated location, mostly shrines. The priest would normally wear a special dress for the occasion. That role, the dress (costume), and the utterance or incantations are regarded as dramatic elements. Drama could therefore emerge from this. So, if it is presented for entertainment and there is an element of impersonation, imitation of an action, and re-enactment of an action, it is drama. Another account traces the origin to man’s desire for entertainment. Here, during festivals or other ceremonies, they recreate the feats of some legendary or mythical heroes to entertain the people.

The Nature of Drama

Drama has developed and been improved upon by various dramatists over the ages. It has developed and been improved upon by various dramatists over the ages. It has also been influenced by the developments and changes in the world. The unique nature of drama makes it possible for it to be read and as also to be performed. Unlike the prose and poetry which depend on narration, drama is presented only through dialogue. The novel is divided in chapters and the poem is written mostly in stanzas, drama is presented in acts and scenes, movements or parts. William Shakespeare made the five-act structure the standard for his plays. Each dramatist is free to adopt his/her own style.

Drama is temporary in nature. Every performance has a definite duration (i.e. it lasts for a certain length of time). Each performance of a play is therefore a distinct work of art. Even if the actors, the composition and the decors remain unchanged throughout the production, each performance varies in nature and quality as one may be better than other. A good example is in a case where an actor may have performed badly in one production and better in another one. It means therefore that “every performance of a play, even by the same actors, represents a different realization of its possibilities and no single performance can fully realize all its possibilities”(Scholes 17). Once a performance is conducted, it ceases to exist except in one’s memory. Ritualistic presentations could also be viewed from the same perspective.

Functions of Drama

Drama originated from ritual. It is an important branch of literature and the most concrete of all art forms. It is devoid of the distant intimacy of the novel, the abstract message of fine arts, the incomplete message of music or the cryptic and esoteric language of poetry. It presents a story realistically through the actors to the audience. Drama is therefore used to entertain, inform and educate people. You can see that it is the most effective tool for mass mobilization by the government and private agencies. For instance, most campaigns against AIDS, DRUG ABUSE, CHILD ABUSE and so on, are presented in form of drama to educate, enlighten while at the same time entertain the people.

Of all the creative artists, the dramatist is in the best position to mirror his society and to effect social reforms. This is because his work has a unique characteristic of presenting events in a vivid, picturesque and realistic manner. This helps to imprint social conditions realistically in the minds of the audience. Its message is therefore immediate. The rich and the poor, the young and the old, the literate and the illiterate enjoy and assimilate the message of drama once it is presented in the appropriate language as the actors live out the story (message) on stage.In most traditional societies, drama forms part of the communal rites. In Africa, reenactment of some feats like hunting, warfare, and other events, are usually part of bigger festivals. Some of these events are presented in form of drama to entertain the audience. In Greece also, drama formed part of a bigger festival. Greek drama is acclaimed to be the earliest recorded form of drama (5th century B.C). It is said to have originated from the Dionysian religious rites, and also remained a communal rite during the classical period. The dramatists of this age gave insight into the philosophy and religious beliefs of the ancient Greece. These early Greek plays treated life's basic problems with utmost honesty and attacked socials ills using legendary and mythological themes. This helped to ensure sanity and equilibrium in the society.

In the Medieval period, drama was used to elucidate the message of the gospel through the re-enactment of the biblical stories during mass. It was later expanded to include the dramatization of the lives of the saints and other notable stories of the bible that did not form part of the Sunday's lessons. It was therefore used for the spiritual and moral growth of the people. Drama and theatre also played important roles in the social lives of the people in the ancient Roman Empire. In England, Germany and France, playwrights like Shakespeare, Brecht, Goethe, Moliere, and others, in varying degrees, used their works to enable their respective countries "… to carve out and affirm a unique identity" for themselves (Hagher 145). The American industrial sector was radically but positively affected through the intervention of one play, Arthur Miller's Death of a Salesman. This play is regarded as being responsible for the spirit of industrial revolution in America. In Africa, Kenya to be precise, a playwright, Ngugi Wa Thiong'o was arrested and detained because of the political and social consciousness which his play, I Will Marry When I Want, aroused in the audience after the production. The play was written and presented in his Gikuyi language; this enabled the audience, to assimilate its message immediately and to react accordingly. Ngugi was forced into exile. The drama of any society, therefore, reflects the problems, aspirations, philosophy and cultural background of the people.

You see that dramatists can use their works to help to shape the future of the societies. They can do this not only by reflecting the ugly sides of the societies but also by promoting the positive aspects of the people's way of life that are worth emulating or cultivating. They also help to ensure the continuity of their tradition and culture by reflecting them in their plays. Each dramatist, therefore, tries from his perspective to use his art to enlighten his audience on the goodness, imbalances and shortcomings of his society. Apart from their thematic concerns, each dramatist, in his own style of relaying his message, tries to highlight his cultural background through the use of myths, legends, music, songs, dances, proverbs, riddles, and other local expressions. In this way, dramatists all over the world are regarded as the conscience of their societies, and custodians of their moral and cultural values.

3.4 Theatre

It is important to explain to you what theatre is. This is to avoid the erroneous impression which some people have as they interchange drama and theatre at will. Theatre comes from the Greek word "Theatron" which means "a place for viewing". Theatre, therefore, refers to the space used for dramatic presentations or for other performances. Hence you have the National Theatre in Lagos, Oduduwa Hall in Obafemi Awolowo University, The Crab at UNIPORT, the Open Air Theatre at UNIJOS and other theatres. One play could be performed or presented in many theatres. There are different types of theatre. It could be a house or an open space, depending on the performance. If you have visited the Obafemi Awolowo University, for instance, they have three theatres, the Oduduwa Hall which is big and modern theatre in all its ramifications, the open air theatre behind it and the pit, a smaller theatre where the actors hold most of their rehearsals. You see, the shape does not matter, what is important is the acting space.Theatre is also used for other performances that are not necessarily drama. These performances include masquerade displays, dances, puppet shows, music jamborees and other forms of festival. The basic elements of theatre are actor, space and audience. The following elements help to enhance the aesthetic aspect of the performance: scenery, costume and make-up, light and sound effects.

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Unit- III: Genres of Literature: Short Story, Essays, and Biography

3.1 Objectives
3.2 Introduction
3.3 Short Story
3.3.1 Kate Chopin: “Ripe Figs”
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3.6 Further Readings

3.1 Objectives

In this unit we are going to study the three prose forms of literature: short story, essay and biography. The short story is a fictional form whereas the essay and biography are largely non-fiction..

3.2 Introduction

Under the broad genres of poetry, fiction and drama, there are many forms. In other words, there are many forms of poetry, fiction, and drama.

3.3 Short Story

Edgar Allan Poe defined the short story as a narrative which can be read at one sitting of from half an hour to two hours and is limited to a “certain unique or single effect” to which every detail is subordinate. It is usually defined as a fictional narrative of variable length but which rarely exceeds 20, 000 words. Most of the terms used for analysing a novel are also applicable to the short story. Like the novel, the plot of the short story can be comic, tragic, romantic or satiric.

The Short Story is a recent addition to English literature. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* are short stories in verse. Chaucer’s *Parson’s Tale* and *Tale of Melibee* are attempts at prose stories. Boccaccio’s *Decameron* is a collection of short stories in prose. Prose romances continued to be translated and written in English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under Italian influence. Steele and Addison, in the 18th century, evolved the tale-with-a-purpose to drive home a moral. The stories produced in towards the end of the century do not show any change.

It was Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe who established the tenets of the modern Short Story writing. In a review of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Twice-Told Tales,* Poe elaborated

this principle as follows: A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale, If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived with deliberate care, **a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out**, he then invents such incidents, he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tends not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there, should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at length pained which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction." Robert Louis Stevenson, in England, echoed Poe's concept of a "unique or single effect" with his prescription that from the beginning to the end, an "impression" or "idea" should engage the attention.

Although the short story is similar to the novel in many respects, it is not merely a shortened from of a novel. The clinching difference between the two forms is the unique effect or impression of the short story. A novel can have many effects or impressions. Superfluous details can be afforded in a novel, but not in a short story. In a short story, the plot is confined to the essentials, only the indispensable characters and included, and the setting to a few suggestive hints. In a short story, sometimes of the three elements dominate the other two. For example, Stevenson's *The Bottle of Imp* story of plot, because setting and character play second fiddle to plot; whereas his *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a story of character, and the *The Merry Men* a story of setting.

Economy of language is the quintessence of the short story. In short story, every word should contribute to the "unique or single effect". In contract to the short story, a novel may have

passages, digressions; for example Lawrence Sterne's *Tristran Shandy*. Verbosity and superfluity are detrimental to the effect of the short story. There is no space in a short story for "fine writing" or stylistic elegance for its own sake. However, many distinguished and well-known short stories depart from this rule in different ways. The short narrative is one the oldest and most widespread of literary forms. In its early history, there developed the device of the frame-story which is a preliminary and at times rudimentary narrative within which one or more of the characters proceeds to tell a series of short narratives, for example, Boccaccio's *Decameron, The Arabian Nights,* or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

The short story is a popular literary form of contemporary writing. The popularity of the short story can be accounted for in many ways, but chiefly, the limited leisure of the modern period and the expansion and circulation of magazines and journals have boosted the demand for short stories. Although, novel in serialised form can be published in journals, short story is tailor made for it. The early practitioners of the short story were Washington Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe in America, Sir Walter Scott and Mary Shelley in England, E.T.A Hoffmann in Germany, Balzac in France, and Gogol, Pushkin, and Turgenev in Russia. All the major novelists in all the European languages have written notable short stories. The short story has been called by Frank O'Connor as the "national art form."

3.3.2 Kate Chopin: "Ripe Figs"

4 **Ripe Figs**

5 **by Kate Chopin**

(1851-1904)

Maman-Nainaine said that when the figs were ripe Babette might go to visit her cousins down on Bayou-Boeuf, where the sugar cane grows. Not that the ripening of figs had the least thing to do with it, but that is the way Maman-Nainaine was.

It seemed to Babette a very long time to wait; for the leaves upon the trees were tender yet, and the figs were like little hard, green marbles.

But warm rains came along and plenty of strong sunshine; and though Maman-Nainaine was as patient as the statue of la Madone, and Babette as restless as a humming-bird, the first thing they both knew it was hot summer-time. Every day Babette danced out to where the fig-trees were in a long line against the fence. She walked slowly beneath them, carefully peering between the gnarled, spreading branches. But each time she came disconsolate away again. What she saw there finally was something that made her sing and dance the whole day long.

When Maman-Nainaine sat down in her stately way to breakfast, the following morning, her muslin cap standing like an aureole about her white, placid face, Babette approached. She bore a dainty porcelain platter, which she set down before her godmother. It contained a dozen purple figs, fringed around with their rich, green leaves.

"Ah," said Maman-Nainaine, arching her eyebrows, "how early the figs have ripened this year!"

"Oh," said Babette, "I think they have ripened very late."

"Babette," continued Maman-Nainaine, as she peeled the very plumpest figs with her pointed silver fruit-knife, "you will carry my love to them all down on Bayou-Boeuf. And tell your tante Frosine I shall look for her at Toussaint--when the chrysanthemums are in bloom."

3.4 Essay

It is very difficult to provide a satisfactory and comprehensive definition of the term Essay, as it is with for any literary genre or form. It was Dr. Johnson who defined the essay, as "a loose sally of the mind, an irregular, indigested piece, nor regular and orderly performance." It has been defined by Saintsbury as a "work of prose art," and more loosely still it has been called "the after-dinner monologue of an interesting and well-informed man." However, all of these definitions will fall short of adequately describing the composition in prose which has been called an essay. These definitions cannot be applied to John Locke's lengthy philosophical treatise titled *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Sometimes even works in verse have been titled essay like Alexander Pope's *Essay on Criticism* and *Essay on Man*. Hence, it is very difficult of find a common definition of the essay which will fit all examples like Macaulay's essays, or E. V. Lucas' essay on G.K. Chesterton. Like most of the literary forms, the essay is indentified by its style and approach, rather than it's content. In the words of Hugh Walker, an essay can be written on "stars to the dust-heap and from the amoeba to man." Hugh Walker divides essays into two classes: "*essays par excellence,"* that is, essays of the highest degree, as the essays of Montaigne, Bacon, Charles Lamb etc and prose compositions to which the name essay is applied only out of custom only because they are short and incomplete in its treatment. The incompleteness may arise from either treating a subject in outline, or from handling only a branch or division of some greater subject. The topic of the essay can be scientific or philosophic, historical or critical. These essays do not strictly belong to a separate literary

form. An incomplete prose composition on a topic related to history may be called a historical essay. Yet besides these essays in the looser sense, there are essays in a unique literary style. Like those of Lamb, Montaigne, and Bacon. These essays on the other hand, are complete in themselves. In other words, no need is felt to expand them into treatises. No feeling of incompleteness is felt after reading these essays.

According to W. H. Hudson, "The true Essay is essentially personal. It belongs to the literature of self-expression. Treatise and dissertation may be objective; the Essay is subjective." Nowadays, indeed, no one turns to essayists for facts and principles, for one reason or another, makes a special appeal to us. They may be masters of every literary device, like Lamb, Stevenson, Chesterton, or Hilaire Belloc, or they may write with a deceptive ease, like Goldsmith, E.V. Lucas, A.G. Gardiner, J. B. Priestley, but it is their individual accent that we wish to hear, even when we have no particular sympathy with the opinions expressed.

Cicero and Seneca have been held as the originators of the Essay whose Epistles would nowadays be regarded as essays rather than letters. In the words of Bacon, "The word (Essay) is late but the thing is ancient. For Seneca's *Epistles to Lucilius,* if one mark them well, are but essay; that is, dispersed meditations, though conveyed in the form of Epistles (letters)." Plutarch's *Moralia* belongs to the same category, being a collection of essays on moral subjects. It was Montaigne who invented the art from of the intimate personal essay in the 16th century by his volume of essays called *Essais*. Montaigne said, "I am myself the subject of my book."

It was Francis Bacon who invented the aphoristic essay. Bacon introduced the form in England. Whereas Montaigne entertains its reader, Bacon gives "counsels, civil and moral." Bacon's counsels are expressed in short, crisp sentences, which read like aphorisms. In the words of Dean Church, Bacon's essays are like the chapters in Aristotle's *Ethics* and *Rhetoric*. Even in Bacon's age, there were writers who continued the personal vein inaugurated by Montaigne, and the foremost of those was Ben Johnson, whose forceful personality continually breaks through his *Discoveries.*

The Critical Essay was introduced by Dryden during the Restoration period. Its form was same as of Montaigne, but its theme was literary criticism. Two of the best known are the *Essay of Dramatic Poesy,* written in dialogue form, and the Preface to his *Fables,* which is partly a critical and partly a personal essay.

In the 18th century, with the rise of journalism, the Essay began to appear in periodicals, deriving abundant material from the manners of the time. Defoe's *Review* is believed to have set the fashion, but the real vogue of the Essay began with Richard Steele and Joseph Addison, acknowledged masters of the form. Taking a hint from Defoe's *Review,* Steele started the *Tatler* with the declared object of exposing the "the false arts of life, of pulling off the disguises of cunning, vanity, and affectation, and of recommending a general simplicity in dress, discourse, and behaviour." It ceased publication after two years, and was replaced by the *Spectator.* In this endeavour, Steele was associated with Addison, who had formerly been a frequent contributor to the *Tatler.* In this enterprise Steele was associated with Addison, who had formerly been a frequent contributor to the *Tatler.* Its objective was to "enliven morality with wit, and to temper wit with morality" and to bring "Philosophy out of closets and libraries, schools and colleges, to dwell in clubs and assemblies, at tea-tables and in coffee houses." In the words of the literary historican Saintsbury, "they taught the 18th century how it should and expecially how it should not, behave in public plaves, from churches to theatres; what books it should like, and how it should like them, how it should treat its lovers, mistresses, husbands, wives, parents and friends." For the first time in its history, the Essay was employed to serve distinctly social purpose.

In the 18th century for the first time, the essay was employed to serve a social purpose. Even then its earlier functions of personal revelation and literary criticism were not forgotten. The fictitious

character invented by *Steele* and Addison Sir Roger de Coverley is well known. He is a lively sketch of the country gentleman of the time of Queen Anne, far surpassing the character studies of the 17th century writers. The next great name in the true succession of essayists is that of Dr. Johnson, whose essays appeared twice weekly in the *Rambler* and eight years later, every Saturday in the *Idler*. They show all his manly good sense and command of majestic language, but they would nowadays be read rather as a duty than for pleasure. He lectures us, whereas with Steele and Addison we feel that we were on equal terms with two friendly men of the world. In Oliver Goldsmith we find again their ease and charm. His *Citizen of the World* , is a delightful series of letters on English life by an imaginary Chinese visitor, was contributed to a daily newspaper, the *Public Ledger,* in 1760-62, and his volume of *Essays* was selected from numerous papers originally published in the *Bee,* the British *Magazine,* and other periodicals.

In the 19th century emerged a kind of periodical which was more concerned with literary practice than social and personal topics. It was called the *Review* and its main content was literary and other criticism. The best-known of these were the *Edinburgh Review* and the *Quaterly Review*. Saintsbury observes, “These two periodicals representing the two great parties and amply furnished with literary ability, took solid place at once, and for many years continued to be the headquarters of serious discussion on politics, literature, religion, philosophy, and things in general. The *Edinburgh Review* and *Quarterly Review* are known for their attack on Wordsworth and Keats respectively.

Contemporary with the *Review* grew up a periodical of another type called the *Magazine.* It is different from the *Review* in being a miscellany of every kind of composition, creative, critical, informative, and entertaining. *Blackwood's Magazine, Fraser's Magazine and the London Magazine* are few examples of this kind. The personal essay was revived in the 19th century by Charles Lam who wrote the *Essays of Elia.* Other writers of the subjective essay were Leigh Hunt, Hazlitt, Thackeray, De Quincey and R. L. Stevenson.

Of Studies
by Francis Bacon

Studies serve for delight, for ornament, and for ability. Their chief use for delight, is in privateness and retiring; for ornament, is in discourse; and for ability, is in the judgment, and disposition of business. For expert men can execute, and perhaps judge of particulars, one by one; but the general counsels, and the plots and marshalling of affairs, come best, from those that are learned. To spend too much time in studies is sloth; to use them too much for ornament, is affectation; to make judgment wholly by their rules, is the humor of a scholar. They perfect nature, and are perfected by experience: for natural abilities are like natural plants, that need proyning, by study; and studies themselves, do give forth directions too much at large, except they be bounded in by experience. Crafty men contemn studies, simple men admire them, and wise men use them; for they teach not their own use; but that is a wisdom without them, and above them, won by observation. Read not to contradict and confute; nor to believe and take for granted; nor to find talk and discourse; but to weigh and consider. Some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested; that is, some books are to be read only in parts; others to be read, but not curiously; and some few to be read wholly, and with diligence and attention. Some books also may be read by deputy, and extracts made

of them by others; but that would be only in the less important arguments, and the meaner sort of books, else distilled books are like common distilled waters, flashy things. Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man. And therefore, if a man write little, he had need have a great memory; if he confer little, he had need have a present wit: and if he read little, he had need have much cunning, to seem to know, that he doth not. Histories make men wise; poets witty; the mathematics subtile; natural philosophy deep; moral grave; logic and rhetoric able to contend. Abeunt studia in mores. Nay, there is no stond or impediment in the wit, but may be wrought out by fit studies; like as diseases of the body, may have appropriate exercises. Bowling is good for the stone and reins; shooting for the lungs and breast; gentle walking for the stomach; riding for the head; and the like. So if a man's wit be wandering, let him study the mathematics; for in demonstrations, if his wit be called away never so little, he must begin again. If his wit be not apt to distinguish or find differences, let him study the Schoolmen; for they are cymini sectores. If he be not apt to beat over matters, and to call up one thing to prove and illustrate another, let him study the lawyers' cases. So every defect of the mind, may have a special receipt.

3.5 Biography

The art-form of Biography developed recently in comparison to other art forms. From classical times, we have *Lives of Caesars* by Seutonius, and Plutarch's *Lives*, short accounts, written in pairs, comparing and contrasting a famous Greek and a famous Roman; but what we understand by Biography these days has no really close resemblance to these or to such odd notes and gossip as one finds in the *Brief Lives* of the seventeenth-century antiquarian, John Aubrey.

The term was first used by Dryden in 1683 defining it as the "the history of particular men's lives." Its form was still indeterminate, and for a long time it continued to be a promiscuous collection of varied details not governed by any artistic principle of selection or proportion. The formal *Life and Letters* of any person of note was a tedious work. As Lytton Strachey, the reknowned biographer of *Queen Victoria,* wrote in 1918: "The art of Biography seems to have fallen on evil times in England. Those two fat volumes, with which it is our custom to commemorate the dead – who does not know them, with their ill-digested masses of material, their slipshod style, their tone of tedious panegyric, their lamentable lack of selection, of detachment of design? They are as familiar as the cortege of the undertaker, and wear the same air of slow funeral barbarism." According to the *Oxford Dictionary* Biography is "the history of the lives of individual men as a branch of literature." In the words of Harold Nicolson, the Biography is "a truthful record of an individual, composed as a work of art."

Biography is not history of a single individual. It is the record of all the events between the birth and death of an individual. A biography fills its canvas with one prominent personality; other figures if portrayed are subsidiary to the central figure. It presents its subject both externally and internally. In the words of Sir Sidney Lee, "Character and exploits are inseparable." A character which doesn't translate into exploit is a mere phantasm for the biographer. The exploit may range from mere talk, as in the case of Johnson, to empire-building and military conquest. The biography should be objective and balanced. It should neither be a panegyric or a diatribe. Finally and pre-eminently, it should be a work of art, not a mere collection of odds and ends to satisfy idle curiosity, but something that will leave in the mind of the reader a sustained and lasting impression. The aim of biography is to transmit a personality by rebuilding

a living man from dead bones. Nevertheless, biography should be based on verifiable facts and not on invented details. A biography is not only artistically attractive but is of immense value for the historian. No wonder Carlyle defined history as the essence of “countless biographies.” The biographer strives for truth as well as beauty. Without the former the biographer’s work becomes fiction. without the latter it degenerates into a mere recital of facts.

Pure and Impure Biography

The biography is often differentiated into two types: Pure Biography and Impure Biography. A pure Biography would give us a perfect picture of the development of both the external and the inner life of its subject. Unfortunately, several factors may intervene to make it “impure.” The most common is the desire to honour the dead, to conceal the evil and perpetuate the memory of the good. *De mortuis nill nisi bonum* is an old Latin proverb which says that the living should speak nothing but good of the dead. It is doubtless a good motto for everyday conduct but not for the art of biography, which ought to look objectively on good and bad alike and to strike a balance between them. A biographer cannot exaggerate the virtues of his subject, nor can be overemphasize the failures. The former may result in an undeserved eulogy and the latter an unkind satire.

The second factor which accounts for impurity in a biography is the intrusion of the author’s own prejudices and predilections. The personal mode, which can be so pleasing and appealing in other forms of literature, is a defect in the biography. It is required that the biographer should stand away from his subject so as to be able to view it clearly and dispassionately. He must maintain an attitude of detachment or disinterestedness, forgetting his personal predilections as far as humanly possible. He must have only a professional interest, such as a doctor has in his patient. If he thrusts too much into his work – his own likes and dislikes, opinions and preferences – he digresses from the biographical into the autobiographical. A third source of impurity is the substitution of moral or other utilitarian aims for the genuinely realistic. A biography should not be treated as an illustration of some theory or with the intention of driving home some particular lesion. Biography should relate faithfully the history of a human soul, without any warping of the truth for purposes either of panegyric or invective; let it but place before us a true narrative, without any straining for effect or any drawing of a moral, and it will not fail to speak to us clearly and influence us powerfully. All works of art are shorn of their power when men attempt to reduce them to slavery rather than allow them to assert theory sovereignty. Works of art cease to be works of art when they carry upon them the chains of any tyrannical influence. A work of art must be as free and sovereign as the Truth, of which, indeed, it is but a part and a manifestation.

We are all interested in lives of other people. Therein lay the basis of the biographical impulse. The biographer instinctively aims at a revelation which will both capture the individuality of his subject and also show the common touch of humanity in which he assures the reader that human nature is always essentially the same. In biography as in the novel, the psychological element is more interesting and significant than mere record of material events.

It is extremely difficult to write a biography of person with whom one hasn’t lived constantly. Boswell was in intimate friend of Johnson; Lockhart was Scott’s son-in-law; Forster was closely associated with Dickens. All three have written masterly *Lives* of their heroes. But biographers are not always contemporaries, much less associates, and for those who are not, Biography can become a herculean task in which failure is more likely than success. Only too often, they imagine a background to their subject in terms of their own time, and thus fall into anachronisms as misleading as those of a Holywood film.

Another difficulty of a biographer is that it is scarcely possible within the covers of a book to contain a whole life in all its phases – physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual – doing full justice to each. Life is too elusive to be so easily confined within the narrow room of biographical record. And, often enough,

half of a man is composed of thoughts he never utters of feelings he prefers to conceal, as to which no biographer can do more than guess. He may, of course, generalise from words and deeds, but these might have been hasty or abnormal lapses of character and so are only dubious guides. Nevertheless, English literature is a treasure house of biographies; for example, Boswell's *Johnson,* Mason's *Gray,* Southey's *Nelson,* Lockhardt's *Scott,* Carlyle's *Sterling,* Froude's *Carlyle,* Rosebery's *Pitt,* Trevelyan's *Macaulay,* and Lytton Strachey's *Queen Victoria*.

Modern Tendencies

The modern tendency in biography was at first towards a ruthless dissection of its subject. In Lytton Strachey's *Eminent Victorians* this process was carried to an extent popularly described as "debunking," by reason of his insistence upon the human weaknesses of famous people who had hitherto been set on lofty pedestals. While this was a useful corrective to the legends fostered by the *nil nisi bonum* school, it fell into the opposite danger of belittling the characters of those with whom it dealt by magnifying trivial matters in their lives and personalities to the distortion of the general effect. In a similar way, the application of psychology has sometimes resulted in over emphasizing certain motives in a man's character, or the biographer has intentionally chosen a hero whose life bears a superficial resemblance to his own, and created him in his own image. A reaction has already set in, and the current trend is to demand from a biographer not only an intuitive understanding of this subject but also a complete and accurate estimate of the environment and social background of events. Until and unless, he takes refuge in the biographical novel, the biographer must therefore become a social historian, philosopher, and psychologist in one.

3.5.2 James Boswell: *Life of Johnson*

Mohandas Gandhi was an Indian revolutionary and religious leader who used his religious power for political and social reform. Although he held no governmental office, he was the main force behind the second-largest nation in the world's struggle for independence.

Early years

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, in Porbandar, India, a seacoast town in the Kathiawar Peninsula north of Bombay, India. His wealthy family was from one of the higher castes (Indian social classes). He was the fourth child of Karamchand Gandhi, prime minister to the raja (ruler) of three small city-states, and Purtlibai, his fourth wife. Gandhi described his mother as a deeply religious woman who attended temple (a place for religious worship) service daily. Mohandas was a small, quiet boy who disliked sports and was only an average student. At the age of thirteen he did not even know in advance that he was to marry Kasturbai, a girl his own age. The childhood ambition of Mohandas was to study medicine, but as this was considered beneath his caste, his father persuaded him to study law instead. After his marriage Mohandas finished high school and tutored his wife.

In September 1888 Gandhi went to England to study. Before leaving India, he promised his mother he would try not to eat meat. He was an even stricter vegetarian while away than he had been at home. In England he studied law but never completely adjusted to the English way of life. He became a lawyer in 1891 and sailed for Bombay. He attempted unsuccessfully to practice law in Rajkot and Bombay, then for a brief period served as lawyer for the prince of Porbandar.

South Africa: the beginning

In 1893 Gandhi accepted an offer from a firm of Muslims to represent them legally in Pretoria, the capital of Transvaal in the Union of South Africa. While traveling in a first-class train compartment in Natal, South Africa, a white man asked Gandhi to leave. He got off the train and spent the night in a train station meditating. He decided then to work to end racial prejudice. He had planned to stay in South Africa for only one year, but this new cause kept him in the country until 1914. Shortly after the train incident he called his first meeting of Indians in Pretoria and attacked racial discrimination (treating a certain group of people differently) by whites. This launched his campaign for improved legal status for Indians in South Africa, who at that time suffered the same discrimination as black people.

In 1896 Gandhi returned to India to take his wife and sons to Africa and to inform his countrymen of the poor treatment of Indians there. News of his speeches filtered back to Africa,

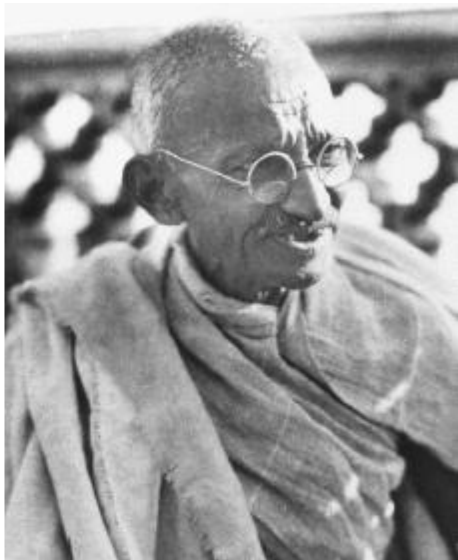
and when Gandhi returned, an angry mob threw stones and attempted to lynch (to murder by mob action and without lawful trial) him.

Spiritual development

Gandhi began to do day-to-day chores for unpaid boarders of the lowest castes and encouraged his wife to do the same. He decided to buy a farm in Natal and return to a simpler way of life. He began to fast (not eat). In 1906 he became celibate (not engaging in sexual intercourse) after having fathered four sons, and he preached Brahmacharya (vow of celibacy) as a means of birth control and spiritual purity. He also began to live a life of voluntary poverty.

During this period Gandhi developed the concept of Satyagraha, or soul force. He wrote: "Satyagraha is not predominantly civil disobedience, but a quiet and irresistible pursuit of truth." Truth was throughout his life Gandhi's chief concern, as reflected in the subtitle of his *Autobiography: The Story of My Experiments with Truth.* Gandhi also developed a basic concern for the means used to achieve a goal.

In 1907 Gandhi urged all Indians in South Africa to defy a law requiring registration and fingerprinting of all Indians. For this activity he was imprisoned for two months but released when he agreed to voluntary registration. During Gandhi's second stay in jail he read the American essayist Henry David Thoreau's (1817–1862) essay "Civil Disobedience," which left a deep impression on him. He was also influenced by his correspondence with Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy



Mohandas Gandhi.
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(1828–1910) in 1909–1910 and by John Ruskin's (1819–1900) *Unto This Last.*

Gandhi decided to create a place for civil resisters to live in a group environment. He called it the Tolstoy Farm. By this time he had abandoned Western dress for traditional Indian garb. Two of his final legal achievements in Africa were a law declaring Indian (rather than only Christian) marriages valid, and the end of a tax on former indentured (bound to work and unable to leave for a specific period of time) Indian labor. Gandhi regarded his work in South Africa as completed.

By the time Gandhi returned to India in January 1915, he had become known as "Mahatmaji," a title given him by the poet Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). This title means "great soul." Gandhi knew how to reach the masses and insisted on their resistance and spiritual growth. He spoke of a new, free Indian individual, telling Indians that India's cages were self-made.

Disobedience and return to old values

The repressive Rowlatt Acts of 1919 (a set of laws that allowed the government to try people accused of political crimes without a jury) caused Gandhi to call a general hartal, or strike (when workers refuse to work in order to obtain rights from their employers), throughout the country. But he called it off when violence occurred against Englishmen. Following the Amritsar Massacre of some four hundred Indians, Gandhi responded by not cooperating with British courts, stores, and schools. The government agreed to make reforms.

Gandhi began urging Indians to make their own clothing rather than buy British goods. This would create employment for millions of Indian peasants during the many idle months of the year. He cherished the ideal of economic independence for each village. He identified industrialization (increased use of machines) with materialism (desire for wealth) and felt that it stunted man's growth. Gandhi believed that the individual should be placed ahead of economic productivity.

In 1921 the Congress Party, a group of various nationalist (love of one's own nation and cultural identity) groups, again voted for a nonviolent disobedience campaign. Gandhi had come to realize that India's reliance on Britain had made India more helpless than ever. In 1922 Gandhi was tried and sentenced to six years in prison, but he was released two years later for an emergency appendectomy (surgery to remove an inflamed appendix). This was the last time the British government tried Gandhi.

Fasting and the protest march

One technique Gandhi used frequently was the fast. He firmly believed that Hindu-Muslim unity was natural and he undertook a twenty-one-day fast to bring the two communities together. He also fasted during a strike of mill workers in Ahmedabad. Another technique he developed was the protest march. In response to a British tax on all salt used by Indians, a severe hardship on the peasants, Gandhi began his famous twenty-four-day "salt march" to the sea. Several thousand marchers walked 241 miles to the coast in protest of the unfair law.

Another cause Gandhi supported was improving the status of members of the lower castes, or Harijans. On September 20, 1932, Gandhi began a fast for the Harijans, opposing a British plan for a separate voting body for them. As a result of Gandhi's fast, some temples were opened to exterior castes for the first time in history.

Gandhi devoted the years 1934 through 1939 to the promotion of making fabric, basic education, and making Hindi the national language. During these years he worked closely with Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964) in the Congress Working Committee. Despite differences of opinion, Gandhi designated Nehru his successor, saying, "I know this, that when I am gone he will speak my language."

World War II and beyond

England's entry into World War II (1939–45; when the United States, France, Great Britain, and the Soviet Union fought against Germany, Italy, and Japan) brought India in without its consent. Because Britain had made no political compromises satisfactory to nationalist leaders, in August 1942 Gandhi proposed not to help in the war effort. Gandhi, Nehru, and other Congress Party leaders were imprisoned, touching off violence throughout India. When the British attempted to place the blame on Gandhi, he fasted for three weeks in jail. He contracted malaria (a potentially fatal disease spread by mosquitoes) in prison and was released on May 6, 1944.

When Gandhi emerged from prison, he sought to stop the creation of a separate Muslim state of Pakistan, which Muhammad Ali Jinnah (1876–1948) was demanding. Jinnah declared August 16, 1946, a "Direct Action Day." On that day, and for several days following, communal killings left five thousand dead and fifteen thousand wounded in Calcutta alone. Violence spread through the country.

Extremely upset, Gandhi went to Bengal, saying, "I am not going to leave Bengal until the last embers of trouble are stamped out." But while he was in Calcutta forty-five hundred more people were killed in Bihar. Gandhi, now seventy-seven, warned that he would fast to death unless Biharis reformed. Either Hindus and Muslims would learn to live together or he would die in the attempt. The situation there calmed, but rioting continued elsewhere.

Drive for independence

In March 1947 the last viceroy, Lord Mountbatten (1900–1979), arrived in India with instructions to take Britain out of India by June 1948. The Congress Party by this time had agreed to separation, since the only alternative appeared to be continuation of British rule. Gandhi, despairing because his nation was not responding to his plea for peace and brotherhood, refused to participate in the independence celebrations on August 15, 1947. On September 1, 1947, after an angry Hindu mob broke into the home where he was staying in Calcutta, Gandhi began to fast, "to end only if and when sanity returns to Calcutta." Both Hindu and Muslim leaders promised that there would be no more killings, and Gandhi ended his fast.

On January 13, 1948, Gandhi began his last fast in Delhi, praying for Indian unity. On January 30, as he was attending prayers, he was shot and killed by Nathuram Godse, a thirty-five-year-old editor of a Hindu Mahasabha extremist newspaper in Poona.

Read more: http://www.notablebiographies.com/Fi-Gi/Gandhi-Mohandas.html#ixzz2oQ7MwDH7

3.6 Further Readings

Walker, H. The English Essay and Essayists
Freeman, John. The English Essayists
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Evans, Ifor. A Short History of English Literature
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Unit -IV: Literary Devices

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4.1 Objectives

In this unit we shall explain how poets use language resourcefully to achieve certain effects. After completing this unit you should be able to recognise and appreciate literary devices such as pun, personification, chiasmus, apostrophe etc.

4.2 Introduction

Literature is the representation of the best and finest expression of human thoughts, feelings, emotions and aspirations, in the best and finest language. Literary practitioners make the ordinary and everyday things and events appear striking, beautiful and mysterious. Writers achieve this through the use of established or invented literary devices. These literary devices though used sometimes in everyday speech or writing, is more frequent in literary works. Innovative and creative use of literary devices differentiates everyday language from literary language.

Literary devices which are found in English literature and literature of other languages can be grouped into various categories on the basis of some characteristics such as sound, construction, similarity, association, difference, indirectness, imagination, and narration. Although this classification is not accepted by all critics and there is some overlap of characteristics between some categories, they are being grouped here into the following classes for convenience of comprehension and learning.

- Literary Devices based on Sound
- Literary Devises based on Construction
- Literary Devices based on Similarity
- Literary Devices based on Association
- Literary Devices based on Difference
- Literary Devices based on Indirectness
- Literary Devices based on Imagination

4.3 Literary Devices based on Sound

4.15.1 Paronomasia or Pun

Paronomasia or Pun is a literary device which consists of playing upon words that are similar in sound but different in meaning. Puns are generally used for achieving humour or emphasis. Puns can be used in three different ways:

(1) Equivocal use of words

This type of pun is sometimes known as **equivoque**. It consists of the use of a single word or phrase in a sentence which has two different meanings, in a context in which both the meanings appear relevant and make sense.

Example 1

When a beautiful woman loses her husband, she may pine for a *second*.

Here, the word *second* has two disparate meanings: either for a short time or for a second husband and both the meaning are relevant in the context. In other words, the meaning of the sentence has been rendered ambiguous by the pun on the word *second.* The sentence can be interpreted in two ways: When a beautiful woman loses her husband, she may pine for her dead husband for a short time or when a beautiful woman loses her husband she may long for a second husband.

Example 2

An ambassador is a man *sent to lie* abroad for the good of his country.

Here, the phrase *sent to lie* has double meaning. It either means an ambassador tells lies or takes recourse to falsehood for the good of his country or it means an ambassador someone is sent to stay abroad for the good of his country. Thus the word *lie* can be interpreted in two ways either to tell lies or to stay at a place.

(2) Use of a word more than once in different senses

This variant of pun consists of the use of a word or phrase more than once in a sentence in different senses.

Example 1

Men of sports find it easy to *follow* hounds than to *follow* an argument.

In this example, the word *follow* is used twice in a sentence and in different meanings. In the first use, the word *follow* means 'pursue' whereas in the second use the word *follow* means 'understand'.

Example 2

A *good deal* in the game of cards depends on good playing, and good playing depends a lot on *good deal*.

In this example, the pun is on the phrase *good deal* which is used more than once, that is, twice in the sentence in disparate senses. In the first use the phrase *good deal* means 'much' and in the second use the phrase *good deal* means 'a good distribution of cards'.

(3) Use of words similar in sound but different in meaning

Sometimes writers play on words of similar sounds or similar spelling which are actually different words and have different meanings.

Example 1

We all have the *sole* right to save our *soul.*

In this example, the pun constitutes a play on the similar sounds of the two words *sole* and *soul.* The pun has the effect of emphasis as well as humour.

Example 2

Should I be *punished* for every *pun-I-shed?*

In this example, pun derives from the similar appearance of the word *punished* and the phrase '*pun I shed',* which is yoked together with the help of hyphens for punning.

4.15.2 Onomatopoeia

This is a literary device where the sound of the words resembles (1) the sounds that it denotes or (2) the sense it conveys. Words like "hiss", "bang", "buzz", "rattle" belong to the former category. It is sometimes called **echoism.** As in the following two lines of Alfred Lord Tennyson's "Come Down, O Maid" (1847):

> The **moan** of doves in immemorial elms,
> And **murmuring** of innumerable **bees**.

And in the following line of Goldsmith; the words in bold are **onomatopoeic.**

And Niagara **stuns** with **thundering** sound.

4.15.3 Alliteration

Alliteration is a literary device in which there is repetition of a speech sound in a sequence of nearby words. The alliteration is applied only when the items repeated are consonants. Usually the repeated sounds beings a word or is a stressed syllable within the word. Alliteration was the most prominent feature of the versification of Anglo-Saxon and old Germanic poetry. In English verse, alliteration is used to emphasize meaning and to link related words.
Alliteration has been used in the following lines:

Most **m**usical, **m**ost **m**elancholy.—Milton
The **f**ield of **f**reedom, **f**action, **f**ame and blood.—Byron
Puffs, **p**owders, **p**atchers, **b**ibles, **b**illet-doux,--Pope

4.15.4 Assonance

If in alliteration the recurrent sound is a consonant, in assonance the recurrent sound is a vowel. Assonance is a literary device in which there is repetition of identical or similar vowels in a sequence of nearby words. The famous opening lines of John Keat's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" (1820) repeats the long ***i*** in a sequence of nearby words. It is a common feature of Spanish poetry, and is rarely found in English verse:

> Thou still unravished br**i**de of qu**i**etness,
> Thou foster ch**i**ld of s**i**lence and slow t**i**me...

4.15.5 Consonance

The literary device called consonance constitutes the repetition of a sequence of two or more consonants with a change in the intervening vowel: live-love, pitter-patter, reader-rider. The following lines from the poem of W. H. Auden "O where are you going?" makes heavy use of this literary device. The last stanza of the poem reads as follows:

> "Out of this house"—said *rider* to *reader,*
> "Yours never will"—said *farer* to *fearer,*
> "They're looking for you" said *hearer* to *horror,*
> As he left them there, as he left them there.

4.4 Literary Devises based on Construction

In the previous sub-unit we read about literary devices based on sound. In this sub-unit, we are going to read about literary devices based on construction. In other words, these are literary devices which depend on the arrangement, order and pattern of words in a sentence.

4.15.1 Interrogation

This device is also known by the name Erotesis. In this literary device, a strong affirmation, often a strong affirmation of the contrary, is implied under the form of an earnet interrogation. It is generally, used in impassioned reasoning when we want to draw the attention of those whom we address, to some important fact or indisputable statement. It is most often used in oratory.

> For who can think of submission?—Milton
>
> If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?—Shakespeare.

4.15.2 Exclamation

The literary device of Exclamation consists of an abrupt expression of emotion, wish or of contemplation. If generally has a profound effect and stirs up some deep emotion. It is most often introduced by interjections, or by such words as how, what, etc,;e.g.,

> How sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child!—Shakespeare
>
> Oh that those lips had language!—Cowper
>
> What a piece of work is a man! How noble in reason! How infinite faculties! In form and moving, how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god.!—Shakespeare.

4.15.3 Chiasmus

Chiasmus is a literary device which involves the inversion of words from the first half of a statement in the second half. It is a sequence of two phrases or clauses which are paraller in syntax but reverse the order of the corresponding words. The famous definition of New Historicism by Louis Montrose uses a chiasmus: "the **history** of *texts* and the *textuality* of **history**."

> **Beauty** is *truth*, *truth* **beauty**.—Keats
>
> The **years to come** seemed *waste of breath*,
> A *waste of breath* the **years behind**.—Yeats

4.15.4 Zeugma

Zeugma is a literary device in which one word governs a series of succeeding words or phrases. Usually, it is one verb which is connected to two nouns, to which normally a separate verb, should be subblied; e.g.,

> Give thy fingers, me thy lips to kiss—Shakespeare

In this example, the verb *give* governs the two phrases that follow.

> Would hide her wrongs and her revenge.—Scott

The word 'wrongs' goes very well with 'hide' but 'revenge' requires the use of another verb like 'ward off.'

4.5 Literary Devices based on Similarity

Simile and Metaphor are the two most important figures of speech based on similarity between two things. Whereas a simile is an expression between two persons, subjects, or events that differ in kind, in metaphor a word is transferred from the object to which it properly belongs to another, in such a way that a comparison is implied but not expressed clearly. Hence, a metaphor differs from simile only in structure and not in principle; and every simile can be condensed into a metaphor and every metaphor can be expanded into a simile. Thus, 'She is as red as a rose' is a simile; whereas 'She is a rose.' is a metaphor. The effect of the metaphor lies in its concentrated expressed and the discovery by the reader the point of similarity which is implied but not explicitly stated. Thus, in the simile, the similarity between the woman and the rose is redness; whereas in the metaphor it is up to the reader to discover the similarity.

4.15.1 Simile

The word simile comes from the Latin word *similis* which means 'like.' It is a literary device which expresses a similarity between two different explicitly or directly using words such as like, as, such, so, similarly, etc.

> The child shows the man, *as* morning shows the day.—Milton

> *As* every climate has its peculiar diseases, *so* every walk has its peculiar temptations.—Macaulay.

> True ease in writing comes from art, not chance,
> *As* they move easiest who have learnt to dance.—Pope

> The scheme of supplying our wants as curtailing our desires is *like* cutting off our feet when we want shoes.—Swift.

4.15.2 Conceit

A conceit is a literary device which establishes a striking parallel, usually ingeniously elaborate, between two very dissimilar things or situations. In other words, it is a far-fetched and fanciful simile or metaphor. Two types of conceits are traditionally differentiated: The **Petrarchan conceit** is a type of figure used in love poems which consists of detailed, ingenious, and often exaggerated comparisons applied to the disdainful mistress, as cold and cruel as she is beautiful, and to the distresses and despair of her worshipful lover. The other kind of conceit is the **Metaphysical conceit** which is a characteristic feature of John Donne and other *metaphysical poets* of the seventeenth century. For example, Donne's comparison of the continuing relationship of his and his lady's soul during their physical parting, and the coordinated movements of the two feet of a mariner's compass; and T. S. Eliot's comparison of the evening to "a patient etherized upon a table" in the beginning of "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock."

4.15.3 Metaphor

The word metaphor comes from the Greek *meta,* meaning beyond, and *phero,* I carry. It is a literary device in which a word is transferred from the object to which it properly belongs to another, in such a way, that a comparison is implied but not explicitly expressed. In other words, something (A) is indentified with something else (B) in order to attribute to A a quality associated with B. For example in the phrase, "Life is a dream," the idea of transient illusion or unreality traditionally associated with dreams is carried over to the subject "life." The effect of the metaphor is due to its high suggestiveness.

> Variety is the *spice* of life.—Cowper
>
> The curfew tolls the *knell* of the parting day.—Gray
>
> Hope is the brightest when it *dawns* from fear.—Scott.
>
> The schoolmaster is aboard, *armed* with his primer.—Brougham.

4.15.4 Allegory

A type of narrative in which the surface story reflects at least one other meaning. In other words, in a allegory a lengthy and detailed comparison is established between two different subjects or stories. Thus, an allegory is a elaborate network of similarities and correspondences. Traditional allegory frequently employs personification, the use of human characters to represent abstract ideas. Medieval morality plays were allegories in which abstractions such as Mankind, Good Deeds, Penance, and Death appeared as characters. Another type of allegory uses the surface story to refer to historical or political events and persons. Jonathan Swift's Tale of a Tub (1704), for example, provides a satirical allegory of the reformation.

The following lines from Sin's speech in Milton's Paradise Lost, II are an example of allegory:

> Out of thy head I sprung. Amazement seized
> All th' host of Heaven; back they recoiled afraid
> At first, and called me Sin, and for a sign
> Portentous held me; but, familiar grown,
> I pleased, and with attractive graces won
> The most averse

Sin springs out of Satan's head – a strange birth indeed. Milton alludes here to a mythological story where Athena (ancient Greek goddess of wisdom, victory, and other things) sprung from Zeus' head. Who better than Satan to give birth to something as far from wisdom as sin? The passage says as much about Sin as it does about Satan and about Milton's relationship to ancient myth.The birth and the nature of sin are allegorically described here. Satan is the father of Sin. At first, Sin appears very disgusting to us, but when we have committed, it makes our conscience callous, and sin becomes quite attractive.

4.15.5 Parable

A tale designed to teach a moral lesson. Usually, as in the parables of Jesus in the New Testament, the story involves human beings whose actions are clarified by the concluding moral. The parable differs from allegory, in which the characters represent abstract qualities, and from fable, in which the moral is unstated because it is presumed to be self-evident. The following is a parable from the *New Testament.*

> A sower went out to sow his seed. And as he sowed, some fell along the path and was trampled underfoot, and the birds of the air devoured it. And some fell on the rock, and as it grew up, it withered away, because it had no moisture. And some fell among thorns, and the thorns grew up with it and choked it. And some fell into good soil and grew and yielded a hundredfold."

4.6 Literary Devices based on Association

When two objects or ideas are frequently found together, they became connected to each other in the mind in such a way that when we think of one of them, we are reminded of the other or the qualities of the other. This is known as association.

4.15.1 Metonymy

It is a figure of speech in which the name of one thing is substituted for that of another to which it has a certain relation. The different kinds of substitution used in metonym are the following:

a. The symbol of sign for the things symbolised:

He was raised to the *bench* (position of a judge)

He ascended the *throne* (symbol of soverignty)

b. The instrument or organ for the agent

The press (media) is called the fourth estate.

The pen (writer) is mightier than the sword (fighter).

c. The cause for the effect , or the effect for the cause

He was basking in the sun (sunshine).

Swiftly flies the feathered *death* (arrow).

d. The container for the things contained

He drank the fatal *cup* (contents of the cup.

The town (people of the town) rose in revolution.

e. The creator for his work

Baroque elements are found in Milton (Milton's work).

f. The place of production for the product

All Arabia (perfumes of Arabia) breathes from yonder box.—Pope

4.15.2 Synecdoche

A literary device in which the part stands for the whole or vice verse, but in fact, the whole or vice versa is meant. Synecdoche is found in the following varieties.

a. A part for the whole

Fourty hands (workers) were dismissed last month.

A fleet of twenty *sails* (ships).

b. The whole for a part:

Dust *thou* (the body) art, to dust returnest.

Wake the *purple year* (spring).—Gray

c. Species for the genus:

Silver and gold (riches) have I none.

Man must earn his *bread* (food) by the sweat of his brow.

d. The genus for a species:

Drink, pretty *creature* (lamb), drink!—Wordsworth

To tread a *measure* (dance) with you in the grass.—Shakespeare

e. Individual for the class

He is the *Nestor* (oldest man) of the village.

He is the *Newton* (greatest scientist) of this country.

f. The material for the thing made:

The prisoner was bound in *irons* (iron fetters).

Was it for this the *clay* (man) grew tell?

g. The abstract for the concrete:

There is the mixture of the *tiger* and the *ape* (tigerly and apish instincts) in the character of a Frenchman.

I see a *lily* (pale whiteness) on thy brow.—Keats

h. Concrete for the abstract:

There is a good deal of the *fox* (cunning) in his character.

And the village maidens lose the *rose* (redness).—Scott.

4.15.3 Hypallage of Transferred Epithet

It is a literary device by which a qualifying adjective which properly belongs to one word is transferred to another with which it is closely associated in the sentence. Thus, when one says that the prisoner was placed in the *condemned* cell, we transfer the epithet 'condemned' from 'the prisoner' who is condemned to the 'cell' where he is placed, e. g,

The ploughman homeward plods his weary way.—Gray's Elegy

He is engaged in a *dishonest* calling.

4.15.4 Symbol
4.15.5

A commonly used term in many disciplines, referring a person, place, object, or event comes to stand for some abstract idea or condition. As normally used in literary study, symbol suggests a similarity between the ordinary sense of reality and a moral or spiritual order. It differs from metaphor in that the connection between the subject and its referent is never explicit; it is left for the reader to discover. For example, the White Whale in Herman Melville's Moby-Dick (1851), the reader is never told what the whale specifically represents. The reader has to discover for himself the significance of the White Whale. A symbol radiates a range of shifting, fragile meanings, some specific, others infinite in their extension, aspects of existence that cannot be expressed using words. Another feature of the symbol is that, it shouldn't be an arbitrary intrusion into the test, but should have a function on the literal level of the story. In the above example, whatever the symbolic significance of whale, it is a whale which has a physical existence and has a role in the text as a literal whale.

4.15.6 Allusion

It is a reference within a literary text to some person, place, or event outside the text or some person, place or event outside the text. Allusions that refer to events more or less contemporary with the text are called *topical* allusions. Those referring to specific people are *personal* allusions. An example of a topical allusion is the reference of the drunken porter in *Macbeth* to "an equivocator … who committed treason enough for God's sake …" This is a reference to Father Henry Garnet, a Jesuit priest who justified equivocation (a form of lying) during his trial for treason in connection with the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. An example of personal allusion is William Butler Yeats's reference to "golden thighed Pythagoras" in his poem "Among School Children."

Brightness falls from the air,
Queens have died young and fair,
Dust hath closed Helen's eye.

--Thomas Nash: Litany in Time of Plague

In the lines above, there is an explicit allusion to Helen of Troy.

4.7 Literary Devices based on Difference

The following literary devices have the common characteristic of deriving their effect due to contrast or difference.

4.15.1 Antithesis

In this literary device, words and ideas opposite in meaning are set against each other in a balanced form for the sake of emphasis. For example, in the statement—"It is a blessing and nor a curse" the word 'blessing' itself conveys the idea implied in 'not a curse,' so that the latter expression may seem unnecessary. The explicit contrast makes the statement more forceful. White never appears as bright as when it is set against black, and both are, viewed together. Similarly, it is the darkness of the night which heightens the brilliance of a flash of lightning.

He was not a *master* but the *slave* of his speech.—Macaulay

United we stand—*divided* we *fall.*—Morris.

4.15.2 Paradox

A paradox is an apparent contradiction that asserts a truth. It is a frequent feature of religious language, as in the biblical injunction "The last shall be first" or "Everything I say is a life" or Wordsworth's line "The Child is father of the Man." In new criticism, paradox represents a central feature of all poetry. In the view of Cleanth Brooks, the language of a poem is profoundly
paradoxical in its emphasis on the reconciliation of opposites. According to Brooks,
"the truth which the poet utters can be approached only in terms of paradox."

4.15.3 Oxymoron

If a paradoxical statement conjoins two terms that in ordinary usage are contraries, it is called an oxymoron; an example is Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "O Death in life, the days that are no more" or in Milton's "darkness visible." In other words, the two contradictory terms should be juxtaposed or placed side by side.

4.15.4 Epigram

In the words of Prof. Bain, the epigram "is an apparent contradiction in language which, by causing a temporary shock, rouses our attention to some important meaning underneath." In other words, an Epigram involves a contradiction which however, is only apparent and not real. An epigram appears to be superficial, but at a closer look it embodies a deeper meaning.

In the midst of *life* we are in *death.*

Facts are a very inferior from of *fiction.*—Virginia Woolf

4.15.5 Climax

The word climax literally means a ladder. It is a literary device in which a series of words, ideas images or sentiments are arranged in an ascending order of importance so that the most forceful one comes last of all.

Black it stood as *Night*, *fierce as ten Furies*, *terrible* as Hell.—Milton.

How has expectation darkened into *anxiety, anxiety* into *dread,* and *dread* into *despair*!—Irving.

4.15.6 Anti-climax or Bathos

It is a literary device which consists of sudden decline from lofty to trivial thoughts. The effect achieved is that of the ludicrous. The literary device like climax depends on its effect by the difference in importance between the successive ideas presented by it.

Ye Gods! annihilate but Space and Time,
And make two lovers happy.—Alexander Pope

A man so various, that she seem'd to be
Not one, but *all mankind's epitome*;
Who, in the course of one revolving moon,
Was *lawyer, statesman, fiddler, and buffoon.*—Dryden.

4.15.7 Condensed Sentence

This literary device consists in bringing together ideas so different that each of them should normally receive a separate sentence. It is generally used for comic purposes. The comic effect is produced by the proximity of incongruous ideas; e. g.,

She *dropped* a *tear* and her *pocket-handkerchief.*—Dickens

Milton, having now tasted the honey of public employment would not *return* to *hunger* and *philosophy.*—Johnson

4.8 Literary Devices based on Indirectness

The following literary devices do not go straight to the points but state or describe certain things in an indirect manner.

4.15.1 Innuendo

It is a literary device which consists of an indirect remark or reference, usually implying something derogatory or insinuating. In other words, by this literary device the writer or speaker makes a damaging remark about the character or reputation of a person or thing in an indirect manner. But though it is merely hinted at and not directly stated, it is not so difficult for the reader or listener to get at the true meaning of the words used; e.g. ,

He was born of rich *but* honest parents.

In the above example, the use of 'but' instead of 'and' indirectly suggests that rich men are not generally honest.

An art critic being asked to give his opinion on a portrait simply remarked, "O what a splendid frame!"

4.15.2 Irony

Irony is a literary device in which the writer or speaker uses word or words, the natural meaning of which is the very opposite of what is intended to be expressed. By this figure, therefore, we say one thing when we mean another. By this figure the writer or speaker pretends to admire a person or a thing while his real object is to put him or the thing into ridicule. But it is the tone of his voice or the form of words he uses that shows what he intends to say.

Yet Brutus says he was ambitious
And Brutus is an *honourable man.*—Shakespeare

In the above lines, the speaker has proved that Caesar was not ambitious and yet when Brutus called him ambitious, he couldn't be regarded as an honourable man, but a self-seeking liar.

A *very fine friend* you were to forsake me in my trouble.

Here the words, 'fine friend' actually mean 'insincere friend.' Really speaking a man who leaves his friend in a difficult situation cannot be friend at all.

4.15.3 Periphrasis

In this literary device, a writer or speaker describes a thing or idea in a indirect and round about way instead of stating it directly. This is commonly used to either avoid low, commonplace or

and trivial terms replacing them by elegant substitutes or to produce comic effect by a new trick of style.

The orbed maiden with white fire laden. (Moon) –Shelley

Moving isles of winter. (ice-bergs) –Tennyson

4.15.4 Euphemism

It is a literary device which is used to soften down a harsh disagreeable expression. In other words, it is a way of stating something offensive in an agreeable manner which doesn't offends. Euphemism often resorted due to demands of courtesy as the frank and direct mention of a thing might recall the grief of a man or hurt his sensibility, and sometimes by a sense of decorum, when a direct statement might so go beyond the bound of propriety and decency.

Saddam Hussein *perished on the scaffold.* (was hanged till death)

The tradesman has stopped payment. (has become bankrupt)

4.9 Literary Devices based on Imagination

Under the influence of emotions man sometimes imagines an inanimate object or an abstract idea to be living being or attributes some emotion or feeling to an inanimate object or makes an impassioned address to either an abstract idea or an inanimate object. or makes an impassioned address either an abstract idea or an inanimate object as if it is a living being present before him or exaggerates the qualities or drawbacks of a person or a thing out of excess of emotion and so on. Each of these varieties of expression is a literary device based on imagination.

4.15.1 Personification

It is a literary device by which either an inanimate object or an abstract idea is represented as a person. In other words, by this device a thing, quality, or idea is spoken as though it were endowed with life or with human attributes or feelings. Personification is the chief tool of allegory.

Death lays his icy hands on kings.

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain,
And drinks and gapes for drink again.

4.15.2 Apostrophe

A literary device in which a speaker turns from the audience to address an absent person or abstract idea. It differs from a soliloquy in that the speaker of an apostrophe need not be alone on the stage.

An example occurs in the second act of Hamlet, when the Prince turns from a conversation with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern to declare:

What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god: the beauty of the world,
the paragon of animals—and yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust?

The apostrophe is also a chief tool of lyric poetry, as in William Blake's poem "Tyger":

Tyger, tyger, burning bright
In the forest of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

4.15.3 Vision

In this literary device the writer or speaker describe some incident or action of the past or anticipated future in such detailed and vivid manner as if it were happening before the writer or speaker's eyes. Usually, the present tense is used in this literary device instead of past or future.

Even now, methinks, as pondering here I stand
I see the rural virtues leave the land.—Goldsmith : The Deserted Village

Hark! forth from the abys a voice proceeds
Along low distant murmur of dread sound.—Byron

4.15.4 Hyperbole

The word hyperbole literally means overshooting or exaggeration. As a literary device, it is the deliberate overstatement or exaggeration of fact used for producing a serious or comic effect. As we all know we are seldom satisfied with things as they are. The hyperbole is the manifestation of this human tendency.

Nor poppy nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world
Shall ever medicine thee to that sweep sleep
Which thou ow'dst yesterday.—Shakespeare: Othello

In the above lines Iago exaggerates the distressed mind of Othello after he has planted the seed of suspicion about the fidelity of his wife Desdemona.

Drink to me only with thine eyes,
And I will pledge with mine:
Or leave a kiss but in the cup,
And I'll not look for wine.—Ben Jonson

In the above lines, Ben Jonson pays compliments to his lady gallantly in highly exaggerated and overstated lines.

4.10 Let Us Sum Up

4.11 Further Readings

Richard Lanham's A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms

Edward P. J. Corbett's Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student.

Bernard Marie Dupriez's A Dictionary of Literary Devices: Gradus, A-Z

M. H. Abrams' A Glossary of *Literary Terms*

Unit-V: Literary Forms: Ballad, Comedy, Elegy, Epic, Novel, Ode, Romance, Sonnet, Tragedy, Tragicomedy, and The Short Story

5.1 Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Ballad

5.4 Comedy

5.5 Elegy

5.6 Epic

5.7 Novel

5.8 Ode

5.9 Romance

5.10 Sonnet

5.11 Tragedy

5.12 Tragicomedy

5.13 The Short Story

5.14 Let Us Sum Up

5.15 Suggested Reading

5.1 Objectives

In this unit we are going to discuss literary forms such as ballad, sonnet, tragedy, elegy, novel etc. By the end of this unit, you will be able to recognise these literary forms and appreciate their chief characteristics.

5.2 Introduction

In Unit-II we discussed three genres: poetry, prose and drama; which are the broadest categories of composition. The term genre also refers to the most basic modes of literary art: lyric (expressive), narrative (storytelling) and dramatic (presentation through enactment). The genre lyric in turn incorporates may literary forms or sub-genres of poetry, e.g., song, ode, ballad, elegy, sonnet. Dramatic poetry includes comedy, tragedy, melodrama, and mixtures like tragicomedy. Although, sometimes genre and literary forms are used interchangeably, it is useful to preserve the term genre for broad and general categories (poetry, prose, drama or lyric, narrative, dramatic) and form for narrow and discrete types (sonnet, ballad, ode). Nevertheless, in general literary discourse genre always has a broader and general connotation whereas form has a narrow and specific reference.

Form is one of the most frequently encountered terms in literary criticism. Etymologically, the word has descended from the Latin word "forma," which meant "an idea. In its original sense, the form of a work is the principle which determines how a work is ordered and structured. Most critics agree that "form" is not simply a fixed container, in which an author, metaphorically speaking, pours his imaginative "content" of his work. According to the New Critics, "form" and "content" are intrinsically and organically linked together; and that any attempt to separate "form" and "content" would constitute a "heresy of paraphrase."

5.3 Ballad

Ballad is a narrative poem or song which tells a popular story usually derived from a tragic event in local history or legend in a direct and dramatic style. Ballads are of two types: the folk ballad (also known as popular ballad or traditional ballad) and the literary ballad, the difference between the two being that fold ballads are originally oral forms (though collected and written down later by scholars) whereas literary ballads are written poems in imitation of the folk ballads. The folk ballad is basically a folk song which tells a story. The folk ballad is usually anonymous, that, its author is unknown. Since, fold ballads are orally transmitted and the singers wittingly or unwittingly introduce changes in the text and the tune, as a result, fold ballads exist in many variant forms.

The ballad actually belongs to folk literature. It was sung from village to village, to the accompaniment of a harp or a fiddle, by a strolling singer or bands of singer, who earned a living in this way. Etymologically, Ballad means a dancing-song. Hence, in its earliest forms, the song must have been accompanied by a crude tribal dance, as its very name seems to imply. Before they were collected and put in print, ballads were handed down by oral tradition, each successive generation or locality making its own alterations to suit contemporary or local contexts. Bishop Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry*, published in 1765, is one such collection.

The stanza most often used in ballad is called **ballad stanza** which is a quatrain (stanza of four lines) in alternating four-stress and three-stress lines with the second and fourth lines rhyming. In other words, the first and the third lines of a ballad stanza are tetrameter whereas the second and the fourth line are in trimester and the four lines rhyme *abcb.*

The first stanza of the literary ballad “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” by Samuel Taylor Coleridge exemplifies the conventionally abrupt and sudden opening and the third-person, and the curt description of setting and action, and the sharp transition and minimal dialogue of the ballad form.

> It is an ancient Mariner,
>
> And he stoppeth one of three.
>
> ‘By they long beard and glittering eye,
>
> Now wherefore stopp’st thou me?

Since ballads were originally sung and orally transmitted rather than read, they used many devices to aid memory and recitation: (1) stock phrases like “lily-white-hand” and “mild-white-steed” (2) stanzaic refrain, and (3) incremental repetition, which constitute repetition of a line or stanza but with gradual additions that advances the story.

The subjects of ballads are events like a memorable feud, a thrilling adventure, a family disaster, love and war etc. The story is usually fierce and tragic and frequently introduces the supernatural.

Some popular folk ballads are “Chevy Chase,” “The Wife of Usher’s Well,””’Sir Patrick Spens,” “Edward,” “Lord Randall,” “Child Waters,” “Lord Thomas and Fair Annet.” The literary ballad, is a narrative poem written in deliberate imitation of the from, language, and spirit of the

traditional ballad. In the eighteenth century in Germany, many literary ballads were written: G. A. Burger's "Lenore" (1774) and Goethe's "Erlkonig" (1782). In England, it were the romantic poets who attempted ballads. Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote "Rime of the Ancient Mariner," Walter Scott wrote "Proud Maisie," and Keats' "La Belle Dame sans Merci."

5.4 Comedy

Comedy is a work of literature in which the content is selected and arranged primarily to amuse the audience. It is one of the two broad categories into which drama has been divided from the earliest times; the other being tragedy. Tragedy deals with the serious side of life, whereas comedy deals with the lighter side of life. Tragedy aims at inspiring us with pity and fear, while comedy aims at evoking our laughter. In tragedy the circumstances impel the characters towards an unhappy fate. In comedy, though the characters may have to endure unkind circumstances temporarily, all comes right at the end.

In comedy, the characters and their actions engage our pleasurable attention rather than our deep concern. The audience is assured that no great catastrophe will occurs, and usually the action turns out happily at the end for the chief characters. Comedy usually deals with people of less importance. The rules of decorum reserved tragedy for characters for high birth and station such as kings, princes and nobles and comedy for lowly subjects and common folk.

The atmosphere of a comedy is mirthful and light. The audience is moved by comedy to laughter whether it is thoughtful laughter or unalloyed mirth. The term usually refers to plays on the stage or motion pictures. However, the comic form can occur in prose fiction and narrative poetry.

Comedy may be classical or Romantic in structure depending on whether it observes or ignores the Classical rules explained above. Ben Jonson and the Restoration playwrights attempted the classical form of comedy. Romantic comedy was developed by Elizabethan dramatists on the

model of prose romances which represented a love affair that involves a beautiful heroine; the course of this love doesn't run smooth, yet overcomes all difficulties to end in a happy union. Many of the boy-meets-girl plots of later writers are instances of romantic comedy.

Satiric comedy is a form of comedy which ridicules political policies, deviations from the normative order of society, and philosophical principles. The comedies obtain their effect by making ridiculous the concerned political policies, philosophical doctrines and the people who violate standards of society. The Greek master of this form of comedy was Aristophanes c. 450-c. 385 B.C. Aristophanes' plays ridiculed political, philosophical, and literary matters of his age. In *The Clouds* 423 B.C. Aristophanes ridiculed Socrates as a fraud and atheist. His last play *Plutus* 388 B.C. is a parody and satire of classical myth. Another form of satiric comedy is the Humours Comedy of Ben Jonson. Jonson called it "corrective comedy." This type of comedy mocked eccentricity which was supposed to be due to an excess of one of the four humours or natural fluids of the body: blood, phlegm, choler (or yellow bile) and melancholy (or black bile)—whose temperament or mixture was held to determine both a person's physical condition and character type. An imbalance of one or another humour in a temperament was believed to produce four kinds of dispositions: sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric and melancholic. Characters in Jonson's comedy of humours possess a characteristic eccentricity due to his preponderant humour. Ben Jonson mocks the greed and cunning of the swindlers as well as the equal greed and gullibility of their victims in *Volpone* and *The Alchemist.*

The comedy of manners developed in the Restoration period in England. This form of comedy relies on the dazzling wit, and sparkle of the dialogue which often takes the form of repartee or a

ingenuous conversational give-and-take almost constituting a verbal fencing match. Comedy of manners usually dealt with the relations and schemes of men and women living in sophisticated upper-class society in which jealous husbands, conniving rivals, foppish dandies and cunning rakes try to outmanoeuvre each other. Some excellent examples are William Congreve's *The Way of the World* and William Wycherley's *The Country Wife.*

Farce is a type of comedy that aims at entertaining the audience through situations that are highly exaggerated, extravagant, and improbable. Farce often uses called physical humour, or deliberate absurdity or nonsense to incite the audience to simple non-intellectual laughter or "belly laughs." Farce is a common component in the theatre of the absurd. Farcical episodes such as the knockabout scenes are found in Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor.*

5.5 Elegy

Elegy is a lyric poem on the subject of death of an individual or on the theme of mortality in general. Sometimes elegies also meditate on the subject matter of change and loss. In Greek and Roman literature elegy meant any poem which was written in elegiac meter that is, alternating hexameter and pentameter lines. The term elegy is also applied to Anglo-Saxon poems such as such as “The Wanderer” and the “The Seafarer” which deal with the transitory nature of earthly objects. Famous examples are John Milton’s elegy dedicated to the memory of Edard King “Lycidas,” Thomas Gray’s meditations on mortality in “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard” (1750), Percy Bysshe Shelley elegy on the death of John Keats *Adonais* (1821)Alfred, Lord Tennyson’s elegy on the death of his friend Arthur Hallam *In Memoriam* (1880), Mathew Arnold’s poem to commemorate his dead friend Arthur Hugh Clough “Thyrsis” (1865).

An important subtype of the elegy is the pastoral elegy which involves the representation of the dead person as well as the speaker of the elegy as shepherds. Notable examples are John Milton’s *Lycidas* (1637) and Percy Bysshe Shelley’s Adonias (1821). Pastoral elegy has certain elaborate conventions similar to the epic such as the invocation of the muse and reference to figures of classical mythology. Usually, all natural objects join the speaker shepherd in mourning the shepheard’s death. The mourner charges with negligence the guardians of the dead shepheard. The mourners join together and take out a procession. The poet raises issues of justice of fate and providence with a closing consolation.

5.6 Epic

An epic is long narrative poem which deals with a heroic figure or group, on events of immense significance that form the cultural history of a nation or a tribe. It is usually told in a formal and elevated style. In a epic, the fate of group, tribe, or nation depend on the actions of the hero of the epic.

Two classic examples of the Epic in European literature are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by the ancient Greek poet Homer. These two poems have served as models for later poets have attempted epics.

Epics, like Ballads, are distinguished into two types: traditional epics and literary epics. Traditional epics are also called "folk epics" or "primary epics." Traditional epics are written versions of what were once oral poems about a tribal or national hero in a warlike age. Notable traditional epics *Iliad* and *Odyssey* of Homer, the Anglo-Saxon *Beowulf;* the French *Chanson de Roland* and the Spanish *Poema del Cid;* and the German epic *Nibelungenlied*. The story of the *Iliad,* for instance, existed as folklore before Homer collected its scattered fragments and put it in one work. The evens of the Epic may have been exaggerated by tradition and by the poet's imagination, but some of them undoubtedly belong to real history.

Literary epics, like literary ballads, were composed by individual poetic craftsmen in deliberate imitation of the traditional form. Virgil's Latin epic the *Aeneid* is a literary epic which in turn served the chief model for Milton's literary epic *Paradise Lost* (1667).

In epics the hero or heroine is generally a figure of national or cosmic, on whose actions depend the fortune of a nation, tribe, universe or the human race. The Epic hero of *Iliad* Achilles is the son of the sea-nymph Thetis. Adam and Eve in Milton's *Paradise Lost* are progenitors of the entire human race. The setting of the epic is huge in scale and may span the world or the universe. In *Iliad* Odysseus wanders over the whole world and in *Paradise Lost* the whole universe is the setting for the action. The action of an epic is about supernatural and superhuman deeds in battles, for example, Achilles' feats in the Trojan War or Satan's revolt. The action of the epic is often intervened by gods and other supernatural agencies. An epic is narrated not in ordinary or common speech but in a grand ceremonial style befitting the heroic subject and action.

Conventions play an important role in epics. These conventions are called epic conventions because they are peculiar to the epic and usually do not occur in other types of poetry. These technique and devices of Homer were imitated by Virgil and by later epic poets:

(1) The topic (called argument or proposition in the parlance of Epic) of the Epic is explicitly announced in the first few lines. Virgil's *Aeneid* and Milton's *Paradise Lost* being with a proposition or argument. Milton's *Paradise Lost* opening paragraph contains both the proposition as well as the invocation.

Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit

Of that forbidden tree whose mortal taste

Brought death into the World, and all our woe,

With loss of Eden, till one greater Man

Restore us, and regain the blissful seat,

Sing, Heavenly Muse, that, on the secret top

Of Oreb, or of Sinai, didst inspire

That shepherd who first taught the chosen seed

In the beginning how the heavens and earth

Rose out of Chaos: or, if Sion hill

Delight thee more, and Siloa's brook that flowed

Fast by the oracle of God, I thence

Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,

That with no middle flight intends to soar

Above th' Aonian mount, while it pursues

Things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme.

And chiefly thou, O Spirit, that dost prefer

Before all temples th' upright heart and pure,

Instruct me, for thou know'st; thou from the first

Wast present, and, with mighty wings outspread,

Dove-like sat'st brooding on the vast Abyss,

And mad'st it pregnant: what in me is dark

Illumine, what is low raise and support;

That, to the height of this great argument,

I may assert Eternal Providence,

And justify the ways of God to men.

(2) Similar to Aristotelian tragedy, the narrative of an epic starts **in medias res** ("in the middle of things") not "in the beginning of things." In other words, the narrative begins at a critical point in the action. Just as the Sophocles' Greek play *Oedipus Tyrannus* begins not with the birth of Oedipus, but when at a critical point in the life of Oedipus when he is a king of Thebes and is facing a dilemma, Milton's *Paradise Lost* begins not in heaven but in hell where the fallen angels gather their strength and decide to take revenge for their ouster from heaven.

(3) Epics make profuse use of **epic catalogues** or a long descriptive list of names, objects and places in order to suggest its wide scope and significance. In *Paradise Lost* Lines 375-54, there is an epic catalogues of fallen angels and demons.

(4) Epics contain **epic similies** or elaborate or sustained comparisons beyond the points of similarities between the two subjects or objects compared. Like all epic conventions this convention was imitated by Virgil and Milton from Homer. A notable example is the Milton's epic simile comparison of the fallen angels movement toward Pandemonium to the swarming of bees:

As bees

In spring-time, when the Sun with Taurus rides.

Pour forth their populous youth about the hive

In clusters; they among fresh dews and flowers

Fly to and fro, or on the smoothed plank,

The suburb of their straw-built citadel,

New rubbed with balm, expatiate, and confer

Their state-affairs: so thick the airy crowd

Swarmed and were straitened;...

(5) The Epic also employs **Homeric epithets**, that is, a term or phrase, sometimes quite lengthy, applied again and again to a particular person, place, or thing. There are usually adjectival terms and is generally a compound of two words like “fleet-footed Achilles,” “bolt-hurling Zeus.”

Epics are very long poems. Homer’s *Illiad* and *Odyssey* consist, respectively, of 15, 693 and 12, 105 lines; whereas Milton’s *Paradise Lost* consist of over 10, 000 lines. Epics are usually divided into books, usually twelve in number. *Illiad* and the *Odyssey* have twenty-four books whereas Virgil’s *Aeneid and* Milton’s *Paradise Lost* consists of twelve books.

5.7 Novel

The term novel is usually applied to a book-length fictional narrative written in prose. As an extended work of fiction, the novel is differentiated from the short story and a work of middle length called a novella. The significance of magnitude lies in that it allows a greater variety of characters, greater complication of plots and greater development of setting and exploration of character and motives than shorter fictional works like a short story or a novella. Henry Fielding described the novel as a comic epic in prose. It is in fact a loose and amorphous literary art which gives a lot of freedom for a fuller and richer representation of real life and character than any other form, primarily by virtue of its lack of limitations of length and style which are present in other literary forms. According to Worsfold, the novel as a form combines "in itself the creations of poetry with the details of history and the generalised experience of philosophy, in a manner unattempted by any previous effort of human genious."

Speaking historically, the novel originated from the prose romance and then the picaresque prose fiction. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* is an early example of the form. The English novel came of age in the 18th century, setting a standard which was imitated throughout Europe. Daniel Defoe and his work *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) is considered to the first English novelist and novel respectively. In the 19th century the novel came into its won as the dominant mode of literature. Affiliated to modes of representations such as realism and naturalism, the novel achieved its high watermark in France in the work of Honore de Balzac, Gustave Flaubert, Stendahl, and Emile Zola; in Russia with Alexander Pushkin, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, an Leo Tostory; in England with Jane Austen, Sir Walter Scott, William Makepeace Thackeray, Charles Dickens,

George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy; and in the United States, with James Fenimore Cooper, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Herman Melville, Mark Twain and Henry James.

In the early 20th century the novel saw formal innovations of **interior monologue**, **stream of consciousness**, **free indirect style** and frank and candid expression of sexuality and social oppression. James Joyce, Marcel Proust, Franz Kafka, Tomas Mann, Virginia Woolf, William Faulkner, and D. H. Lawrence revitalised and enhanced the appeal of the novel in the new century.

In most European languages the term for the novel is **roman**, which is derived from the medieval term, the *romance*, a fantastic tale of love and adventure. In 1350 Boccaccio wrote a famous collection of love stores in prose entitled the *Decameron.* Similar short stories are generally called in Italian "novelle." The term originally meant a "new story" but gradually came to signify a story in prose and distinguished from a story in verse, which continued to be called a romance. However, now that prose has become the almost universal medium of narrative, the term "romance" today implies a story or series of stories of the legendary past. Thomas Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* is a notable example.

A novel, like a play, has a plot, and to a greater or lesser extent its characters reveal themselves and their motives in dialogue or narration. There difference between the art of the novel and the drama lies in that the dramatist can make the audience see and hear for themselves, whereas the novelist can describe what could never be presented on any stage. The novel offers unlimited variations and combinations to the novelist. The novelist can tell us what is happening, explain it,

and if he so wishes, give us his won comments on it. Further, his story need not be symmetrical in exposition, crisis, and denouement. For instance, it may being with a crisis and the rest of the book may be devoted to depicting how that crisis arose; n the other extreme it may work patiently up to a climax in its very last pages. Quite similar to lyric poetry, in any serious novel the author's personality is another important factor. In the words of W. H. Hudson, "directly or indirectly, and whether the writer himself is conscious of it or not, every novel must necessarily present a certain view of life and some of the problems of life; that is, it must so exhibit incidents, characters, passions, motives, as to reveal more or less distinctly the way in which the author looks out upon the world and his general attitude towards it."

The early novels were narratives of action. In modern novels, the action id more internal, that is, the psychology and mental processes of the characters is subordinate to outward action. In many modern novels the central theme is the mental and spiritual development of the characters rather than their physical adventures.

For convenience in analyzing the forms of the novel, critics often place them in categories. The major categories are picaresque novels, historical novels, gothic novels, epistolary novels, and *bildungsroman*. The **picaresque novel** ,in the strict sense, is a novel with a picaroon (Spanish, picaro: a rogue or scoundrel) as its hero or heroine, usually recounting his or her escapades in a first-person narrative marked by its episodic structure and realistic low-life descriptions. The picaroon is often a quick-witted servant who takes up with a succession of employers and moves from one situation to another. Cervantes' *Don Quixote* (1605), Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*

(1749), and Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) are examples of novels that are referred to as being wholly or partly picaresque in this sense.

A **historical novel**, is a novel in which the action takes place during a specific historical period well before the time of writing (often one or two generations before, sometimes several centuries), and in which some attempt is made to depict accurately the customs and mentality of the period. It may include fictional or historical characters, or a mix of both. The central character-real or imagined-is usually subject to divided loyalties within a larger historic conflict of which readers know the outcome. Examples of historical novels are Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819), set in the period of Norman domination of the Saxons at the time of Richard I; Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), in Paris and London during the French Revolution; George Eliot's *Romola* (1863), in Florence during the Renaissance; Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869), during Napoleon's invasion of Russia.

Gothic novel or Gothic romance is a story of terror and suspense, usually set in a gloomy old castle or monastery (hence 'Gothic', a term applied to medieval architecture and thus associated in the 18th century with superstition). It was inaugurated by Horace Walpole’s The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story in 1764. This type of fiction employs mystery, terror or horror, suspense, and the supernatural for the simple purpose of scaring the wits out of its readers. The traditional setting, beginning with Walpole’s The Castle of Otranto, is a medieval castle, replete with secret passages, torch lit dungeons, and an occasional bat. The traditional plot, as in Anne Radcliffe’s The Mysteries of Udolpho, involves sufferings imposed on a beautiful heroine by a cruel and lustful villain beset by dark shadows, strange noises, and a candle that keeps blowing out. She was careful to explain away apparently supernatural occurrences in her stories. These early gothic novels aimed at instilling terror. Later examples of the form, such as Matthew

Lewis's The Monk, moved beyond terror to horror, invoking demons, ghosts, and other supernatural paraphernalia in gory and subliminally erotic detail.

Epistolary novel is a novel written in the form of a series of letters exchanged among the characters of the story, with extracts from their journals sometimes included. Epistolary fiction dates back to the early development of the English novel, particularly the work of Samuel Richardson, whose Pamela (1740) and Clarissa (1747–48) established its basic forms. In Pamela the letters are written by the major character, recording her experiences; in Clarissa a number of characters exchange letters. Richardson's success created a vogue of epistolary fi ction in the late 18th century. The appeal of the epistolary form was that it combined simple, direct language with the opportunity to explore the emotions of the characters. In recent years the epistolary form has been revived to the extent that a significant portion of a novel may be given over to an exchange of letters—notably, in John Barth's Letters (1979), Alice Walker's The Color Purple (1982), and A. S. Byatt's Possession (1990).

Bildungsroman, also known as education novel, is a German term which means "novel of formation or education." The theme of these novels is the development of the protagonist's mind and character moving from childhood to maturity. Prominent examples include Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774), Charles Dickens's *David Copperfield* (1849–50), James Joyce's *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1916), and Günter Grass's *The Tin Drum* (1959).

5.8 Romance

A romance is a fictional narrative which tells improbable adventures of larger-than life characters in remote and exotic places. The tendency of romance is opposite to realism. In the words of Northrop Frye "the romance is nearest of all literary forms to the wish-fulfillment dream…" The early prominent model is the medieval romance, which celebrates the ideal of chivalry and courtly love, as represented in the tales of King Arthur's knights and Charlemagne of France. However, the term today embraces all types of improbable and exotic fiction from the gothic novel and escapist love story to the scientific romances. Lengthy and elaborate romances were written during the Renaissance such as Ludovico Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1532), Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene,* and Sir Philip Sidney's prose

romance *Arcadia* (1590). Cervante's *Don Quixote (1605)* parodies some of the conventions of the romances.

Shakespeare contributed to the romance with his plays *Pericles*, *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest.* These plays employ improbable events, strange coincidences, and an episodic structure which are central to the romance form. Romance was revived in verse form in the Romantic age. The enchanted world which is characteristic of the genre is exemplified in the opening of Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Kubla Khan" (1816):

In Xanadu did Kubla Khan

A stately pleasure dome decree:

Where Alph, the sacred river, ran

Through caverns measureless to man

Down to a sunless sea.

Similar outstanding examples of verse romances are John Keat's "The Eve of St. Agnes", Alfred Lord Tennyson's *Idylls of the King,* and William Morris's *Earthly Paradise.* These works invoke a past which is implicitly contrasted to urban, industrial, 19th-century England, a period in which the values of romance never seemed more vulnerable.

Romance appears in yet another way in 19th century fiction in works such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's novel *The House of the Seven Gables: A Romance.* In the words of Nathaniel Hawthorne, "When a writer calls his work a Romance, it need hardly be observed that he wishes to proclaim a certain latitude. . . which he would not have felt himself entitled to assume had he professed to be writing a novel." In the 20th century romance was identified with stories in which love forms the central theme.

5.9 Sonnet

The sonnet is one stanza lyric poem consisting of fourteen lines. The lines are iambic pentameter that is, consisting of five feet, each feet consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable in each feat. The rhyme scheme is the most unique element of a sonnet. The sonnet is characterised by a rigid and intricate rhyme scheme. There are two major rhyme patterns in sonnets in the English language.

(a) The Petrarchan sonnet is named after the fourteenth century Italian poet Petrarch. It is also known as Italian sonnet. It consists of two major part: an **octave** of eight lines which rhymes *abbaabba* followed by a **sestet** of six lines rhyming *cdecde or cdccdc.* The octave states the general subject of the poem, the basic idea or emotion, and the sestet offers a resolution. The sonnets written by Petrarch himself are addressed to his unattainable beloved, Laura. Petrarch's sonnets were popular throughout Europe. Petrarch's sonnets were first imitated in England. The English sonneteers imitated both the stanza form as well as the subject matter, that is, the hopes and pains of an adoring male lover for an unattainable beloved. Sir Thomas Wyatt introduced the sonnet in England. The Petrarchan model was later imitated by Milton, Wordsworth, Christina Rossetti, D. G. Rossetti. These sonneteers relaxed the rigidity of the Petrarchan rhyme pattern by introducing a new pair of rhymes in the second four lines of the octace. William Wordsworth's "London, 1802" is an example of a Petrarchan sonnet.

Milton! thou shouldst be living at this hour	a
England hath need of thee: she is a fen	b
Of stagnant waters: altar, sword, and pen,	b
Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower,	a
Have forfeited their ancient English dower	a
Of inward happiness. We are selfish men;	b
Oh! raise us up, return to us again;	b
And give us manners, virtue, freedom, power.	a

Octave - Introduces the theme or problem

Thy soul was like a Star, and dwelt apart;	c
Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea:	d
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free,	d
So didst thou travel on life's common way ,	e
In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart	c
The lowliest duties on herself did lay.	e

Sestet - Solves the problem

(b) The English sonnet is otherwise known as the Shakespearean sonnet after its greatest practitioner William Wordsworth. The Shakespearean form consists of three quatrains rhyming *ababcdcdefef* with a final couplet rhyming *gg*. The English sonnet was developed by the Earl of Surrey. Although the Shakespearean form is the dominant form of the English sonnet, Spenser used a variant which has had some followers. The

Spenserian sonnet has each quatrain linked to the next by a continuing rhyme: *abab bcbc cdcd ee.*

In the 16th century England, the fashion for sonnet took the form known as the sonnet sequence. A *sonnet sequence* is a series of sonnets that trace the development of the relationship between the poet and his idealized beloved. However, Shakespeare departed from this convention in his sequence of 154 sonnets; of which 1 through 126 are addressed to a young man and the remainder is addressed to a "dark lady. John Donne broke with the sonneteering tradition of composing sonnets on the theme of love, and composed "Holy Sonnet" on religious themes. In the seventeenth century, Milton expanded the range of the sonnet to embrace matters of serious concern. The sonnet has remained a popular form through the ages till today, except in the English Augustan Age. In the nineteenth century, Wordsworth, Keats, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Christina Rossetti and Dante Gabriel Rossetti, Edwin Arlington Robinson, Edna St. Vincent Millay, W. B. Yeats, Robert Frost, W.H. Auden, and Dylan Thomas have been practitioners of sonnets.

The popularity of the sonnet lies in its stanza form which is long enough to permit a fairly complex lyric development and yet short and so exigent in its rhymes as to pose a challenge to the artistic ingenuity of the poet. On the whole the rhyme scheme of the Petrarchan sonnet favours the structure of a statement of problem, situation, or incident in the octave, with a resolution in the sestet. The English form also uses a similar division of the content, but often presents a repetition of a statement in each of the three quatrains with some variation. The most peculiar characteristic of the sonnet is its couplet which usually occurs in the form of an epigram.

5.10 Tragedy

A type of literature that represents the downfall of the protagonist (the chief character). Tragedy is rooted in the human desire to find value in human mortality. The first definition of tragedy is found in *Poetics*, the fourth century B.C. treatise of Aristotle. Aristotle founded his theory tragedy on the tragic works of Greek dramatics such as Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Aristotle defined tragedy as "an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish its *katharsis* of such emotions. . . . Every Tragedy, therefore, must have six parts, which parts determine its quality—namely, Plot, Characters, Diction, Thought, Spectacle, Melody." According to Aristotle the dramatic medium is most suited to tragedy than the narrative; this is because tragedy "shows" rather than "tells." Aristotle claims that tragedy is more a higher entity thn history because history merely relates what has happened whereas tragedy shows what may happen or what is possible according to he "law of probability and necessity." In other words, history deals with the particular, whereas tragedy deals with the universal.

The plot is, according to Aristotle, of primary importance in a tragedy. In its simplest sense, plot is the "arrangement of the incidents." Tightly constructed cause-and-effect plot is superior than plots which are loose and episodic. Character is second place in importance. In a perfect tragedy, character will support the plot, that is, personal motivations will be intricately connected according to the principle of cause-and-effect producing pity and fear in the audience. The tragic hero should be renowned and prosperous in order that his change of fortune can be from good to bad. Further, that this change "should come about as the result, not of vice, but of some great error or frailty in a character." A plot like this will generate pity and fear in the audience, for "pity is aroused by in merited misfortune, fear by the misfortune of a man like ourselves." The used by Aristotle here is **hamartia**, often translated as "trafic flaw." The term has

been a subject of debate among critics. Modern critics consider that the meaning of "**hamartia**" is closer to "error" than "tragic flaw." A common form of hamartia in Greek tragedies was **hubris** or "pride." In Sophocles' *Oedipus* Tyrranus, the tragic hero Oedipus moves the audience to pity for he is not an evil man. In other words, he doesn't intentionally kill his father and marry his mother and cause the plague in Thebes. In fact, he runs away from his parents in order to avoid this misfortune. At the end, his misfortune is a lot greater than he deserves. Oedipus also moves the audience to fear for such misfortune can also occur to ordinary people.

Aristotle says very little about thought. The characteristic fourth in importance is diction. Regarding diction, Aristotle considers command of metaphor, the most important. In importance, song is fifth which refers to the musical element of the chorus. The element of tragedy last in importance is spectacle which basically refers to stagecraft and costume.

Katharsis (purgation, purification or clarification) is the end of tragedy. This is another Aristotelian which has been the bone of contention among critics and translator of Aristotle. Some critics interpret it as meaning "purging." In this sense, the term is used as medical metaphor. Tragedy arouses the emotions of pity and fear and purges away the excess to reduce these passions to balanced proportions.

Famous Greek tragedians are Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides. Seneca's plays are the sole example of tragedy in Roman literature. The influence of Senecan tragedies is seen in the five-act structure and the use of scenes of horror and mutilation. The tragedy known to cause the highest pity and fear is Shakespeare's *King Lear,* which shows a disproportion in scale between the protagonist's error and his downfall. In the 17th century plays of Pierre Corneille and Jean Racine were major contributions to tragedy. In the 19th century the most important contributions to tragedy were made in Germany and Scandinavia; for example, the historical tragedies of *Mary Stuart* (1800), and Goethe's *Faust Part I*

(1808) and in the realistic drama of Henrik Ibsen (*Ghost*, *Hedda Gabler*) and August Strindberg (*The Father*, *Miss Julie*).

5.11 Tragicomedy

The term tragicomedy is a combination of two words: tragedy and comedy. Hence, as its name entails tragicomedy is the mingling of elements and styles of tragedy and comedy in a single play. Tragicomedy is not the same as tragedy which contains comic relief or comedy which has a tragic background. The comic relief serves to either provide a safety-valve or intensify the traffic effect by contrast. Many scenes of comic relief intensify the tragic effect. In Drunken Porter's scene in *Macbeth,* the garrulousness of the Porter and his ignorance of the murder of Duncan heighten the audience's awareness of the horrible deed, and make it wait more eagerly for the crime to be discovered. In the same way, the gravediggers in *Hamlet* and the Fool in *King Lear* heighten the tragic effect of the play.

On the other hand, in plays such as *As You Like It,* or later in its course, as in *Much Ado About Nothing,* the wrongs done to the chief characters makes us more happier when they are righted at the end. In this way, comedy with a tragic background is more effective than comedy without a tragic background. In contract to tragedy with comic relief and comedy with tragic background, tragicomedy is a complete tragedy up to a certain point, and a complete comedy thereafter. The complication is tragic and the denouement is comic. In other words, the Rising Action is tragedy whereas the Falling Action is a comedy. In tragicomedies, the Climax is the dividing point between the tragic part and the comic part. Shakespeare's *Cymbeline, Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* are other examples.

Tragicomedy was unknown and unattempted by the Greeks as the principle of Unity of Action forbade the mixture of tragic and the comic. The first playwright who attempted a mixture of

tragedy and comedy was Plautus in his *Amphitruo.* The English tragicomedy emerged in the in the reign of James I under the Spanish and Italian influences. The Italian influence was responsible for the pastoral element and the Spanish influence was responsible for the romantic intrigue. Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster* and *A King and No King* finally established it on the English stage.

In a tragicomedy the standard characters and subject matter and the standard plot forms of tragedy and comedy are intermingled. In it both people of high degree and people of low degree are included; whereas only upper-class characters are appropriate to tragedy by the rules of decorum and Aristotelian theory of tragedy. Tragicomedy also represented a serious action which appears to lead towards a tragic disaster, yet, by a sudden reversal, turns out happily. Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* satisfies all these criteria.

Tragicomedy has always been opposed by purists. It was Philip Sidney who first opposed tragicomedy for the reason that "neither the admiration and commiseration, nor the right sportfulness, is by the mongrel Tragi-Comedy obtained." Milton condemned tragicomedy in the preface to *Samson Agonistes* "to vindicate tragedy from the small esteem, or rather infamy, which in the account of many it undergoes at this day, with other common interludes; happening through the poet's error of intermixing comic stuff with tragic sadness and gravity, or introducing trivial an vulgar persons: which by all judicious hath been counted absurd, and brought in, without discretion, corruptly to gratify the people." According to Allardyce Nicoll, tragicomedy is natural as "tears and laughter lie in close proximity." In *An Essay of Dramatic Poesy* concluded that the English have" invented, increased, and perfected a more pleasant way

of writing for the stage, that was ever known to the ancients or moderns of any nation, which is tragicomedy." Similarly, Dr. Johnson asks, "What is there in the mingled drama which impartial reason can condemn?"

In German drama, tragicomedy appeared in the early 19th century in Georg Buchner's *Leonce and Lena* and Heinrich von Kleist's *The Prince of Homburg*. Later in the 19th century, Henrik Ibsen experimented with the form, and Anton Chekhov revolutionized it by adopting the features of drawing room comedy with a tragic conclusion and psychological insight. In the words of George Bernard Shaw, tragicomedy is a "much deeper and grimmer entertainment than tragedy." In the 1950s and '60s, the interplay of tragicomic and comitragic became the dominant feature of those plays associated with the Theatre of the Absurd.

5.12 The Short Story

Edgar Allan Poe defined the short story as a narrative which can be read at one sitting of from half an hour to two hours and is limited to a “certain unique or single effect” to which every detail is subordinate. It is usually defined as a fictional narrative of variable length but which rarely exceeds 20, 000 words. Most of the terms used for analysing a novel are also applicable to the short story. Like the novel, the plot of the short story can be comic, tragic, romantic or satiric.

The Short Story is a recent addition to English literature. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* are short stories in verse. Chaucer’s *Parson’s Tale* and *Tale of Melibee* are attempts at prose stories. Boccaccio’s *Decameron* is a collection of short stories in prose. Prose romances continued to be translated and written in English during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under Italian influence. Steele and Addison, in the 18th century, evolved the tale-with-a-purpose to drive home a moral. The stories produced in towards the end of the century do not show any change.

It was Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe who established the tenets of the modern Short Story writing. In a review of Nathaniel Hawthorne’s *Twice-Told Tales,* Poe elaborated this principle as follows: A skilful literary artist has constructed a tale, If wise, he has not fashioned his thoughts to accommodate his incidents; but having conceived with deliberate care, **a certain unique or single effect to be wrought out**, he then invents such incidents, he then combines such events as may best aid him in establishing this preconceived effect. If his very initial sentence tends not to the outbringing of this effect, then he has failed in his first step. In the whole composition there, should be no word written, of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to the one pre-established design. And by such means, with such care and skill, a picture is at

length pained which leaves in the mind of him who contemplates it with a kindred art, a sense of the fullest satisfaction." Robert Louis Stevenson, in England, echoed Poe's concept of a "unique or single effect" with his prescription that from the beginning to the end, an "impression" or "idea" should engage the attention.

Although the short story is similar to the novel in many respects, it is not merely a shortened from of a novel. The clinching difference between the two forms is the unique effect or impression of the short story. A novel can have many effects or impressions. Superfluous details can be afforded in a novel, but not in a short story. In a short story, the plot is confined to the essentials, only the indispensable characters and included, and the setting to a few suggestive hints. In a short story, sometimes of the three elements dominate the other two. For example, Stevenson's *The Bottle of Imp* story of plot, because setting and character play second fiddle to plot; whereas his *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* is a story of character, and the *The Merry Men* a story of setting.

Economy of language is the quintessence of the short story. In short story, every word should contribute to the "unique or single effect". In contract to the short story, a novel may have passages, digressions; for example Lawrence Sterne's *Tristran Shandy*. Verbosity and superfluity are detrimental to the effect of the short story. There is no space in a short story for "fine writing" or stylistic elegance for its own sake. However, many distinguished and well-known short stories depart from this rule in different ways. The short narrative is one the oldest and most widespread of literary forms. In its early history, there developed the device of the frame-story which is a preliminary and at times rudimentary narrative within which one or more of the

characters proceeds to tell a series of short narratives, for example, Boccaccio's *Decameron, The Arabian Nights,* or Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales.*

The short story is a popular literary form of contemporary writing. The popularity of the short story can be accounted for in many ways, but chiefly, the limited leisure of the modern period and the expansion and circulation of magazines and journals have boosted the demand for short stories. Although, novel in serialised form can be published in journals, short story is tailor made for it. The early practitioners of the short story were Washington Irving, Hawthorne, and Poe in America, Sir Walter Scott and Mary Shelley in England, E.T.A Hoffmann in Germany, Balzac in France, and Gogol, Pushkin, and Turgenev in Russia. All the major novelists in all the European languages have written notable short stories. The short story has been called by Frank O'Connor as the "national art form."

5.13 Let Us Sum Up

In this unit, we have discussed some of the major literary forms which are basic to the understanding and enjoyment of literature. The forms we have discussed are ballad, comedy, elegy, epic, novel, romance, sonnet, tragedy, tragicomedy and the short story. How something is told is very much important in literature? These literary forms are the “how” which major authors have used to tell their story or express their feelings.

5.13 Further Readings

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