



# CHHATRAPATI SHAHU JI MAHARAJ UNIVERSITY, KANPUR



**प्रश्नBANK**  
Bridge of Academic Novelties in Knowledge

## KANPUR UNIVERSITY'S QUESTION BANK

Based on  
**NEP**  
2020

**B.A. V SEM**

# FICTION

- Brief and Intensive Notes
- Long & Short Answers

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## Question Bank

### B.A Semester V

Programme /Class: <b>DEGREE</b>	Year: <b>THIRD</b>	Semester: <b>FIFTH</b>
Subject: <b>ENGLISH</b>		
Course Code: - <b>A040502T</b>		Course Title: <b>Fiction</b>
<b>Course Outcomes:</b> After completing this course, the students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop an understanding of the growth of novel form and its various types</li> <li>• Enhance their reading skills and understand how to represent their experience and ideas critically, creatively, and persuasively through the medium of English language</li> <li>• Get acquainted with different cultures, myths and social conservation through the reading of selected novels of Britain, America and India</li> <li>• Learn human values and behavioural pattern from the prescribed novels and develop an understanding of the human race</li> <li>• Exposed to the unflattering portrayal of the contemporary Indian society through popular works of Indian fiction writers in English</li> </ul>		
Credits: 05		Paper: Core Compulsory
Max. Marks: 25+75		Min. Pass Marks: .....
Total No. of Lectures-Tutorials-Practical (in hours per week): 5-0-0.		
Unit	Topic	No. of Lectures
I	Literary Terms: Plot, Characterization, Narrative Technique & Structure, Elements of Novel	9
II	Earlier Trends in fiction: Picaresque Novel, Historical Novel, Gothic Novel, Epistolary Novel, Regional Novel, Domestic novel.	10
III	Trends in 20th & 21st Century Fiction: Detective Novel, Science Fiction, Meta Fiction, Utopia, Dystopia, Mythological Fiction, Campus Fiction, Space Fiction, Chic lit, Junk Fiction	10
IV	British Fiction Charles Dickens- A Tale of Two Cities OR Thomas Hardy- Far from the Madding Crowd	9
V	British Fiction Jane Austen- <i>Pride and Prejudice</i> OR George Eliot- <i>Mill on the Floss</i>	9

VI	American Fiction: Toni Morrison- <i>The Bluest Eyes</i> OR Harper Lee- <i>To Kill a Mocking Bird</i>	9
VII	American Fiction Ernest Hemingway- <i>The Old Man and the Sea</i> OR John Steinbeck- <i>The Grapes of Wrath</i>	9
VIII	Indian Popular Fiction 1. Aravind Adiga- <i>The White Tiger</i> 2. Sanjay Chitranshi- <i>Dalit, Dynasty and She</i> OR Sudha Murthy- <i>Dollar Bahu</i>	10

**Suggested Readings:**

- Forster, E.M., “Aspects of the Novel”, Penguin, London, 2005.
- Toliver & Calderwood, “Perspectives on Fiction”, Oxford University Press, New York, 1970.
- Wynne-Davies, M., “The Bloomsbury Guide to English Literature”, Prentice Hall, New York, 1990.
- [https://www.youtube.com/embed/O7DeTnf0\\_yM](https://www.youtube.com/embed/O7DeTnf0_yM)
- <https://www.youtube.com/embed/4IijTINyHK8>
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- [https://www.youtube.com/embed/6q9\\_EbDrUgQ](https://www.youtube.com/embed/6q9_EbDrUgQ)
- [https://www.youtube.com/embed/2yN\\_X-zkC-E](https://www.youtube.com/embed/2yN_X-zkC-E)
- Bloom, H., “Toni Morrison’s *The Bluest Eye*”, Chelsea House, 1999.
- Heavilin, Barbara A., “The Critical Response to John Steinbeck’s *The Grapes of Wrath*”, Greenwood Press, 2000.

This course can be opted as an elective by the students of following subjects:

Open to all

Suggested Continuous Evaluation Methods: Continuous Internal Evaluation shall be based on Project/ Assignment and Internal Class Test.

The marks shall be as follows:

Project/Assignment                      10 Marks

Internal Class test                        15 Marks

Course prerequisites: To study this course, a student must have passed/opted English in B.A. II

Suggested equivalent online courses:

- [https://onlinecourses.nptel.ac.in/noc21\\_hs28/preview](https://onlinecourses.nptel.ac.in/noc21_hs28/preview)

Further

Suggestions:

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- I. **Literary Terms:** Literary terms denote to the technique, style, and formatting used by writers and speakers to powerfully emphasize, elaborate, or support their compositions. Literary terms can refer to playful techniques employed by comedians to make us laugh or witty tricks wordsmiths use to coin new words or phrases. They can also include the tools of persuasion that writers use to convince and the audiences/readers. With their carefully crafted speeches geared towards both logical and emotional thinking, they challenge the everyday modes of thinking.
1. **Plot:** The plot of a fiction is the series of events that unfolds from start to finish. The plot explains not just what happens but also the causativeness that means how one event leads to another. In *Poetics*, Aristotle explains that the basic form of a plot contains three parts: a beginning, middle, and the end. According to Aristotle, a plot should progress with events occurring in chronological order. However, the nineteenth century German novelist and playwright Gustav Freytag, expanded on Aristotle's concept of plot by adding two additional components: rising action and falling action.
2. **Characterization:** Characterization can be demarcated as a literary device that writers use to designate and provide information about specific characters in their work. Characterization can be used to evaluate what a character's impetuses are, what characters desire, fear, love, and dislike. Characterization is a the most important and indispensable tool to get readers both interested and invested in who they are reading about.
3. **Narrative Technique & Structure:** A narrative technique in fiction, is a fictional device. It is a strategy applied in the delivering of a narrative to communicate information to the readers and to make the narrative more complete as well as complex and engaging.  
Narrative structure, also named as a storyline or plotline, defines the framework of how one tells a story. In short one can say it is the process how a text is organized and how the plot is unveiled to the reader.
4. **Elements of Novel:** A novel is a developed prose narrative of significant length and complexity that deals ingeniously with human experience. Its origins can be traced back thousands of years, though its origins in English are traditionally placed in the 18th century.



A novel can put up an almost infinite number of elements. Some of the novel's distinctive elements, though, are :

- ✓ the story or plot,
- ✓ the characters,
- ✓ the setting,
- ✓ the narrative method
- ✓ point of view
- ✓ the scope or dimension.

### **Long Type Questions:**

#### **Q 1. Explain in detail the importance of plot in a novel.**

Plot refers to the sequence of events that unfold within a story. It encompasses the arrangement and development of key incidents, conflicts, and resolutions. A well-crafted plot captivates readers by creating suspense, tension, and emotional engagement. For example, *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

In Austen's classic novel, the plot revolves around the Bennet family and their five daughters. The story follows the romantic pursuits and social interactions of the characters, with a central focus on Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy. The plot unfolds as misunderstandings, societal expectations, and personal prejudices create obstacles for their relationship. Through a series of events and encounters, the plot ultimately leads to their reconciliation and a satisfying resolution.

Another example is of *The Lord of the Rings* by J.R.R. Tolkien. Tolkien's epic fantasy trilogy features a complex and intricate plot that spans across multiple books. It follows the journey of Frodo Baggins and his companions as they seek to destroy the One Ring and defeat the dark Lord Sauron. The plot encompasses various subplots, alliances, and conflicts, building suspense and tension. As the characters face countless challenges, including battles, treachery, and personal sacrifices, the plot steadily advances toward the final climactic confrontation.

We can also cite the example of *Gone Girl* by Gillian Flynn, which is a psychological thriller. The plot revolves around the disappearance of Amy Dunne on her fifth wedding anniversary.

The story alternates between the perspectives of Amy and her husband Nick, revealing the complexities of their relationship and the secrets they hold. As the plot unfolds, unexpected twists and revelations keep the readers on the edge of their seats, questioning the true nature of the characters and the events surrounding Amy's disappearance.

### **Elements of Plot**

A plot typically follows a three-act structure: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution as we have discussed above. It serves as the backbone of a story, driving the narrative forward and providing a sense of coherence.

The main characteristics of an intriguing plot are:

**Exposition:** The exposition introduces the setting, characters, and background information necessary to comprehend the story. For example, in *The Lord of the Rings* the exposition describes the Shire and introduces the hobbits.

**Rising Action:** The rising action presents a series of events that build tension and lead to the story climax. For example, in William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, the rising action includes the secret marriage of the young lovers, their subsequent separations, and the escalating conflicts between their families.

**Climax:** The climax is the turning point or the most intense moment of the story, where conflicts reach their peak. For example, in George Orwell's novel *1984* the climax occurs when the protagonist, Winston Smith, is captured and tortured for rebelling against the totalitarian regime.

**Falling Action:** The falling action follows the climax and depicts the consequences of the story major events. For example, in F. Scott Fitzgerald *The Great Gatsby*, the falling action includes the revelation of Gatsby's true nature and the disillusionment of the characters.

**Resolution:** The resolution, also known as the denouement, brings the story to a satisfying or thought-provoking conclusion. For example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* the resolution occurs when Elizabeth Bennet and Fitzwilliam Darcy finally overcome their pride and prejudice and confess their love for each other.



**Q2 What is the role of Characters in a novel and how does characterisation effects the success of a novel?**

Characterisation refers to the creation, development, and portrayal of characters within a literary work. It enables readers to connect with and understand the motivations, personalities, and relationships of the story's individuals.

**Introduction to Characterisation**

Characterisation breathes life into a story by crafting believable and relatable characters. Authors employ various techniques to reveal character traits and evoke empathy or aversion in readers.

**Methods of Characterisation:** Following are the different methods of characterisation used by a novelist to make their story interesting and intriguing

**Direct Characterisation:** The author directly describes a character's traits, appearance, or personality. For example, in Roald Dahl's *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, the author describes Willy Wonka as a small, odd-looking man.

**Indirect Characterisation:** When Character traits are revealed through actions, dialogue, thoughts, or interactions with other characters, the method is referred as indirect characterisation. For example, in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* the character of Jack demonstrates his ruthless nature through his relentless pursuit of power.

**Round and Flat Characters:** Round characters are multidimensional and exhibit complex personalities, while flat characters are one-dimensional and lack depth. For example, in Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes series*, Sherlock Holmes is a round character with intricate traits, while Inspector Lestrade serves as a flat character.

**Dynamic and Static Characters:** Dynamic characters undergo significant changes throughout the story, while static characters remain unchanged. For example, in Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*, Ebenezer Scrooge undergoes a transformation from a miserly individual to a generous and compassionate person.

### **Importance of Characterisation**

Characterisation enriches a narrative by providing depth, relatability, and emotional resonance. It allows readers to empathise with characters, explore their struggles, and reflect on the human condition.

Memorable Literary Characters:

Literature is replete with iconic characters who have left an indelible mark on readers' minds. Characters like Holden Caulfield from J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*; and Atticus Finch from Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* continue to resonate with audiences due to their compelling and enduring qualities.

### **Q 3 Describe in detail the major elements of a novel?**

A novel comprises various essential elements that contribute to its overall impact and meaning. These elements include setting, theme, symbolism, tone, and style.

### **Introduction to Elements of a Novel**

Understanding the key elements of a novel allows readers to delve deeper into its layers of meaning and appreciate the author's craftsmanship.

#### **1. Setting**

The setting encompasses the time, place, and social or cultural environment in which the story takes place. It creates a backdrop for the narrative and influences the characters and events. For example, in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* the gloomy and isolated moorland setting contributes to the dark and turbulent atmosphere of the story.

#### **2. Theme**

The theme is the central idea or message that the author intends to convey through the narrative. It explores universal truths and provides insight into the human condition. For example, in

George Orwell's *Animal Farm* the theme of corruption and abuse of power is explored through the allegorical depiction of animals on a farm.

### 3. Symbolism

Symbols are objects, characters, or elements that represent deeper meanings or concepts within a novel. They enhance the story's layers of interpretation and add depth to the narrative. For example, in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, the scarlet letter symbolises both sin and the protagonist Hester Prynne's strength and resilience.

### 4. Tone

Tone refers to the author's attitude or emotional expression towards the subject matter. It sets the mood of the story and influences readers' emotional responses. For example, in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the tone is witty and ironic, allowing the author to critique social norms and explore themes of love and class.

### 5. Style

An author's style encompasses their unique use of language, syntax, and literary techniques. It contributes to the overall artistic and aesthetic qualities of the novel. For example, in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, her stream-of-consciousness writing style immerses readers in the characters' thoughts and perceptions.

### 6. Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing is a technique in which the author hints at or suggests future events or outcomes within the narrative. It creates anticipation and builds tension. For example, in William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, the appearance of the three witches at the beginning of the play foreshadows the tragic downfall of the protagonist.

### 7. Irony

Irony is a literary device in which there is a contrast between what is expected and what actually happens. It adds depth, humour, or poignancy to the narrative. O' Henry's short story *The Gift of the Magi*, the irony lies in the fact that both characters make sacrifices to buy gifts for each other that are rendered useless by the gifts' recipients.

By familiarising ourselves with the essential literary terms of plot, characterisation, narrative

technique and structure, and elements of a novel, we gain a deeper appreciation of the art of storytelling. These terms serve as tools to dissect, analyse, and interpret literature, enabling us to unlock the hidden treasures within the pages of our favourite books. Whether we are writers or avid readers, understanding these literary terms enriches our literary journeys and nurtures our love for the written word.

**Q4. Theme plays the most important role in the narrative structure of a novel. Explain.**

The theme of a story is the underlying message or concept that the author is trying to convey to the reader. The theme of a story is generally an opinion the writer wants to convey through their storytelling. The theme, whether it be a novel, film, television show, or any kind of narrative, can be viewed in at least two ways. Most importantly, it is the idea that integrates everything in a story — the nature of its characters, their motivations, and arcs, as well as their conflicts and all the events of the plot, to name just a few key aspects.

In a story it can operate on many different levels, depending upon the form and genre of a particular story, and on the interests and imagination of the writer. For example, one of the most common themes in literature is good versus evil.

Therefore, a story is not only integrated by its central conflict, but also by its theme. Themes are the backbone of storytelling, providing depth and meaning that resonate with readers on a profound level. In literature, themes explore universal concepts, emotions, and ideas that connect us all as human beings.

From classic novels to contemporary bestsellers, themes have played a crucial role in shaping memorable stories. Themes in fiction are overarching ideas or messages that serve as the underlying foundation of a story. They convey the author's perspective on human nature, societal issues, personal growth, and more.

Themes allow readers to relate to characters and their experiences, making the narrative more impactful and memorable.

**Major Themes in Fiction**

There are a few major themes in fiction that you'll recognize right away.

**Love and Relationships**

Exploring the complexities of human connections, love, and various forms of relationships.



Literary Example: "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen In this classic novel, the theme of love and relationships is intricately woven through the complex courtship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy. The story explores how societal norms, pride, and misunderstandings can influence romantic connections.

#### Power and Corruption

Investigating the abuse of power and its consequences on individuals and society.

Literary Example: "Animal Farm" by George Orwell In this allegorical novella, the theme of power and corruption is portrayed through the rise of the animals' rebellion against the humans on Manor Farm. Over time, the pigs, led by Napoleon, become corrupt and oppressive rulers, mirroring the traits of the humans they once opposed.

#### Good vs. Evil

Depicting the eternal struggle between opposing forces, often personified by characters embodying these traits.

Literary Example: "The Lord of the Rings" by J.R.R. Tolkien The epic fantasy trilogy delves into the timeless theme of good vs. evil through the epic battle against the dark lord Sauron. The story follows the quest to destroy the One Ring, with characters embodying virtues of bravery, selflessness, and determination in their fight against malevolent forces.

#### Coming of Age

Focusing on the journey of self-discovery and maturation in young protagonists.

Literary Example: "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee The theme of coming of age is beautifully depicted in this novel through the journey of Scout Finch. As she navigates her childhood in a racially divided town, Scout learns valuable life lessons about empathy, courage, and understanding.

#### Identity and Self-Discovery

Reflecting on characters' search for their true selves and their place in the world.

Literary Example: "The Catcher in the Rye" by J.D. Salinger This influential novel explores the theme of identity and self-discovery through its protagonist, Holden Caulfield. As Holden grapples with feelings of alienation and disillusionment, he embarks on a quest to find meaning and authenticity in his life.



### Freedom and Oppression

Addressing the desire for liberty and the fight against oppression and injustice.

Literary Example: "1984" by George Orwell In this dystopian novel, the theme of freedom and oppression is at the core of the story. The totalitarian regime of Big Brother exercises oppressive control over its citizens, stifling individuality and free thought.

### Redemption

This is a character-driven theme. transformation after having made mistakes or the redemption theme in literature revolves around the idea of a character seeking forgiveness, atonement, or personal engaged in morally questionable actions. It is a powerful and emotionally resonant theme that explores the potential for growth, change, and reconciliation, even in the face of past wrongs.

Literary Example: "A Christmas Carol" by Charles Dickens This timeless novella centres around the theme of redemption as the miserly Ebenezer Scrooge is visited by three spirits on Christmas Eve. Through these encounters, Scrooge undergoes a transformative journey of self-awareness and redemption.

### Short Type Questions:

**Q1. Write in short, the importance of narrative technique and structure in the development of the plot of a novel.**

Narrative technique and structure encompass the tools and methods employed by authors to craft their storytelling. It involves the arrangement of events, point of view, stylistic choices, and various literary devices that shape the narrative experiences. Narrative technique and structure determine the flow, perspective, and overall impact of a literary work. Authors make deliberate choices to engage readers, evoke emotions, and convey their intended messages effectively. Therefore, narrative structure is the content of a story and the form used to tell the story.

This feature of a creative text generally describes the order and manner in which a narrative is presented to a reader, listener, or viewer. The frameworks of a narrative text structure are the plot and the setting.

This can also depend on the genre and medium of a story. Hence one can conclude that a narrative technique (also, in fiction, a fictional device) is any of several storytelling methods the creator of a story uses, thus effectively relaying information to the audience or making the story more complete, complex, or engaging.

## **Q2 What is a point of view?**

### Point of View

Point of view in literature refers to the narrator of a story. Narrator is one who describes the action in a given story. A story might be narrated by a character within a story describing their own experiences or by an external narrator who describes the thoughts and feelings of one or more characters. Hence the narration can be done using the following methods:

**First-person Narrative:** The story is narrated from the perspective of a character within the story. For example, Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is narrated in the first person by Huck Finn, offering readers a personal and intimate view of his journey.

**Third-person Omniscient:** The narrator knows the thoughts and feelings of multiple characters. For example, in Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, the third-person omniscient narrator provides insights into the inner lives of various characters, offering a panoramic view of the story.

**Third-person Limited:** The narrator reveals the thoughts and feelings of a single character. For example, in J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter series*, the third-person limited point of view follows Harry Potter's experiences and perceptions, allowing readers to empathise with his journey.

## **Q3. What is the importance of dialogue in a Novel?**

Dialogue is a key element of a novel. Dialogue may be defined as a written conversation between two or more people in a novel. Dialogue seems to have many functions. It not simply moves the story of the novel ahead, but additionally discloses the personality of the character.

It offers us an awesome piece of information about the setting, time, age and location of the characters. It also provides us a good chance to get insight into the mindset of various characters. Their words and intonation lay bare the personality of the characters.

Without dialogue, the entire structure of a novel sounds like a monotonous essay. It enhances the flow of thoughts and provides you with a sort of pleasure. The readers won't get sick and tired, in case the text is presented in the form of dialogue. Merely prose won't make up the novel. A novel is not an essay; it is a representation of real life. For this reason; dialogue is extraordinarily important in a novel. According to W.H Hudson, dialogue must fulfill the following requirements:

- It should be an organic element and an inseparable part of the novel, and should really contribute, directly, either to the movement of the plot or the elucidation of the characters in their relation with it.

- Dialogue, to be really and fully effective, should be natural, appropriate, and dramatic. The novelist should take care, that the language employed in conversation is in keeping with the personality of the speaker and suitable to the situation in which it occurs. The novel reflects life as it is actually lived and if the language is not in harmony with the character and talent of the speaker, the novel will become unrealistic.

Dialogue is an important element of novels. It can help to further the plot, develop the characters and their relationships, and provide comic relief. When used effectively, dialogue can be a powerful tool for writers.

#### **Q 4. Write in short, the importance of Exposition and Climax in narrative structure of a novel.**

**Exposition:** Exposition is the very first phase of the plot. Every single novel starts with the introduction of a number of characters. These characters interact with each other and advance the story head Rising Action

Rising action is the consequence of exposition. Action of the novel steadily moves forward and goes on till it reaches up to its peak, often referred to as Climax of a plot. It is a series of events, animosity, conflicts, and adversary. It is additionally labelled as complication.

**Climax:** Climax is the most essential stage of a plot. It is actually the heightened peak of Rising Action. The culmination of Rising Action is the starting point of Climax. In almost any novel, this phase is considered the most poignant, turbulent, thought provoking and also inciting position in the plot. In Charles Dickens' Great Expectations, the climax of the novel is the identity of the benefactor of Pip. Pip's understanding of his real benefactor is the climax in the novel.

**Q5. Write in short, the significance of flashback, foreshadowing and tone in a novel.**

**Flashback:**

A flashback reveals something about the story or characters that the reader doesn't know. Flashbacks often set up events that will occur in the story or explain a character's motives based on past behaviour. Toni Morrison employed flashbacks heavily to explain the death of Sethe's children in the novel "Beloved," information not otherwise shared in the story, Flashbacks can provide important background information that can both clarify and move the story forward, as long as they do not confuse the reader.

**Foreshadowing:**

Foreshadowing is a technique used to hint at things to come. The purpose is to create tension within the reader by insinuating possible scenarios for later use in the story. For example, a suicidal individual who discovers a hidden gun early in the story plants a seed in the reader's mind about its ultimate use. Foreshadowing can be a useful technique to suggest situations for later resolution.

**Tone:**

Tone is the way in which a writer expresses himself in a story, using diction or word choice and imagery. Often authors convey tone through the style of their writing, such as Voltaire's use of satire in "Candide" or Steinbeck's derisive tone through the character of "George" in "Of Mice and Men." Tone helps the author communicate his feelings toward particular issues and regarding certain characters. This in turn helps the reader determine how to feel about the subject matter.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q1. What is Setting in reference to novel?**

The setting encompasses the time, place, and social or cultural environment in which the story takes place. It creates a backdrop for the narrative and influences the characters and events. For example, in Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* the gloomy and isolated moorland setting contributes to the dark and turbulent atmosphere of the story.

**Q2. What is the significance of symbols in reference to a novel?**

Symbols are objects, characters, or elements that represent deeper meanings or concepts within a novel. They enhance the story's layers of interpretation and add depth to the narrative. For example, in Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*, the scarlet letter symbolises both sin and the protagonist Hester Prynne's strength and resilience

**Q3. What role does style play in the success of a novel?**

An author's style encompasses their unique use of language, syntax, and literary techniques. It contributes to the overall artistic and aesthetic qualities of the novel. For example, in Virginia Woolf's *To the Lighthouse*, her stream-of-consciousness writing style immerses readers in the characters' thoughts and perceptions.

**Q4. What is a climax?**

The climax is the turning point or the most intense moment of the story, where conflicts reach their peak. For example, in George Orwell's novel *1984* the climax occurs when the protagonist, Winston Smith, is captured and tortured for rebelling against the totalitarian regime.

**Q5. What is the difference between round and flat characters?**

Round and Flat Characters: Round characters are multidimensional and exhibit complex personalities, while flat characters are one-dimensional and lack depth. For example, in Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes series*, Sherlock Holmes is a round character with intricate traits, while Inspector Lestrade serves as a flat character.

**References:**

<https://www.creativescreenwriting.com/storytelling-and-the-importance-of-theme/>  
<https://flynngray.wordpress.com/2016/01/13/what-is-theme-and-why-is-it-important/>

Sharma. Shalini Lalit Tiwari Ed. (2023) British American and Indian Popular Fiction. Meerut. Pragati Prakashan

Singh. Hukum. Ed.(2023) British American and Indian Popular Fiction. Kanpur. sahitya Ratnalaya



# UNIT II



## Earlier Trends in Fiction:

**Picaresque Novel**

**Historical Novel**

**Gothic Novel**

**Epistolary Novel**

**Regional Novel**

**Domestic Novel**

A *novel* (NAH-vull) is a narrative work of fiction published in book form. Novels are longer than short stories and novellas, with the greater length allowing authors to expand upon the same basic components of all fictional literature—character, conflict, plot, and setting, to name a few.

Novels have a long, rich history, shaped by formal standards, experimentation, and cultural and social influences. Authors use novels to tell detailed stories about the human condition, presented through any number of genres and styles.

The word *novel* comes from the Italian and Latin *novella*, meaning “a new story.”

### **Picaresque Novels**

Picaresque novels feature the adventures of impish, lowborn but likeable heroes who barrel through a variety of different encounters, living by their wits in corrupt or oppressive societies. Picaresque novels reached their peak of popularity in Europe from the 16th to 19th centuries, but authors still occasionally write them today. *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, by Henry Fielding is a classic picaresque, while *A Confederacy of Dunces* by John Kennedy Toole is a more recent one.

### **Historical Novels**

Historical novels take place in the past, where plots typically involve a specific historical event or era. The novel may or may not include fictionalized versions of real people. Authors of historical fiction often conduct in-depth research of the times about which they write to provide readers with a vivid reimagining of what life was like. Popular historical novels

include *The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follett, *The Other Boleyn Girl* by Philippa Gregory, and *Roots* by Alex Haley.

### **Gothic Novels**

Death and romance are major plot points in gothic novels. The supernatural, family curses, stock characters like Byronic heroes and innocent maidens, and moody settings like castles or monasteries usually figure prominently in the storylines. *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Brontë and *The Phantom of the Opera* by Gaston Leroux are two beloved gothic novels.

### **Epistolary Novels**

An epistolary novel tells its story through fictional letters, newspaper and magazine clippings, diary entries, emails, and other documents. *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker and *Les Liaisons Dangereuses* by Pierre Choderlos de Laclos are examples of epistolary novels.

<https://www.supersummary.com/novel/>

### **Regional novel**

By 'regional novel' one can think about a fiction that is set in a recognizable region, and which describes features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialect or other aspects of the culture of that area and its people. In this Fiction, a strong sense of local geography, topography or landscape is also included. In such writings a particular place or regional culture may perhaps be used to illustrate an aspect of life in general, or the effects of a particular environment upon the people living in it.

<https://www.eng-literature.com/2021/07/regional-novel-definition-elements-examples.html>

### **Domestic Novel**

A domestic novel is a type of fiction prevalent in the early-to-mid-nineteenth century, primarily read by women, characterized by heroines undergoing emotional struggles and typically ending in marriage. Contrarily, *Pride and Prejudice*, written by Jane Austen, is more accurately classified as a Novel of Manners, focusing on social classes and their customs, and how characters navigate their social roles. Its themes, while overlapping with a domestic novel, are less sentimental and more social in nature.

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**

## Long Answer Type Questions

### Q1. Describe the term Picaresque citing examples from some novels.

The picaresque novel is a genre that emerged in the early 17th century, originating in Spain and later spreading throughout Europe. It presents the adventures and misadventures of a rogue or anti-heroic protagonist, often of low social status, as they navigate through society. This genre serves as a social critique, exposing the flaws and hypocrisies of the ruling class.

One notable example of a picaresque novel is Miguel de Cervantes' "Don Quixote." The novel follows the escapades of the delusional knight-errant, Don Quixote, and his loyal sidekick, Sancho Panza. Through their exploits and offers a critique of social norms. Don Quixote's misguided quest and his encounters with various characters highlight the absurdity and contradictions of society.

Another example is Daniel Defoe's "The Adventure of Robinson Crusoe," This novel narrates the survival journey of the eponymous character after being shipwrecked on a deserted island. It explores themes of self-reliance, human resilience and the clash between civilization and nature. Through Crusoe's group encounters with native inhabitants and his resourcefulness in building a new life, Defoe questions societal norms and explores the ideas of man's place in the world.

"Moll Flanders" by Daniel Defoe tells the story of Moll Flanders, a resourceful and cunning woman who navigates her way through a life of poverty, crime, and numerous marriages. The narrative follows Moll's adventures as she encounters various social situations and finds creative ways to survive and thrive.

"Adventures of Simplicius Simplicissimus" by Hans Jakob Christoffel von Grimmelshausen is set during the Thirty Years War, this picaresque novel follows the life of Simplicius Simplicissimus, an innocent and naive protagonist who witnesses the horrors and chaos of war. Simplicius' journey takes him through various misadventures and encounters with different social classes, providing a satirical commentary on society and human nature.

In the English-speaking world, the term "picaresque" has referred more to a literary technique or model than to the precise genre that the Spanish call *picaresco*. The English-language term can simply refer to an episodic recounting of the adventures of an anti-hero on the road.

Elements of the picaresque novel are found in Charles Dickens' *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–37). Nikolai Gogol occasionally used the technique, as in *Dead Souls* (1842–52). Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1884) also has some elements of the picaresque novel.

To conclude one can say that picaresque novels contain seven essential elements. These are: first-person narrator, protagonist is of a lower social class, protagonist makes immoral choices which border on criminality, minimal character development, little to no plot, literary realism, and satire. Thus, a picaresque novel is a fictional adventure story which follows a rogue hero.

## **Q2 What is a Historical novel? Explain.**

The historical novel gained prominence in 19th century providing reader with fictional narrative set against real historical events. These novels often combine accurate historical details with fictional character and plots, allowing readers to experience history in more increasing and personal way.

One iconic example of historical novel is your Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* set during the Napoleonic era, the novel weaves together the lives of various characters against the backdrop of significant historical events. Tolstoy skilfully captures the social and political climate of the time, exploring themes of war, love and search of meaning. Through the experiences of character like Perry Bezokhov and Natasha Rostova, Tolstoy delves into the impact of war on individuals and society, offering profound insight into human nature

Another notable historical novel is Charles Dickens' *A Tale of Two Cities*. This novel takes place during the French revolution and follows the intertwined lives of characters from London and Paris. Dickens masterfully portrays the tumultuous historical period, delving into themes of sacrifice redemption and the inherent darkness and resilience of humanity. Through the contrasting experiences of characters like Sydney Carton and Charlie Darnay, Dickens explore the complex inter play between personal choices and historical events



*The Pillars of the Earth* by Ken Follet is set in the 12th century England. This epic historical novel follows the construction of a cathedral in the fictional town of Kingsbridge. The story intertwines the lives of various characters, including the master builder, clergy, nobility and ordinary townspeople, against the backdrop of political intrigue, war and religious upheaval.

*Wolf Hall* by Hilary Mantel provides a fictional account of the life of Thomas Cromwell, a key figure in the court of Henry VIII during the English Reformation. Through Cromwell's perspective, the book offers a vivid portrayal of the political machinations, religious conflicts, and personal ambitions that shaped the tumultuous reign of Henry VIII.

Therefore, the essential element of historical novels is that it is set in the past and pays attention to the manners, social conditions and other details of the depicted period. Authors also frequently chose to explore notable historical figures in these settings, allowing readers to better understand how these individuals might have responded to their environments. Some subgenres such as alternate history and historical fantasy insert speculative or ahistorical elements into a novel.

Works of historical fictions are sometimes criticized for lack of authenticity because of readerly criticism or genre expectations for accurate period details.

### **Q3 Which type of novels are referred as Gothic Novel? Explain in detail**

The Gothic Novel emerged in the 18th century and gain popularity during the romantic era. It delves into the realm of mystery, horror and supernatural, often set in eerie and atmospheric setting such as crumbling castles or isolated mansions. Gothic novels explore themes of madness, obsessions and the supernatural, creating an atmosphere of suspense and terror.

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a prominent example of Gothic Novel. It tells the story of Victor Frankenstein, a scientist who create a monstrous being through unorthodox means. Shelley's novel examines is the consequences of scientific hubris, exploring themes of morality, identity and the boundaries of creation. The dark and atmospheric setting along with the moral dilemmas faced by the characters contribute to the gothic elements of the story.

Another notable Gothic novel is Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. This iconic vampire tale takes readers into the dark and mysterious world of Count Dracula and his encounters with a group of individuals seeking to defeat him. Stoker's novel explores themes of desires, temptation and the clash between good and evil. The Gothic elements including the isolated castle and supernatural occurrences create an eerie ambience that adds to the suspense and horror of the narrative.

*Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Brontë is a classic gothic novel following the life of the eponymous character Jane Eyre, as she navigates a tumultuous journey from her oppressive childhood to her position as a governess of Thornfield Hall. The story is filled with an eerie atmosphere, secrets and a brooding, mysterious love interest, Mr Rochester.

*Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier is set in a secluded mansion called Manderley, this gothic novel tells the story of a young woman who marries a wealthy widower, Maxim de Winter. As she settles into the new life, the protagonist finds herself haunted by the ghostly presence of Maxim's deceased wife, Rebecca. The novel explores the themes of love, jealousy and the lingering power of the past.

#### **Q 4 Write in detail the main features of Epistolary Novels.**

Epistolary novel also known as a novel in letters, is a genre that presents the story through a series of letters or diaries written by the characters. This narrative technique offers readers an intimate and subjective perspective on the events and emotions within the story.

An exemplary epistolary novel is Samuel Richardson's *Pamela*. The novel tells the story of a young maid, Pamela, through her letters to her parents. Richardson skilfully portrays Pamela's struggle and triumphs in the face of harassment, presenting a narrative that explores social class, gender dynamics and the power of virtue. Through Pamela's heartfelt letters, readers gain insight into her thoughts, fears and hopes, creating a compelling and emotionally engaging reading experience.

Another notable example is Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. The novel incorporates a variety of documents, including letters, diary entries and newspaper clippings to unfold the story. This

epistolary format intensifies the sense of realism and urgency, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the character's experience. By presenting multiple perspectives and personal accounts, Stoker heightens the suspense and mystery surrounding the vampires' actions and the efforts to stop him.

*The Color Purple* by Alice Walker is a Pulitzer Prize winning novel. It is presented in the form of letter written by the protagonist, Celie, and later by other characters. Through these letters, Celie, shares her struggle, hopes and growth as an Africa American woman in early twentieth century. The epistolary format allows for intimate glimpses into the characters' thought and emotions

*84, Charing Cross Road* by Helen Hanff is a charming non-fiction book. It is a collection of letters exchanged between the American writer, Helen Hanff, and the staff of a London book shop, Marks & Co. The correspondence spans over two decades and develops into a heartwarming friendship centred around a mutual love of books. The letters capture the joy of bibliophilia and the enduring power of written communication

#### **Q 5. What is a Regional novel, discuss sighting example.**

The regional novel focuses on a specific geographic region and portrays its distinctive culture, traditions and social dynamics. These novels often emphasise the local dialect, customs and landscapes creating a vivid sense of place and community.

Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* exemplifies the regional novel. Set in the rural landscape of Wessex, England, the novel explores the struggles of Tess, a young woman from humble background, as she navigates the challenges of society and the constraints of class. Hardy's novel provides a nuanced depiction of the rural community and its impact on Tess's life. Through detailed description of the landscape and the interaction between characters, Hardy capture the essence of Wessex and its influence on the characters' destinies.

Another notable regional novel is Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* set in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, Lee's novel delves into the Southern United States during the 1930's. Through the eyes of Scout Finch, a young girl, the novel tackle's themes of racism, injustice and the complexities of Southern society. The vivid portrayal of Maycomb's small town

dynamics, the Southern accent, and the cultural norms prevalent in the region contribute to the authentic representation of the setting

*Gilead* by Marilynne Robinson is a Pulitzer Prize winning novel. It takes place in the small town of Gilead, Iowa. Written as a series of letters from and an ageing minister, John Ames, to his young son, the book offers a reflective and deeply introspective exploration of faith, family and the complexity of human relationship within the context of rural America.

*Their Eyes Were Watching God* by Zora Neale Hurston is set in the rural community of Florida during the early twentieth century. The novel portrays the life of Janie Crawford, an African American woman on quest for self-discovery and empowerment. The book explores themes of love, independence on the African American experience within the unique cultural and social context of the Southern United States.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

#### **Q1. Discuss the key features of a Domestic novel.**

The domestic novel focuses on the domestic sphere, exploring the dynamics and intricacies of family life, relationship and social expectations.

These novels delve into the private lives of characters, often highlighting the challenges faced by individuals within the confines of the homes.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* is a quintessential example of a domestic novel. Set in Regency era England the novel revolves around the Bennett family and their interaction with potential suitors. Austen's work offers a witty and insightful critique of social norms, gender roles and the pursuit of love and marriage. Through the experience of the Bennett sisters Austen explores the complexity of family dynamics, societal expectations, and the negotiations of personal desires.

Louisa Mary Alcott's *Little Women* is another well-read domestic novel. Set during the American Civil War the novel follows the lives of the March sisters as they navigate the challenges of growing up, finding their place in society and maintaining their family bonds. This novel in particular has been adapted by more than one filmmaker into movies which proves enough the popularity and huge readership of the narrative of four sisters.

The Awakening by Kate Chopin is set in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. This novel explores the story of Edna Pontellier, a woman who begins to question societal expectations and norms surrounding marriage and motherhood.

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* is set on post-civil war Ohio. The story follows Sethe, a former slave who attempts to rebuild her life with her daughter Denver, as they are haunted by the memory of Sethe's murdered child, known as Beloved.

**Q 2. Discuss the key features of the epistolary novel:**

§ The epistolary novel is told through medium of letters.

§ The epistolary novel emphasizes on thoughts, feelings, and emotions of the protagonist who writes the letter therefore most of the events are presented as memories of its hero or heroine.

§ Epistolary novel form is suitable and can be adopted for any type of novel whether it is a satire, picaresque comedy, tragic, novel of manners and soon.

§ An epistolary novel is in the form of narration therefore less scope is left for dialogue therefore story-telling becomes fragmented.

§ It can be presented from different points of view (more than one character's viewpoints).

§ It adds realism to the story.

**Q3 Point out the important characteristics of a Gothic Novel**

§ Gothic novel is a story of terror and suspense with a combination of horror mystery and romance.

§ Theme of these novels is based on medieval romance having supernatural element and appearance of ghost.

§ Its setting is in the old castles in dark gloomy room.

§ It deals with intense emotions.

§ Sometimes prophecy plays an important role in the development of action or plot.)

**Q 4 What are the key features of a Historical novel?**



§ These novels are based on historical events that take place during an authentic period in history with real historical characters and places.

§ The plot of these novels may have a combination of real and fictional event.

§ The character of these novels may be real or fictional or both but their appearance should reflect the historical period they belong. Sometimes many novels of this genre show fictional stories by using actual historical figures or historical events.

§ The language of the characters should be chosen according to the historical age.

§ These novels should deal with the same conflicts and problems which were faced by the characters of that historical period.

**Q 5. What are the salient features of a Picaresque Novel.**

§ The plot of picaresque novel is episodic in nature.

§ It shows the adventures of the protagonist belonging to low social status. Other characters are drawn from upper or middle-class society.

§ The use of first-person narration adds the element of realism.

§ It has the elements of irony, realism and satire.

§ The setting of these novels is often in rural areas from where the protagonist belongs and moves to urban areas in search of better life.

§ Most of picaresque novels use epistolary structure. The tone is ironical which satires the hypocritical upper class society of landlords.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:**

**Q1 Define Regional novel and cite an example?**

Regional novel is defined as the fiction set in recognizable region and which describes features distinguishing the life, social relations, customs, language, dialogues, dialect or other aspects of culture of that area and its people. One of the best and renowned regional novelists of English literature is Thomas Hardy, whose novels are based on an imaginary place named Wessex.

**Q2 Name some famous picaresque novels citing the cause of their eminence?**

The picaresque novel originated in Spain with *Lazarillo de Tormes* dated 1554, in which the poor boy Lázaro describes his services under seven successive lay and clerical masters, each of whose dubious character is hidden under a mask of hypocrisy.

However, the first picaresque novel in England was Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveller; or, The Life of Jacke Wilton* (1594).

In England the female picaro character was shown in Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, and many picaresque elements can be found in Henry Fielding's *Jonathan Wild*, *Joseph Andrews*, and *Tom Jones* and in Tobias Smollett's *Roderick Random*, *Peregrine Pickle*, and *Ferdinand, Count Fathom*.

Elements of the picaresque novel proper reappeared in such mature realistic novels as Charles Dickens's *The Pickwick Papers*, Nikolay Gogol's *Dead Souls*, Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*, and Thomas Mann's *Confessions of Felix Krull*.

**Q3. Can you cite example of Epistolary Novels in English?**

The first novel in English to be composed entirely of letters is usually considered to be *Love Letters Between a Nobleman and His Sister*, published in 1684 and attributed to the versatile playwright and author Aphra Behn. Although Behn's characters are fictional, they were modelled on real-life likenesses. Putting their narrative into the form of letters increased the realism of Behn's account, making readers feel as though they were privy to a secret and private correspondence.

But the epistolary novel really came into its own with the immensely popular novels of Samuel Richardson in the mid-18th century: *Pamela* in 1740 and the even more massive *Clarissa* of 1748.

**Q 4 Who initiated to write Domestic novel in English? Name a Domestic novel that remains popular till date.**

Domestic fiction rose to popularity around the 1830s on the heels of Catharine Maria Sedgwick's *A New-England Tale* (1822), considered the first domestic novel.

The genre was distinct from earlier iterations of the format because it focused on individual characters' decisions and moral character rather than their social affiliation.

As a result of this new historical reality, domestic fiction arose primarily to instruct a generation of women in the new so-called rules of womanhood: what society expected of a young girl and how she could meet those expectations. Domestic fiction, therefore, tends to be didactic and moralistic.

The genre's popularity peaked around the 1870s, shortly after the publication of *Little Women* (1868) by Louisa May Alcott, this novel was adapted by many filmmakers and the latest version was filmed as late as 2019 by Greta Gerwig.

**Q 5 Name some Historical novels and their writers.**

Since the appearance of the first historical novel, Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley* (1814), this type of fiction has remained popular. Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1865–69), is of the highest artistic quality

And thus, one may say that Tolstoy is among the three giants of historical fiction, the other two are Graves's, *I Claudius* and Vidal's *Burr*.

Yet there are many other names worthy of note, especially Marguerite Yourcenar, Henryk Sienkiewicz, Mary Renault, and the twice winner of the Booker prize, for the first two parts of her trilogy on Cromwell, Hilary Mantel.

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# **Unit III**



## **Trends in 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> Century Fiction**

The 20<sup>th</sup> century opened with great hope but also with some apprehension, for the new century marked the final approach to a new millennium. For many, humankind was entering upon an unprecedented era. For many, humankind was entering upon an unprecedented era.

H.G. Wells's utopian studies, the aptly titled *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* (1901) and *A Modern Utopia* (1905), both captured and qualified this optimistic mood and gave expression to a common conviction that science and technology would transform the world in the century ahead.

To achieve such transformation, outmoded institutions and ideals had to be replaced by ones more suited to the growth and liberation of the human spirit.

The death of Queen Victoria in 1901 and the accession of Edward VII seemed to confirm that a franker, less inhibited era had begun. The most significant writing of the period, traditionalist or modern, was inspired by neither hope nor apprehension but by bleaker feelings that the new century would witness the collapse of a whole civilization.

World War I brought this first period of the Modernist revolution to an end and, while not destroying its radical and utopian impulse, made the Anglo-American Modernists all too aware of the gulf between their ideals and the chaos of the present.

As a result of late 20<sup>th</sup>-century re readings of Modernism, scholars now recognize the central importance of women writers to British Modernism, particularly as manifested in the works of Mansfield, Richardson, May Sinclair, Mary Butts, Rebecca West (pseudonym of Cicily Isabel Andrews), Jean Rhys (born in the West Indies), and the American poet Hilda Doolittle (who spent her adult life mainly in England and Switzerland).

The outbreak of World War II in 1939, as in 1914, brought to an end an era of great intellectual and creative exuberance. Individuals were dispersed; the rationing of paper affected the production of magazines and books; and the poem and the short story, convenient forms for men under arms, became the favoured means of literary expression.

Increased attachment to religion most immediately characterized literature after World War II. The two most innovative novelists to begin their careers soon after World War II were also religious believers—William Golding and Muriel Spark.

From the late 1960s onward, the outstanding trend in fiction was enthrallment with empire.

Typically, though, fiction in the 1980s and '90s was not futuristic but retrospective. As the end of the century approached, an urge to look back—at starting points, previous eras, fictional prototypes—was widely evident.

As the 21<sup>st</sup> century got underway, history remained the outstanding concern of English literature. Although contemporary issues such as global warming and international conflicts (especially the Second Persian Gulf War and its aftermath) received attention, writers were still more disposed to look back.

Another preoccupation of the 21<sup>st</sup> century's early years was the imitation of earlier literary styles and techniques. There was a marked vogue for pastiche and revisionary Victorian novels. Although they had entered into a new millennium, writers seemed to find greater imaginative stimulus in the past than in the present and the future.

Some of the prominent genres of novels that were practised and are still being practised by the contemporary English writers, which now includes the writers from America, African countries, south Asian countries most dominantly India are:

Detective Novel, is a genre of writing where a detective works to solve a crime. The audience is challenged to solve the crime by the clues provided before the detective reveals the answer at the end of the novel. In the beginning of the novel, a crime is introduced.

Science Fiction, is a genre of speculative fiction, which typically deals with imaginative and futuristic concepts such as advanced science and technology, space exploration, time travel, parallel universes, and extraterrestrial life.

Meta Fiction, occurs when a fictional work is aware of how it and other fictional works are constructed. It notices its own plot or characters or other elements that go into many other types of fictional stories as well.

Utopian fiction is a style of fiction that takes place in an idealized world. The author of a utopian novel sets their narrative in a world that aligns with their broader ethos and personal philosophy. This does not mean that utopian works are free from conflict.

Dystopia literature is a form of speculative fiction that offers a vision of the future. Dystopias are societies in cataclysmic decline, with characters who battle environmental ruin, technological control, and government oppression.

Mythological Fiction, is a literary genre that combines myth, folklore, and fantasy with fictional storytelling. It frequently entails incorporating mythological or folklore figures, concepts, and motifs into a modern or historical environment.

Campus Fiction, is a genre of novels that take place on or around a university campus. The genre is also known as the academic novel. The popularity of campus novels began in the 1950s, and *The Groves of Academe* by Mary McCarthy is often considered the first example.

Space Fiction, is a genre of literature that explores futuristic concepts, such as space travel, aliens, and time travel, in a setting beyond Earth.

Chic lit, is a genre of fiction that typically features a strong female character in her 20s or 30s trying to navigate the modern world:

Junk Fiction: is a term used to describe popular novels with formulaic plots that fit into well-established genres. Some examples of junk fiction include airport novels, Harlequin romances, and works by Agatha Christie, Anne Rice, Danielle Steel, Michael Crichton, and Stephen King.

**Long Answer Type Questions:****Q1 Define Meta Fiction?**

Metafiction is a literary genre in which the narrator or characters are conscious of the fact that they are a part of a fictional work. Metafiction deviates from traditional narrative standards and is frequently most closely related to postmodern prose. A self-aware narrator injects their perspective into the text to create a fictitious work that makes remarks on fiction. Fictional writing of this type can be found in plays, video games, novels, short stories, films, and television.

William H. Gass first used the word "metafiction" in 1970 in his book "Fiction and the Figures of Life". Gass explains how authors at the period began to employ metafiction more frequently as a result of their increased grasp of the genre. This new appreciation for the form brought about a significant shift in how fiction was approached. The importance of theoretical questions increased, leading to more introspection and formal uncertainty.

According to Robert Scholes, who builds on Gass' theory, there are four different types of critique for fiction: formal, behavioural, structural, and philosophical. These viewpoints are included into the narrative process through metafiction, which highlights one or more of these elements.

These changes were a part of a larger movement-possibly referred to as a meta referential turn-that emerged roughly from the 1960s onward as a result of growing social and cultural self-awareness, or, as Patricia Waugh puts it, "a more general cultural interest in the problem of how human beings reflect, construct and mediate their experience in the world."

This trend led more novelists to reject the idea of creating fictional versions of the real world. The new guiding idea was to use words to construct a world that is not representative of reality. Language was viewed as a tool for mediating knowledge of the outside world and as an "autonomous, self-contained system which develops its own "meanings." Literary fiction, which creates worlds via language, changed from being a reflection of "reality" to becoming a

model for creating it. Instead of being considered an absolute fact, reality was now seen as a fabrication. Metafiction evolved into the tool that investigates the issue of how people create their worldview through its formal self-examination.

According to Robert Scholes, the zenith of experimental fiction, of which metafiction is a crucial component, was about 1970. Its subsequent collapse is attributed to the genre's lack of commercial and critical success of Postmodernism's move towards metafictional writing drew a range of reactions.

Some commentators asserted that it represented the decadence of the novel and the medium's aesthetic potential exhausted, even going so far as to declare the "death of the novel." Others view fictional writing's self-consciousness as a means of developing a better understanding of the form and as a catalyst for innovation that has given rise to new genres of literature, such as Linda Hutcheon's historiographic novel and the rise of indie video games in the 2010's; video games also began to incorporate metafictional ideas.

Games like *The Magic Circle*, *The Beginner's Guide*, *Undertale*, and *Pony Island* employ a variety of strategies to make the player wonder where the line is between the video game's fiction and their own reality while they play it.

## **Q2 Elucidate and explain Mythological Fiction**

When mythical stories are presented in story form we regard it as mythological fiction. The type of fiction writing known as mythological fiction is particularly intriguing. They are tales with roots in folklore, myth, and fairytales and are inspired by the diversity of cultural expression.

Many myths, including Greek mythology, Roman mythology, Indian mythology, Chinese mythology, Japanese mythology, and many others, are quite fascinating. And well-known all around the world. Many authors attempted to write a fictionalised version due to their distinctive narratives. and deliver them to readers' desks all across the world.

Most of us are familiar with the Mahabharata and the Ramayana's general plotlines. It should not come as a surprise that readers enjoy mythological fiction that is based on these tales. It is, after all, the norm for Indian childhoods! Retellings of well-known epics have long been



common in local tongues. Yuganta -End Of An Epoch by Irawati Karve, originally published in Marathi in the 1970s and then translated into English, is a fascinating examination of the characters in the Mahabharata. These retellings have always existed, but using English to communicate them is fresh, according to Ashwin Sanghi in an interview.

Samhita Arni's English translation of Mahabharata - A Child's View was released in the 1990s by Tara Books. The idea of an epic from a 12-year-old's perspective was pretty original, though a little ahead of its time. The early 2000s, when a particular fantasy novel marketed as a children's book began making waves in the West, may have been the turning point for the trend. Both adults and children were drawn to the tale of a young boy who attends wizardry school and battles the terrible, deformed Voldemort. Given its popularity, it's possible that India was also rediscovering her own fantastical narratives through the profusion of legendary myths. And then there came The Da Vinci Code, whose plot gave a completely different perspective on Jesus and the Church. This gave us the motivation to research our own "set-in-stone" variants. What if the epics we write had a second dimension as well? The search for epic secondary characters to tell their own stories started with writers. By the middle of the 2000s, there was an increase in legendary figures anxious to tell their side of the tale, some of whom were well-known and others not so much.

Let us discuss the subgenres of mythological fiction.

**Mythological Retellings:** In this subgenre, well-known mythological tales from various civilizations are retold or reinterpreted. While retaining the essential aspects of the myths, authors are free to add their own interpretations, viewpoints, or modern twists.

**Urban Fantasy Mythology:** In this subgenre of fantasy literature, mythology is combined with modern urban surroundings. It frequently depicts mythical beings or gods interacting with contemporary culture, fusing the fantastic with the everyday.

**Mythological Historical Fiction:** This subgenre incorporates actual historical events, people, or time periods while setting mythological narratives in a historical setting. It offers a unique viewpoint on the past by fusing mythology and historical veracity.

**Mythological Adventure/Quest:** In this subgenre, heroes or protagonists set out on grand missions or adventures that are based on myths. These tales frequently feature mythical objects, beasts, and run-ins with deities.

**Mythological Romance:** This category blends love relationships with aspects from mythology. It examines love tales involving demigods, gods, or other mythological figures, frequently featuring themes of lust, forbidden love, and sacrifice.

**Contemporary Mythological Fantasy:** This type of fantasy incorporates mythical aspects within a modern fantasy setting. It might have heroes with mythological powers, secret kingdoms or pantheons, or a conflict between mythical creatures and regular people.

**Mythological Historical Fantasy:** The subgenre known as "mythological historical fantasy" combines aspects of mythology and fantasy in a historical setting. It frequently incorporates mythologically inspired magical or supernatural elements into a historical setting, resulting in a fusion of fanciful and real-world components.

**Mythological Science Fiction:** This subgenre fuses science fiction ideas with mythological elements. It might involve the interaction between mythical entities and advanced civilizations, cutting-edge technology, space travel, or any of these.

Some examples of mythological fiction are "The Sea of Achilles" by Madeline Miller, "The Sea of Monsters" and "The Titan's Curse" by Rick Riordan and "The Immortals of Meluha" by Amish Tripathi.

### **Q 3 What are the chief characteristics of a Campus Novel?**

#### **Campus Novel Characteristics**

- The Campus novel generally deals with the internal affairs of a university or a college. It deals with the complex relationships among the faculty and the staff.
- It presents a picture of the past memories of the members of the university, their experiences, power politics, conflicts and struggles of the characters. The Campus novel presents the sociocultural point of view of one of the members of the staff.
- The Campus novel abounds with scenes of drinking, partying, love- scenes, seduction, molestation, envy, exploitation and manipulation in the university or college campus. They are the inseparable part of Campus novel.
- Extra-marital relationships, adultery of the authorities have been focussed through the Campus novels. The Campus novel also unveils the snobbery and hypocrisy of people.
- There are also scenes of disparity and discrimination on the basis of caste, religion, culture, language and gender in the Campus novel. The Campus novel presents the dirty picture of power politics within the academics. It also highlights class struggle and

gender struggle. It also throws light on a clash between members of the staff on the basis of their position in the hierarchical order.

- Though some of the Campus novels have been written in comical vein, they have serious undercurrents. The views of the characters are presented by using satiric and sarcastic language.
- Many Campus novels have anti-heroes who are incompetent, unlucky, tactless and stupid. Kingsley Amis's 'Lucky Jim' is a fine example of an anti-hero.
- The campus novel deals with the hopes and aspirations of characters. Their failures, disillusionment, and discontentment.
- They were several novels with academic background and setting produced before the Second World War.
- The pioneer of this subgenre is generally recognized to be Edward E. (Doc) Smith, with his Skylark and Lensman series

#### **Q 4 Explain in your own words, citing example, the genre of Detective fiction.**

Detective fiction is a subgenre of mystery literature in which a detective looks into a crime and seeks to identify the perpetrator. The author frequently invites the reader to solve the mystery with the detective by providing narrative hints. Numerous detective stories follow a similar structure: a seemingly perfect crime is committed; an innocent person is falsely accused of the crime, frequently as a result of circumstantial evidence; the detective makes mistakes while looking into the case, sending them in the wrong direction; and the detective, using their skills of observation and logic, solves the crime in the end.

Detective fiction first appeared in the 1800s, just before the Industrial Revolution. The environment was favourable for detective genres to thrive because more people were residing in cities and crime rates were rising. The first modern detective novel which is a notable example, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", was published in 1841 by American poet Edgar Allan Poe. The main character, C. Auguste Dupin, not only appeared in the first fictional detective story, but also in two of Poe's short stories, "The Mystery of Marie Rogêt" and "The Purloined Letter".

The first detective book was written in 1868 by English novelist Wilkie Collins and one of the first American authors to do so was Anna Katharine Green with *The Leavenworth Case* in 1878 which was a milestone. The two main figures in the genre, Sherlock Holmes and Dr. Watson, were created by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The most well-known literary detective team consists of Dr. Watson, Sherlock Holmes' right-hand man, and Holmes, an eccentric detective with extraordinary deduction skills. The years from 1920 to 1939 are referred to as the "Golden Age of Detective fiction" Agatha Christie produced 66 detective novels and 14 collections of short stories during her lifetime. Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple, two of the most well-known detectives in literary history, were both created by Christie.

Let us discuss the subgenres of detective fiction.

**Hardboiled:** Stories that emphasise the detective as a character and are explicit in their violence usually take place in urban areas.

**Cosy mystery:** Almost the polar opposite of a hardboiled mystery, a cosy mystery suggests violence but rarely goes into great depth describing it. The investigator is typically a novice, frequently from a small town, who the reader may easily root for.

**Serial Killer Mysteries:** These detective tales are more brutal than others because they involve serial killers. Usually, the investigator tries to catch a murderer who has a string of victims and a mysterious purpose.

**Locked-room mystery:** Often known as an impossible mystery, includes a crime that, because it occurred in a room that could not be entered or left, appears to be impossible to solve.

Some examples of detective novels are "The Maltese Falcon" by Dashiell Hammett (1930), "Murder on the Orient Express" by Agatha Christie (1934), "The Name of the Rose" by Umberto Eco (1980), "The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo" by Stieg Larsson (2005) and "Gone Girl" by Gillian Flynn (2012).

#### **Q 5. What type of Literature is known as Chic Lit.?**

Chic Lit is a genre of fiction concentrating on young working women and their emotional lives. Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English defines chic lit as the "books about young women and the typical problems they have with men, sex, losing weight etc, especially books written by women for women to read-used humorously." Chic lit is



portmanteau of the American slang words "Chic" for a young woman, and "lit", the shortened form of literature.

### **Chic Lit Meaning**

It addresses issues of modern womanhood, often humorously and lightheartedly. The genre gained popularity in the late 1990s, with chic lit titles topping bestseller lists and the creation of imprints devoted entirely to chic lit. Although it sometimes includes romantic elements, chic lit is generally not considered a direct subcategory of the romance novel genre, because the heroine's relationship with her family or friends is often just as important as her romantic relationships.

To put more simply, Chic lit is a genre comprised of books that are mainly written by women for women. These books range from having main characters in their early 20's to their late 60's. There is usually a personal, light, and humorous tone to the books. Sometimes Chic Lit are written in first-person narrative while at the other time they are written from multiple viewpoints. The plots of chic Lit carry things like women experiencing usual life issues, such as love marriage, dating, relationships, friendships, roommates, corporate environments, weight issues, addiction, and much more.

Chic lit Books like Helen Fielding's *Bridget Jones's Diary* and Candace Bushnell's *Sex and the City* are examples of Chic Lit. The success of *Bridget Jones* and *Sex and the City* in book form established chic lit as an important trend in publishing. *The Girls' Guide to Hunting and Fishing* by Melissa Bank are regarded as one of the first chic lit works to originate as a novel (actually a collection of stories), though the term "chic lit" was in common use at the time of its publication (1999). Serena Mackesy's *The Temp* appeared in the same year.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

#### **Q1 What is The Difference Between Utopian Fiction And Dystopian Fiction?**

Dystopian and Utopian fiction can often be confused, and the lines between them can be blurred. In this section we will explore the main differences between utopian and dystopian Fiction.

In Utopian fiction, we are imagining society that is true perfection. However, in dystopian fiction we are exploring a world where society has gone wrong. It is the direct opposite of utopian and is often chaotic, challenging, unfair and disruptive. The problems that might be affecting our world today (for example war or disease) are often more extreme in dystopian fiction and its depiction of an often anarchist society.

It is interesting that in many utopian worlds or settings it will start as a perceived perfect and well managed world but will soon turn in a destructive and harmful dystopian world once the individuals in the setting find flaws in the utopia. A perfect example of this is found in *Brave New World* by Aldous Huxley, where the State has total control of a supposed perfect state. Another example is George Orwell's *1984*.

Simply put, one explores an ideal society (utopian), the other an anarchist society that lacks justice and fairness (dystopian).

## **Q2 What do you mean by Junk fiction?**

"Junk fiction" is not a recognized literary term or genre. It may be a colloquial or subjective term used to refer to certain types of literature that are perceived as having low literary or artistic value. However, it is important to note that literary value is subjective, and what one person considers "junk fiction" may be highly enjoyable and entertaining to another. In general, the term "junk fiction" may be used to describe books that are seen as disposable, formulaic, or lacking in depth, complexity, or literary merit. These books often prioritise entertainment value over literary craftsmanship and may be associated with genres such as romance, mystery, science fiction, fantasy, or action/adventure.

### **Trends in 20th and 21st Century Junk Fiction**

While the term "junk fiction" is subjective and not commonly used within literary discourse, it may be associated with certain trends observed in popular or mass-market fiction during the 20th and 21st centuries. These trends are often characterised by a focus on entertainment, fast-paced storytelling, and formulaic approaches. Different readers have varied tastes and preferences, and what one person may consider "junk fiction" may be immensely enjoyable and valued by others. Let us discuss the subgenres of junk fiction.



**Q 3 What is a Space Fiction?**

Space fiction is a sub-genre of Science fiction. Oxford Dictionary of Science Fiction defines the term, "Science fiction set primarily in space or that involves space travel. Hence, space-fictional,"

Space fiction is actually a peculiar category that is based on contemporary space technology.

Space fiction authors, artists, and illustrators generally portray the Spacecraft, like automobiles and they narrate certain basic systems that function properly in their space fictional world.

Space fiction may include space opera which is also the part of science fiction. According to Wikipedia "Space opera is adventure science fiction set in outer space or on distant planets."

The conflict is heroic, and typically on a large scale.

Space opera is sometimes used pejoratively, to describe improbable plots, absurd science, and cardboard characters. But it is also used nostalgically, and modern space opera may be an attempt to recapture the sense of wonder of the golden age of science fiction.

**Q 4 Science fiction has emerged as a popular genre, highlights its salient features.**

Science Fiction is a genre of writing that focuses on futuristic themes, innovative technologies, space exploration, and other scientific themes. Although Science fiction is technically a subgenre of the larger fiction genre, but most authors and readers view it as a separate one because it encompasses such a large and varied field on its own.

*A True Story* a work of science fiction written in the second century by Assyrian satirist Lucian, dealt with space travel, extraterrestrial life and intergalactic conflict. The Scientific Revolution, produced novel theories and scientific admin that encourage writers to speculate about that lies beyond the ever-expanding known Universe.

In depth science fiction stories started to appear once the novel took over as literature's dominant form in the 19th Century. Among the most read science fiction books are Julius Verne's *Twenty thousand League Under the Sea* and Mary Shelly's *Frankenstein*

Science fiction authors started experiment with the genre in the 1960's and 1970's adding literacy elements and more inventive storytelling techniques. During this time, socially

conscious science fiction works also began to appear exploring topics like feminism, civil rights and income inequality.

Science fiction authors are still interested in social themes that speaks to the times, with a focus on 21st century topics including environmental damage, the effects of the Internet and apparently endless information, and the morality of human cloning.

### **Q 5 Define Fantasy and Science Fiction Adventure Novels.**

These subgenres within fantasy and science fiction often focus on quests, adventures, and action- driven plots. They feature fantastical worlds, epic battles, and heroic protagonists navigating their journeys through imaginative landscapes.

Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" is often cited as an example of fast- paced and plot-driven fiction that prioritises entertainment value.

The novel follows the protagonist, Robert Langdon, as he unravels a mystery involving ancient symbols, secret societies, and religious conspiracies.

It is known for its quick pacing, cliffhangers, and an abundance of plot twists that keep readers engaged. While it has been commercially successful and enjoyed by many readers, it has also received criticism for its simplistic writing style and reliance on formulaic storytelling techniques.

### **Vert Short Answer Type Questions:**

#### **Q1 what is Airport/Travel Novels?**

These are books often found in airport bookstores or marketed as "beach reads" or "vacation reads." They are typically light, easy- to-read novels that provide escapism and entertainment during travel or leisure time.

#### **Q2 What is Pulp Fiction?**

Originating in the early 20th century, pulp fiction encompasses various genres like crime, mystery, science fiction, and adventure. Pulp novels were known for their sensational and action-packed plots, often published in inexpensive, low-quality magazines.

#### **Q 3 Define Romance Novels.**

Romance novels are a popular subgenre of mass-market fiction known for their formulaic plot structures and focus on romantic relationships. They typically offer a satisfying and predictable story with elements of passion, love, and happy endings.

**Q4 what are Thrillers and Suspense Novels?**

Thrillers and suspense novels are fast-paced and often plot-driven, with an emphasis on creating tension and keeping readers on the edge of their seats. These books typically feature high-stakes conflicts, unexpected twists, and intense action.

**Q5. What does the term Young Adult Fiction denote?**

Young adult (YA) fiction is targeted towards teenage readers and often embraces fast-paced narratives, relatable characters, and engaging storytelling. While YA literature encompasses a wide range of genres, many YA books prioritise entertainment value and immediate engagement with their target audience.

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# Unit IV

## **British Fiction**

### **Charles Dickens: *A Tale of Two Cities***

Charles John Huffam Dickens (7 February 1812 – 9 June 1870) was an English novelist, journalist, short story writer and social critic. He created some of English literature's best-known fictional characters, and is regarded by many as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era.

His works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime and, by the 20th century, critics and scholars had recognised him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories are widely read today.

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, published in 1859, gives the readers a glimpse of contrasting worlds of London and Paris before and during the French Revolution. The novel weaves a complex narrative involving characters like Charles Darnay, Sydney Carton, and Lucie Manette, each grappling with love, sacrifice, and the profound societal transformations brought about by historical disturbance. Dickens's iconic opening line, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," summarizes the stark opposition that permeates the narrative, capturing the turbulence of the era.

The historical setting of the novel adds depth to the story, vividly depicting the social disparities and political unrest of the late 18th century. Dickens dexterously utilizes the backdrop of the French Revolution to explore timeless themes of resurrection, sacrifice, and the potential for

positive change, making the novel a convincing exploration of human resilience in the face of societal, political, and personal challenges.

Beyond its historical context, *A Tale of Two Cities* resonates across different periods due to its common themes. Dickens draws parallels between the social injustices and inequalities of 18th-century France and the societal issues faced by Victorian England. The novel's lasting impact is reflected in its numerous film adaptations.

The novel tells the story of the French Doctor Manette, his 18-year-long imprisonment in the Bastille in Paris, and his release to live in London with his daughter Lucie whom he had never met. The story is set against the conditions that led up to the French Revolution and the Reign of Terror.

**Main Characters:**

**Charles Darnay, Sydney Carton, Doctor Manette, Lucie Mannette, Monsieur Defarge, Madame Defarge, Jarvis Lorry, Jerry Cruncher, Miss Pros, Marquis St. Evrémonte etc.**

**Long Type Questions:****Q1. Elaborate Dickens as a novelist.**

Charles John Huffam Dickens, was an English novelist, journalist, short story writer and social critic. He created some of English literature's best-known fictional characters, and is regarded by many as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era.

His works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime and, by the 20th century, critics and scholars had recognised him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories are widely read today.

Dickens's approach to the novel is influenced by various things, including the picaresque novel tradition, melodrama and the sensibility. According to Ackroyd, other than these, perhaps the most important literary influence on him was derived from the fables of *The Arabian Nights*. Satire and irony are central to the picaresque novel. Comedy is also an aspect of the British picaresque novel tradition of Laurence Sterne, Henry Fielding and Tobias Smollett.



Fielding's *Tom Jones* was a major influence on the 19th-century novelist including Dickens, who read it in his youth and named a son Henry Fielding Dickens after him. Influenced by Gothic fiction—a literary genre that began with *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) by Horace Walpole—Dickens incorporated Gothic imagery, settings and plot devices in his works.

Victorian gothic moved from castles and abbeys into contemporary urban environments: in particular London, such as Dickens's *Oliver Twist* and *Bleak House*. The jilted bride Miss Havisham from *Great Expectations* is one of Dickens's best-known gothic creations; living in a ruined mansion, her bridal gown effectively doubles as her funeral shroud.

No other writer had such a profound influence on Dickens as William Shakespeare. On Dickens's veneration of Shakespeare, Alfred Harbage wrote in *A Kind of Power: The Shakespeare-Dickens Analogy* (1975) that "No one is better qualified to recognise literary genius than a literary genius". Regarding Shakespeare as "the great master" whose plays "were an unspeakable source of delight",

Dickens's lifelong affinity with the playwright included seeing theatrical productions of his plays in London and putting on amateur dramatics with friends in his early years. In 1838, Dickens travelled to Stratford-upon-Avon and visited the house in which Shakespeare was born, leaving his autograph in the visitors' book. Dickens would draw on this experience in his next work, *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838–39), expressing the strength of feeling experienced by visitors to Shakespeare's birthplace: the character Mrs Witterly states, "I don't know how it is, but after you've seen the place and written your name in the little book, somehow or other you seem to be inspired; it kindles up quite a fire within one." In this line one can also draw the reference of The Artful Dodger from *Oliver Twist*. His dialect is rooted in Cockney English.

Dickens's writing style is marked by a profuse linguistic creativity. Satire, flourishing in his gift for caricature, is his forte. An early reviewer compared him to Hogarth for his keen practical sense of the ludicrous side of life, though his acclaimed mastery of varieties of class idiom may in fact mirror the conventions of contemporary popular theatre.

Dickens worked intensively on developing arresting names for his characters that would reverberate with associations for his readers and assist the development of motifs in the storyline, giving what one critic calls an "allegorical impetus" to the novels' meanings.

To cite one of numerous examples, the name Mr Murdstone in *David Copperfield* conjures up twin allusions to murder and stony coldness. His literary style is also a mixture of fantasy and realism. His satires of British aristocratic snobbery—he calls one character the "Noble Refrigerator"—are often popular. Comparing orphans to stocks and shares, people to tug boats or dinner-party guests to furniture are just some of Dickens's acclaimed flights of fancy.

On his ability to elicit a response from his works, English screenwriter Sarah Phelps writes, "He knew how to work an audience and how to get them laughing their heads off one minute or on the edge of their seats and holding their breath the next. The other thing about Dickens is that he loved telling stories and he loved his characters, even those horrible, mean-spirited ones."

**Q2 Charles Dickens have given English literature some of its universal characters. Do you agree. Elaborate.**

Dickensian characters are amongst the most memorable in English literature, especially so because of their typically whimsical names. The likes of Ebenezer Scrooge, Tiny Tim, Jacob Marley and Bob Cratchit (*A Christmas Carol*); Oliver Twist, The Artful Dodger, Fagin and Bill Sikes (*Oliver Twist*); Pip, Miss Havisham, Estella and Abel Magwitch (*Great Expectations*); Sydney Carton, Charles Darnay and Madame Defarge (*A Tale of Two Cities*); David Copperfield, Uriah Heep and Mr Micawber (*David Copperfield*); Daniel Quilp and Nell Trent (*The Old Curiosity Shop*), Samuel Pickwick and Sam Weller (*The Pickwick Papers*); and Wackford Squeers (*Nicholas Nickleby*) are so well known as to be part and parcel of popular culture, and in some cases have passed into ordinary language: a *scrooge*, for example, is a miser or someone who dislikes Christmas festivity.

His characters were often so memorable that they took on a life of their own outside his books. "Gamp" became a slang expression for an umbrella from the character Mrs Gamp, and "Pickwickian", "Pecksniffian" and "Gradgrind" all entered dictionaries due to Dickens's original portraits of such characters who were, respectively, quixotic, hypocritical and vividly factual.

The character that made Dickens famous, Sam Weller became known for his Wellerisms—one-liners that turn proverbs on their heads. Many were drawn from real life: Mrs Nickleby is based on his mother, although she did not recognise herself in the portrait, just as Mr Micawber

is constructed from aspects of his father's 'rhetorical exuberance' Harold Skimpole in *Bleak House* is based on James Henry Leigh Hunt; his wife's dwarfish chiropodist recognised herself in Miss Mowcher in *David Copperfield*. Perhaps Dickens's impressions on his meeting with Hans Christian Andersen informed the delineation of Uriah Heep (a term synonymous with sycophant).

Virginia Woolf maintained that "we remodel our psychological geography when we read Dickens" as he produces "characters who exist not in detail, not accurately or exactly, but abundantly in a cluster of wild yet extraordinarily revealing remarks".

T. S. Eliot wrote that Dickens "excelled in character; in the creation of characters of greater intensity than human beings". One "character" vividly drawn throughout his novels is London itself. Dickens described London as a magic lantern, inspiring the places and people in many of his novels. From the coaching inns on the outskirts of the city to the lower reaches of the Thames, all aspects of the capital—Dickens's London—are described over the course of his body of work. Walking the streets (particularly around London) formed an integral part of his writing life, stoking his creativity. Dickens was known to regularly walk at least a dozen miles (19 km) per day, and once wrote, "If I couldn't walk fast and far, I should just explode and perish."

### **Q 3 Write the summary of *A Tale of Two Cities***

*A Tale of Two Cities* by Charles Dickens, published in 1859, gives the readers a glimpse of contrasting worlds of London and Paris before and during the French Revolution

Dickens opens the novel with a sentence that has become famous:

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way—in short, the period was so far like the present period, that some of its noisiest authorities insisted on its being received, for good or for evil, in the superlative degree of comparison only.

In 1775, Jerry Cruncher flags down the nightly mail-coach en route from London to Dover. Cruncher is an employee of Tellson's Bank in London; he carries a message for Jarvis Lorry,

one of the bank's managers. Lorry sends Jerry back with the cryptic response "Recalled to Life", referring to Alexandre Manette, a French physician who has been released from the Bastille after an 18-year imprisonment. On arrival in Dover, Lorry meets Dr. Manette's daughter Lucie and her governess, Miss Pross. Believing her father to be dead, Lucie faints at the news that he is alive. Lorry takes her to France for a reunion.

In the Paris neighbourhood of the Faubourg Saint-Antoine, Dr. Manette has been given lodgings by his former servant Ernest Defarge and his wife Therese, the owners of a wine shop. Lorry and Lucie find him in a small garret where he spends much of his time distractedly and obsessively making shoes – a skill he learned in prison. Lorry and Lucie take him back to England.

In 1780, French émigré Charles Darnay is on trial in London for treason against the British Crown. The key witnesses against him are two British spies, John Barsad and Roger Cly. Barsad claims that he would recognise Darnay anywhere, but Darnay's lawyer points out that his colleague in court, Sydney Carton, bears a strong resemblance to the prisoner. With Barsad's testimony thus undermined, Darnay is acquitted.

In Paris, the hated and abusive Marquis St. Evrémonde orders his carriage driven recklessly fast through the crowded streets, hitting and killing a child. The Marquis throws a coin to the child's father, Gaspard, to compensate him for his loss; as the Marquis drives on, a coin is flung back into the carriage.

Arriving at his country château, the Marquis meets Darnay, who is his nephew and heir. Out of disgust with his aristocratic family, the nephew has shed his real surname (St. Evrémonde) and anglicised his mother's maiden name, D'Aulnais, to Darnay. He despises the Marquis' views that "Repression is the only lasting philosophy. The dark deference of fear and slavery ... will keep the dogs obedient to the whip, as long as this roof [looking up to it] shuts out the sky." That night, Gaspard creeps into the château and stabs and kills the Marquis in his sleep. He avoids capture for nearly a year, but is eventually hanged in the nearby village.

In London, Carton confesses his love to Lucie, but quickly recognises that she cannot love him in return. Carton nevertheless promises to "embrace any sacrifice for you and for those dear to you". Darnay asks for Dr. Manette's permission to wed Lucie, and he agrees. On the morning of the marriage, Darnay reveals his real name and lineage to Dr. Manette, facts that Manette had asked him to withhold until that day. The unexpected revelation causes Dr. Manette to

revert to his obsessive shoemaking. He returns to sanity before their return from honeymoon, and the whole incident is kept secret from Lucie.

As the years pass, Lucie and Charles raise a family in England: a son (who dies in childhood) and a daughter, little Lucie. Lorry finds a second home with them. Carton, though he seldom visits, is accepted as a close friend and becomes a special favourite of little Lucie.

In Paris in July 1789, the Defarges help to lead the storming of the Bastille, a symbol of royal tyranny. Defarge enters Dr. Manette's former cell, One Hundred and Five, North Tower, and searches it thoroughly. Throughout the countryside, local officials and other representatives of the aristocracy are slaughtered, and the St. Evrémont château is burned to the ground.

In 1792, Lorry travels to France to save important documents stored at Tellson's Paris branch from the chaos of the French Revolution. Darnay receives a letter from Gabelle, one of his uncle's former servants who has been imprisoned by the revolutionaries, pleading for Darnay (now the Marquis St. Evrémont) to help secure his release. Without telling his family or revealing his position as the new Marquis, Darnay also sets out for Paris

On his way to Paris, Darnay is arrested as a returning emigrated aristocrat and jailed in La Force Prison. Hoping to be able to save him, Dr. Manette, Lucie and her daughter, Jerry, and Miss Pross all move to Paris and take up lodgings near those of Lorry.

Fifteen months later Darnay is finally tried, and Dr. Manette – viewed as a popular hero after his long imprisonment in the Bastille – testifies on his behalf. Darnay is acquitted and released, but is re-arrested later that day.

While running errands with Jerry, Miss Pross is amazed to run into her long-lost brother Solomon. Now posing as a Frenchman, he is an employee of the revolutionary authorities and one of Darnay's gaolers. Carton also recognises him – as Barsad, one of the spies who tried to frame Darnay at his trial in 1780. Solomon is desperate to keep his true identity hidden, and by threatening to denounce him as an English spy Carton blackmails Solomon into helping with a plan.

Darnay's retrial the following day is based on new denunciations by the Defarges, and on a manuscript that Defarge had found when searching Dr. Manette's prison cell. Defarge reads the manuscript to the tribunal. In it, Dr. Manette had recorded that his imprisonment was at the

hands of the Evrémonde brothers (Darnay's father and uncle) after he had tried to report their crimes. Darnay's uncle had kidnapped and raped a peasant girl. Her brother, first hiding his remaining younger sister, had gone to confront the uncle, who ran him through with his sword. In spite of the best efforts of Dr. Manette, both the elder sister and the brother died. Dr. Manette's manuscript concludes by denouncing the Evrémondes, "them and their descendants, to the last of their race." The jury takes that as irrefutable proof of Darnay's guilt, and he is condemned to die by the guillotine the next afternoon.

In the Defarges' wine shop, Carton discovers that Madame Defarge was the surviving sister of the peasant family, and he overhears her planning to denounce both Lucie and her daughter. He visits Lorry and warns him that Lucie and her family must be ready to flee the next day. He extracts a promise that Lorry and the family will be waiting for him in the carriage at 2 pm, ready to leave the very instant he returns.

Shortly before the executions are due to begin, Carton puts his plan into effect and, with Barsad's reluctant assistance, obtains access to Darnay's prison cell. Carton intends to be executed in Darnay's place. He drugs Darnay and trades clothes with him, then has Barsad carry Darnay out to the carriage where Lorry and the family are expecting Carton. They flee to England with Darnay, who gradually regains consciousness during the journey.

Meanwhile, Madame Defarge goes to Lucie's lodgings, hoping to apprehend her and her daughter. There she finds Miss Pross, who is waiting for Jerry so they can follow the family out of Paris. The two women struggle and Madame Defarge's pistol discharges, killing her outright and permanently deafening Miss Pross.

As Carton waits to board the tumbril that will take him to his execution, he is approached by another prisoner, a seamstress. Carton comforts her, telling her that their ends will be quick and that the worries of their lives will not follow them into "the better land where ... [they] will be mercifully sheltered." A final prophetic thought runs through his mind in which he visualises a better future for the family and their descendants.

Dickens closes with Carton's final prophetic vision as he contemplates the guillotine:

I see Barsad, and Cly, Defarge, The Vengeance [a lieutenant of Madame Defarge], the Juryman, the Judge, long ranks of the new oppressors who have risen on the destruction of the



old, perishing by this retributive instrument, before it shall cease out of its present use. I see a beautiful city and a brilliant people rising from this abyss, and, in their struggles to be truly free, in their triumphs and defeats, through long years to come, I see the evil of this time and of the previous time of which this is the natural birth, gradually making expiation for itself and wearing out.

I see the lives for which I lay down my life, peaceful, useful, prosperous and happy, in that England which I shall see no more. I see Her with a child upon her bosom, who bears my name. I see her father, aged and bent, but otherwise restored, and faithful to all men in his healing office, and at peace. I see the good old man [Lorry], so long their friend, in ten years' time enriching them with all he has, and passing tranquilly to his reward.

I see that I hold a sanctuary in their hearts, and in the hearts of their descendants, generations hence. I see her, an old woman, weeping for me on the anniversary of this day. I see her and her husband, their course done, lying side by side in their last earthly bed, and I know that each was not more honoured and held sacred in the other's soul than I was in the souls of both.

I see that child who lay upon her bosom and who bore my name, a man winning his way up in that path of life which once was mine. I see him winning it so well, that my name is made illustrious there by the light of his. I see the blots I threw upon it, faded away. I see him, foremost of just judges and honoured men, bringing a boy of my name, with a forehead that I know and golden hair, to this place—then fair to look upon, with not a trace of this day's disfigurement—and I hear him tell the child my story, with a tender and a faltering voice.

It is a far, far better thing that I do, than I have ever done; it is a far, far better rest that I go to than I have ever known.

### **Short Answer Type Questions:**

**Q1 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, what is illustrated by the scene that occurs when Jerry Cruncher catches up to the mail coach?**

This scene illustrates the high level of concern over crime in England in 1775. Mr. Jarvis Lorry is traveling to Dover by mail coach, and Jerry Cruncher is sent after him with a message from Tellson's Bank. The narrator has made clear that everyone on the coach suspects everyone else of criminal intent. The coach is stopped at the top of a hill for the horses to rest when Jerry catches up with it. As his galloping hoofbeats are heard, the coachman and guard become

worried; the guard alerts the passengers, cocks his blunderbuss, and gets ready to fire if necessary.

Everyone is silent, listening to the horse's approach and to their pounding hearts. They all fear that a highwayman may be approaching, as highwaymen were known to prey on travellers and to attack mail coaches. The guard challenges the newcomer. Even after Jerry asks for Mr. Jarvis (Lorry) and is identified as safe, no one trusts him. What's more, Mr. Lorry has also become suspect by association and is "assisted [in leaving the coach] from behind more swiftly than politely by the other two passengers"—that is, they push him out. The others get back into the coach and shut the doors and windows. The guard remains on alert as Jerry and Mr. Lorry conduct their business.

Afterward, Mr. Lorry gets back into the coach, but this time no one helps him. In fact, the other passengers, who have already "secreted their watches and purses in their boots" are now pretending they're asleep. This unusual and unnerving encounter has given them all the impression that, despite his mild manners and decent appearance, Mr. Lorry may be a criminal, and they do not want to set him off with a comment or even a glance. This scene makes clear that, unless they know one another, people in England in 1775 simply could not trust one another. A threat lurked beneath the surface of every encounter with a stranger, no matter how innocent it seemed.

**Q 2 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, how does Dickens combine the setting of Tellson's Bank and character description?**

Dickens uses not only details of the ugliness, dinginess, and old-fashioned, outdated business practices of Tellson's Bank, but also the interactions people have with the bank's employees and the building itself to describe the setting. He almost turns Tellson's Bank into another character: an old, stodgy, painfully slow and ineffective business that is proud to be that way and whose employees endeavour to keep it that way.

Everything a client could store at Tellson's takes on an odor or an appearance that mimics the place where it is stored, and even the room where private documents are kept serves as a witness to death outside the building. An employee who begins at Tellson's at a young age is kept in

the back until he is old, "in a dark place, like a cheese, until he had the full Tellson flavour and blue-mould upon him."

In addition, because the death sentence is used for just about every financial crime a person could commit, the narrator goes so far as to say that it is Tellson's itself that has caused the deaths of hundreds of people. Dickens also uses second person to make the reader experience the setting on a more intimate level: "If your business necessitated your seeing 'the House,' you were put into a species of Condemned Hold at the back, where you meditated on a misspent life."

This allows readers to better imagine their possible interactions with such a bank to serve as a description of all the ways in which Tellson's slows down business transactions, "the triumphant perfection of inconvenience."

### **Q 3 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, how and why does Lucie Manette's personality change?**

At the beginning of the chapter, Lucie Manette can barely make it up the staircase to the garret, let alone look at her white-haired father sitting there in his ragged clothing, oblivious to the world, making shoes. She tells Mr. Jarvis Lorry that she is afraid of her father.

Once everyone is in the room with Dr. Manette, Lucie keeps her hands over her face, looking through her fingers, like a small child trying to work up the courage to see something terrible. She is curious but can't face the idea that this helpless man, who can barely speak, is her father. But as Monsieur Defarge asks Dr. Manette questions, and as Dr. Manette looks at Mr. Lorry with a glimmer of recognition that fades almost immediately, Lucie begins to find her strength.

Witnessing the injustice he has suffered makes her strong, and makes her forget her fear. First she moves to stand next to him, and then sits down next to him, with her hand on his arm. When he pulls a piece of cloth from his neck to compare two gold hairs from his wife he has kept all these years to Lucie's hair, he realizes that she can't be his wife and wants to know who she is. Not only does she decide that she should wait to tell him exactly who she is, though she hints enough at her identity for him to begin crying, but she tells the rest of the people gathered in the room to leave them be and prepare a cart to get them to the ferry.

Lucie tells her father that she is taking him to England "to be at peace and at rest" and makes sure that no one upsets him any more than he is already upset. Lucie is clearly in charge now that she knows what her father has endured, and being a caretaker makes her strong.

**Q4 Why is Charles Darnay acquitted at his English trial?**

When Charles Darnay first appears in the novel, he is on trial in London, accused of passing information between France and England.

When the court's attention is drawn to Sydney Carton, the members realize that the two men are virtually identical to one another. The resemblance plants the seed of doubt about whether someone else could be mistaken for Darnay.

As the result of this possibility, and the circumstantial evidence, Darnay is acquitted and allowed to go. The trial even turns out to have been a positive event for Darnay, because it puts him back in contact with Lucie and Dr. Manette.

**Q5 How does Madame Defarge die?**

Madame Defarge is killed when her pistol accidentally fires as she struggles with Miss Pross. Madame Defarge is trying to find Lucie and little Lucie in order to attack and kill them, and Miss Pross is determined to protect the family by concealing the fact that they have fled.

The struggle between the two women becomes an opportunity to show how "the vigorous tenacity of love [is] always so much stronger than hate."

The fact that Madame Defarge is killed by her own weapon suggests that those who choose violence and hatred set themselves on a path that is likely to backfire and destroy them.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:**

**Q1 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, why does Jarvis Lorry keep repeating to Lucie Manette that his purpose for accompanying her to Paris is business?**

Mr. Jarvis Lorry keeps referring to business because he is trying to remain emotionally neutral in this situation. He says, "I have no feelings; I am a mere machine." However, the fact that he knows the prisoner, Lucie Manette's father, well enough to be the person contacted when her father comes out of prison tells the reader that there is no way that he can remain completely neutral.

His body language, rubbing Lucie's hands to comfort her when she grabs his arms, as well as the expressions on his face and his indirect way of telling her about her father in order not to get her upset show that he does have feelings. Mr. Lorry is personally connected to this family, and going to rescue Lucie's father isn't just business for him; it is a very emotional experience not only for Lucie, but for Mr. Lorry as well.

## **Q2 What is the significance of the name "Jacques" in *A Tale of Two Cities*?**

In *A Tale of Two Cities*, the name "Jacques" is the name used by male members of the third estate who are participating in the Defarges' plot to revolt against the monarchy and the aristocracy in France. All of Monsieur Defarge's friends are named Jacques, and he says his own name is Jacques.

The men use the name to refer to each other in public for two main reasons. First, it serves as a code word that allows them to recognize each other as fellow revolutionaries. Second, they use it to make sure that if someone overhears their conversations, that person will be less likely to guess the real identities of people involved in the plot to overthrow the government.

This is illustrated by the response Defarge gives to the spy John Barsad in Book 2, Chapter 16. Barsad is trying to catch Madame Defarge and Monsieur Defarge in the act of plotting against the king, so when Madame Defarge points her husband out to Barsad, Barsad greets him with "Good day, Jacques!" He has to say it twice, and Monsieur Defarge feigns confusion, finally replying, "You deceive yourself, monsieur." He tells Barsad his name is Ernest Defarge, which, in turn, confuses Barsad, who expected the code name to work.

## **Q 3 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, why does Monsieur Defarge allow the Jacques to wait outside Dr. Manette's door?**

Monsieur Defarge allows the men to wait outside Dr. Manette's door because they are waiting for him to regain his sanity and join their revolution. He is a hero for having tried to report the Marquis for his crimes, and the fact that he survived 18 years in the Bastille is admirable.

They want to get a look at this man, who has managed to come out of the Bastille alive, just as if he had risen from the dead. Seeing such a man is a great boost to the revolutionaries' morale, and Defarge realizes that.

Of course, because Dr. Manette is still making shoes, he isn't really mentally capable of helping the cause, but Defarge also knows they will need a doctor once the fighting begins and hopes Dr. Manette will later join them in that capacity.

**Q 4 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, why does Sydney Carton speak so disagreeably to Charles Darnay and ask him if he thinks Carton likes him?**

Sydney Carton is unpleasant to Charles Darnay because he sees how Lucie Manette pitied Darnay in the courtroom and how grateful she was to have not caused him harm. Carton would have preferred it if Lucie looked at him (Carton) like that, but he knows that, although he looks just like Darnay physically, he is dressed poorly, drinks too much, and wastes his life carousing. He dislikes Darnay mostly because of jealousy; after all, he takes him to a tavern to make sure that Darnay eats and regains his strength, so he can't really hate Darnay.

But Carton resents him because Darnay makes him think of all he has not done and the man he has not become. It is rather unfair of Carton to pin all of this on a man he has never met, especially a man who has been unjustly accused of treason and has nearly lost his life over the matter. The truth is he wants to hear Darnay say that he doesn't like Carton because Carton can't see how anyone could like him as he is. When Darnay leaves the tavern, Carton looks at himself in a mirror and says to himself, "Come on, and have it out in plain words. You hate the fellow." This is really how he feels about himself.

**Q5 In *A Tale of Two Cities*, how does Jerry Cruncher introduce the theme of resurrection?**

Jerry Cruncher says at the end of the chapter that if the verdict had been "Recalled to Life" instead of "Acquitted," he would have at least understood it better this time than he did last time he heard it, when Mr. Jarvis Lorry gave him that exact written message to take back to the bank at the beginning of the novel.



Jerry brings up the theme of resurrection, being "recalled to life," because he hears at the start of the trial that if the prisoner is declared guilty, he will be to be drawn and quartered. The person who tells him about this punishment gives a gleefully graphic description of what it entails, so Jerry knows that by being acquitted, the prisoner has been brought back from the brink of a horrible death.

The theme of resurrection in the novel revolves around saving someone from death, even if, as it does for Sydney Carton, it costs one's own life.

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OR

**Thomas Hardy- Far from the Madding Crowd**

**Thomas Hardy** (born June 2, 1840, Higher Bockhampton, Dorset, England—died January 11, 1928, Dorchester, Dorset) was a novelist and poet who set much of his work in Wessex, his name for the counties of southwestern England.

While Hardy wrote poetry throughout his life and regarded himself primarily as a poet, his first collection was not published until 1898. Initially, he gained fame as the author of novels such as *Far from the Madding Crowd* (1874), *The Mayor of Casterbridge* (1886), *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* (1891) and *Jude the Obscure* (1895). During his lifetime, Hardy's poetry was acclaimed by younger poets (particularly the Georgians) who viewed him as a mentor. After his death his poems were lauded by Ezra Pound, W. H. Auden and Philip Larkin.<sup>[2]</sup>

Many of his novels concern tragic characters struggling against their passions and social circumstances. Two of his novels, *Tess of the d'Urbervilles* and *Far from the Madding Crowd*, were listed in the top 50 on the BBC's survey The Big Read.

*Far From the Madding Crowd* is a novel by Thomas Hardy about a young woman named Bathsheba Everdene who is pursued by three very different men: **Gabriel Oak**: A steady, reliable shepherd who Bathsheba turns down early in the story because she values her independence second is **Frank Troy**: An unreliable Sergeant who Bathsheba marries in secret, unaware that he was about to marry someone else. And the last one is **William Boldwood**: A wealthy and mature bachelor who becomes obsessed with Bathsheba and marries her after Troy is presumed dead. The story takes place in rural Victorian England and explores themes of love, pride, and the consequences of choice

**Main Characters:**

**Bathsheba Everdene. Gabriel Oak .Mr. Boldwood, Francis Troy .Fanny Robin. Mrs. Hurst. Liddy Smallbury . Maryann Money Mrs. Coggan . Cainy Ball .Benjy Pennyways etc.**

**Long Answer Type Questions:****Q1 Draw a character sketch of Bathsheba Everdene.**

Bathsheba Everdene is the independent and headstrong protagonist of Thomas Hardy's novel *Far From the Madding Crowd*. She is a young and beautiful woman who inherits a farm in rural England and becomes the object of desire for three different suitors.

**Her Appearance and Physical Charms:** Bathsheba is described as a strikingly beautiful woman with dark hair and bright eyes. Her physical charms are a source of admiration for the men around her, as evidenced by Gabriel Oak's initial fascination with her. The narrator describes Bathsheba as having: "an abundance of energy and spirit beneath her beauty" (Chapter 1), which hints at her fiery and dynamic nature.

**Her Dutifulness:** Despite her independent nature, Bathsheba is also dutiful and responsible, as shown by her dedication to managing her farm and taking care of her employees. She takes her responsibilities seriously and is willing to work hard to ensure the success of her business. This is evident in her interactions with Gabriel Oak, who becomes her loyal shepherd. She shows her appreciation for his dedication by offering him a job and paying him a fair wage.

**Her Feelings for Oak:** Bathsheba's relationship with Gabriel Oak is marked by mutual respect and admiration. Although she initially rejects his romantic advances, she comes to appreciate his steadfastness and loyalty. When Gabriel loses his flock of sheep, Bathsheba offers him a job on her farm and a chance to start over. She values his opinion and trusts his judgment. Finally, she gets married to him.

**Her Relationship with William Boldwood:** Bathsheba's relationship with William Boldwood is initially cordial but becomes strained when he becomes infatuated with her. Bathsheba sends him a Valentine's Day card as a joke, not realizing the impact it will have on him. When Boldwood proposes to her, she rejects him, but he continues to pursue her relentlessly. Despite his wealth and status, Bathsheba is not swayed by his persistent proposals and ultimately rejects him.

**Her Relationship with Sergeant Troy:** Bathsheba's relationship with Sergeant Troy is a tumultuous one. She becomes infatuated with his charm and romantic gestures but is later disillusioned when she discovers his true character. Despite warnings from others, Bathsheba

marries Troy and discovers his selfish and irresponsible nature. Her emotional journey throughout the novel is marked by the contrast between her impulsive decisions and her eventual growth and maturity.

Thus, Bathsheba Everdene is a complex and multi-dimensional character who embodies both the strength and weaknesses of human nature. Her relationships with the men in her life are a reflection of her evolving character, as she learns to appreciate loyalty and steadfastness over wealth and charm. Despite her flaws, Bathsheba remains a beloved and iconic figure in the world of literature.

## **Q2. Draw a character sketch of Gabriel Oak.**

**Introduction:** Gabriel Oak is the male protagonist in Thomas Hardy's novel *Far From the Madding Crowd*.

He is a sheep farmer who falls in love with Ans. **Introduction:** Gabriel Oak is the male protagonist in Thomas Hardy's *Bathsheba Everdene*, the new owner of a nearby farm. Gabriel is a kind and hardworking man, whose steadfastness and loyalty make him a beloved figure in the novel.

**His Appearance:** Gabriel is described as a tall and muscular man, with, "brown face, shading to yellow". He is a skilled farmer who takes great pride in his work and has a natural affinity for animals. He is also an excellent judge of character, as shown by his initial assessment of Bathsheba as a "handsome woman" with a "fine spirit"

**His Steadfastness and Loyalty:** Gabriel's defining traits are his steadfastness and loyalty. He is a reliable and hardworking employee, who is willing to put in long hours to ensure the success of his farm. When Bathsheba hires him as a shepherd, he becomes her most trusted advisor and confidante. He is honest and straightforward in his dealings with her, even when it means giving her unwelcome advice. For example, when he warns her about the weather, she dismisses his concerns, but he remains steadfast in his belief that she should sell her sheep.

**His Kindness and Compassion:** Gabriel's kindness and compassion are also evident throughout the novel. He is always willing to lend a helping hand, even to strangers. For example, when he sees Bathsheba's wagon stuck in a river, he jumps in to rescue her and her belongings. He is also patient and helps others to improve their lives.

**His Modesty:** Despite his many admirable qualities, Gabriel is also humble and modest. He does not seek recognition or praise for his work but is content with doing his job to the best of his abilities. When Bathsheba offers him a promotion and a higher wage, he initially refuses, saying, "I've been accustomed to being able to turn my hand to most things that are required on a farm" He is a man of simple pleasures, who enjoys spending time with his animals and being out in nature.

**His Expertise in Farming:** Gabriel Oak is an expert in farming and takes great pride in his work. He has a deep understanding of the land, animals, and weather patterns, which makes him a valuable asset to Bathsheba's farm. He has a natural ability to read the signs of the weather and knows how to care for his animals. For example, when he discovers that one of his sheep has a twisted foot, he sets it straight and binds it with a bandage to help it heal.

**His love for Nature:** Gabriel Oak has a deep respect for Nature and the environment. He believes in working in harmony with the land and treating animals with kindness and compassion. He is a conservationist at heart and believes in preserving the natural beauty of the countryside. For example, when Bathsheba asks him to cut down a beautiful tree on her farm, he refuses, saying, "It is a shame to pull it down so early."

**His Power of Endurance:** Gabriel Oak is a stoic character who endures many hardships throughout the novel. He experiences both personal and professional setbacks but remains resolute in the face of adversity. When he loses his flock of sheep due to a storm, he does not wallow in self-pity but instead focuses on rebuilding his life. When Bathsheba rejects his proposal of marriage, he remains stoic and continues to work hard on her farm.

**His Moral Aspect:** Gabriel Oak has a strong moral code and believes in doing what is right, even when it is difficult. He is an honest and honourable man who values integrity above all else. He is also a man of his word and keeps his promises, even when it means putting his interests aside. For example, when he promises to take care of Bathsheba's farm, he does so with utmost dedication and loyalty, despite the challenges he faces.

Thus, Gabriel Oak is a complex and nuanced character who embodies the best qualities of humanity. He is a hardworking, compassionate, and principled man who has won the hearts of readers for generations. His unwavering commitment to Bathsheba and his love for the natural world makes him a character who is both timeless and relevant today.

**Q3. What is the role of Fate and Chance in the lives of the characters of the Novel *Far From The Madding Crowd*?**

Fate and chance play a very important role in Thomas Hardy *Far From the Madding Crowd*. The novel explores how the lives of the characters are shaped by the unpredictable and often uncontrollable forces of fate and chance. Here we will examine the role of fate and chance in the lives of the characters in the novel.

**Unpredictable Circumstances:** The characters in the novel are often subject to unpredictable circumstances that are outside of their control. For example, Gabriel Oak loses his flock of sheep in a storm, which sets off a chain of events that changes the course of his life. Similarly, Bathsheba's decision to send a Valentine's Day card to Boldwood sets in motion a series of events that have unforeseen consequences.

**Fate as a Driving Force:** Fate is portrayed as a driving force that shapes the lives of the characters. Hardy uses the metaphor of the wheel of fortune to represent the ups and downs of life. At one point in the novel, Gabriel reflects on the capricious nature of fate, saying,

It is difficult for a man to lose all the long-cherished hopes of his life, and suddenly to find himself the companion of his regrets".

**Chance Encounters:** Chance encounters play a significant role in the lives of the characters in the novel. For example, Bathsheba first meets Sergeant Troy when he saves her from being trampled by her horse.

Similarly, Fanny Robin's chance meeting with Troy at a fair set off a chain of in motion a tragic love triangle that has devastating consequences for all involved events that ultimately leads to her demise.

**The Unpredictable Nature of Life:** Hardy portrays life as inherently unpredictable and uncertain. The characters in the novel are constantly at the mercy of fate and chance, and their lives are shaped by a series of random events, this is reflected in Gabriel's reflection on life, where he says, "No man had ever seen the like in the forest before. This extraordinary growth must be the result of some unnatural interference";.

Thus, In the novel Fate and Chance plays significant role in the lives of the characters. The novel explores how unpredictable circumstances, chance encounters, and the capricious nature fate can shape the course of one's life. Hardy portrays life as inherently unpredictable and uncertain, and his characters are constantly at the mercy of forces beyond their control.

### **Short Answer Type Questions:**

#### **Q 1 Why does Bathsheba reject Gabriel's proposal at the start of the novel?**

Gabriel is smitten by Bathsheba and proposes to her very quickly without allowing much time for them to get to know each other. When he proposes, he also focuses on the ways in which he will be able to make Bathsheba economically comfortable, not the ways in which the two might enjoy each other's company, or have things in common.

Without any of this context, Bathsheba does not feel love for Gabriel, and she does not want to marry a man she doesn't love simply because doing so will make her more secure. Bathsheba is also very proud and independent, and worries about whether or not she will like the close companionship involved in marriage.

It is only through the many challenges she experiences during the plot that Bathsheba comes to love Gabriel because of the dedication and reliability he shows, and because she realizes she wants a steadfast partner by her side.

As Bathsheba matures and becomes wiser, she gains perspective about why Gabriel is a desirable partner, but at the start of the novel, she is too young and immature to realize this.

#### **Q2 What role do reversals of fortune play in the novel?**

Reversals of fortune and changes to a character's social position play a significant role in the novel. At the start of the plot, Gabriel is in a promising economic position and his future looks rosy for him to advance far beyond the social standing into which he was born. Bathsheba's



position is very precarious, since she is an orphan and may have to resort to working as a governess in order to earn a livelihood.

After Gabriel proposes and is rejected, the fortunes of the two characters reverse due to chance circumstances: Bathsheba inherits her uncle's farm, making her prosperous and also in a position of power as a landowner, while Gabriel is reduced to poverty after he loses his flock of sheep.

This reversal of fortune leads to the two characters re-encountering each other when Gabriel begins working on Bathsheba's farm, and it also makes it possible for their relationship to develop. As Bathsheba's employee, Gabriel has the chance to demonstrate how reliable and competent he is, and their time spent working together towards shared goals deepens their bond.

Interestingly, it is only when their fortunes have shifted again that the two decide to marry: at the end of the novel, Gabriel is again increasing his status and earning power, while Bathsheba has shifted out of a power position due to taking a much more hands-off role in the farm.

### **Q 3 How do Bathsheba's three suitors serve as different models of masculinity?**

Gabriel Oak, Farmer Boldwood, and Sergeant Troy all attempt to woo and marry Bathsheba at different points in the novel. As they compete for her affection and attention, the three men also embody different types of masculinity.

Gabriel Oak is presented as a humble and down-to-earth man; even his last name connects him to an element of the natural world. Although he is ambitious and competent enough to achieve success and advance far beyond his modest beginnings as a shepherd, Gabriel never acts like he is too good for anything, and he is always willing to do any kind of work that might benefit the farm and the community. He is reliable, conscientious, and dependable, but his modesty and economic instability make it hard for Bathsheba to recognize what is attractive about him.

Farmer Boldwood, on the other hand, is very prosperous and well-established, and represents a sound financial choice. Although he is older and not as physically attractive as Gabriel, he is very much in love with Bathsheba and would be a doting and indulgent husband.

Finally, Troy represents a dangerous but enticing alternative to the other two men. He is by far the most handsome and charismatic of the three, but he is also reckless and unpredictable.

**Q 4 How is sexual desire portrayed in the novel?**

Sexual desire is portrayed as a dangerous force that often leads characters, especially women, to make harmful choices. First Fanny, and then Bathsheba, are seduced by the charm and good looks of Sergeant Troy.

The two women follow their hearts and their desires, and end up suffering unfortunate consequences. Fanny winds up pregnant and destitute, and eventually dies as a result of poverty and neglect. Bathsheba ends up trapped in an unhappy marriage and at risk for economic ruin due to Troy's reckless spending and laziness.

Even for the male characters, their desires can make them unhappy: Boldwood's longing for Bathsheba pushes him to the brink of insanity and leads to his eventual imprisonment, while Gabriel stunts his career progress because he remains faithful to working for her rather than exploring other opportunities.

It is important to note that the novel does end with a happy marriage in which mutual desire plays a role: Gabriel and Bathsheba are clearly attracted to one another. More importantly, however, they have compatible goals and personalities.

**Q5 How does the character of Bathsheba change over the course of the novel?**

Over the course of the novel, Bathsheba matures from a willful and headstrong girl into a more reflective and compassionate woman. At the beginning of the novel, when she first rejects Gabriel's proposal and then when she takes on the management of her uncle's farm, Bathsheba is convinced that she can survive without anyone's help. She does not like the idea of long-term commitment, or of anyone telling her what to do. She also has romantic ideals of what the experience of falling in love should be like.

Gradually, Bathsheba faces obstacles and challenges both in her business and in her personal life. She comes to realize that in order to manage the farm successfully she needs the loyalty and trust of her employees, but also reliable advice, which comes in the form of Gabriel. After her tragic marriage to Troy, she realizes that sexual attraction and impulse do not necessarily lead to long-term happiness and that she needs a partner who shares her values.

While Bathsheba suffers a lot over the course of the story, this suffering ultimately makes her wiser and leads her to appreciate and value Gabriel.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:**

**Q 1 Write a short note on the vital role of the emotion of love in the novel *Far From The Madding Crowd*?**

Love is a major theme of the novel; in fact, the plot revolves around Bathsheba trying to understand what love truly is, and what type of man is worthy of giving her love to. Each of her suitors represents a different kind of love. Boldwood offers a love that is intense, obsessive, and functions like a form of ownership; he tries to buy her love with luxurious goods and promises of sharing in his prosperity. Troy offers her a passionate, sexually charged love that is very pleasurable in the short term but quickly fades away, and is not substantiated with long-term devotion or compatibility. It is Gabriel who offers her a quiet, unassuming, but steadfast and reliable love that will endure through problems and challenges. As Bathsheba matures, she comes to realize what real love is, and that Gabriel is the best partner for her.

**Q 2 Bathsheba's is an independent lady. Do you agree.**

Bathsheba is determined to assert her independence; she knows that many people assume that because she is a woman, she needs to get married and have a husband to help her with the farm. Bathsheba rejects the idea of marrying out of social convention; when Gabriel first proposes, she makes it clear that she only wants to marry for love. Through hard work and intelligence, she is fairly successful at proving that she can successfully manage her own farm as an independent woman. However, Bathsheba's ideal of independence is a bit of an illusion, since while she thinks she is taking care of everything, she is actually dependent on Gabriel's help the entire time. If he had abandoned her or refused to help her during crises like the sheep getting poisoned or the storm breaking out on the night of the harvest supper, she could have been ruined.

**Q 3 Deceit seems to play an important role in the plot of the story of the novel, *Far From The Madding Crowd*, explain in short.**

Deceit is an important theme since various characters create unfortunate situations through a lack of honesty. Bathsheba unleashes a long and tragic series of events through the simple and playful deception of sending Boldwood a valentine and misleading him about her feelings.

Later, Troy repeatedly tricks and deceives characters around him, especially Bathsheba. He does not reveal the nature of his relationship with Fanny, and when he returns from America, he disguises his identity at the fair. The scale of deceit ranges from relatively harmless to very serious, and yet it always has negative consequences, showing that honesty and integrity are the ways to lead a happy life.

**Q4 Discuss the roles of the farm labourers in the novel.**

Several times during the novel, Hardy spends entire chapters giving an account of how the common labourers speak, how they spend their free time, and their opinions about each other. These groups of lower-class, common characters figure in almost all of Hardy's novels; like Shakespeare, he often uses them to effect comic relief, offsetting a tragic scene--for example, the deaths of Gabriel's ewes--with one of a more light-hearted tone. With such scenes, Hardy also intends to introduce urban or middle-class readers to the many different kinds of people that exist in the lower classes.

In a later essay on the Dorsetshire labourer, he complains that people tend to stereotype farm workers and lump them all together. In other scenes, such as the sheep-washing and sheep-shearing scenes, the farm workers act as a kind of Greek chorus. At Boldwood's Christmas party, tension builds through the use of the villagers' comments about Troy, just like a Greek tragedy in which the conflicts about to be unleashed are commented on by the chorus.

They alone know what the reader knows--that Troy is alive, and may turn up at the party. Like the reader, they are powerless to intervene. The villagers articulate all the fears the readers have about how Boldwood and Bathsheba will react to Troy's presence. The tension they instil makes the somewhat melodramatic climax--Boldwood shooting Troy--more plausible.

**Q5 Who is Sergeant Francis (Frank) Troy?**

Sergeant Francis (Frank) Troy is the antagonist of the novel. Troy is a less responsible male equivalent of Bathsheba. He is handsome, vain, young, and irresponsible, though he is capable of love. Early in the novel he is involved with Fanny Robin and gets her pregnant.

At first, he plans to marry her, but when they miscommunicate about which church to meet at, he angrily refuses to marry her, and she is ruined. He forgets her and marries the rich, beautiful



Bathsheba. Yet when Fanny dies of poverty and exhaustion later in the novel with his child in her arms, he cannot forgive himself.

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## British Fiction

### Jane Austen- *Pride and Prejudice*

Jane Austen (16 December 1775 – 18 July 1817) was an English novelist known primarily for her six novels, which implicitly interpret, critique, and comment upon the English landed gentry at the end of the 18th century. Austen's plots often explore the dependence of women on marriage for the pursuit of favourable social standing and economic security. Her works are implicit critiques of the novels of sensibility of the second half of the 18th century and are part of the transition to 19th-century literary realism. Her use of social commentary, realism, wit, and irony have earned her acclaim amongst critics and scholars.

The anonymously published *Sense and Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), and *Emma* (1816) were modest successes, but they brought her little fame in her lifetime. She wrote two other novels—*Northanger Abbey* and *Persuasion*, both published posthumously in 1817—and began another, eventually titled *Sanditon*, but it was left unfinished upon her death. She also left behind three volumes of juvenile writings in manuscript, the short epistolary novel *Lady Susan*, and the unfinished novel *The Watsons*.

Since her death Austen's novels have rarely been out of print. A significant transition in her reputation occurred in 1833, when they were republished in Richard Bentley's Standard Novels series (illustrated by Ferdinand Pickering and sold as a set). They gradually gained wide acclaim and popular readership.

### **Pride and Prejudice**

#### **Main Characters:**

**The Bennet family: Mr and Mrs. Bennet, Jane, Elizabeth, Lydia and Kitty, Charles Bingley, Darcy, Lieutenant, George Wickham, Collins. Charlotte Lucas, Sir William, Lady Lucas Caroline, Louisa Hurst, Georgiana**

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**

The novel describes the clash between Elizabeth Bennet, the daughter of a country gentleman, and Fitzwilliam Darcy, a rich and aristocratic landowner. Although Austen shows them intrigued by each other, she reverses the convention of “first impressions”: “pride” of rank and fortune and “prejudice” against the inferiority of the Bennet family hold Darcy aloof, while Elizabeth is equally fired both by the “pride” of self-respect and by “prejudice” against Darcy’s snobbery. Ultimately, they come together in love and self-understanding. The intelligent and high-spirited Elizabeth was Jane Austen’s own favourite among all her heroines and is one of the most engaging in English literature.

### **Long type Questions:**

#### **Q1 Write a summary of Jane Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*.**

The novel opens with one of the most famous lines in English literature: “It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.” The statement is seemingly what Mrs. Bennet thinks as she sets her sights on the newly arrived Bingley, who she is sure will make a suitable husband for one of her daughters. At a ball, Bingley takes an immediate interest in the beautiful and shy Jane. The encounter between his friend Darcy and Elizabeth is less cordial. Although Austen shows them intrigued by each other, she reverses the convention of first impressions: the pride of rank and fortune and prejudice against the social inferiority of Elizabeth’s family hold Darcy aloof, while the pride of self-respect and prejudice against Darcy’s snobbery hold Elizabeth equally aloof.

The pompous Collins soon arrives, hoping to marry one of the Bennet sisters. Mrs. Bennet steers him toward Elizabeth, but the latter refuses his offer of marriage. He instead becomes engaged to her friend Charlotte. During this time, Elizabeth encounters the charming Wickham. There is a mutual attraction between the two, and he informs her that Darcy has denied him his inheritance.

After Bingley abruptly departs for London, Elizabeth’s dislike of Darcy mounts as she becomes convinced that he is discouraging Bingley’s relationship with Jane. Darcy, however, has grown increasingly fond of Elizabeth, admiring her intelligence and vitality. While visiting the now-married Charlotte, Elizabeth sees Darcy, who professes his love for her and proposes.



A surprised Elizabeth refuses his offer, and, when Darcy demands an explanation, she accuses him of breaking up Jane and Bingley and of denying Wickham his inheritance. Darcy subsequently writes Elizabeth a letter in which he explains that he separated the couple largely because he did not believe Jane returned Bingley's affection. He also discloses that Wickham, after squandering his inheritance, tried to marry Darcy's then 15-year-old sister in an attempt to gain possession of her fortune. With these revelations, Elizabeth begins to see Darcy in a new light.

Shortly thereafter the youngest Bennet sister, Lydia, elopes with Wickham. The news is met with great alarm by Elizabeth, since the scandalous affair—which is unlikely to end in marriage—could ruin the reputation of the other Bennet sisters. When she tells Darcy, he persuades Wickham to marry Lydia, offering him money. Despite Darcy's attempt to keep his intervention a secret, Elizabeth learns of his actions. At the encouragement of Darcy, Bingley subsequently returns, and he and Jane become engaged. Finally, Darcy proposes again to Elizabeth, who this time accepts.

### **Q2 Elucidate Jane Austen as a novelist of her time.**

Jane Austen began writing stories at a very young age and completed her first novel in her early twenties. By the age of twenty-five, Austen had already written three novels, though *Sense and Sensibility*, Austen's first novel to be published, was not released until 1811. All of her work was published anonymously, and few outside of her family were aware of her writing. In the early nineteenth century, publishing was one of the few ways middle-class women could earn money, and Austen used her modest earnings to supplement her income. Two years later, her second novel, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) was published and proved to be extremely popular, ending Austen's anonymity. Her next novel, *Mansfield Park* (1814), did not sell as well, and Austen followed it in 1816 with *Emma*, the last novel to be published before her early death. In failing health, Austen wrote her final novel, *Persuasion*, in under a year. *Persuasion* and *Northanger Abbey* were published posthumously in 1818, and together earned little over 500 Pounds, a small amount by today's standards, but more money than Austen herself ever saw in her lifetime.

The social milieu of Austen's Regency England was particularly stratified, and class divisions were rooted in family connections and wealth. In her work, Austen is often critical of the

assumptions and prejudices of upper-class England. She distinguishes between internal merit (goodness of person) and external merit (rank and possessions). Though she frequently satirizes snobs, she also pokes fun at the poor breeding and misbehaviour of those lower on the social scale. Nevertheless, Austen was in many ways a realist, and the England she depicts is one in which social mobility is limited and class-consciousness is strong.

Socially regimented ideas of appropriate behaviour for each gender factored into Austen's work as well. While social advancement for young men lay in the military, church, or law, the chief method of self-improvement for women was the acquisition of wealth. Women could only accomplish this goal through successful marriage, which explains the ubiquity of matrimony as a goal and topic of conversation in Austen's writing. Though young women of Austen's day had more freedom to choose their husbands than in the early eighteenth century, practical considerations continued to limit their options.

Even so, critics often accuse Austen of portraying a limited world. As a clergyman's daughter, Austen would have done parish work and was certainly aware of the poor around her. However, she wrote about her own world, not theirs. The critiques she makes of class structure seem to include only the middle class and upper class; the lower classes, if they appear at all, are generally servants who seem perfectly pleased with their lot. This lack of interest in the lives of the poor may be a failure on Austen's part, but it should be understood as a failure shared by almost all of English society at the time.

### **Q 3 Compare and contrast the characters of Elizabeth and Darcy.**

The second daughter in the Bennet family, and the most intelligent and quick-witted, Elizabeth is the protagonist of *Pride and Prejudice* and one of the most well-known female characters in English literature. Her admirable qualities are numerous—she is lovely, clever, and, in a novel defined by dialogue, she converses as brilliantly as anyone. Her honesty, virtue, and lively wit enable her to rise above the nonsense and bad behaviour that pervade her class-bound and often spiteful society.

Nevertheless, her sharp tongue and tendency to make hasty judgments often lead her astray; *Pride and Prejudice* is essentially the story of how she (and her true love, Darcy) overcome all obstacles—including their own personal failings—to find romantic happiness. Elizabeth must not only cope with a hopeless mother, a distant father, two badly behaved

younger siblings, and several snobbish, antagonizing females, she must also overcome her own mistaken impressions of Darcy, which initially lead her to reject his proposals of marriage. Her charms are sufficient to keep him interested, fortunately, while she navigates familial and social turmoil. As she gradually comes to recognize the nobility of Darcy's character, she realizes the error of her initial prejudice against him.

The son of a wealthy, well-established family and the master of the great estate of Pemberley, Darcy is Elizabeth's male counterpart. The narrator relates Elizabeth's point of view of events more often than Darcy's, so Elizabeth often seems a more sympathetic figure. The reader eventually realizes, however, that Darcy is her ideal match. Intelligent and forthright, he too has a tendency to judge too hastily and harshly, and his high birth and wealth make him overly proud and overly conscious of his social status. Indeed, his haughtiness makes him initially bungle his courtship. When he proposes to her, for instance, he dwells more on how unsuitable a match she is than on her charms, beauty, or anything else complimentary.

Elizabeth's rejection of his advances builds a kind of humility in Darcy. Darcy demonstrates his continued devotion to Elizabeth, in spite of his distaste for her low connections, when he rescues Lydia and the entire Bennet family from disgrace, and when he goes against the wishes of his haughty aunt, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, by continuing to pursue Elizabeth. Darcy proves himself worthy of Elizabeth, and she ends up repenting her earlier, overly harsh judgment of him.

#### **Q 4 Discuss the theme of Love and Marriage in the novel *Pride And Prejudice*.**

Introduction: *Pride and Prejudice* is a novel by Jane Austen, first published in 1813. The novel is a masterpiece of romantic fiction, depicting the societal norms, culture, and expectations of the British upper class in the 19th century. One of the primary themes of the novel is love and marriage, which explored through the relationships of various characters. Here we will analyse theme of love and marriage in *Pride and Prejudice* in the following manner:

Arranged Marriages: In the society depicted in *Pride and Prejudice*, marriages that were prevalent, were often based on wealth, social status connections. The novel's opening line.; "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession good fortune must be in want of a wife,"; sets the tone for the importance marriage in the society of the novel.



The pressure to marry was very significant for women, as their social status and financial security were depended on their marriage. The characters of Charlotte Lucas and Mr. Collins represent societal expectation of marriage.

**Love vs. Social Status:** While marriage was considered a necessity for social standing, the novel also explores the theme of love and how it conflicts with social status. The relationship between Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy is an example of this conflict. Mr. Darcy, as a member of the upper-class aristocracy, initially looks down on Elizabeth's lower social status, leading to her prejudice against him. However, as they get to know each other, they fall in love, which ultimately overcomes their societal differences.

**Love and Individual Choice:** Another aspect of the theme of love and marriage explored in *Pride and Prejudice* is the idea of individual choice. The novel suggests that marriage should be based on love and personal connection, rather than solely on social status or wealth. Elizabeth and Jane Bennet's relationships with their respective partners, Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley, represent the importance of individual choice in marriage. They choose their partners based on personal connection and compatibility, rather than societal expectations or pressure.

**Marriage for Wealth:** The marriage between Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas is a prime example of a marriage based on financial and societal gain rather than love. Charlotte is aware of Mr. Collins's flaws but agrees to marry him because of his financial stability and social connections. The relationship represents the societal expectations of women to secure their financial future through marriage.

**Marriage based on Love:** The marriage between Jane Bennet and Mr. Bingley is an example of a relationship based on love and compatibility. Unlike Mr. Darcy Mr. Bingley does not have a significant social status, but he and Jane fall in love based on mutual respect and affection for each other. The novel suggests that a successful marriage requires compatibility and shared values, rather than just social status or wealth.

**Marriage for Social Status:** The marriage between Lydia Bennet and Mr. Wickham is a result of their shared attraction and desire for social status. Lydia is willing to marry Mr. Wickham, despite his financial instability and lack of social standing, to escape the pressure of living with her family and gain some social status. This marriage represents the dangers of marrying for social status rather than love and compatibility.

Good Marriages: The novel portrays good marriages that are based on love, mutual respect, and shared values. The marriage between Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy is considered a good marriage because they choose each other based on these factors, rather than social status or financial gain. Similarly, the marriage between Jane and Mr. Bingley is also a good one. These marriages serve as examples of successful relationships that are built on love and mutual understanding.

Bad Marriages: Conversely, the novel also depicts bad marriages that lack compatibility, mutual respect, and love. The marriage between Mr. Collins and Charlotte Lucas is considered a bad marriage because it is based on social status and financial gain rather than love and mutual respect. Similarly, the marriage between Lydia and Mr. Wickham is also bad because it lacks mutual respect and love.

Conclusion: In this way, we have seen that love and marriage are central themes in *Pride and Prejudice*, and the novel explores them through the relationships of various characters. The novel also suggests that marriage should be based on love and personal choice, rather than social status or wealth. Through the characters of Elizabeth and Mr. Darcy, Austen shows how love can overcome societal differences and prejudices, ultimately leading to a fulfilling and happy marriage.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q1 Jane and Bingley are a made for each other couple. Prove by citing example from the novel *Pride and Prejudice***

Elizabeth's beautiful elder sister and Darcy's wealthy best friend, Jane and Bingley engage in a courtship that occupies a central place in the novel. They first meet at the ball in Meryton and enjoy an immediate mutual attraction. They are spoken of as a potential couple throughout the book, long before anyone imagines that Darcy and Elizabeth might marry.

Despite their centrality to the narrative, Jane and Bingley are vague characters, sketched by Austen rather than carefully drawn. Indeed, they are so similar in nature and behaviour that they can be described together: both are cheerful, friendly, and good-natured, always ready to think the best of others; they lack entirely the prickly egotism of Elizabeth and Darcy. Jane's

gentle spirit serves as a foil for her sister's fiery, contentious nature, while Bingley's eager friendliness contrasts with Darcy's stiff pride.

Their principal characteristics are goodwill and compatibility, and the contrast of their romance with that of Darcy and Elizabeth is remarkable. Jane and Bingley exhibit to the reader true love unhampered by either pride or prejudice, though in their simple goodness, they also demonstrate that such a love is mildly dull.

### **Q 2 Does the Novel Endorse the Role of Marriage in Society**

Austen's female characters are fixated on marriage, a preoccupation that some modern readers find off-putting. It is true that Austen, like her characters, believes that marriage is the surest route to happiness for women. However, recognizing this state of affairs does not mean she approves of it.

Jane Bennet is ideally suited for Bingley, the man she eventually marries. Yet according to Austen, this compatibility, while wonderful, is almost irrelevant. Far more relevant, from an objective point of view, is the fact that marrying Bingley ensures the fiscal wellbeing of Jane and her family.

Other characters are not as lucky as Jane. Charlotte's marriage to Mr. Collins, one of the more discomfiting unions in Austen's oeuvre, is an implicit criticism of the impossible position in which society puts women. Charlotte does not love Mr. Collins, or even like him very much. She is six years older than Elizabeth, she has no fortune, and she has no prospective suitors beyond Mr. Collins. Society offers her two choices: She can become an aging spinster with no significant position in society, or she can marry a fool who will provide her with companionship, money, and some status. Neither of these choices is pleasant.

Society's expectations for marriageable women are so stringent, Austen suggests, that one woman's scandalous behaviour is presumed to infect everyone to whom she is related. By sleeping with a man who isn't her husband, Lydia imperils not only her own name, but also the name of her entire family.

Thus, one can conclude that Austen through her novels satirises the marital positioning of her contemporary society.



**Q 3 How is Mr. Bennet different from Mrs Bennet?**

The patriarch of the Bennet family, a gentleman of modest income with five unmarried daughters. Mr. Bennet has a sarcastic, cynical sense of humour that he uses to purposefully irritate his wife. Though he loves his daughters (Elizabeth in particular), he often fails as a parent, preferring to withdraw from the never-ending marriage concerns of the women around him rather than offer help.

Mr. Bennet's wife, a foolish, noisy woman whose only goal in life is to see her daughters married. Because of her low breeding and often unbecoming behaviour, Mrs. Bennet often repels the very suitors whom she tries to attract for her daughters.

The nervous Mrs. Bennet only wants her daughters to marry for fortune and status, and soon, but the logical Mr. Bennet enjoys the company of his daughters and hopes that they marry for love when they are ready. Mrs. Bennet's domain is the hearth and the kitchen, and she is flighty and busy most of the time. Mr. Bennet's domain is his study, and he prefers to withdraw and detach from the family. Elizabeth is Mr. Bennet's favourite because of her intelligence, but Mrs. Bennet doesn't seem to play favourites. Her ambitions for her daughters are equal and consistent: She wants them all to marry upward.

**Q4 What role do letters play in the novel?**

In addition to face-to-face conversation, letters are the means that characters use to convey their intentions and wishes and one of the ways readers learn important information about characters and critical plot developments.

A few examples of the role letters play include the following: Elizabeth writes to her mother to summon a carriage to Netherfield; Mr. Collins sends a letter to Mr. Bennet announcing his upcoming visit; Mr. Darcy sends a long letter of explanation to Elizabeth, which marks the beginning of her change of heart toward him; Mr. Gardiner communicates with his brother-in-law about Lydia by letter; Mr. Gardiner sends a letter to Elizabeth in which he confirms Mr. Darcy's generosity to her family; Lydia sends letters to her family before her marriage, assuring them of her health and happiness; and Mr. Bennet's brief letter to Mr. Collins announcing



Elizabeth's marriage to Mr. Darcy slyly suggests that Mr. Bennet will have to console Lady Catherine.

**Q5. What is entailment, and what role does it play in the novel?**

Based on the evidence in the novel, entailment is a legal situation in which a property or estate automatically transfers to a predetermined heir regardless of how many children the property owner has. In the case of the Bennet family, their property will automatically be inherited by William Collins, not any of the Bennet daughters.

This controversial reality is evoked many times by Mrs. Bennet and confirmed by her husband and children, and the situation provides the momentum for marrying off the five Bennet daughters to men of means since the family property can never become theirs.

Mrs. Bennet reveals her feelings about entailment to Mr. Bennet when she says, "I never can be thankful, Mr. Bennet, for any thing about the entail. How any one could have the conscience to entail away an estate from one's own daughters I cannot understand; and all for the sake of Mr. Collins too!—Why should he have it more than anybody else?"

**Very Short Type Questions:****Q1 Why does Charlotte Lucas marry Mr. Collins?**

Charlotte marries Mr. Collins because he has a stable income and offers her the opportunity to have a home of her own. She does not love him, but she doesn't believe that love is essential for a successful marriage. As Charlotte explains to Elizabeth, "I'm not a romantic, you know. I never was. I ask only a comfortable home." Since Charlotte is not particularly beautiful and is growing older, she decides to make the most of an opportunity.

**Q2 Why is Lizzy Mr. Bennet's favourite daughter?**

Lizzy is her father's favourite child because she is the only one to share his wit and sense of humour. Early in the novel, Mr. Bennet is described as "a mixture of quick parts, sarcastic humour, caprice, and reserve." Lizzy shares many of these qualities: she is also a keen observer of human nature, and she also possesses a dry and witty sense of humour. Mr. Bennet admires that Lizzy can think for herself and make good decisions, which is why he supports her decision to refuse Mr. Collins's proposal.

**Q3 Why does Darcy dislike Wickham?**

Darcy has long seen Wickham to be selfish and unscrupulous, characterized by “vicious propensities.” In particular, Darcy detests Wickham because after Darcy refused to give Wickham money, Wickham seduced Darcy’s fifteen-year-old sister and planned to elope with her in order to get his hands on her fortune. Although Darcy has never made this story public in order to protect his sister’s reputation, he knows that Wickham has a history of predatory behaviour.

**Q 4 Why does Lizzy form a negative first impression of Darcy?**

When Lizzy first meets Darcy at the ball, he makes a bad first impression by being cold, reserved, and unfriendly toward everyone. Like the other guests, Lizzy decides that “he was the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world.” The bad impression is further solidified when she accidentally overhears him talking about her and commenting on her appearance. Darcy remarks that she is “tolerable but not handsome enough to tempt me.”

**Q5. Why does Lizzy reject Darcy’s first proposal to her?**

Lizzy rejects Darcy’s first proposal because while he admits to loving her, he also says many insulting things about her family and social position. Darcy makes clear “his sense of her inferiority, of its being a degradation, of the family obstacle, which judgment had always opposed to inclination.” He also seems confident that she will consider it an honor to marry him. These attitudes are offensive to Lizzy, because she does not think Darcy is inherently better than her.

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**Or**

### **George Eliot- Mill on the Floss**

George Eliot (born November 22, 1819, Chilvers Coton, Warwickshire, England—died December 22, 1880, London) was an English Victorian novelist who developed the method of psychological analysis characteristic of modern fiction. Her major works include *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner* (1861), *Middlemarch* (1871–72), and *Daniel Deronda* (1876). As with Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy, she emerged from provincial England; most of her works are set there. Her works are known for their realism, psychological insight, sense of place and detailed depiction of the countryside.

*Middlemarch* was described by the novelist Virginia Woolf as "one of the few English novels written for grown-up people". Martin Amis and Julian Barnes says it is the greatest novel in the English language.

#### **Mill On The Floss**

The *Mill on the Floss*, novel by George Eliot, published in three volumes in 1860. It sympathetically portrays the vain efforts of Maggie Tulliver to adapt to her provincial world. The tragedy of her plight is underlined by the actions of her brother Tom, whose sense of family honour leads him to forbid her to associate with the one friend who appreciates her intelligence and imagination. When she is caught in a compromising situation, Tom renounces her altogether, but brother and sister are reconciled in the end as they try in vain to survive a climactic flood.

#### **Long Answer Type Questions**

**Q1 Draw a character sketch of Maggie Tulliver.**

Maggie Tulliver is the protagonist of *The Mill on the Floss*. When the novel begins, Maggie is a clever and impetuous child. Eliot presents Maggie as more imaginative and interesting than the rest of her family and, sympathetically, in need of love.

Yet Maggie's passionate preoccupations also cause pain for others, as when she forgets to feed Tom's rabbits, which leads to their death. Maggie will remember her childhood fondly and with longing, yet these years are depicted as painful ones. Maggie's mother and aunts continually express disapproval with Maggie's rash behaviour, uncanny intelligence, and unnaturally dark skin, hair, and eyes.

Yet it is only Tom's opinion for which Maggie cares, and his inability to show her unconditional love, along with his embarrassment at her impetuosity, often plunges Maggie into the utter despair particular to immaturity. The most important event of Maggie's young life is her encounter with a book of Thomas a Kempis's writings, which recommend abandoning one's cares for oneself and focusing instead on unearthly values and the suffering of others.

Maggie encounters the book during the difficult year of her adolescence and her family's bankruptcy. Looking for a "key" with which to understand her unhappy lot, Maggie seizes upon Kempis's writings and begins leading a life of deprivation and penance. Yet even in this lifestyle, Maggie paradoxically practices her humility with natural passion and pride. It is not until she re-establishes a friendship with Philip Wakem, however, that Maggie can be persuaded to respect her own need for intellectual and sensuous experience and to see the folly of self-denial. Maggie's relationship with Philip shows both her deep compassion, as well as the self-centred gratification that comes with having someone who fully appreciates her compassion.

As Maggie continues to meet Philip Wakem secretly, against her father's wishes, her internal struggle seems to shift. Maggie feels the conflict of the full intellectual life that Philip offers her and her "duty" to her father. It is Tom who reminds her of this "duty," and Maggie's wish to be approved of by Tom remains strong.

The final books of *The Mill on the Floss* feature Maggie at the age of nineteen. She seems older than her years and is described as newly sensuous—she is tall with full lips, a full torso and arms, and a "crown" of jet-black hair. Maggie's unworldliness and lack of social pretension



make her seem even more charming to St. Ogg's, as her worn clothing seems to compliment her beauty. Maggie has been often unhappy in her young adulthood.

Having given up her early asceticism, she longs for a richness of life that is unavailable to her. When she meets Stephen Guest, Lucy Deane's handsome suitor, and enters into the society world of St. Ogg's, Maggie feels this won't for sensuousness fulfilled for the first time. Stephen plays into Maggie's romantic expectations of life and gratifies her pride.

Maggie and Stephen's attraction seems to exist more in physical gestures than in witty discussion, and it seems to intoxicate them both. When faced with a decision between a life of passionate love with Stephen and her "duty" to her family and position, Maggie chooses the latter. Maggie has too much feeling for the memories of the past (and nostalgia for a time when Tom loved her) to relinquish them by running away.

**Q 2 How does the story of Maggie Tulliver represents the contemporary society of the Victorian era.**

Maggie Tulliver is the impetuous, clever younger daughter of the Tullivers of Dorlcote Mill in St. Ogg's. Maggie frustrates her superficial mother with her unconventional dark colouring and unnatural activeness and intelligence. Maggie's father often takes Maggie's side, but it is Maggie's older brother Tom upon whom she is emotionally dependent. Maggie's greatest happiness is Tom's affection, and his disapproval creates dramatic despair in Maggie, whose view of the world, as all children's, lacks perspective.

Though Tom is less studious than Maggie appears to be, Mr. Tulliver decides to pay for Tom to have additional education rather than have him take over the mill. This decision provokes a family quarrel between Mr. Tulliver and his wife's sisters, the Dodsons. Mr. Tulliver is frustrated by the snobbish contrariness of the Dodsons, led by Mrs. Tulliver's sister Mrs. Glegg, and vows to repay money that Mrs. Glegg had lent him, thereby weakening her hold on him. He has lent almost an equal sum to his sister and her husband, the Mosses, but he feels affectionately toward his sister and decides not to ask for money back, which they cannot pay.

Mr. Stelling, a clergyman, takes Tom on as a student, and Maggie visits him at school several times. On one of these visits, she befriends Mr. Stelling's another student—the sensitive,

crippled Philip Wakem, son of her father's enemy, Lawyer Wakem. Maggie herself is sent to school along with her cousin, Lucy, but is called home when she is thirteen when her father finally loses his extended lawsuit with Lawyer Wakem over the use of the river Floss. Mr. Tulliver is rendered bankrupt and ill. Tom returns home as well to support the family, as the Dodson's offer little help. The mill itself is up for auction, and Lawyer Wakem, based on an idea inadvertently furnished to him by Mrs. Tulliver, buys Dorlcote Mill and retains Mr. Tulliver as a manager in an act of humiliating patronage.

Even after Mr. Tulliver's recovery, the atmosphere at the Tullivers' is grim. One bright spot is the return of Bob Jakin, a childhood friend of Tom's, into Tom and Maggie's life. Bob, a trader, kindly buys books for Maggie and one of them—Thomas a Kempis's *The Imitation of Christ*—influences a spiritual awakening in her that leads to many months of pious self-denial. It is only after Maggie reencounters Philip Wakem on one of her walks in the woods that she is persuaded to leave her martyrish dullness in favour of the richness of literature and human interaction. Philip and Maggie meet clandestinely for a year, since Maggie's father would be hurt by their friendship as he has sworn to hold Lawyer Wakem as his life-long enemy.

Philip finally confesses to Maggie that he loves her, and Maggie, at first surprised, says she loves him back. Soon thereafter, Tom discovers their meetings, cruelly upbraids Philip, and makes Maggie swear not to see Philip again. On a business venture with Bob Jakin, Tom has amassed enough money to pay off Mr. Tulliver's debts to the family's surprise and relief. On the way home from the official repayment of the debts, Mr. Tulliver meets Lawyer Wakem and attacks him, but then Mr. Tulliver falls ill himself and dies the next day.

Several years later, Maggie has been teaching in another village. Now a tall, striking woman, she returns to St. Ogg's to visit her cousin Lucy, who has taken in Mrs. Tulliver. Lucy has a handsome and rich suitor named Stephen Guest, and they are friends with Philip Wakem. Maggie asks Tom for permission to see Philip, which Tom grudgingly gives her.

Maggie and Philip renew their close friendship, and Maggie would consider marriage to Philip, if only his father approved. Lucy realizes that Tom wishes to purchase back Dorlcote Mill, and she asks Philip to speak to his father, Lawyer Wakem. Philip speaks to his father about selling the mill and about his love for Maggie, and Lawyer Wakem is eventually responsive to both propositions.

Meanwhile, however, Stephen and Maggie have gradually become helplessly attracted to each other, against both of their expectations and wishes. Maggie plans for their attraction to come to nothing, as she will take another teaching post away from St. Ogg's soon. Stephen pursues her, though, and Philip quickly becomes aware of the situation. Feeling ill and jealous, Philip cancels a boat-ride with Maggie and Lucy, sending Stephen instead. As Lucy has proceeded down river, meaning to leave Philip and Maggie alone, Stephen and Maggie find themselves inadvertently alone together. Stephen rows Maggie past their planned meeting point with Lucy and begs her to marry him.

The weather changes and they are far down the river. Maggie complacently boards a larger boat with Philip, which is headed for Mudport. They sleep over night on the boat's deck and when they reach Mudport, Maggie holds firm in her decision to part with Stephen and return to St. Ogg's.

On her return to St. Ogg's, Maggie is treated in town as a fallen woman and a social outcast. Tom, now back in Dorlcote Mill, renounces her, and Maggie, accompanied by her mother, goes to lodge with Bob Jakin and his wife.

Despite public knowledge of Stephen's letter, which acknowledges all the blame upon himself, Maggie is befriended only by the Jakins and the clergyman Dr. Kenn. Lucy, who has been prostrate with grief, becomes well again and secretly visits Maggie to show her forgiveness. Philip, as well, sends a letter of forgiveness and faithfulness responsive to both propositions. Stephen sends Maggie a letter renewing his pleas for her hand in marriage and protesting the pain she has caused him.

Maggie vows to bear the burden of the pain she has caused others and must endure herself until death but wonders to herself how long this trial, her life, will be. At this moment, water begins rushing under the Jakin's door from the nearby river Floss, which is flooding. Maggie wakes the Jakins' and takes one of their boats, rowing it down river in a feat of miraculous strength toward Dorlcote Mill. Maggie rescues Tom, who is trapped in the house, and they row down river towards Lucy. Before they can reach Lucy's house, the boat is capsized by debris in the river, and Maggie and Tom drown in each other's arms. Years go by and Philip, and Stephen and Lucy together, visit the grave.



**Q3 Symbols plays an important role in the novel *Mill on The Floss*, explain in detail**

George Eliot uses powerful symbols to highlight the important actions and incidents of the novel. Some of the major symbols she uses to develop a successful plot are:

**The Floss**

The Floss is a somewhat difficult symbol to track, as it also exists for realistic effect in the workings of the novel. On the symbolic level, the Floss is related most often to Maggie, and the river, with its depth and potential to flood, symbolizes Maggie's deeply running and unpredictable emotions. The river's path, nonexistent on maps, is also used to symbolize the unforeseeable path of Maggie's destiny.

**St. Ogg**

St. Ogg, the legendary patron saint of the town, was a Floss ferryman. One night a woman with a child asked to be taken across the river, but the winds were high and no other boaters would take her. Only Ogg felt pity for her in her need and took her. When they reached the other side, her rags turned into robes, and she revealed herself to be the Blessed Virgin.

The Virgin pronounced Ogg's boat safe to all who rode in it, and she sat always in the prow. The parable of Ogg rewards the human feeling of pity or sympathy. Maggie has a dream during her night on the boat with Stephen, wherein Tom and Lucy row past them, and Tom is St. Ogg, while Lucy is the Virgin.

The dream makes explicit Maggie's fear of having neglected to sympathize with those whom she hurts during her night with Stephen (and also, perhaps, her fear that they will not sympathize with her in the future). But it is Maggie, finally, who stands for St. Ogg, as she rows down river thinking only of Tom's safety during the flood in a feat of "almost miraculous, divinely-protected effort."

**Maggie's Eyes**

Eliot depicts Maggie's eyes as her most striking feature. All men (including Philip, Bob Jakin, and Stephen) notice her eyes first and become entranced. Maggie's eyes are a symbol of the power of emotion she contains—the depth of feeling and hunger for love that make her a tragic character. This unique force of character seems to give her power over others, for better or for

worse. In Book First, Maggie is associated with Medusa, the monster who turns men to stone by looking at them.

Maggie's eyes compel people, and different characters' reactions to them often reflect the character's relationship with Maggie. Thus, Philip, who will become Maggie's teacher, in a sense, and first love, notices that her eyes "were full of unsatisfied intelligence, and unsatisfied, beseeching affection."

Bob Jakin, who views Maggie as superior to him and a figure of whom to be in awe, reports that Maggie has "such uncommon eyes, they looked somehow as they made him feel nohow." Finally, Stephen, who will exploit the inner struggle that Maggie has felt for the entire novel, notices that Maggie's eyes are "full of delicious opposites."

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q1. George Eliot in her Novel *Mill on the Floss* propogates the The Claim of the Past Upon Present Identity Can you Explain how?**

Both characters and places in *The Mill on the Floss* are presented as the current products of multi-generational gestation. The very architecture of St. Ogg's bears its hundreds of years of history within it. Similarly, Maggie and Tom are the hereditary products of two competing family lines—the Tullivers and the Dodsons—that have long histories and tendencies.

In the novel, the past holds a cumulative presence and has a determining effect upon characters who are open to its influence. The first, carefully sketched out book about Maggie and Tom's childhood becomes the past of the rest of the novel. Maggie holds the memory of her childhood sacred and her connection to that time comes to affects her future behavior. Here, the past is not something to be escaped nor is it something that will rise again to threaten, but it is instead an inherent part of Maggie's (and her father's) character, making fidelity to it a necessity.

Book First clearly demonstrates the painfulness of life without a past—the depths of Maggie's childhood emotions are nearly unbearable to her because she has no past of conquered troubles to look back upon with which to put her present situation in perspective. Stephen is held up as an example of the dangers of neglecting the past. Dr. Kenn, a sort of moral yardstick within the

novel, complains of this neglect of the past of which Stephen is a part and Maggie has worked against: "At present everything seems tending toward the relaxation of ties—toward the substitution of wayward choice for the adherence to obligation which has its roots in the past."

Thus, without a recognition of the past with which to form one's character, one is left only to the whims of the moment and subject to emotional extremes and eventual loneliness.

**Q 2 Write a short note on how the novel makes the reader aware of the the Importance of Sympathy through the different series of incidents.**

*The Mill on the Floss* is not a religious novel, but it is highly concerned with a morality that should function among all people and should aspire to a compassionate connection with others through sympathy. The parable of St. Ogg rewards the ferryman's unquestioning sympathy with another, and Maggie, in her final recreation of the St. Ogg scene during the flood, is vindicated on the grounds of her deep sympathy with others.

The opposite of this sympathy within the novel finds the form of variations of egoism. Tom has not the capability of sympathizing with Maggie. He is aligned with the narrow, self-serving ethic of the rising entrepreneur: Tom explains to Mr. Deane that he cares about his own standing, and Mr. Deane compliments him, "That's the right spirit, and I never refuse to help anybody if they've a mind to do themselves justice." Stephen, too, is seen as a figure that puts himself before others. His arguments in favor of his and Maggie's elopement all revolve around the privileging of his own emotion over that of others', even Maggie's.

In contrast, Maggie's, Philip's, and Lucy's mutual sympathy is upheld as the moral triumph within the tragedy of the last book. Eliot herself believed that the purpose of art is to present the reader with realistic circumstances and characters that will ultimately enlarge the reader's capacity for sympathy with others. We can see this logic working against Maggie's young asceticism. Maggie's self-denial becomes morally injurious to her because she is denying herself the very intellectual and artistic experiences that would help her understand her own plight and have pity for the plight of others.



**Q 3 The life experiences of Maggie put forth a tug of war between practical knowledge and bookish knowledge. Do you Agree.**

*The Mill on the Floss*, especially in the first half of the novel, is quite concerned about education and types of knowledge. Much of the early chapters are devoted to laying out the differences between Tom's and Maggie's modes of knowledge. Tom's knowledge is practical: "He knew all about worms, and fish, and those things; and what birds were mischievous, and how padlocks opened, and which way the handles of the gates were to be lifted."

This knowledge is tangible and natural—it brings Tom in closer association to the world around him. Meanwhile, Maggie's knowledge is slightly more complicated. Other characters refer to it as "uncanny," and her imagination and love of books are often depicted as a way for her to escape the world around her or to rise above it—"The world outside the books was not a happy one, Maggie felt." Part of the tragedy of Maggie and Tom Tulliver is that Tom received the education that Maggie should have had. Instead of Maggie blossoming, Tom is trapped. When Tom must make a living in the world, he discovers that his bookish education will win him nothing: Mr. Deane tells Tom, "The world isn't made of pen, ink, and paper, and if you're to get on in the world, young man, you must know what the world's made of."

Tom soon returns and takes advantage of his skills for practical knowledge, making good in the newly entrepreneurial world. Tom's practical knowledge is always depicted as a source of superiority for Tom. From his childhood on, Tom has no patience for Maggie's intellectual curiosity. The narrowness of Tom's miseducation under Mr. Stelling seems somewhat related to the narrowness of Tom's tolerance for others' modes of knowledge. Yet Eliot remains clear that Maggie's intellectualism makes her Tom's superior in this case—"the responsibility of tolerance lies with those who have the wider vision."

**Q4 Is *The Mill on the Floss* a feminist novel?**

*The Mill on the Floss* is a feminist novel in the sense that it reveals the difficulty of Maggie's coming of age, and that difficulty is shown to be made harder by her society's narrow views about women. Especially during Maggie's childhood, we are constantly confronted with older characters ignoring or devaluing Maggie's obvious intelligence because she is a girl. Even Tom

is shown to participate in this narrowness—he considers it his right to keep Maggie in her place, as well as care for her.

In scenes such as the one in which Mr. Stelling pronounces the cleverness of women to be shallow, we are clearly meant to become angry at this pronouncement and know automatically that the pronouncement is wrong. Significantly, society's mistaken views about the shallowness of women are shown to adversely affect men as well—it is Tom who suffers just as much as Maggie, through his miseducation.

The structure of the novel itself presents Maggie as constrained and unable to move outside of her family circle. We are significantly not shown the chapters in which she is on her own, teaching, and are made to focus, instead, on scenes with Maggie and her family and friends, in which Maggie's subjection, or non-subjection, to their will is at issue. The passages dealing with the hypocritical morality of St. Ogg's society are unsparing in relation to women—the town's females are revealed as the most self-serving and shallow of the population—yet, this harsh realism does not change the basic feminist tenor of the novel.

#### **Q5 Do the concerns of *The Mill on the Floss* relate to 1830s England?**

*The Mill on the Floss* mainly deals with the troubled childhood and young adulthood of Maggie Tulliver, but a variety of background details reveal the changing community of the time and so relate to the actual sociological and economic shifts in 1830s England. The novel situates itself on the cusp of a new economic order.

The old ways of local provincial relations, illustrated through Mr. Tulliver, as well as the old ways of slow saving, as illustrated by the Gleggs and the Pullets, as shown to be giving way to a new order of speculation capitalism. The Tulliver family has owned Dorlcote Mill for years, but suddenly, new families like the Pivarts are advancing in the world and becoming moneyed and propertied.

Over the course of the novel, we are shown how Mr. Deane advances in the world, making Mrs. Deane the most successful Dodson sister, when Mrs. Pullet had claimed that honor for years prior. Mr. Deane himself points to one of the agents of this change, in the steam engine. Mr. Deane also explains that the age of farming is being succeeded by the age of trade: "Somebody has said it's a fine thing to make two ears of corn grow where only one grew before; but, sir it's a fine thing, too, to further the exchange of commodities, and bring the grains of corn to the mouths that are hungry."

Buying goods cheaply and selling them for a profit is the exact way that Tom made enough money to cancel the family debts. Finally, these economic forces are shown to effect the sociology of the society in that fortunes are won and lost more swiftly, and the hierarchies of the community are not as stable. Thus the young people of St. Ogg's are not as restricted in their choices of marriage partner as they may once have been—Stephen can marry down to Lucy Deane, and even to Maggie Tulliver, and Lawyer Wakem can agree to a match between his son and Maggie.

### **Vert Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q 1 Make a case for either Philip, Tom, Stephen, or another character as the character who is depicted as having the most influence on Maggie's character.**

Though Philip Wakem is shown to teach Maggie a great deal and to be the single force which leads her away from her path of self-abnegation, Tom still remains the character with the most formative power over Maggie. Tom has a negative influence upon Maggie's sensibility.

As children, it is Tom that is set up as increasing Maggie's need for love and approval by his very denial of that love and approval. As they grow older, it is Tom who enables the shift in Maggie's inner struggle.

The classification of Maggie's failures under the rubric of duty to close family affects Maggie's inner struggle throughout the rest of the novel, which will be understood by her in terms of duty versus love. Additionally, it is for her childhood with Tom that Maggie longs throughout her adult years—this pull to the past is entirely due to Tom's childhood effect on her.

Toward the end of the novel, it is in scenes with the unforgiving Tom which call for the most reader sympathy and allow us to classify Maggie Tulliver as a tragic figure. The final scene, in which the brother and sister drown together, cancels out the potential importance of figures such as Philip or Stephen, affirming the centrality of Tom to Maggie's character development.

**Q2 How does George Elliot narrates the effect of the society on her Characters?**



Society is never revealed to be a completely determining factor in the destiny of Eliot's main characters—for example, Maggie's tragedy originates in her internal competing impulses, not in her public disgrace.

Yet, Eliot remains concerned with the workings of a community—both social and economic—and tracks their interrelations, as well as their effect upon character, as part of her realism. *The Mill on the Floss* sets up a geography of towns and land holdings—St. Ogg's, Basset, Garum Firs, Dorlcote Mill—and describes the tone of each community (such as the run-down population of Basset).

The novel tracks the growth of the particular society of St. Ogg's, referencing the new force of economic trends like entrepreneurial capitalism or innovations like the steam engine. A wide cast of characters aims to outline different strata in the society—such as the Dodsons, or the Miss Guests—through their common values, economic standing, and social circles. In the first part of the novel, Eliot alludes to the effect these communal forces have on Maggie's and Tom's formation.

Toward the end of the novel, the detailed background of St. Ogg's society functions as a contrast against which Maggie seems freshly simple and genuine.

**Q3. How does the disparity between the Dodsons and the Tullivers effect the plot of the novel.?**

Early on in the novel a distinction between the two families from which Tom and Maggie are descended is drawn out. The Dodsons are socially respectable, concerned with codes of behaviour, and materialistic.

The Tullivers are less socially respectable and have a depth of emotion and affection. The constant repetition of the characteristics of the two clans serves to create a division along which Maggie's and Tom's growth can be tracked.

Tom is associated with the Dodsons, even more so when an adult, and Maggie is associated with the Tullivers.

**Q 4 Do you think that the use of Dark and Light motifs by George Eliot makes the story of the novel more engaging?**

The motif of darkness and lightness of women—meaning their eyes, hair, or skin—is often used to emphasize the uniqueness of Maggie's appearance. The motif of darkness and lightness connects to the motif of the distinctions between the Dodsons and the Tullivers—the Tullivers have darker skin, while the Dodsons have lighter skin. The Dodsons, and indeed, all of St. Ogg's, respect or covet Lucy Deane's fair appearance.

Her lightness is also prized in a larger cultural arena, and, in Book Fourth, Maggie becomes frustrated by the traditional plot lines in which the light, blond women live happily ever after in love.

Maggie's family views her darkness as ugly and unnatural, yet by the end of the novel, it has made men perceive Maggie as more beautiful because her darkness is a rarity

#### **Q5 What does floss symbolize in the novel?**

Floss is the river on which the Dorlcote Mill, the family home and business of Tulliver's is located.

River Floss is the symbol of life and death whereas the mill symbolizes economic stability, prosperity and survival

Mr. Tulliver's family with its mill located on river Floss symbolize harmony with Nature. But with time, the river is flooded and nature disturbed. This chaos gets reflected on the characters too. Thus, the flooded river represents the unbridled emotional exuberance of the characters especially Maggie.

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# Unit VI

## American Fiction

### Toni Morrison- The Bluest Eye

**Chloe Anthony Wofford Morrison** (née **Chloe Ardelia Wofford**; February 18, 1931 – August 5, 2019), known as **Toni Morrison**, was an American novelist and editor. Her first novel, *The Bluest Eye*, was published in 1970. The critically acclaimed *Song of Solomon* (1977) brought her national attention and won the National Book Critics Circle Award. In 1988, Morrison won the Pulitzer Prize for *Beloved* (1987); she was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1993.

Born and raised in Lorain, Ohio, Morrison graduated from Howard University in 1953 with a B.A. in English. Morrison earned a master's degree in American Literature from Cornell University in 1955. In 1957 she returned to Howard University, was married, and had two children before divorcing in 1964.

Morrison became the first black female editor for fiction at Random House in New York City in the late 1960s. She developed her own reputation as an author in the 1970s and '80s. Her novel *Beloved* was made into a film in 1998. Morrison's works are praised for addressing the harsh consequences of racism in the United States and the Black American experience.

#### The Bluest Eye

The *Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison is a novel about an African American girl named Pecola Breedlove who is convinced she is ugly and longs for lighter skin and blue eyes:

- **Setting:** The story takes place in 1941 in Lorain, Ohio, Morrison's hometown.
- **Themes:** The novel explores themes of race, class, and beauty standards.
- **Plot:** Pecola is consistently regarded as "ugly" due to her mannerisms and dark skin. She develops an inferiority complex, which fuels her desire for the blue eyes she equates with "whiteness". The novel chronicles Pecola's disintegration and madness in this pursuit.
- **Style:** The novel is marked by shifting point-of-view, a non-traditional structure, and innovative style.

- **Conclusion:** The novel depicts the existence of low self-esteem of black people at that time (Great Depression).

**Characters:**

**Pecola Breedlove, Claudia MacTeer, Frieda MacTeer:, Cholly Breedlove:, Pauline "Polly" Breedlove, Sam Breedlove:, Auntie Jimmy:, Samson Fuller:, The Fishers:, Gerald, Louis Junior, Maginot Line (Marie):, Rosemary Villanucci:, Mr. Yacobowski, Maureen Peal, Soaphead Church**

**Long Answer Type Questions**

**Q 1** What is the significance of the title of the novel "The Bluest Eye"? Discuss with illustrations.

**Introduction:** Toni Morrison wrote her first novel 'The Bluest Eye' in 1970. In the title the colour 'blue' refers to the colour consciousness which was prevailing in the racially discriminated society during the 1940s. The title refers to the protagonist's (Pecola Breedlove) desire to have blue eyes so that she can be accepted in the racially discriminated society. As a result, she prays every night for blue eyes. She prays for none other than 'blue colour eyes' because 'blue colour' symbolizes 'royalty' represented by a section of society that is highly prosperous, dearly loved, and welcomed by all. In the novel royalty is associated with the people of the white community, who are given special affection and care for which other middle-class and lower-middle-class people of the black community have yearned.

**Origin of the title:** The pray for having blue eyes is shown through the character of Pecola and is based on an anecdote that happened in the life of Toni Morrison when she was a student in elementary school. It is based on a conversation she had with a childhood friend belonging to the black community who said 'she wanted blue eyes'.

The desire for asking for blue eyes exposes the deep-rooted cause of African American culture, its experiences of slavery, and the feelings and suffering during the Atlantic slave trade which was operated from the 16th to 19th century. The African Americans were the people who were forcefully brought as an indentured slave from their native place (Africa) to the new world (America). They originally didn't belong to the new world therefore, they were



always discriminated against, exploited, and victimized. They were not equally treated in society like the white people. Through the novel 'The Bluest Eye' Toni Morrison tries to depict the same exploitation, victimization, and suffering that African Americans felt during the slave trade in the racially discriminated society.

**The symbols of the Blue colour:** There are different symbols and interpretations of blue colour. Generally, the emotions which are associated with the blue colour include 'trust', 'responsibility', 'honesty', and 'inner security'. Pecola does not ask for blue eyes only, but she desires trust (between her parents), responsibility for her father to earn and protect his family, honesty for her mother towards her children, and inner security which comes after love, care, and affection for family members. The blue also symbolises peace, confidence, calmness, sincerity, faithfulness, wisdom, stability, and integrity. Pecola asks for peace within the family and between the two communities (Black and White). She wants the confidence of the white shopkeeper who glances at her with disdain and rejection. She wants calmness on the part of a black lady, Geraldine, who utterly rebukes her for the cause (race) she has no control over. She wants sincerity, faithfulness, wisdom, stability, and integrity for her own family where everything was missing and as a result, she was rejected by her own family.

**Conclusion:** Toni Morrison has significantly used the title 'The Bluest Eye'. It reflects the desire for Pecola to be accepted equally in society without any racial discrimination. She asks for blue eyes so that she can save herself from the exploitation, victimization, and sufferings that the people of white, as well as the black community, protected her due to her black skin tone.

**Q2. What causes Pecola's madness in "The Bluest Eye"? Explain with illustrations.**

**Or**

**Discuss the character sketch of Pecola Breedlove.**

**Introduction:** Pecola Breedlove is an eleven years old girl and the protagonist of Toni Morrison's first novel 'The Bluest Eye'. She is the daughter of her parents Cholly Breedlove and Pauline Breedlove. She is a younger sister to her brother Sammy Breedlove. She lives with her parents in a small storefront house on rent in Lorain, Ohio with scarcity.

**Her abusive family:** She belongs to a poor family. Her father is an abusive man who drinks and beats his wife in front of his children. Her father does not work therefore her mother alone,

bears the entire expense of their family. She works as a housekeeper for a white family where she looks after everything diligently and ignores her own family including her husband and the children.

**A neglected child:** Pecola Breedlove is a neglected child at home, at school, and in society. She never gets the love and affection on the part of her parents as a child should get. She is an imaginative and delicate child who always lives in the world of fantasy. She is passive, lonely, and a little expressive with an introverted personality.

**Her friendship with Freida and Claudia :** Toni Morrison delineates the character of Pecola in contrast to Claudia. Pecola nurtures a good friendship with Freida and Claudia who are her neighbour and classmate. Pecola is older than both Claudia and Freida, but she is not enough mature. The sisters also love Pecola and protect her from violence in school as well as in the neighbourhood. During Pecola's menstruation, they help her and express care for her. Claudia is a foil of Pecola who is active participative, determined and loves herself, and feels proud of her black community.

**A victim of self-loathing (self-hatred):** Pecola is a symbol of the black community's self-hatred and belief in its own ugliness. Pecola along with her family represents the prominent self-loathing (self-hatred) deep rooted in the African American culture. She believes in the concept of ugliness which was induced in African American people by the dominant culture.

**A victim of racism, sexism, and classism:** Being a black girl, Pecola is not only disliked and despised by whites but also by the people of her own community. For instance, when Pecola goes to buy candy from a white shopkeeper, she was disliked and despised by him. Even Maureen Pele did not like Pecola due to her black colour. The blacks also dislike her for her race and ugliness. She is a victim of sexism as her own father, Colly Breedlove rapes her.

**Her fascination for Shirley Temple:** Pecola and Freida are depicted as getting fascinated by Shirley Temple (a white Hollywood star). They adore her white skin, blond hair, and blue eyes. Pecola likes Shirley Temple for her beauty and hates herself for her ugliness. Shirley Temple represents the white standard of beauty that oppressed the blacks.

**Her desire for blue eyes and insanity:** Due to constant rejection at her home and in society, Pecola asks for blue eyes. She desires if her eyes will turn blue, she will be liked and welcomed by everyone. She thinks that blue eyes are the solution to all her problems. If she has blue eyes, not only her own family will love her but also the whites as well as the blacks will appreciate

her as they appreciate white girls. But in the process of getting blue eyes, she loses her sanity. At the end of the novel, we find Pecola as a mad girl talking to herself.

**Conclusion:** Although Pecola belongs to an abusive family, she is a neglected child at home, and a rejected child at school, a victim of self-loathing, self-hatred, racism, sexism, and classism. Her fascination for Shirley Temple and her admiration for blue eyes is the defence mechanism to protect her 'self' so that she can survive in the society of dominant culture.

**Q. 3. Discuss Toni Morrison as a novelist with reference to her novel "The Bluest Eye".**

**Or**

**Discuss Toni Morrison as an Afro-American novelist.**

**Or. Discuss the literary devices and narrative techniques used by Toni Morrison in her novel "The Bluest Eye".**

**Introduction:** Toni Morrison is one of America's most acclaimed writers of fiction. She wrote more than eleven novels and several short stories. She was an activist in 'The Black Feminist Movement'. She portrays the life of blacks with honesty, accuracy, and realism. In her novel, 'The Bluest Eye' she explored the experiences of African Americans in the racially discriminated society. 'The Bluest Eye' is a tragic story about a young black girl's desire for blue eyes that symbolizes worthiness in society. The events of the novel are set in the year 1941.

**Her Major Themes:** Morrison deals with several themes in her novels like good and evil, love, hate and violence, friendship, beauty, ugliness, and death, race and gender, whiteness as the standard of beauty, racial self-loathing, poverty, and the saga of slavery. The novel 'The Bluest Eye' clearly deals with the damaging influences of white standards and values on the lives of African Americans.

**Her Characterization:** Toni Morrison's characters are realistic. Most of her black characters are depicted as a victim of racial discrimination in society. She traces the history of oppression and victimization of African Americans in the hands of whites through her major characters like Pecola and Cholly Breedlove. The minor characters are used to support and highlight the main theme of the novel. She presents the whites as the oppressor and the blacks as the oppressed.

**Her choice of the unique structure:** The form of the novel is also experimental and highly innovative. In her first novel, Toni Morrison employed a unique structure divided into four

large sections named after the four seasons. Each section is further divided into chapters having a significant heading. The first section of each season is narrated by Claudia MacTeer, a black adult girl whose memories frame the events of the novel. At the time when the main events took place, Claudia was a nine-year-old girl.

**Her language and style:** Toni Morrison's prose is experimental and lyrical. Her prose is a reflection of her close connection with her culture. Her language is highly symbolic and culture-specific. In order to understand her language, one should know the history of African Americans' slavery. Toni Morrison describes her prose as 'race specific yet race free'.

**Her innovative literary devices:** Toni Morrison uses multiple narrators to depict the tragic story of Pecola. She alters narrators and focal points within and between the four sections of the novel. The frequent shift in perspective of the narrators is a key part of Morrison's narration.

**Her narrative technique:** She uses the technique of contrast prominently in portraying her characters, their families, and their relationships. Toni Morrison emphasizes the contrast between the idealized life of Dick and Jane and the joyless life of African American people, especially the Breedlove family. She also contrasts the MacTeer and Breedlove family the former struggles to survive and the latter does not bother. She also employed the techniques like foreshadowing, flashback, and juxtaposition to narrate the events of the novel.

**Use of autobiographical element:** Morrison uses autobiographical elements in her novel. Morrison wrote the novel in 1970 but she deliberately sets the story in 1941 and narrates the story from Claudia's perspective. Claudia is none other than Morrison herself who represents the same age Morrison would have at that time. Morrison has portrayed the racial discrimination in school which she received in her childhood. Pecola Breedlove like Toni Morrison, belongs to an African American family which has migrated from the rural south to urban Lorain, Ohio, the hometown of Toni Morrison.

**Her love for African American Culture, Folklore, and anecdotes:** Being an African American novelist, Toni Morrison has a deep affection for her culture which is reflected through the family of the MacTeers who feel proud to be blacks contrary to the Breedloves who hate themselves and their culture and race. Toni Morrison uses folklore, the oral storytelling tradition of African Americans in her novel. The story of the novel is based on an anecdote that happened in Toni Morrison's life.

**Realistic Treatment of African American Life:** The incident of 'outdoor' or 'homelessness' of the Breedlove family shows the historical reality of African American (black) families who faced such situations in the 1940s.

**Conclusion:** Toni Morrison is a true African American black feminist writer who realistically portrays its culture, rituals, oppression, victimization, and sufferings. Her choice of theme and subject matter is also inspired by her culture. She uses folklore, and storytelling which were prominent in African American society. Her innovation in form, prose, style, narration, and techniques establishes her as a prominent African American fiction writer in the 21st century.

### Short Answer Type Questions

**Q1 *The Bluest Eye* uses multiple narrators, including Claudia as a child, Claudia as an adult, and an omniscient narrator. Which narrative point of view do you think is most central to the novel and why?**

A case can be made for the centrality of any of the three narrators listed above. The perspective of the adult Claudia frames the novel—the second section of the prologue and the novel's last chapter are told from her point of view. These opening and closing sections say the most about what Pecola's story means, and our efforts to make sense of the story therefore depend upon and parallel the adult Claudia's efforts.

But Claudia's childlike perspective is also crucial. She is similar to Pecola in age and social status, and therefore possesses special insight into the nature and meaning of Pecola's suffering. At the same time, she is comparatively more confident and secure than Pecola, so she can articulate things that Pecola cannot.

The omniscient narrator is also central to the telling of the story, because she provides information about Cholly's and Pauline's pasts, which make them more sympathetic and give the novel its broader scope. Without the character backgrounds provided by this omniscient perspective, Pecola's tragedy might be too senseless for the novel to hold together.



**Q2 Who do you think is the most sympathetic character in the novel and why?**

Morrison designs *The Bluest Eye* to make us sympathize with even the most violent and hurtful characters, which means that this question has many possible answers. Pecola is the most obvious candidate for our sympathy, because she undergoes a shocking amount of abuse. She is forced to witness her parents' violent fights, she is mocked or ignored by her classmates, she is tormented by Junior, she is raped by her father, and she is used by Soaphead Church. But to some degree, Pecola remains a shadowy, mysterious character—we are not given as much insight into how she thinks and feels as we are into other characters, who may therefore receive the greater share of our sympathy.

Both of Pecola's parents are sympathetic because the narrator goes to great lengths to explain how they have become the kind of people they are. Pauline's story is partially narrated by Pauline herself, which makes her more sympathetic because we are given a vivid glimpse into the pleasure and suffering of her life. Although Cholly does not narrate any part of his story, he endures so much hardship—starting from the moment he is born and discarded by the train tracks—that we cannot help but feel sympathy for him. Claudia is yet another candidate for the most sympathetic character, simply because we experience so much of the story from her point of view and she is the one who helps us make sense of it all.

**Q3 *The Bluest Eye* is a novel about racism, and yet there are relatively few instances of the direct oppression of black people by white people in the book. Explain how racism functions in the story.**

Unlike *To Kill a Mockingbird*, in which an African-American is persecuted by whites simply on the basis of skin colour, *The Bluest Eye* presents a more complicated portrayal of racism. The characters do experience direct oppression, but more routinely they are subject to an internalized set of values that creates its own cycle of victimization within families and the neighbourhood. The Black community in the novel has accepted white standards of beauty, judging Maureen's light skin to be attractive and Pecola's dark skin to be ugly.

Claudia can sense the destructiveness of this idea and rebels against it when she destroys her white doll and imagines Pecola's unborn baby as beautiful. Racism also affects the characters of the novel in other indirect ways. The general sense of precariousness of the Black community during the Great Depression, in comparison with the relative affluence of the whites in the novel, reminds us of the link between race and class. More directly, the sexual violation of

Pecola is connected to the sexual violation of Cholly by whites who view his loss of virginity as entertainment.

**Q 4 How does the novel explore the theme of “Seeing versus Being Seen”?**

Pecola’s desire for blue eyes, while highly unrealistic, is based on one correct insight into her world: she believes that the cruelty she witnesses and experiences is connected to how she is seen. If she had beautiful blue eyes, Pecola imagines, people would not want to do ugly things in front of her or to her.

The accuracy of this insight is affirmed by her experience of being teased by the boys—when Maureen comes to her rescue, it seems that they no longer want to behave badly under Maureen’s attractive gaze. In a more basic sense, Pecola and her family are mistreated in part because they happen to have black skin.

By wishing for blue eyes rather than lighter skin, Pecola indicates that she wishes to see things differently as much as she wishes to be seen differently. She can only receive this wish, in effect, by blinding herself. Pecola is then able to see herself as beautiful, but only at the cost of her ability to see accurately both herself and the world around her. The connection between how one is seen and what one sees has a uniquely tragic outcome for her.

**Q 5 “The House” in this novel serve as an effective symbol. Explain in short.**

The novel begins with a sentence from a Dick-and-Jane narrative: “Here is the house.” Homes not only indicate socioeconomic status in this novel, but they also symbolize the emotional situations and values of the characters who inhabit them.

The Breedlove apartment is miserable and decrepit, suffering from Mrs. Breedlove’s preference for her employer’s home over her own and symbolizing the misery of the Breedlove family. The MacTeer house is drafty and dark, but it is carefully tended by Mrs. MacTeer and, according to Claudia, filled with love, symbolizing that family’s comparative cohesion.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions****Q 1 What does the title mean?**

*The Bluest Eye* refers to Pecola's wish for blue eyes, based on her belief that having blue eyes would make people love her. She comes to this conclusion because of the way society prizes whiteness as the most beautiful, epitomized by blue eyes. For example, Mrs. Breedlove treats the Fisher family's blue-eyed daughter with love that she never shows her own children. However, even after Pecola believes she has gained blue eyes, she worries that unless her eyes are the very bluest she still won't be loved. Through her logic, the person with the bluest eye is the most beautiful and therefore most loveable.

**Q2 How do Claudia and Frieda feel about Pecola?**

Claudia and Frieda have a complicated relationship with Pecola. Throughout the novel, they seem to treat Pecola as a peer. They even stand up for her when she's teased by the boys at school. However, there is an ulterior motive to their kind treatment. Claudia explains, "we were so beautiful when we stood aside her ugliness." That is, Pecola—unloved, poor, and ugly by society's standards—makes Claudia and Frieda feel better about themselves. Even if they cannot have the social privileges of being light skinned like Maureen, they can take comfort in the fact that they are not Pecola.

**Q3 Why is the novel divided into seasons?**

The seasons bring to mind agricultural imagery of planting and harvesting. Alongside the depiction of young girls coming of age, this agricultural metaphor raises the question of how Pecola can possibly grow in this environment that despises her and gives her no care. The novel ends with summer, never making it to another autumn's harvest, which emphasizes the tragedy that neither Pecola, lost in her delusions, nor her baby will mature. As Claudia observes, "This soil is bad for certain kinds of flowers." In other words, this environment does not nurture Black girls, especially poor Black girls like Pecola.

**Q 4 Why does Claudia hate white dolls?**

Claudia hates white dolls because the adults expect her to prize them, telling her the dolls are beautiful and deserve careful treatment. Implicit in her hatred is anger over the fact that the adults around her don't treat her with gentleness or care. Even in Claudia's memory of her mother tending to her when she's ill, which she describes as a memory of love, her mother treats her roughly while scolding her. Claudia's anger therefore gestures to the unfairness of



society's privilege of whiteness, that even a white doll is expected to be treated with more kindness than a real Black child.

**Q5. Cholly Breedlove is not an antagonist. Why?**

By all rights, we should hate Cholly Breedlove, given that he rapes his daughter. But Morrison explains in her afterword that she did not want to dehumanize her characters, even those who dehumanize one another, and she succeeds in making Cholly a sympathetic figure.

He has experienced genuine suffering, having been abandoned in a junk heap as a baby and having suffered humiliation at the hands of white men. He is also capable of pleasure and even joy, in the experience of eating a watermelon or touching a girl for the first time. He is capable of violence, but he is also vulnerable, as when two white men violate him by forcing him to perform sexually for their amusement and when he defecates in his pants after encountering his father. Cholly represents a negative form of freedom. He is not free to love and be loved or to enjoy full dignity, but he is free to have sex and fight and even kill; he is free to be indifferent to death. He falls apart when this freedom becomes a complete lack of interest in life, and he reaches for his daughter to remind himself that he is alive

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toni\\_Morrison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Toni_Morrison)

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/bluesteye/>

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Singh. Hukum. Ed.(2023) British American and Indian Popular Fiction. Kanpur. sahitya Ratnalaya

OR

**Harper Lee- To Kill a Mocking Bird**

Nelle Harper Lee (April 28, 1926 – February 19, 2016) was an American novelist whose 1960 novel *To Kill a Mockingbird* won the 1961 Pulitzer Prize and became a classic of modern American literature. She assisted her close friend Truman Capote in his research for the book *In Cold Blood* (1966). Her second and final novel, *Go Set a Watchman*, was an earlier draft of *Mockingbird*, set at a later date, that was published in July 2015 as a sequel.

The plot and characters of *To Kill a Mockingbird* are loosely based on Lee's observations of her family and neighbours in Monroeville, Alabama, as well as a childhood event that occurred near her hometown in 1936. The novel deals with racist attitudes, and the irrationality of adult attitudes towards race and class in the Deep South of the 1930s, as depicted through the eyes of two children.

Lee received numerous accolades and honorary degrees, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2007, which was awarded for her contribution to literature

**To Kill a Mocking Bird**

*To Kill a Mockingbird* is set in the fictional town of Maycomb, Alabama, during the Great Depression (1929–39). The story centres on Jean Louise (“Scout”) Finch, an unusually intelligent girl who ages from six to nine years old during the novel. She and her brother, Jeremy Atticus (“Jem”), are raised by their widowed father, Atticus Finch. Atticus is a well-known and respected lawyer. He teaches his children to be empathetic and just, always leading by example.

When Tom Robinson, one of the town’s Black residents, is falsely accused of raping Mayella Ewell, a young white woman, Atticus agrees to defend him despite threats from the community. Although Atticus presents a defence that gives a more plausible interpretation of the evidence—that Mayella was attacked by her father, Bob Ewell—Tom is convicted. He is later killed while trying to escape custody. The children, meanwhile, play out their own miniaturized drama. Scout and Jem become especially interested in the town recluse, Arthur (“Boo”) Radley, who interacts with them by leaving them small gifts in a tree. On Halloween, when Bob Ewell

tries to attack Scout and Jem, Boo intervenes and saves them. Boo ultimately kills Ewell. The sheriff, however, decides to tell the community that Ewell's death was an accident.

**Main Characters:** Scout Finch, Atticus Finch, Jem Finch, Arthur "Boo" Radley, Calpurnia, Bob Ewell, Charles Baker "Dill" Harris, Miss Maudie Atkinson, Aunt Alexandra, Mayella Ewell, Tom Robinson, Link Deas, Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose, Nathan Radley, Heck Tate, Mr. Dolphus Raymond, Mr. Walter Cunningham and etc

### Long Answer Type Questions

#### Q1 Critically analyse Harper Lee as a novelist.

Nelle Harper Lee was born in 1926 in Monroeville, Alabama, a small Southern town very similar to Maycomb, Alabama, where her two novels, *To Kill a Mockingbird* and *Go Set a Watchman*, are set. Like Atticus Finch, the father of Jean Louise "Scout" Finch, the narrator and protagonist of both novels, Lee's father was a lawyer. Among Lee's childhood friends was the future novelist and essayist Truman Capote, from whom she drew inspiration for the character Dill in *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

In 1949, Lee moved to New York City to become a writer, and in 1957, she sent the manuscript for *Go Set a Watchman* to publishers. J.B. Lippincott, a now-defunct publishing company, bought the novel. After Lee's editor read the manuscript of *Go Set a Watchman*, she suggested that Lee she write a new book from the heroine's perspective that focused on her childhood. So, Lee took the setting and characters of *Go Set a Watchman* and revised them into the manuscript that became *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Critical response to *To Kill a Mockingbird* was mixed: a number of critics found the narrative voice of a nine-year-old girl unconvincing and called the novel overly moralistic. Nevertheless, in the racially charged atmosphere of the early 1960s, the book became an enormous popular success, winning the Pulitzer Prize in 1961 and selling over fifteen million copies. Two years after the book's publication, an Academy Award-winning film version of the novel, starring Gregory Peck as Atticus Finch, was produced. Meanwhile, the author herself had retreated from the public eye: she avoided interviews, declined to write the screenplay for the film version, and published only a few short pieces after 1961.



After *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Lee didn't publish any other novels, didn't work on the screenplay for the film, and retreated from the public eye, eventually returning to Monroeville. Because Lee had been so reclusive, and because her literary output was incredibly celebrated but extremely limited, the discovery of *Go Set a Watchman*, and its publication in 2015, was an enormous literary event.

But controversy plagued nearly every step of the publication of *Go Set a Watchman*. In November 2014, Harper Lee's sister and longtime caretaker passed away. A few months later, Harper Lee's publishers announced that they were planning to release a novel that Lee had completed in the mid-1950s, before she wrote *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Although Lee's lawyer claimed that she found the manuscript shortly after Lee's sister died, the manuscript had actually been discovered in 2011. Lee died in Monroeville in 2016.

## **Q2 Compare and contrast the character of Scout and Atticus as the protagonist of the novel**

Scout is the most obvious choice of protagonist of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. While her decisions do not directly incite the action of the trial, other choices she makes, such as to spy on Boo Radley, or to confront the men outside the jail, determine the course of the novel. Atticus also tells Uncle Jack that he is defending Tom Robinson because he wants to set a good example for Scout and Jem, so in a sense Scout is indirectly responsible for the action around the trial as well. Over the course of the novel, Scout matures from a child who judges people based on their status, such as unsophisticated Walter Cunningham or reclusive Boo Radley, to a more mature young woman who is able to see the individual inside each person. At the end of the novel, Scout has learned to see beyond her childish preconceptions about Boo Radley and thinks about the world from his perspective. In some ways, the very end of the novel is when Scout first steps into her own as a protagonist. Though Scout's simplicity and goodness make her an appealing protagonist, her perception of racial issues remains simplistic and childish, which, while appropriate for the character, can be less than satisfying for the reader.

Another choice for protagonist is Atticus, whose decision to defend Tom Robinson incites the central action of the book and results in the death of two characters. Throughout the book, Atticus's goal is to raise his children to judge people without prejudice in a town roiled by racism and intolerance. In pursuit of this goal he takes on a case he knows he's going to lose, in hopes of setting a good example for his children. Thwarting Atticus in this goal is Bob Ewell and other racist members of the community, as well as the flawed justice system itself. As a

character Atticus doesn't change much over the course of the novel – he is an idealistic, determined, and wise father at the beginning of the novel, and ends with the same characteristics intact. However, Scout and Jem's perception of Atticus changes over the novel, as they see aspects of their father they didn't know about, such as the fact that he is an excellent marksman, or that he is sympathetic to their cruel and racist neighbor, Mrs. Dubose.

**Q3. Write a summary of the Novel *To Kill a Mocking Bird* by Harper Lee**

A young girl nicknamed Scout recounts her family history. She tells about her father, Atticus Finch, who became a lawyer in the town of Maycomb. Jem is Scout's brother, and Calpurnia helps raise them after their mother dies. The siblings befriend a boy named Dill who suggests that they lure Boo Radley, a reclusive neighbour, out of his house.

Scout eagerly attends school for the first time, but she and her teacher, Miss Caroline, do not get along. Jem invites the poor Walter Cunningham to lunch who douses his food in molasses, shocking Scout to the point that Calpurnia scolds her for not being a better hostess. Back at school, an incident involving Burris Ewell, a boy from an even poorer and less respectable family than the Cunninghams, disillusions Scout further.

When school breaks for the summer, Dill returns to Maycomb, continuing his games with Scout and Jem and eventually creating one called "Boo Radley" that they suspend when Atticus catches them. As Jem and Dill grow closer, Scout spends time with Miss Maudie Atkinson, who tells Scout that the rumours about Boo Radley are false.

On Scout's walks home from school with Jem, they find gifts left for them in a tree knothole. Maycomb endures a real winter, allowing the children to build a snowman that looks so much like Mr. Avery that Atticus demands them to disguise it. That night, Scout is woken up to find that Miss Maudie's house is on fire, and while outside someone drapes a blanket over her, which they later realize was Boo Radley's doing.

Scout nearly starts a fight when a classmate uses a racial slur to declare that Atticus defends Black people, particularly Tom Robinson, who was accused of raping a white woman. Atticus says that Tom is innocent but doomed, since it's inconceivable that an all-white jury would acquit him.

Jem begins spending less time with Scout, telling her that she should act more like a girl, a comment that upsets her. The children are taken to Calpurnia's mostly Black church, where they learn that Tom Robinson was accused by Bob Ewell. When they return home, they find Aunt Alexandra, who has come to stay

Tom Robinson's trial draws near, and Atticus's role as his defence lawyer subjects Jem and Scout to town gossip. Sherriff Heck Tate appears at the Finch home and expresses concerns about the possibility of a lynch mob arising as Tom Robinson is being moved to the Maycomb jail.

People from all over the county make an appearance at the trial, except for Miss Maudie who does not approve of watching. Bob Ewell gives his testimony, telling the court how he found Tom Robinson raping his daughter Mayella .

During Atticus's fiery cross-examination of Mayella, Mayella yells at the courtroom to convict Tom Robinson, eventually crying and refusing to answer any more questions. Tom's testimony explains how he often would help Mayella with chores, and how on the night of the alleged rape, it was actually Mayella who attempted to pursue Tom.

Atticus gives his closing remarks in the courtroom, and when he finishes, Calpurnia tells him that the children have not been home. The children beg to hear the verdict, but they are sent home. The jury eventually delivers a guilty verdict.

After Bob Ewell makes threats against Atticus's life, Atticus tells his family not to worry. Atticus shares that Tom Robinson was shot to death after attempting to escape prison.

As school starts, the shadow of the trial still hangs over Scout. Bob Ewell, who loses his job, blames Atticus, and begins following Helen Robinson while whispering obscenities at her. Aunt Alexandra believes Bob holds a grudge against everyone connected with the trial. That Halloween, the town sponsors a pageant at the school.

On their way home from the pageant, Scout and Jem are attacked. They struggle until suddenly the assailant is pulled away and Scout stumbles home, seeing a man carrying Jem toward her house. Scout learns that Bob Ewell is lying dead under a tree and she realizes that the man who



brought Jem home is Boo Radley. Heck Tate tells Atticus that though Boo is the one who stabbed Bob, Heck would rather have the whole affair hushed up to spare Boo. Scout walks Boo home, imagining the world from his perspective.

### **Short Answer Type Questions:**

#### **Q1 How is Tom Robinson a mockingbird?**

The phrase "it's a sin to kill a mockingbird" refers to intentionally and pointlessly destroying something that does no harm. The mockingbird is a songbird, not a pest, and it isn't a game bird. Killing a mockingbird serves no purpose, and therefore is an act of unnecessary cruelty. When the jury convicts Tom Robinson of rape despite the absence of physical evidence and despite Atticus's compelling defence, the jury is guilty of the same unnecessary cruelty.

The jury specifically, and the town of Maycomb generally, destroy a good person who has never done harm simply because of the colour of his skin. Though Tom is the symbolic mockingbird at the heart of the novel, he is not the only character who fits that description. Heck Tate also specifically describes Boo Radley as a mockingbird, in that he is a harmless person who is the victim of pointless cruelty. Unlike Tom Robinson, Boo Radley is not destroyed, though he does suffer greatly.

#### **Q2 What does the rabid dog Atticus shoots symbolize?**

In Chapter 11, Atticus shoots a mad (rabid) dog in the street. This episode serves two important purposes in the novel. Before the incident with the dog, Scout and Jem saw their father as old, reserved, and not particularly powerful. When Scout and Jem learn that their father is known as the best shot in the entire county, they learn to see Atticus with a greater sense of respect.

In a larger symbolic sense, the dog, because it has rabies, is a dangerous threat to the community. In shooting the dog, then, Atticus is trying to protect the community from its most dangerous elements. Similarly, in defending Tom Robinson, Atticus tries to protect the community from its most dangerous, racist tendencies.

Later in the book, in Chapter 22, Miss Maudie tells Jem about Tom Robinson's trial, "I simply want to tell you that there are some men in this world who were born to do our unpleasant jobs

for us. Your father's one of them." Atticus's killing of the dog and defence of Tom Robinson both reflect that he is willing and able to take on things that the rest of Maycomb is unequipped to face.

### **Q3 How did Jem break his arm?**

In the first sentence of the novel, Scout says that Jem broke his arm. She starts to explain what happened but says that she needs to go back and provide the necessary context in order for the story to make sense. The rest of the novel is the background context for Jem's broken arm.

At the end of the novel Bob Ewell, who has suffered as a result of Atticus's defence of Tom Robinson, attacks Jem and Scout on their way home from the Halloween pageant. Jem breaks his arm in the struggle.

The story of a broken arm serves as a narrative device, bookending the entire novel with Scout's telling of the story. While initially the reader might assume Jem broke his arm through innocent childhood games, by the end of the novel we understand the darker, more complicated truth behind the accident.

### **Q 4 What is the significance of the gifts Boo Radley leaves in the knothole?**

In the early chapters of the book, Jem and Scout find several small items, ranging from sticks of gum to a pocket watch, left by Boo Radley in the knothole of a tree on the Radley property.

These gifts are the first of several kindnesses that Boo extends to the children, ultimately culminating in Boo killing Bob Ewell to protect Jem. The gifts also represent one of the ways that Boo tries to engage with the world around him without giving up the secrecy and privacy that he requires.

Despite his reclusive nature, Boo engages the Finch children in a more generous and kind way than many of the other adults that they encounter. But because of Boo's limitations, his interactions must take a remote form.



**Q5 Why does the jury find Tom guilty?**

The jury's decision to convict Tom Robinson for a crime he clearly did not commit plagues Jem (and many readers) as an intolerable miscarriage of justice. The most obvious reason justice isn't served is because the jury's overwhelming racism prevents Tom from getting a fair trial.

Another reason the jury finds Tom guilty is because both Mayella Ewell and her father, Bob, both perjured themselves on the stand. In addition to the presumption of an impartial jury, the justice system operates on the assumption that witnesses will tell "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth" after being sworn in to testimony.

But both Mayella and Bob lied rather than admit that Mayella tried to kiss Tom. Tom's race, combined with the Ewells' lies, proved enough for the racist jury to find Tom guilty, even in the face of overwhelming evidence of Tom's innocence.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:****Q1 What role does Calpurnia play in the family and in the novel?**

Calpurnia is a surrogate mother to Jem and Scout who teaches them about good manners, hard work, and honesty. She takes care of the family's needs, and Atticus trusts her unequivocally. She is also the narrator's window into Maycomb's African American community. She takes the children to her church one Sunday, and, because of this, Scout and Jem can sit in the "coloured" balcony during Tom Robinson's trial. She helps Atticus comfort Tom's wife, Helen, and she knows how to read and write, which is uncommon in her community.

**Q2 Why is Dill an important character?**

Charles Baker Harris, the boy also known as Dill, is an important foil to Jem and Scout. His imagination kindles theirs, and his youthful enthusiasm contrasts with Jem's budding serious maturity. As children, Dill and Scout pretend that they are engaged to be married. He visits Maycomb every summer, and as it becomes clearer that his own family is erratic and insecure, readers understand that the Finches and his Aunt Stephanie are, in fact, his true family. He represents both childhood innocence and friendship.

**Q3 What does Mrs. Dubose teach Scout and Jem?**

Although she is a mean, racist neighbour, Mrs. Henry Lafayette Dubose teaches the children a lesson in courage. As Jem reads aloud to her every day for a month—a punishment for destroying her camellia bushes after she harshly criticizes Atticus—she weans herself from her morphine addiction by refusing her medicine for longer and longer each day. When she dies a month later, Atticus tells Jem that she was “the bravest person [he] ever knew.” The whole episode teaches Jem and Scout that people are not always what they appear to be and that even despicable people can have heroic qualities.

**Q4 Why does Dolphus Raymond hide Coca-Cola in a brown paper bag?**

Dolphus Raymond, a white man who prefers the company of African Americans, uses a brown paper bag as a theatrical prop to act like a drunkard. He has mixed-race children and lives among the African American community as one of them. During the trial, when Dill feels sick, Mr. Raymond explains to Scout and Dill that he pretends to be drunk all the time so that people can explain away his behaviour. “It helps folks if they can latch onto a reason,” he says. He admits that he even staggers sometimes to reinforce his charade.

**Q5 How does Maycomb react to Tom Robinson’s death?**

The citizens of Maycomb react to Tom’s death in many different ways. The African American community feels angry and upset, but they cannot show it in public. Many racist white people feel that justice was done because a Black man is always guilty, no matter what. Some white people are ashamed and sincerely saddened by the injustice done by the jury. The editor of the local newspaper feels angry because Tom was a “cripple” and should not have been shot. Bob Ewell is satisfied because his lie worked, and Jem is furious and incredulous.

<https://www.sparknotes.com/lit/mocking/summary/>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harper\\_Lee](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harper_Lee)

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/To-Kill-a-Mockingbird>

Sharma. Shalini Lalit Tiwari Ed. (2023) British American and Indian Popular Fiction. Meerut. Pragati Prakashan

Singh. Hukum. Ed.(2023) British American and Indian Popular Fiction. Kanpur. sahitya Ratnalaya

The logo of Shaheed Ji Maharaj University, Kanpur, is a circular emblem. It features a central sunburst design with rays emanating from a central point. The text "शाहजि महाराज विश्वविद्यालय कानपुर" is written in Hindi around the top inner edge of the circle. At the bottom, the motto "आसोह तमसो ज्योति" is written in Hindi. The English name "SHAHJI MAHARAJ UNIVERSITY KANPUR" is written around the bottom inner edge. The entire logo is rendered in a light red or pinkish hue.

# UNIT VII

## American Fiction

### Ernest Hemingway- *The Old Man and the Sea*

**Ernest Miller Hemingway** born July 21, 1899 and took his last breath on July 2, 1961 was an American novelist, short-story writer and journalist. Known for an economical, understated style that influenced later 20th-century writers, he has been romanticized for his adventurous lifestyle and outspoken, blunt public image. Some of his seven novels, six short-story collections and two non-fiction works have become classics of American literature, and he was awarded the 1954 Nobel Prize in Literature.

#### *The Old Man and the Sea*

**Characters: Santiago, Marlin, Manolin, Joe Di Maggio, Perico Martin.**

This is a 1952 novella by the American author Ernest Hemingway. Written between December 1950 and February 1951, it was the last major fictional work Hemingway published during his lifetime. It tells the story of Santiago, an aging fisherman, and his long struggle to catch a giant marlin. The novella was highly anticipated and was released to record sales.

Santiago is an elderly fisherman who has not caught a fish in eighty-four days and is considered *salao* (very unlucky). Manolin, who had been trained by Santiago, has been forced by his parents to work on a different, luckier boat; Manolin still helps Santiago prepare his gear every morning and evening and brings him food. They talk about baseball and Joe DiMaggio, before the boy leaves and Santiago sleeps. He dreams of the sights and experiences of his youth.

On the eighty-fifth day of his streak, Santiago takes his skiff out early, intending to row far into the Gulf Stream. He catches nothing except a small albacore in the morning before hooking a huge marlin. The fish is too heavy to haul in and begins to tow the skiff farther out to sea. Santiago holds on through the night, eating the albacore after sunrise. He sees the marlin for the first time—it is longer than the boat. Santiago increasingly appreciates the fish, showing respect and compassion towards his adversary. Sunset arrives for a second time and the fisherman manages some sleep; he is awoken by the fish panicking but manages to recover his equilibrium. On the third morning the marlin begins to circle. Almost delirious, Santiago draws the marlin in and harpoons it. He lashes the fish to his boat.

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**

A mako shark smells blood in the water and takes a forty-pound bite of the marlin. Killing the shark but losing his harpoon, Santiago lashes his knife to an oar as a makeshift spear and kills three more sharks before the knife blade snaps. Cursing himself for going out too far, he apologises to the mutilated carcass of the marlin. He clubs two more sharks at sunset, but the marlin is now half-eaten. In the third night, the sharks come as a pack and leave only bones behind them. Santiago reaches shore and sleeps in his shack, leaving the skeleton tied to his skiff.

In the morning, Manolin cries when he sees Santiago's state. He brings coffee and sits with Santiago until he wakes. He insists on accompanying Santiago in the future. A fisherman measures the marlin at eighteen feet long, and a pair of tourists mistake its skeleton for that of a shark. Santiago goes back to sleep and dreams of lions on an African beach.

### **Long Answer Type Questions**

#### **Q1 Give a character sketch of Santiago.**

**Introduction:** Santiago is the hero of the novella *The Old Man and the Sea*. He is an old man but full of courage and strength. He does not surrender before the adverse circumstances. He is full of hope, determination, and willpower which make him a great hero-

**His Appearance:** Santiago is described as a thin and gaunt old man with deep wrinkles on his face and dark patches on his cheeks. He has "old man's scars" from years of handling heavy fishing lines, and his hands are "cracked and sore." Despite his physical weariness, Santiago is still strong and capable, with "good eyesight" and "strength in his arms." He is a testament to the physical and mental resilience of the human spirit-

"Everything about him was old except his eyes and they were the same color as the sea and were cheerful and undefeated."

**His Personal Traits:** Santiago is a proud and determined man, with a strong sense of honor and dignity. He is a skilled fisherman who takes great pride in his abilities, and he is willing to endure great pain and hardship to prove himself. He is also a man of deep faith, believing in



the power of God and the blessings of the sea. He is kind and compassionate, especially towards Manolin, the young boy who looks up to him as a mentor and friend. He says,

"Man is not made for defeat...A man can be destroyed but not defeated."

**His Relationship with Manolin:** Santiago has a close and affectionate relationship with Manolin, the young boy who used to fish with him. Manolin sees Santiago as a mentor and father figure, and he looks up to him with great respect and admiration. Santiago cares for Manolin deeply, and he takes pride in his achievements as a fisherman. Despite their age difference, the two have a strong bond and a deep understanding of each other -

"The boy had helped him and the old man had taught the boy to fish."

**His Will Power:** Santiago is a man of extraordinary willpower and determination. He is able to endure great physical pain and hardship in order to achieve his goals. He never gives up, even in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds. His willpower is a testament to the power of the human spirit and the strength of the individual will. He says,

"But I will show him what a man can do and what a man endures."

**His Struggle with the Marlin:** Santiago's struggle with the marlin is the central conflict of the novella. He spends three days locked in a battle of wills with the massive fish, enduring great physical pain and exhaustion in the process. Santiago sees the Marlin as a worthy adversary, and he respects its strength and endurance. Despite his desire to catch the fish, he also feels a sense of sympathy for it, recognizing it as a fellow creature of the sea –

"The fish is my friend too...I have never seen or heard of such a fish. But I must kill him. I am glad we do not have to try to kill the stars."

He again says, "Fish, I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you dead before this day ends."

**His Loneliness and Isolation:** Santiago is a lonely and isolated figure, both physically and emotionally. He lives alone in a small shack and has no family or close friends. His only companion is Manolin, a young boy who used to fish with him but who is no longer allowed to do so by his parents. Santiago's isolation is heightened by his lack of success as a fisherman, which causes others to view him with pity or scorn. Despite this, Santiago remains stoic and resolute, never giving in to despair or self-pity.

**Conclusion:** Santiago is a complex and deeply human character, with a strong sense of pride, determination, and faith. His relationship with Manolin highlights the importance of mentorship and the passing on of wisdom from one generation to the next. Despite his physical weariness and the challenges he faces, he remains a symbol of the strength and resilience of the human spirit.

Overall, while others may view Santiago with pity or scorn, he remains steadfast in his beliefs and committed to his goal of catching the marlin. His determination, even in the face of adversity and criticism, is a testament to his courage and bravery.

### **Q2 Draw the character sketch of Manolin.**

**Or**

#### **In what ways does Manolin's character contribute to the overall theme of the novella?**

Manolin is a young boy who has been fishing with Santiago for several years. He is a loyal and devoted friend to the old man. He is deeply saddened by his lack of success as a fisherman. Despite his youth, Manolin is wise and perceptive and is able to understand and empathize with Santiago's struggles.

**His Loyalty and Devotion:** Manolin is fiercely loyal to Santiago, and is determined to help him in any way he can. Even though his parents forbid him from fishing with Santiago because of the old man's lack of success, Manolin still visits him. He helps him prepare for his fishing trips. He also brings him food and supplies. He is always there to offer him emotional support and encouragement,

"I would like to go. If I cannot fish with you, I would like to serve in some way"

**His Wisdom and Perception:** Despite his youth, Manolin is wise and perceptive. He is able to understand and empathize with Santiago's struggles. He recognizes the importance of Santiago's quest to catch the Marlin and is able to offer him words of wisdom and encouragement when he is feeling discouraged-

"It is better to be lucky. But I would rather be exact. Then when luck comes you are ready"

**His Role as an Apprentice:** Manolin is introduced in the novella as a young boy who is an apprentice to Santiago. He is eager to learn from the old man and sees him as a mentor and role model. Manolin is often seen helping Santiago with his fishing gear and preparing for his trips,

as well as accompanying him on shorter fishing trips. Manolin also shows a great deal of respect for Santiago and his experience as a fisherman. The novelist writes:

"The boy had helped him lash the plank across and he had driven it into the beach to hold the skiff up"

**His Courage and Perseverance:** Manolin shows a great deal of courage and perseverance in the novella, particularly when he decides to continue helping Santiago despite his parents' objections. He also remains dedicated to fishing, despite the fact that he is often unable to catch much on his own trips. Manolin's courage and perseverance serve as a foil to Santiago's own struggles and help to emphasize the importance of persistence in the face of adversity.

**His Love for the Sea and Fishing:** Manolin's love for the sea and fishing is a central part of his identity and ambitions. He sees fishing as a way of life and as something that is deeply important to him and his community. Manolin's connection to the sea and fishing help to emphasize the beauty and majesty of the natural world, as well as the importance of tradition and community in shaping our identities and aspirations.

**A Contrast to Santiago:** Manolin's youth and innocence serve as a contrast to Santiago's age and experience as a fisherman. While Santiago has faced numerous challenges and setbacks over the course of his long career, Manolin is still relatively new to the profession and has not yet experienced the same level of hardship. This contrast helps to highlight the themes of aging, experience, and the passing of time that are central to the novella.

**Conclusion:** Manolin is a crucial character in "The Old Man and the Sea" as he serves as a contrast to Santiago's experience and age, and as a source of empathy, understanding, and support for the old man. Manolin's role as an apprentice, his relationship with his parents and the fishing community, his courage and perseverance, his youth and innocence, his empathy and understanding, his sense of responsibility towards Santiago and his own future as a fisherman, and his love for the sea and fishing - all contribute to the depth and richness of his character. Through his interactions with Santiago, Manolin helps to highlight the importance of human connection, tradition, and perseverance in the face of adversity, and serves as a reminder of the importance of empathy and compassion in shaping our identities and aspirations.

**Q 3 What literary devices and techniques does Hemingway employ in "The Old Man and the Sea "to create tension and suspense?**

"The Old Man and the Sea" is a novella by Ernest Hemingway that tells the story of an aging fisherman's struggle to catch a giant Marlin into the sea. Hemingway's spare and direct prose, as well as his use of literary devices and techniques, create a sense of tension and suspense. It keeps the readers engaged until the very end. The following literary devices and techniques are employed by him:

**Use of Foreshadowing in building suspense:** Foreshadowing is a literary technique used to hint at events that occur later in the story. In "The Old Man and the Sea", Hemingway uses foreshadowing to build tension and create a sense of impending danger. For example, Santiago notes the presence of sharks in the water early on in his journey, foreshadowing the dangers that he will face later. Additionally, Hemingway foreshadows Santiago's eventual success in catching the Marlin through his repeated references to the strength and beauty of the fish.

**The use of imagery to create tension:** Imagery is an important component of Hemingway's writing style. He uses vivid descriptions of the sea and its creatures to create a sense of tension and danger. The imagery in the novella is often stark and brutal, reflecting the harsh realities of life on the sea. For example, Hemingway describes the Marlin's struggle as "a strange warlike scent" and notes that its flesh is "deep purple and staggeringly strong". This type of imagery underscores the challenges that Santiago faces in his battle against the Marlin and the dangers that await him on the open sea.

**Use of repetition:** Repetition is a powerful tool that Hemingway uses to create tension and emphasize the central themes of "The Old Man and the Sea". One of the most notable examples of repetition is the phrase "Man vs. Nature", which appears throughout the story. This phrase highlights the struggle that Santiago faces against the powerful and unpredictable forces of the sea, underscoring the story's theme of the human struggle against an indifferent universe. Hemingway also employs repetition in his descriptions of the Marlin, emphasizing its beauty and strength and heightening the tension as Santiago battles it.

Hemingway uses repetition to reinforce key themes and ideas in the story, as well as to create a sense of rhythm and momentum. For example, he repeats the phrase -

"man is not made for defeat" throughout the novella, emphasizing Santiago's resilience and determination.

**Flashbacks:** Hemingway uses flashbacks to provide background information on Santiago's past, as well as to create a sense of contrast between his current struggles and his earlier successes. For example, he recalls a time when he caught a large Marlin, highlighting the contrast between his current isolation and his earlier triumphs.

**Hemingway's sparse writing style:** Hemingway's writing style is often described as "sparse" or "economical", with a focus on simple, straightforward language and a minimum of descriptive detail. This style has a significant impact on the pace of the story, with the action moving quickly and the tension building steadily throughout. By avoiding unnecessary detail, Hemingway keeps the focus on Santiago's struggle.

**Use of Dialogue:** Hemingway's use of dialogue helps to create tension and suspense by revealing the thoughts and emotions of the characters. For example, Santiago's conversations with himself and with the Marlin provide insight into his motivations and fears, as well as his determination to succeed.

**Conclusion:** Ernest Hemingway employs a variety of literary devices and techniques to create tension and suspense in "The Old Man and the Sea." Through his use of foreshadowing, repetition, and imagery, he effectively builds anticipation and suspense throughout the novella. Hemingway's sparse, direct writing style also adds to the tension, as the reader is forced to pay close attention to every detail.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q1 Manolin and Joe Di Maggio plays an important role in the life of Santiago. Do you agree, if yes, why?**

A boy presumably in his adolescence, Manolin is Santiago's apprentice and devoted attendant. The old man first took him out on a boat when he was merely five years old. Due to Santiago's recent bad luck, Manolin's parents have forced the boy to go out on a different fishing boat. Manolin, however, still cares deeply for the old man, to whom he continues to look as a mentor. His love for Santiago is unmistakable as the two discuss baseball and as the young boy recruits help from villagers to improve the old man's impoverished conditions.

Although DiMaggio never appears in the novel, he plays a significant role nonetheless. Santiago worships him as a model of strength and commitment, and his thoughts turn toward



DiMaggio whenever he needs to reassure himself of his own strength. Despite a painful bone spur that might have crippled another player, DiMaggio went on to secure a triumphant career. He was a centre fielder for the New York Yankees from 1936 to 1951, and is often considered the best all-around player ever at that position.

**Q 2 What is the role of the sea in *The Old Man and the Sea*?**

The rich waters of the Gulf Stream provide a revolving cast of bit players—birds and beasts—that the old man observes and greets. Through Santiago's interactions with these figures, his character emerges. In fact, Santiago is so connected to these waters, which he thinks of good-humouredly as a sometimes-fickle lover, that the sea acts almost like a lens through which the reader views his character. Santiago's interaction with the weary warbler, for instance, shows not only his kindness but also, as he thinks about the hawks that will inevitably hunt the tiny bird, a philosophy that dominates and structures his life. His strength, resolve, and pride are measured in terms of how far out into the gulf he sails. The sea also provides glimpses of the depth of Santiago's knowledge: in his comments about the wind, the current, and the friction of the water reside an entire lifetime of experience, skill, and dedication. When, at the end of the novella, Manolin states that he still has much to learn from the old man, it seems an expression of the obvious.

**Q 3 Santiago is considered by many readers to be a tragic hero, in that his greatest strength—his pride—leads to his eventual downfall. Discuss the role of pride in Santiago's plight.**

At first, Santiago's plight seems rather hopeless. He has gone eighty-four days without catching a fish, and he is the laughingstock of his small village. Regardless of his past, the old man determines to change his luck and sail out farther than he or the other fishermen ever have before. His commitment to sailing out to where the big fish are testifies to the depth of his pride. Later, after the sharks have destroyed his prize marlin, Santiago chastises himself for his hubris, claiming that it has ruined both the marlin and himself. Yet, Santiago's pride also enables him to achieve what he otherwise would not. Not until he meets and battles the marlin are his skills as a fisherman truly put to the test. In other words, the pride that leads to the destruction of his quarry also helps him earn the deeper respect of the village fishermen and secures him the prized companionship of the boy.

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**

**Q 4 Discuss religious symbolism in *The Old Man and the Sea*. To what effect does Hemingway employ such images?**

Christian symbolism, especially images that refer to the crucifixion of Christ, is present throughout *The Old Man and the Sea*. During the old man's battle with the marlin, his palms are cut by his fishing cable. Given Santiago's suffering and willingness to sacrifice his life, the wounds are suggestive of Christ's stigmata, and Hemingway goes on to portray the old man as a Christ-like martyr. As soon as the sharks arrive, Santiago makes a noise one would make "feeling the nail go through his hands and into the wood."

And the old man's struggle up the hill to his village with his mast across his shoulders is evocative of Christ's march toward Calvary. Even the position in which Santiago collapses on his bed—he lies face down with his arms out straight and the palms of his hands up—brings to mind the image of Christ on the cross. Hemingway employs these images in order to link Santiago to Christ, who exemplified transcendence by turning loss into gain, defeat into triumph, and even death into life.

**Q 5 Do you think this novella celebrates Kinship and Connection?**

Throughout the story, Santiago fosters a myriad of connections with others, despite the solitary nature of fishing and Santiago's own particular seclusion. For instance, he forms a deeply spiritual connection with the very marlin he wishes to catch. Though it's easy to imagine most hunters think of their prey as purely that, Santiago respects the marlin and feels grateful for its persistence, and even shows a willingness to die in the marlin's stead, should the marlin persist. The act of catching the marlin comes to feel less like an individual need, and more like a collaborative experience in which both are active participants, even partners.

Santiago also finds connection with Joe DiMaggio. Providing both a moral compass and a framework for understanding the true nature of resilience, thoughts of DiMaggio bring Santiago comfort; he feels a kinship for this man he's never met and imagines what it might be like to bring DiMaggio fishing while discussing baseball with Manolin, who likewise offers Santiago a sense of community. The bond they have is formed through fishing, and although Manolin has been forbidden from working with Santiago, it's clear from how they reminisce

about their time together that they mean a great deal to one another. After all, “The old man Q had taught the boy to fish and the boy loved him.”

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:****Q 1 How does Santiago lose the Marlin?**

On the fourth day, Santiago is still struggling, unable to reel in the marlin. When the marlin begins to circle the boat, still hooked, Santiago stabs it with a harpoon in a fit of near delirium, killing it. Because the marlin is too big to fit in the boat, he fastens it to the side. The scent of its blood draws the attention of a mako shark. The shark lashes at the marlin, and although Santiago manages to kill the shark with his harpoon, fresh blood from the attack brings more sharks. Several arrive to scavenge the remains; Santiago fights them valiantly but is unable to prevent them from eating what remains of the marlin, so that when he arrives home, only the skeleton remains.

**Q2 What does Manolin represent to Santiago?**

Though Santiago has no children of his own, the devoted Manolin serves as something of a son for the old man and a nod to the next generation, underlying the story’s message concerning the cyclical nature of life. Santiago’s journey to conquer the marlin is the grand culmination of his lifelong career as a fisherman. Manolin, the dutiful apprentice, is primed to take the baton, symbolizing the act of shepherding in the next generation.

**Q 3 How does Santiago embody a hero?**

Santiago demonstrates a remarkable resolve. Not only does he refuse to give up, despite his lack of success for so many days, but he maintains a thoughtful philosophy regarding his relationship with success, living, dying, and hunting. His devotion to the marlin is not out of ego, as Santiago is aware of his own pride, but rather respect and honor for the great fish. Even as the sharks destroy everything he has fought and bled for, Santiago proceeds nobly, thinking of the trials his own hero Joe DiMaggio endured and attempting to live up to standard set by the great ballplayer.

**Q 4 How does Santiago serve as a Christ figure?**

Throughout the novella, a number of allusions to Christ’s crucifixion appear, speaking to the suffering, rebirth, healing, and redemption of Santiago’s journey. When the shovel-nosed



sharks arrive to attack the Marlin, Santiago makes a noise “such as a man might make, involuntarily, feeling the nail go through his hands and into the wood.” When he returns to shore, Santiago takes down the mast and carries it up the hill to his shack, much like how Christ was ordered to carry the cross to his own crucifixion. More broadly, however, Santiago gladly accepts his own death as a likely outcome from his time at sea, speaking to a peace of mind about his life and purpose. When he returns, the presence of Manolin suggests there is something regenerative about passing the baton from one generation to the next, and that Santiago lives on in his young apprentice just as Christ had risen.

**Q 5 What is the significance of Santiago dreaming about the lions?**

There are many interpretations of the symbolic nature of the lions. One is that they offer glimpses of the wildness of nature, in an environment just as menacing as the open sea. Yet even though lions are predators thought to be vicious, Santiago imagines them playing rather than hunting, suggesting a certain harmony inherent in nature that opposes the straightforward hunter versus prey dichotomy. This underscores the idea that Santiago and the marlin are not merely adversaries, but something resembling partners. That Manolin watches over Santiago as he dreams of the lions implies the lions are suggestive of youth, underlying the cyclical nature of life and the fact that Santiago is nearing the end of his life.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest\\_Hemingway](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ernest_Hemingway)

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**OR****John Steinbeck- *The Grapes of Wrath***

John Ernst Steinbeck born on February 27, 1902 and he left for heavenly abode on December 20, 1968. He won the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature "for his realistic and imaginative writings, combining as they do sympathetic humour and keen social perception". He has been called "a giant of American letters."

During his writing career, he authored 33 books, with one book coauthored alongside Edward Ricketts, including 16 novels, six non-fiction books, and two collections of short stories. He is widely known for the comic novels *Tortilla Flat* (1935) and *Cannery Row* (1945), the multigeneration epic *East of Eden* (1952), and the novellas *The Red Pony* (1933) and *Of Mice and Men* (1937). The Pulitzer Prize-winning *The Grapes of Wrath* (1939) is considered Steinbeck's masterpiece and part of the American literary canon.<sup>[6]</sup> By the 75th anniversary of its publishing date, it had sold 14 million copies.

Much of Steinbeck's work employs settings in his native central California, particularly in the Salinas Valley and the California Coast Ranges region. His works frequently explored the themes of fate and injustice, especially as applied to downtrodden or everyman protagonists.

***The Grapes of Wrath***

It is a realist novel written by John Steinbeck and published in 1939.<sup>[2]</sup> The book won the National Book Award<sup>[3]</sup> and Pulitzer Prize<sup>[4]</sup> for fiction, and it was cited prominently when Steinbeck was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1962.

Set during the Great Depression, the novel focuses on the Joads, a poor family of tenant farmers driven from their Oklahoma home by drought, economic hardship, agricultural industry changes, and bank foreclosures forcing tenant farmers out of work. Due to their nearly hopeless situation, and in part because they are trapped in the Dust Bowl, the Joads set out for California on the "mother road", along with thousands of other "Okies" seeking jobs, land, dignity, and a future.



*The Grapes of Wrath* is frequently read in American high school and college literature classes due to its historical context and enduring legacy. A celebrated Hollywood film version, starring Henry Fonda and directed by John Ford, was released in 1940.

**Characters: Tom Joad, Ma Joad, Pa Joad, Jim Casey, Rose of Sharon,**

### **Long Answers Type Questions**

**Q1. How does Steinbeck develop the plot of the novel. Explain.**

The narrative, which traces the migration of an Oklahoma Dust Bowl family to California and their subsequent hardships, is interspersed with prose-poem interludes that explain the wider circumstances of the world with which the protagonists contend.

Tom Joad, newly released from prison after serving a sentence for manslaughter, makes his way home, and along the way he is joined by Jim Casey, a former preacher. Tom learns that his family has been evicted from the farm and has moved in with Uncle John. When the two men reach Uncle John's home, they find the family, enticed by handbills advertising farm-labour jobs, preparing to drive to California. The Joads and Casey head out along Route 66, joining an exodus of poor tenant farmers heading west. They encounter many obstacles on the journey, as well as warnings that the jobs they expect in California are illusory. Grampa and Granma Joad die along the route, and Tom's elder brother, Noah, decides to abandon the enterprise. Upon arrival in California, they find that their trials are far from over. They stop in a migrant encampment, where they speak with a man named Floyd Knowles, who informs them that jobs are scarce, available pay is poor, and families are literally starving to death in the makeshift migrant camps. Connie, the husband of Tom's pregnant sister, Rose of Sharon (called Rosasharn by her family), abandons her. When a man arrives seeking workers to pick fruit, Floyd asks for the proposed wages in writing. A policeman accuses him of communism and tries to arrest him. A fight breaks out, and, when the policeman shoots at the fleeing Floyd, Casey knocks him out. Casey is arrested, and the Joad family heads to another town, where they are met by a hostile crowd gathered to keep "Okies"—migrants from Oklahoma and nearby

states—away. However, they later find the government-run camp Weedpatch, which is kept clean and organized by committees of residents, and Tom finds work.

After a month in the camp, Ma Joad declares that they must move on because of the scarcity of work. They soon are offered jobs picking peaches, but the pay is so low that they cannot afford an adequate dinner. Tom finds Casy, who is now organizing striking peach pickers—the Joad family was hired to be strike-breakers. A group of men approach the meeting under cover of darkness, and one of them strikes Casy with a pick handle, killing him. An enraged Tom kills that man before returning to his family. Fearful that Tom will be arrested, the Joads leave the peach farm.

They subsequently find good work picking cotton, as well as a home in a boxcar that they share with another family. Tom, who has gone into hiding, decides to become a labour organizer. When the season for cotton ends, the Joads again struggle to find work. Endless rains cause flooding, and Rose of Sharon's baby is stillborn. When the rising waters begin to fill the boxcar, the Joad family leaves. They soon reach a barn, in which they find a small boy and a starving man. The book ends with Rose of Sharon feeding the man her breast milk.

### **Q 2 In *Grapes of Wrath* Steinbeck masterfully depicts the struggle of the common man.**

#### **Explain**

The families and workers are exploited by organized business, and Steinbeck uses Christian religious imagery to press his arguments that using cropland as a source of profit for business rather than food for people causes widespread suffering and that political and spiritual unity is necessary to overcome the forces causing the dispossession of farmworkers. Ultimately, the migrants learn to rely on one another, and the insularity of the Joads—Ma's obsession with family togetherness, Tom's self-centredness, and Rose of Sharon's materialism—gives way to a sense of universal community, a shift from an emphasis on "I" to "we."

Steinbeck masterfully depicted the struggle to retain dignity and to preserve the family in the face of disaster, adversity, and vast, impersonal commercial influences. He based his epic on his visits to the migrant camps and tent cities of the workers, seeing firsthand the horrible living conditions of migrant families. His novel, with its easily accessible, colloquial style, was widely welcomed and hailed by working-class readers, though it was just as widely panned by

business and government officials who took umbrage at its socialist overtones and denounced it as “communist propaganda”; some local areas, including Kern County, California, where the Joad family settles, branded the book libelous and even burned copies of it and banned it from libraries and schools. Nonetheless, it was the top-selling novel of 1939, and it won a Pulitzer Prize in 1940, the year of John Ford’s acclaimed film adaptation of the book. *The Grapes of Wrath* also did much to earn the author the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1962. Steinbeck plainly stated his purpose in writing the novel: “I want to put a tag of shame on the greedy bastards who are responsible for this [the Depression and the plight of the worker].”

### **Q 3 Explore The Joads as Universal Figures for Dust Bowl Farmers.**

Steinbeck writes about the Dust Bowl farmers with great empathy. *The Grapes of Wrath* exists, in large part, to bring to life the farmers’ plight and to depict them as ground-down but noble people. Steinbeck makes the Joads, his protagonists, stand in for all of the Dust Bowl farmers. While each Joad family member has his own quirks, speech patterns, and characteristics, the Joads are less a group of three-dimensional characters than they are a collection of archetypes. This narrative choice has two opposites, and often simultaneous, effects: It both elevates and universalizes the Joads and makes them difficult to care about as individuals.

While the Joads are by no means flat or allegorical characters, Steinbeck intentionally lets their deep inner psychologies go unexplored, preferring to focus on the ways in which they represent every other Dust Bowl farmer and the ways in which the changes they undergo during their move to California resemble the changes every farmer endures. Tom Joad is the young everyman, a good person forced to develop a social conscience. Ma Joad is the universal mother, the nurturer who rallies to support her family and sacrifices her own comfort for their sake. Pa Joad is the broken-down father, the man who longs to lead his family but whose spirit is broken by the constant stream of disasters the Great Depression brings. And after she gets pregnant, Rose of Sharon is the spirit of motherhood made flesh, a 1930s-era Virgin Mary figure.

Because the Joads are meant to be universal figures rather than specific people, reading about their grim problems and determined struggle to survive is often a particularly moving experience. Tom’s move from self-interested independence to social awareness is a familiar and stirring young man’s journey. Ma’s determination to hide the death of Granma during the desert crossing is a miracle of motherly strength and selflessness. Pa’s attempt to construct the

dam sums up the touching determination of fathers to protect their families. And Rose of Sharon's willingness to feed the starving man at the end of the novel becomes a symbol of hope and an assertion that people can be kind to one another even under the most desperate circumstances. As Steinbeck intends, the Joads' plight seems to represent the plight of all farmers—or, indeed, all people living through trying times—and so following the narrative can feel like following some mythological or Biblical story about the woes of humanity.

Steinbeck's grand scale not only evokes strong reactions, but it also paradoxically suppresses them. Many novelists try to erase evidence of their own presence from their fiction, thereby allowing the reader to forget she is encountering a story that has been constructed by a writer and enjoy the illusion that she is reading about real people. In contrast, Steinbeck looms as an ever-present authorial presence. He lards the narrative with deserts, floods, and dramatic births, setting his characters against a biblical backdrop. He transparently manoeuvres his characters so that their actions are symbolic, rather than convincingly human. Because we know so little about the mentalities of the characters, we have a hard time believing that they are acting as real people might. Rather, they seem to be the author's pawns. We may long to know whether Tom would have embraced Christianity if Jim Casy weren't around, and what reservoirs of strength Ma draws on, and what exactly Pa's befuddled thoughts consist of, and whether Rose of Sharon is ever faking her saintly smile. But Steinbeck intentionally denies us access to his characters' minds. We can only observe them in the situations their creator has constructed.

### **Short Answer Type Questions:**

**Q1 Half of the chapters in *The Grapes of Wrath* focus on the dramatic westward journey of the Joad family, while the others possess a broader scope, providing a more general picture of the migration of thousands of Dust Bowl farmers. Discuss this structure. Why might Steinbeck have chosen it? How do the two kinds of chapters reinforce each other?**

*The Grapes of Wrath* is most memorable as the story of the Joad family's trek across Depression-era America. The long narrative chapters that trace their journey provide a personal context for understanding the more abstract social, historical, and symbolic musings of the shorter alternating chapters.

Despite their sometimes-preachy tone, these alternating chapters play an important role in the structure of the novel. Most notably, they extend the saga of migrant farmers beyond a single family, reminding the reader that the hardships faced by the Joads were widespread, afflicting tens of thousands of families in the Dust Bowl.

Furthermore, these chapters anticipate the circumstances that the Joads will encounter: when the Joads come to the Hooverville in Chapter 20, for instance, the reader has already read a detailed description of these camps in the preceding chapter and thus foresees their difficulties.

Alternating between the Joads' tale and more contextual musings outside the narrative also allows Steinbeck to employ a greater range of writing styles. It is true that Steinbeck successfully conveys a great deal of the Joads' journey through spare, declarative prose and through the rustic dialect of the family members.

However, the short chapters allow him to exceed the constraints of these prose forms, to root his story in a more universal tradition. At times, Steinbeck evokes the repetition and moral bluntness of biblical tales; at other moments, he assumes the clear, castigating tone of a soapbox politician; sometimes his style conjures up ancient epics of heroic deeds and archetypal struggles. Thus, the author roots his story in a more universal tradition, endowing it with significance that exceeds the individual characters and their specific setting.

**Q 2 What is Jim Casy's role in the novel? How does his moral philosophy govern the novel as a whole?**

Jim Casy is, in many ways, the novel's guiding moral voice. He explicitly articulates many of Steinbeck's thematic ideas, namely that human life is as sacred as any divinity and that a single life has little purpose unless it takes part in, and contributes to, a greater community. These ideas provide the foundation for the acts of charity and kindness that unify the migrant farmers as their lives grow harder and less forgiving.

Furthermore, Casy plays a vital role in the transformation of Tom Joad into a social activist. In many ways, Casy resembles a Christ figure: he is a man possessed of radical, controversial ideas; a champion of the poor and oppressed; and, in the end, a martyr for his beliefs. Tom's newfound commitment to a better future indicates that Casy was correct in positing the power of selfless devotion to others: by joining the cause to help the people, and by inspiring others



to join as well, Casy ensures his own immortality. Because he has merged his spirit with the whole of humanity, Casy lives on.

**Q3 Many critics have noted the sense of gritty, unflinching realism pervading *The Grapes of Wrath*. How does Steinbeck achieve this effect? Do his character portrayals contribute, or his description of setting, or both?**

The book's sense of realism results from its brutal setting. The migrants exist in a world characterized by dirt, dust, suffering, starvation, death, poverty, ignorance, prejudice, and despair. Steinbeck does not hesitate to provide honest details, many of which appear in the brief chapters of exposition and social commentary that intersperse the Joads' story.

In contrast to the naturalistic setting, many of the characters in the Joad family stand as sentimentalized or heroized figures. The realism of the nonnarrative chapters, some of which function like journalistic or cinematic reportage, balances this more romantic side of the novel by grounding the reader in the undeniably harsh and vivid surroundings. While Steinbeck's frequent romanticism contributes to his novel's epic proportion and import, his use of realism strengthens the novel's effectiveness as a work of social commentary.

**Q 4 Write a short note on how Steinbeck in this novel propagates Man's Inhumanity to Man.**

Steinbeck consistently and woefully points to the fact that the migrants' great suffering is caused not by bad weather or mere misfortune but by their fellow human beings. Historical, social, and economic circumstances separate people into rich and poor, landowner and tenant, and the people in the dominant roles struggle viciously to preserve their positions. In his brief history of California in Chapter 19, Steinbeck portrays the state as the product of land-hungry squatters who took the land from Mexicans and, by working it and making it produce, rendered it their own.

Now, generations later, the California landowners see this historical example as a threat, since they believe that the influx of migrant farmers might cause history to repeat itself. In order to protect themselves from such danger, the landowners create a system in which the migrants are treated like animals, shuffled from one filthy roadside camp to the next, denied livable wages, and forced to turn against their brethren simply to survive. The novel draws a simple line

through the population—one that divides the privileged from the poor—and identifies that division as the primary source of evil and suffering in the world.

**Q 5 How does the novel depicts the multiplying effects of Selfishness and Altruism**

According to Steinbeck, many of the evils that plague the Joad family and the migrants stem from selfishness. Simple self-interest motivates the landowners and businessmen to sustain a system that sinks thousands of families into poverty. In contrast to and in conflict with this policy of selfishness stands the migrants' behavior toward one another. Aware that their livelihood and survival depend upon their devotion to the collective good, the migrants unite—sharing their dreams as well as their burdens—in order to survive. Throughout the novel, Steinbeck constantly emphasizes self-interest and altruism as equal and opposite powers, evenly matched in their conflict with each other.

In Chapters 13 and 15, for example, Steinbeck presents both greed and generosity as self-perpetuating, following cyclical dynamics. In Chapter 13, we learn that corporate gas companies have preyed upon the gas station attendant that the Joads meet. The attendant, in turn, insults the Joads and hesitates to help them. Then, after a brief expository chapter, the Joads immediately happen upon an instance of kindness as similarly self-propagating: Mae, a waitress, sells bread and sweets to a man and his sons for drastically reduced prices. Some truckers at the coffee shop see this interchange and leave Mae an extra-large tip.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions:****Q 1 What does Rose of Sharon's Pregnancy symbolise?**

Rose of Sharon's pregnancy holds the promise of a new beginning. When she delivers a stillborn baby, that promise seems broken. But rather than slipping into despair, the family moves boldly and gracefully forward, and the novel ends on a surprising (albeit unsettling) note of hope. In the last few pages of his book, Steinbeck employs many symbols, a number of which refer directly to episodes in the Bible. The way in which Uncle John disposes of the child's corpse recalls Moses being sent down the Nile. The image suggests that the family, like the Hebrews in Egypt, will be delivered from the slavery of its present circumstances.

**Q 2 What message is conveyed by the novelist through The Death of the Joads' Dog**

When the Joads stop for gas not long after they begin their trip west, they are met by a hostile station attendant, who accuses them of being beggars and vagrants.

While there, a fancy roadster runs down their dog and leaves it for dead in the middle of the road. The gruesome death constitutes the first of many symbols foreshadowing the tragedies that await the family.

**Q 3 Write in short the improvised leadership structures shown by Steinbeck in this novel.**

When the novel begins, the Joad family relies on a traditional family structure in which the men make the decisions and the women obediently do as they are told. So invested are they in these roles that they continue to honour Grampa as the head of the family, even though he has outlived his ability to act as a sound leader.

As the Joads journey west and try to make a living in California, however, the family dynamic changes drastically. Discouraged and defeated by his mounting failures, Pa withdraws from his role as leader and spends his days tangled in thought. In his stead, Ma assumes the responsibility of making decisions for the family.

At first, this shocks Pa, who, at one point, lamely threatens to beat her into her so-called proper place. By the end of the novel, the family structure has undergone a revolution, in which the woman figure, traditionally powerless, has taken control, while the male figure, traditionally in the leadership role, has retreated.

This revolution parallels a similar upheaval in the larger economic hierarchies in the outside world. Thus, the workers at the Weedpatch camp govern themselves according to their own rules and share tasks in accordance with notions of fairness and equality rather than power-hungry ambition or love of authority.

**Q 4 Write in short how in the face of adversity the Joads doesn't lose their kindness and generosity.**

The Joads stand as exemplary figures in their refusal to be broken by the circumstances that conspire against them. At every turn, Steinbeck seems intent on showing their dignity and honor; he emphasizes the importance of maintaining self-respect in order to survive spiritually.



Nowhere is this more evident than at the end of the novel. The Joads have suffered incomparable losses: Noah, Connie, and Tom have left the family; Rose of Sharon gives birth to a stillborn baby; the family possesses neither food nor promise of work. Yet it is at this moment (Chapter 30) that the family manages to rise above hardship to perform an act of unsurpassed kindness and generosity for the starving man, showing that the Joads have not lost their sense of the value of human life.

**Q 5 Give a glimpse of how *In Grapes of Wrath* Steinbeck makes a clear connection between dignity and rage**

Steinbeck makes a clear connection in his novel between dignity and rage. As long as people maintain a sense of injustice—a sense of anger against those who seek to undercut their pride in themselves—they will never lose their dignity. This notion receives particular reinforcement in Steinbeck’s images of the festering grapes of wrath (Chapter 25), and in the last of the short, expository chapters (Chapter 29), in which the worker women, watching their husbands and brothers and sons, know that these men will remain strong “as long as fear [can] turn to wrath.” The women’s certainty is based on their understanding that the men’s wrath bespeaks their healthy sense of self-respect.

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# Unit VIII



## Indian Popular Fiction

### Aravind Adiga- *The White Tiger*

Aravind Adiga (born 23 October 1974) is a writer and journalist. His debut novel, *The White Tiger*, won the 2008 Man Booker Prize. Adiga grew up in Mangalore and studied at Canara High School and later at St. Aloysius College, Mangaluru, where he completed his SSLC in 1990.

After emigrating to Sydney with his family, Aravind studied at James Ruse Agricultural High School. He later studied English literature at Columbia College of Columbia University, in New York City, under Simon Schama, and graduated as salutatorian in 1997. He also studied at Magdalen College, Oxford, where one of his tutors was Hermione Lee.

He began his journalism career as an intern at the *Financial Times*. With pieces published in *Money* and *Time*, he covered the stock market and investment. In 2003, he interviewed future US President Donald Trump. Later that year, he moved from New York to New Delhi to be South Asia correspondent for *Time*.

Soon after resigning from his position at *Time*, Adiga started writing his debut novel, *The White Tiger*. Published in March 2008, the book won the Booker Prize later that year. He is the fourth Indian-born author to win the prize, after Salman Rushdie, Arundhati Roy, and Kiran Desai.

Propelled mainly by the Booker Prize win, *The White Tiger*'s Indian hardcover edition sold more than 200,000 copies.

Adiga's second book, *Between the Assassinations*, is a short story collection set in a fictional coastal town in India. It was released in India in November 2008<sup>[31]</sup> and in the US and UK in mid-2009.

His third book, *Last Man in Tower*, was published in the US in September 2011. His next novel, *Selection Day*, was published in the US in January 2017.

*Amnesty*, published in February 2020, is a novel about an undocumented Sri Lankan immigrant living in Australia. It was shortlisted for the 2021 Miles Franklin Award.

### *The White Tiger*

The novel provides a darkly humorous perspective of India's class struggle in a globalized world as told through a retrospective narration from Balram Halwai, a village boy. The novel examines issues of the Hindu religion, caste, loyalty, corruption, and poverty in India.

The novel has been well-received, making the *New York Times* bestseller list in addition to winning the Booker Prize. Aravind Adiga, 33 at the time, was the second youngest writer as well as the fourth debut writer to win the prize. Adiga says his novel "attempt[s] to catch the voice of the men you meet as you travel through India – the voice of the colossal underclass." According to Adiga, the exigence for *The White Tiger* was to capture the unspoken voice of people from "the Darkness" – the impoverished areas of rural India, and he "wanted to do so without sentimentality or portraying them as mirthless humourless weaklings as they are usually."

**Main Characters: Balram Halwai, Vikram Halwai, Kusum, Kishan, Balram's Mother, The Stork, The Mongoose, Mr. Ashok, Pinky Madam, The wild Boar, The Buffalo, The Ravan etc.**

**Long Answer Type Questions:**

**Q 1 Aravind Adiga's *The White Tiger* is the portrayal of poverty and corruption-ridden Postcolonial India. Discuss with illustrations.**

**Or**

**Discuss *The White Tiger* as a Picaresque novel.**

**Or**

**Discuss Aravind Adiga as a novelist who satirizes the prevailing social evils of contemporary society through his novel '*The White Tiger*'.**

**Introduction:** Aravind Adiga is a pioneering figure in the field of contemporary Indian English literature who won Britain's most prestigious literary award The Booker Prize for his debut novel 'The White Tiger' which provides a darkly humorous perspective of India's class struggle in a globalized world as told through a retrospective first-person narration of Balram Halwai. The novel depicts the harsh reality of poor people in India. Adiga expresses the anger of the oppressed through his 'picaro' protagonist, Balram Halwai. 'The White Tiger' is the story of Balram who was born and brought up in Darkness and evolved into a successful entrepreneur.

**His Major Themes:** Aravind Adiga's novels explored almost every aspect of social life. The 'White Tiger' which delineates 'the real India' was Adiga's aggressive rebuke of the cheerful and false notions of a new transformed India. The novel is set in the backdrop of a darkly comical viewpoint of modern life in India. The novel showcases the contrast between India's rise as a modern global economy on one hand and its middle-class working citizen living in extreme conditions on the other. The novel introduces us to the evil of the feudal landlords (the four animals).

**His Art of Characterization:** The characters of Adiga are realistic and come from all walks of life which makes Adiga an efficient critic of modern India. His characters have depth. His protagonists come from the middle or lower-middle class like a school teacher, a Chutney seller, and a chauffeur. Male characters play a prominent role in his novel. The characters from the lower social class are stronger than the characters from the higher class. The protagonist of the novel 'The White Tiger' comes from a low social class and is a dynamic type of character. Some of his characters are flat like Stork and Mukesh Sir. The protagonist is a 'picaro' or 'rough' who moves from one city to another (Laxmangarh to Dhanbad, Dhanbad to Delhi, and Delhi to Bangalore) in search of a job, serves his master obediently, and at the end kills his master, robs him, and runs away to other destination..

**His Vivid Descriptions:** The novel opens with a vivid description of India's village people and landscapes. For instance, the description of FIR fired against Balram, the price tag on each liquor bottle, and the description of the chandelier, etc. are vivid and pictorial. His novels have complex plots. The incidents are well structured and have a beginning, middle, and end. His novels have gradual development of the story. The entire plot of 'The White Tiger' pivots around the protagonist Balram Halwai, who narrates his story of life in the form of a letter to a foreign dignitary, The Chinese, Primer minister who visited Bangalore.

**His Style and Tone:** Aravind Adiga has used a unique Indian style of writing characterized by the satirical descriptions of his land, Indian social milieu, and fluidity of language. He gives an ironical describes the river Ganga in his novel. He writes, 'Why I am talking of mother Ganga, daughter of the Vedas, river of illumination, protector of us all, breaker of the chains of birth and rebirth. Everywhere this river flows, that area in the Darkness'. His tone is satirical like Charles Dickens who satirizes the gross malpractices in Indian society. He ironically delineates the harsh reality of doctors. He remarks, 'Now, you, Dr. Ram Pandey will kindly put one-third of your salary in my palm. Good boy..... You can keep the rest of your government salary and go work in some private hospital so the rest of the week. Forget the village'.

**His Narrative Techniques and Point of View:** Aravind Adiga is a master of narrative techniques. The White Tiger deals with the first-person narration of Balram Halwai. He tells his tale of success after going through different odds in his life. The structural techniques frequently employed by Adiga are metaphors, irony, symbols, flashbacks, flash-forward, foreshadowing, and satire. He compares the body of a rich and a poor. He states, 'A rich man's body is like a premium cotton pillow, white and soft blank. Ours are different. My fathers' spine was a knotted rope, the kind that women use in the village to pull water from wells'.

His language has a high pictorial quality therefore his novel is adopted as a Netflix movie which stands close to the story of the novel. For instance, he satirizes the mid-day meal system of the school. He writes, 'Children too lean and short for their age, and with oversized heads from which vivid eyes shine, like the guilty consciousness of the government of India'.

**Conclusion:** Aravind Adiga chose serious themes for his novels. His characters are real which is a reflection of his keen observation. His plots are well structured with vivid descriptions. His style is experimental and his tone is usually satirical, ironic, and suggestive. His language is highly pictorial. He has used various narrative techniques like flashback, flash forward, foreshadowing, symbols, and metaphors to make his novel interesting.

**Q 2. Balram observed his life as 'the autobiography of a half-baked Indian' and said 'the story of my upbringing is the story of how a half-baked fellow is produced'. In light of this statement discuss the character sketch of Balram Halwai.**

**Or**

**To what extent the title of the novel The White Tiger is Significant? Explain.**

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**

**Introduction:** Balram Halwai is a young boy, the protagonist as well as the narrator of Arvind Adiga's debut novel *The White Tiger*. Being an intellectual boy in school, Balram was titled 'The White Tiger', 'The rarest of animals-the creature that comes along only once in a generation, 'by the inspector who visited his school.

The novel is a Bildungsroman that traces the psychological and moral growth of Balram Halwai (the protagonist) from childhood to adulthood. The entire plot of the novel revolves around Balram Halwai, who was born and brought up in utter poverty in the remote village of Laxmangarh. The title of the novel refers to Balram Halwai. The novel portrays the journey of Balram Halwai from a poor downtrodden boy of Laxmangarh to an accomplished entrepreneur in Bangalore. He writes to Jiabao, 'It is the autobiography of a half-baked Indian' and said 'The story of my upbringing is the story of how a half-baked fellow is produced'.

**His Impoverished Family:** Balram Halwai belongs to a destitute combined family of around twenty people including his uncle and aunt. His father, Vikram Halwai, was a rickshaw puller but a courageous man who died of tuberculosis when Balram was a schoolboy. His mother also died early. The orphan Balram was left alone whose life's actions were decided by his authoritative grandmother Kusum. After his father's death, Kusum removes Balram from school so that he can work in a tea shop in Dhanbad 'where he broke the coal against the brick 'along with his elder brother Kishan to support the family.

**An ambitious brilliant boy:** Balram was an ambitious boy who learned to drive and became a chauffeur in the house of Stork alias Thakur Ramdev (one of the animals and landlords who controlled Laxmangarh) in Dhanbad. Balram was hired as a 'number two' driver and soon he becomes 'the number one' driver by replacing Ram Persad (the Muslim driver).

**His devotion to his master and his family:** Balram admires his master, Mr. Ashok a lot. Like his master, he was genuine and innocent. He enjoys the company of his master who treats him like a friend and he drives for him from Delhi to Gurgaon. He said, 'I would drive them wherever they wanted, as faithfully as the servant-god Hanuman carried about his master and mistress, Ram and Sita'. Apart from being a driver, Balram also served as a general servant of the family. He is often found doing feet massage of Stork. He worked diligently for the family and many times he was remarked as 'you are the family' by Mr. Ashok.



**A victim of rooster coop, treachery, and corruption:** Balram became a victim of rooster coop in the hands of rich people like Stork and Mukesh who forced him to take the claim of accident (Pinky Madam did in drunken state) on himself. Balram said, 'The roosters in the coop smell the blood from above. They see the organs of their brothers lying around them. They know they are the next. Yet they do not rebel. They do not try to get out of the coop. The very same thing is done with human beings in this country'. He was trapped in the rooster coop. He felt deceived when he realized that he was going to be replaced by another driver. When Pinky Madam left Ashok and went to America, Ashok turned adulterous and corrupt so did the driver Balram. Balram remarked, 'He returned from America an innocent man, but life in Delhi corrupted him-and once the master becomes corrupted, how can the driver stay innocent?'

**His journey as a self-made entrepreneur:** Balram who came from a destitute family, was exploited in his childhood, humiliated as a slave, and gradually became a successful entrepreneur after killing his master and robbing his red bag full of bribe money which he often gave to the ministers.

**Conclusion:** Although belonging to a deprived low social class, Balram was innocent, quick, ambitious, skilful, and truly devoted to his master. But in the hands of treacherous and corrupt men (Stork and Mukesh Sir) who humiliated and tortured him like a slave, Balram was trapped in a rooster coop. The novel successfully portrays how an innocent rural boy got affected by the ways of urban, gradually nurtured ill will for his master, killed him, and finally ran away to Bangalore with a red bag full of bribe money to become a self-made entrepreneur.

**Q 3 Give the Character sketch of Mr. Ashok**

**OR**

**How far do you agree that Mr. Ashok is a spokesman for Aravind Adiga? Explain with suitable examples.**

**Introduction:** Mr. Ashok is one of the major characters of the novel 'The White Tiger' by the contemporary Indian English novelist and short story writer Aravind Adiga. Mr. Ashok is the younger son of The Stork (Thakur Ramdev), who is one of the landlords of Laxmangarh (Bihar). He is the younger brother of Mukesh sir. He received his education in America where he married a Christian lady, Pinky Madam. Mr. Ashok is introduced at the beginning of the

novel who has returned from America along with his wife to live with his family in Dhanbad for a short duration.

**An intelligent, honest, and caring man:** Arvind Adiga has used the technique of contrast in delineating the character of Ashok. Ashok stands in contrast to his father and brother. Unlike his father and brother, Ashok is an intelligent, honest, and caring man. He is honest in his personal and professional life.

**A loving husband:** Mr. Ashok is depicted as a loving husband who cares a lot for his wife, Pinky Madam, and helps her to understand the Indian culture and value system. Although Pinky Madam belongs to a different religion (Christian) and a different set of values yet Ashok tries his best to make her happy. He shifts from Dhanbad to Gurgaon (a Westernized modern city in India) to make her joyful.

**A symbol of modern values:** Mr. Ashok is portrayed as a symbol of modern values. He staunchly believes in modern values like individuality, equality and freedom. Arvind Adiga treats Mr. Ashok as his spokesman to express his opinion on individuality, equality, and freedom. Like Arvind Adiga, Mr. Ashok does not believe in caste and class disparities prevailing in post-colonial India. Like Arvind Adiga, Mr. Ashok returns from America (foreign land) to his motherland, India.

**His affinity for the poor:** Mr. Ashok has sympathy for the poor and downtrodden people of India. He has a sympathetic attitude toward his driver, Balram Halwai. Although his driver belongs to a low-social-class, yet he does not treat him like a servant as his brother and father treat him. When Pinky Madam hits a child while driving in Delhi, Mr. Ashok expresses his sympathy for the child and for Balram for his forced confession.

**His reversal from honesty to corruption:** Mr. Ashok being an honest man in America turns out to be corrupt in India. When Pinky Madam left him, he became physically and economically corrupt day by day. He went to prostitutes and developed illicit relations with his ex-girlfriend Miss Usha. He was involved in a corrupt political system, and to keep his family free from tax, he paid bribes to ministers.

**His tragic death:** Balram Halwai killed Ashok to seek his revenge, being an innocent low-class boy who turned out to be a corrupt man by following the footsteps of his master. After killing Mr. Ashok, Balram ran away from Delhi to Bangalore.

**Conclusion:** Mr. Ashok was a dynamic character. He became a victim of an Indian corrupt society and political system. Initially, he was an intelligent, honest, and caring husband who had an affinity with the poor but later on, he becomes a corrupt person who meets his tragic death at the hands of his driver.

### **Short Answer Type Questions**

#### **Q1 The White Tiger is an epistolary novel. Do you agree. Why?**

The novel is structured in the epistolary form and is divided into seven letters that are addressed to a Chinese premier, Mr. Wen Jiabao, who is expected to visit India. Each letter highlights a crucial phase in Balram's life.

The first letter titled, 'The Darkness' traces Balram's childhood in the village and the struggles of his poverty-stricken family. Nevertheless, he is able to become a driver for a wealthy household in Delhi, the Stork family through his smartness and ambitious nature.

The second letter titled the 'Rooster Coop' is a metaphor to foreground the state of oppression and powerlessness of poor people in India's caste-based society. Balram narrates the lavish and corrupt lifestyle of the Stork family and his experience of being treated as a servant by them.

The third and fourth letter reveals the events that led him to murder his master employer, his escape and subsequent entrepreneurial venture of taxi business that he sets up with the stolen money and his changed identity.

The fifth letter titled, 'The Mongoose and the Maruti,' reflects Balram's business growth coupled with challenges of corruption and criminality within Indian society and his interactions with corrupt political and business elite.

The sixth letter, titled 'The Tragedy of Balram,' emphasises Balram's business success and the power it brings him and at the same time the choices and moral compromises he has made.

The last letter to the Chinese Premier is a confession of his actions and an invitation to change the oppressive system in India

**Q 2 Write in short how the novel is a mixture of a range of political and social scenario of contemporary Indian Life**

The novel ends with Balram's message to the prem Mr. Wen Jiabao, expressing his ambition and hope for change. Balram's journey from a non-descript village to becoming a successful entrepreneur is intriguing, as he navigates through complexities of life and a morally ambiguous world.

His story serves as a critique of social and economic inequality in contemporary India. The novel offers a thought-provoking exploration of the harsh realities of Indian society, class and caste system, corruption, and the pursuit of success in a rapidly changing world. The novel deals with economic inequality, social injustice, poverty and corruption.

Balram emphasizes the brutal division of economic inequality on which Indian society stands. Balram reveals that he too is the victim of this inequality when he dwells upon the details of his childhood and education.

**Q 3 What according to Balram were his strengths that made him a successful entrepreneur?**

Balram lists, what he considers his entrepreneurial skills that fetch him extra money while working as a driver for Ashok; to steal and sell the petrol of the car and costly whisky of his master; to get commission from the car repair mechanic and to rent out the master's car.

The only dream that he cherishes is to become rich like his master. He thus takes advantage of his master's disturbed personal life, plans the scheme of murdering him and stealing his money. He justifies his action of brutal murder and the breach of trust by relating it with the inability to come out of the coop that cages the poor in India under servitude and subordination at the hands of their rich class.

**Q4 How does Adiga justifies the ill deeds of his protagonist Balram?**

The master –servant relationship has been well exploited by Adiga to tear the Indian social fabric asunder.

Balram not only sustains himself but shines as an entrepreneur. What Adiga seems to suggest is that in this country of crime and revenge, there is no place for punishment and repentance. He creates an India that has lost all its moral values in the name of power and money.

Adiga has intertwined two stories through the central protagonist, who is also the narrator of the story. Adiga traces the path of India's progress in the present century through Balram Halwai's journey.

At the surface level, Adiga seems to give voice to the Indian subaltern masses. While describing India further, he explains to the foreign guest: "Please understand, Your Excellency, that India is two countries in one: an India of Light, and an India of Darkness. The ocean brings light to my country. Every place on the map of India near the ocean is well-off. But the river brings darkness to India – the black river" (14).

Adiga does not spare the sacred river Ganga. Through his underdog anti-hero's perspective, Adiga has portrayed India devoid of all grace, glory and moral grandeur. Balram has an irreverent attitude to religion and religious symbols that are so important in Indian life. He shows nothing but disrespect to the gods.

#### **Q 5 In the novel why does Balram Murders Mr. Ashok?**

Balram, the faithful servant and driver of Mr Ashok turns rebellious and murders him because after the sudden dismissal of Pinky madam, Ashok's wife from his life Ashok became desperate and started behaving in a weird manner.

He visited the prostitutes; he bribed Government officials for gaining quick fortune and thus the sudden corruption of his master disappointed Balram. He planned to murder him.

He murders Ashok using a broken liquor bottle.

After killing his master he returns to his apartment, takes Dharam his younger cousin and escapes with him to Bangalore.



**Vert Short Answer Type Questions**

**Q 1 How does Adiga portrays the self-centred character of Balram?**

One of the ways in which Adiga portrays Balram's self-centeredness is through his early experiences as a driver for Ashok, a member of the wealthy Delhi elite.

Balram's initial reverence for his employer gradually gives way to a more cynical understanding of the ways in which the wealthy exploit and manipulate their employees. Balram observes how Ashok and his family use their power and wealth to insulate themselves from the harsh realities of Indian society, while at the same time taking advantage of the poor and marginalized to maintain their privileged position.

Balram himself becomes complicit in this system, using his position as a driver to gather information and ultimately betray his employer in order to escape his own poverty and achieve his own goals. This self-centeredness is also evident in Balram's relationships with his family and friends.

**Q 2 Through the story of Balram Adiga tried to show the broader social breakdown. Explain in short.**

Balram's story is emblematic of the broader social breakdown that Adiga portrays in the novel. Adiga depicts Indian society as a place where corruption and inequality are deeply entrenched, and where traditional social structures and relationships have broken down.

The novel portrays a society in which power and privilege are concentrated in the hands of a few, while the poor and marginalized struggle to survive. Another way in which Adiga portrays social breakdown in 'The White Tiger' is through his depiction of Balram's relationships with his family and friends.

Balram is estranged from his family and feels little loyalty to his fellow drivers. He sees his colleagues as competitors and is willing to betray them in order to gain an advantage.

Adiga portrays Balram's isolation as a result of the breakdown of traditional social structures and relationships in Indian society. Balram's lack of trust in others is a reflection of the breakdown of trust and social cohesion in Indian society.

**Q3 How does Adiga portray that corruption is prevalent in the Indian society?**

Adiga's portrayal of corruption in politics is particularly damning, as he shows how politicians use their influence to maintain their power and privilege, at the expense of the poor and marginalized.

Adiga also portrays corruption in the novel through his depiction of the Indian business world. The novel shows how businesses use bribery and other illegal means to gain advantages and maintain their power. Adiga's portrayal of corruption in the business world highlights the ways in which it perpetuates inequality and social injustice, as businesses use their power to exploit and manipulate the poor and marginalized.

Furthermore, Adiga depicts corruption through his portrayal of the character of Ashok, Balram's employer. Ashok is depicted as a character who is caught between the corrupt world of Indian politics and business, and his own personal morality.

While Ashok recognizes the corruption and inequality in Indian society, he is unable to break free from the system, and ultimately becomes complicit in the corruption that surrounds him.

**Q4 Write in short how the novel draws an apt picture of inequalities in the Indian Society.**

Adiga portrays inequality through his depiction of the characters of Balram and Ashok. Balram, the novel's protagonist, is a poor, lower-caste driver, while Ashok is his wealthy, upper-caste employer. The novel shows how Ashok's wealth and privilege provide him with opportunities and advantages that are denied to Balram.

Adiga's portrayal of the stark differences in their social and economic status underscores the ways in which inequality creates a system of structural oppression that limits the opportunities and possibilities available to those at the bottom of the social hierarchy.

**Q 5 Write in short how Adiga has explored the themes of Power and control in this novel**

In 'The White Tiger', power and control are central themes that are explored throughout the narrative. The novel depicts a society where power and control are wielded by the wealthy elite, who use their influence to maintain their status and suppress the lower classes.

One of the key ways in which power and control are exercised in the novel is through corruption. The wealthy elite use their wealth and influence to bribe officials, manipulate the legal system, and engage in other illicit activities to maintain their position of power.

This is demonstrated through the character of Mr. Ashok, who comes from a wealthy family and engages in corrupt practices to maintain his family's status. Similarly, Balram's employer, Mr. Stork, is shown to be involved in corruption, highlighting the pervasiveness of this issue in Indian society.

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**Sanjay Chitranshi- *Dalit, Dynasty and She***

Sanjay Chitranshi is an alumnus of IIT Roorkee. *Dalits, Dynasty, and She* is his second novel. His first novel is *Poetic Penetrations*.

Besides being a poet and a writer on the path of self-evolution through writing, which he had beautifully told in his first novel through an absorbing tale, he also possesses a keen social and political mind.

He believes one cannot evolve in isolation. *Dalits, Dynasty and She* despite being a satire on the Indian socio-political systems is a tribute to the Indian state for its resilience, tolerance and acceptance.

***Dalits, Dynasty and She***

This novel is a novel that can be categorized as an example of Dalit literature

Dalit literature refers to the writings about the Dalit life. The Dalits in India were devoid of basic living amenities. Dalit literature is the propagating of all the adverse experiences of a particular community who were subjugated by the so-called hegemony class or upper caste of the society

'*Dalits, Dynasty and She*' is a political satire. For the first time in the history of the nation, a Dalit woman leader has captured the seat of power in the most populous and politically most important state.

And decades after the independence, the Dalits are feeling hopeful of justice and their empowerment. An old political party, controlled by a powerful dynasty that has ruled the country most of the years since the independence, is facing the charges of massive corruption.



A powerful movement against corruption has erupted under an old social-activist, hijacked by his vocal, ambitious upper-caste supporters is spreading over the entire country, taking the political class by surprise.

A small section of the Dalits and tribal, disgruntled with the status-quo and the feudal power-structure, while the seats of power change from one set of looters to another have embraced Maoism and are preparing for an armed revolution.

**Characters: Shanti Devi, Rama Chandra, Bhola Mishra. Ballu Singh. Kunwar Balwant Singh Chauhan, Chandra Mani, Sachin Keiser, Ravindra Talmelkar, Robert Keiser,Sheela.**



**Long Answers Type Questions:**

**Q1 Draw a Character Sketch of Shanti Devi**

**Or**

**Discuss Shanti Devi's contribution in corruption.**

The novel starts with Shanti Devi as the first Dalit Chief Minister of the most populous but one of the most backward, socially dynamic, and politically important state. She was a highly ambitious, firebrand woman politician with a vital sense of having been wronged and deprived. She made people of her community conscious of their power. She told them that this was possible only if they voted for her and her party and the party to be in the majority. The name of her party "Dalit Power Party" was catchy and her speeches were candid and synonymous with the expectations of the Dalit.

In UP Dalits were feeling victorious as for the first time they had a leader who was not ready to bow down in front of the dictats of the higher castes. One such Dalit was Rama Chandra who received an invitation from the party when the party won the election, as he was an educated Dalit.



As a repercussion against the Dalits coming to power the OBC and the upper caste leaders joined to create havoc in the state because Shanti Devi has snatched power from Equitable hooligans Party a powerful party of OBC's. Other than the thoughtful educated Ram Chandra Shanti Devi's Dalit community was so exuberant at the victory of Shanti Devi that they planned to arrange marriages with the same pomp and show as the upper caste neighbourhood without thinking the fact that power is transient but neighbours are permanent.

The novel is a narrative of Shanti Devi's regime as the head of the state where she as the leader fails to manage her unruly community. A state where the upper caste politician bribes the police officers and promotes hooliganism as is the case with Chandra Mani , Bhola singh and Kunwar sahab.

The incident in which the Dalits unruly and mobocracy results into the death of an innocent mare of Kunwar, and in the three years' time the Dalits became so unmanageable that the governance of Shanti Devi became questionable.

Nothing seems to be at its place, Rama Chandra's wife Sheela being an educated lady gets a job as a school teacher but her posting was more like a punishment. She was asked to join in a school situated in a remote village. When they tried to get her transferred to Gaziabad she was asked to bribe. The presence of corruption was very evident and the Dalit rule brought it to its epitome as although the supremo is Dalit but the bureaucracy is not. They acted as a sword to take revenge against the chief minister by exploiting the people of her community in one or the other way.

The incident of bribe and the publicity of corruption by Rama Chandra and the handicap situation of the state government ignited Sheela she tried to burn herself and commit suicide.

The ruthlessness of the situation of Shanti Devi's regime is so that the incident becomes a step forward in the political carrier of Rama Chandra.

Shanti devi seems to enjoy the chaos resulted due to the incident of self-emulation of Sheela, she calls a press conference as a protest but leaves the venue in rage and fury as if she is hurt and she is trying to show her anger towards the upper castes. She always had an intuition that her core vote bank like her arrogance, her diamonds and enjoyed her commanding upper cates people to her tune.

The novel also shows how Dalit leaders like Rama Chandra and Shanti devi exploits the situation to its fullest and understand the maths of becoming rich quickly. Both invest in land; they gather the fact that land is one of the most profitable businesses in any country with rapidly increasing population and rising economic activities.

Shanti devi now tries to invest her power in becoming the first Dalit Prime Minister of the country. She uses the popularity of Ravindra Talmekar, a veteran and dedicated politician to get her dream fulfilled.

The fast of Talmekar against the corrupt ways of the central government gives Shanti Devi an opportunity to rise to power. The novelist wanted to show that the society where the power mongers rule the protocols are kept at bay. Shanti Devi in spite of unrest and unruly atmosphere in the state sits calmly in her abode and watches silently the political turmoil in Delhi.

She in between the turmoil at the centre announces all the commercial land acquired by her as residential. She tried to play with the emotions of the ordinary and poor farmers. A huge demonstration under the leadership of Rama Chandra was organised in order to get back the acquired land. Moreso ever, the Dalits also started brooding over the rape cases of Dalit girls.

Talmelkar's situation started deteriorating with the passage of each day of his fast. On the other hand. The novelist at this point tries to show many activities going at a same time, Sheila, the wife of Rama Chandra joined National Family Congress, she was made the president of Dalit Women Emancipation Cell and on the other hand Rama Chandra was promoted as the national Spokesperson of Dalit Power Party. There family broke as now both belonged to different political parties.

In the parliamentary session the actual issue of corruption was not raised by any instead they showed their concern about the health of the fasting old Talmekar. A planning of kidnapping of Talmekar was being planned by a young group of Dalit Power Party, the leader was the same young man who murdered Kunwar in past.

Sachin Keiser, the leader of National Family Congress raised the issue of corruption in the parliament and a strong bill was passed. On the other hand, the high court verdict on the land acquisition in Sahibabad for residential purposes by the fraudulent means was dismissed. Talmelkar breaks his fast but was killed and the novel ends with the joviliant Rama Chandra and Shanti Devi who now feels that the time has come when the country may see a Dalit Prime minister.

**Q2. In the novel Rama Chandra, is the that face of Dalit who knows how to exploit the situation to become affluent. Comment.**

**Or**

**Draw a character sketch of Rama Chandra as it progresses in the story.**

In UP Dalits were feeling victorious as for the first time they had a leader who was not ready to bow down in front of the diktats of the higher castes. One such Dalit was Rama Chandra who received an invitation from the party when the party won the election, as he was an educated Dalit.

The novel narrates how power corrupts a man like Rama Chandra who had always been a man of conscience and not someone who would stray from his principles for personal gain.

The novelist had described him as a man who never believed in a religion that would force Dalits to do the dirtiest of menial jobs. But in the course of time we see how he flows with the ways of the time and changes into an opportunist. In the beginning of the story he was the one who was conscious of the fact that it was a risky thing to take out a wedding procession because it was too early to invite any rivalry of the neighbouring upper caste community.

People like Ballu Singh, the OBC gram Panchayat, Chandra Mani, the thana incharge whose corrupt activities and ways to curb the power of the newly elected Dalit government instigated the conscience of educated Dalit lot like Rama Chandra took refuge in the corrupt ways of the upper caste politician to rise into power and to become affluent.

In the three years span the character of Rama Chandra changed from an idealist to a power and money hungry politician.

When Rama Chandra's wife Shela was posted to a remote village and her request for transfer resulted into a demand of bribe followed by her act of self-emulation, Rama Chandra didn't hesitate to make use of the opportunity for upgrading his political ventures. Many parties approached him to join them including the ruling National Congress Family. But despite his political ambitions, he cleverly denied to join any, instead he by now had realised that it is money that has the power to bring him in the notice of powerful people.

So, he decided to land into the real estate business. Soon his business flourished and he was loaded with gold, big cars, luxury apartments in Delhi. He also bought a revolver and a double barrel gun. Very soon opportunity knocked his door, the Raise remuneration Front movement started and was initiated by Shanti Devi, she chooses Rama Chandra as the leader. Under his leadership they decided to have a massive demonstration in front of the Sahibabad Development Authority. This made Rama Chandra a leader in making and he was promoted as the National spokesperson of Dalit Power party soon after his wife was appointed the president of the Dalit Women Emancipation cell by Sachin Keiser of National Congress Family.

But with power and money individual life is at a loss, Rama Chandra and his wife separates but that doesn't make Rama Chandra sit back as now power has taken him into its grip. The novel ends with Rama Chandra as a successful political figure with dreams of making his leader Shanti Devi the first Dalit Premier of the country.

**Q3. Do you think Ravindra Talmelkar's sacrifice was justified? Quote some examples from the story.**

Ravindra Talmelkar was an ordinary man, a school dropout, but he was fearless and knew how to fight for a public cause till the very end. He was demanding the central government to enact a law to decimate corruption and threatening to resort to fast unto death if his demand was not met. He was supported by Dalit leaders like Shanti Devi and Rama Chandra but silently

People like Baba Kripa Ram also joined Talmelkar to propagate and highlight his vengeance against the ruling Government of Robert Keiser. The Delhi police successfully curbed the activities of Baba but in the meantime the government of Delhi ceased to power and Delhi police now automatically became the one to decide whether to allow Talmelkar to continue his peaceful protest or not. They are also to decide the venue of the demonstration.

The conditions put forth by the Delhi police were tyrannical, undemocratic and impractical that Ravindra refused to accept them and was adamant to fast on his own terms. In the core committee meeting of Ravindra Talmelkar and his associates Rama Chandra also joined only with the thought that the old man must be put behind the bars.



Consequently, Ravindra Talmelkar was arrested from the venue of his fast and put behind the bars. But this could not stop Talmelkar from continuing his fast which stirred the whole nation.

The condition of the nation compelled the government to release Talmelkar on his conditions and he was allowed to continue his fast on the venue he had selected previously. He became the messiah for the mass. An injured or dead Talmelkar was more dangerous for the government than a live one.

The happening of the Victory Ground where Talmelkar was continuing and the opinion of Kaiser family became the story of the nation. But the readers can see that the political leaders were least bothered about the ideologies of Talmelkar, they were playing different games.

In the Parliament too leaders avoided to speak about the real cause of Talmelkar's days long fast. They only discussed his health issues.

Ultimately the day comes when Parliament passes an anti-corruption bill but Talmelkar was attacked by some young activists, he was tried to be kidnapped and, in this hullabaloo, he was killed.

Hence one can conclude that Ravindra Talmelkar dies like an unsung hero whose sacrifice of life had no meaning for the political leaders and their corrupt ways. A life was lost in vain.

### **Short Answer Type Questions:**

#### **Q1 Who is the protagonist of the Novel?**

The novel is the story of the Dalit movement and how they came into power. It details the consequences of the power-hungry subaltern class of the society. It narrates how power corrupts and makes one act the same manner against which the voice was raised. The only difference is the table are turned to the other side.

The novel demonstrates how power and politics corrupts man, Rama Chandra, who was an idealist turns to be an opportunist by the end of the novel. One can say that Rama Chandra is the protagonist of the novel as the readers witnesses the journey of Rama Chandra from a lay man to a political bigwig.

**By Prof. Jaba Kusum Singh**



But it can also be said that the novel is the success story of Shanti Devi, the Dalit woman whose high ambitions and selfish attitude makes the First Dalit Chief Minister of U.P. and brings her into a situation where the readers find her in a position where she is found to be knocking the door of opportunity to become the First Dalit Premier of the country.

**Q2. What is the occupation of Ram Chandra?**

Ram Chandra is a educated Dalit who was an idealist but with the course of time he realised the value of money and used the right opportunity of earning money as a land broker. He understood well in time that the only thing that rules the society is money. He took the opportunity of the ruling Dalit Community and learnt to make money through real estate business.

He took the opportunity of his wife Sheila's suicidal attempt as it opened the floodgates of his political career. He was appointed as the national spokesperson of Dalit Power Part. The novel ends with Rama Chandra as a very important member of Dalit Power Party and with a sure career in politics.

**Q3 Who was the leader of National Family Congress?**

The first in command of the National Family Congress Party had been Robert Keiser. But the second in command of the party Sachin Keiser did all the manipulations, he had the decision-making power in the party. He was the person who took the opportunity of Rama Chandra's wife, Shela Devi's suicidal attempt and invited her to join the party and appointed her as the president of the Dalit Women Emancipation Cell as a counter attack against the Dalit Power Party who had risen because of they are identified as the party for Dalits.

The National Congress Party was the ruling party of the country and the party was severely criticised by the opponents because of the corrupt ways of the party workers, ministers and government officials.

**Q 4 What was Sheila Chandra's initial Occupation?**

Sheila Chandra like her husband Rama Chandra was an educated lady. After much hard work she got a job in a government school. But, to her dismay, she was posted in a

far-off village and it was not for her to go for a job and manage the family as well. When she tried to get a transfer, she was asked to bribe the officials.

When Rama Chandra tried to publicise the corruptive measure of the officials no newspaper was ready to publish it. This instigated her so much that she tried to emulate herself.

This incident opened the floodgates of a successful political career for both husband and wife. She was appointed the president of the Dalit Women Emancipation Cell of the National Family Congress Party.

**Q5. What was the primary demand of the protestors in the land acquisition case?**

Land is one of the most profitable businesses in any country with rapidly increasing population and rising economic activities. Shanti Devi took the opportunity of this and suddenly passed a gazette for acquiring land in Sahibabad and Danapur. In her Rally in Sahibabad, she announced job for one member from every Dalit family whether they have land or not. This gave an opportunity to all corrupt builders and developers; illegal arms dealers and criminals make down table payment to the Dalit Power Party in order to acquire land in low price and flourish monetarily.

But because of political turmoil in Delhi Shanti Devi exploited the situation and suddenly declared that the status of the acquired land in Sahibabad from commercial to residential. There were so many dreams attached to the remuneration in exchange for the land. So, to address all these issues, the Raise Remunetaion Front was started.

Under the leadership of Rama Chandra people decided to have a massive demonstration in front of the Sahibabad Development Authority, they were all demanding the acquired land back.

**Vert Short Answer Type Questions****Q1. What was Shanti Devi's reaction to Court's verdict?**

Shanti Devi feels vindicated by the court's verdict. The court has taken care of the Dalit's ambitions and feels thankful for that. The public image of Shanti Devi was that of a messiah to the Dalit's and thus she had no choice other than showing her vindication for the verdict of the court.

**Q2 What was the main demand of Ravindra Talmelkar?**

Ravindra Talmelkar, an ordinary man but a fearless revolutionist who had no terror to fight for a public cause, was demanding the central government to enact a law to decimate corruption and threatening to resort to fast unto death if his demand was not met.

**Q 3 Why did Shaila Chandra leave her husband's house?**

Rama Chandra and Shela Chandra were having Commotions at their house due to differences among their parties, as a result Sheila left the house with the children and went to her parent's place.

As Sheila had joined National Congress Family Party and Rama was the member of Dalit Power Party there was a clash of ideologies between the two.

**Q4. What did Ravindra Talmelkar demand when he was arrested?**

Ravindra Talmelkar refused to accept the undemocratic, tyrannical and impractical conditions of the police and was adamant to fast on his own terms. He decided to continue his fast from the same venue and was arrested to the Transformation Jail where he decided to fast until death.the entire country seemed to stand behind Ravindra Talmelkar.

**Q 5 Who is Ballu Singh?**

Ballu Singh, was a Gujjar Leader and the Gram Pradhan of Danapur. He was among those who were fuming at the audacity of Dalits to arrange a marriage procession of three Dalit

bridegrooms who were anxiously waiting to get married with same pomp and show as the upper castes and the OBC's did. Ballu lived with his wife and four sons in a large palatial house. He was being pressurised to teach lesson to the Dalits, but he felt helpless as there was a Dalit Chief Minister leading the state.

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**OR**

**Sudha Murthy- *Dollar Bahu***

Sudha Murty (née Kulkarni; born 19 August 1950) is an Indian educator, author, and philanthropist. She is married to the co-founder of Infosys, N. R. Narayana Murthy. She is the Founder-Chairperson of the non-profit charitable organization Infosys Foundation. In 2024, Murty was nominated as Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha on 8 March 2024 for her contribution to social work and education. Murty was awarded the Padma Shri, the fourth highest civilian award in India, for social work by the Government of India in 2006. In 2023, she was awarded the Padma Bhushan, the third highest civilian award in India.

Sudha Murty began her professional career in computer science and engineering. She is a member of the public health care initiatives of the Gates Foundation. She has founded several orphanages, participated in rural development efforts, supported the movement to provide all Karnataka government schools with computer and library facilities, and established Murty Classical Library of India at Harvard University.

Murty is best known for her philanthropy and her contribution to literature in Kannada and English. *Dollar Bahu* (lit. 'Dollar Daughter-in-Law'), a novel originally authored by her in Kannada and later translated into English as *Dollar Bahu*, was adapted as a televised dramatic series by Zee TV in 2001. *Runa* (lit. 'Debt'), a story by Sudha Murty was adapted as



a Marathi film, *Pitruroon* by director Nitish Bhardwaj. Sudha Murthy has also acted in the film<sup>[13]</sup> as well as a Kannada film *Prarthana*.

### ***Dollar Bahu***

The story is about two daughters-in-law of a family, one from America and the other one from India. Now, how their mother-in-law treats them (Rupees and Dollar) is uncovered. The story is more of the mother-in-law who thinks that her American daughter-in-law (dollar bahu) is better than her counterpart in India, since she lives in the land of dreams, USA. Henceforth, she desires to live with her son in America.

However, when she lives a year or so in America, she realises that the Indians living there face the same problems and challenges as those of living in India. Now she realises that "grass always looks greener on the other side". And when she comes back to India, she shows immense love to the daughter in law whom she felt to be a trash and her grandson.

Finally, after getting a slap on feelings by her dollar bahu, Gouramma understands the fact that, may be dollar can remove the poverty from one's life. But family is much more important than that of dollars.

**Characters: Gouramma, Vinuta, Girish, Chandru, Surabhi, Shamanna, Jamuna**

### **Long Answer Type Questions**

**Q1. How did Sudha Murthy portray the concept of the American Dream through her novel *Dollar Bahu*?**

The novel 'Dollar Bahu' is written by a prolific Indian writer Sudha Murthy. The novel is all about the American Dream" which everyone is fond of. Every man aspires to live in America and learn the ways of American life. Sudha Murthy has clearly portrayed the American Dream' which Indians want to fulfil. She has drawn three categories of Indians who want to fulfil their American dream, which are given in the following manner:

**Migrated Indians who helped their families:** The catagen is represented by the Indians who migrated to America and consider themselves very lucky. America for them is a land of



opportunity and wonder. They find America, a place where they make money that fulfils their needs and gives them a luxurious and comfortable life. After getting settled in America they helped their family and relatives living in their hometown. They don't want to return to their own country. Chitra Joseph, Asha Patil, Malti, and Gopinath fall in this category, who earned money in America and helped their family and relatives in India. Most of them belonged to a middle-class family in India. Their migration to America gave comfort to their family in India. As Asha Patil told Gouramma "I feel great, this country has changed my life forever. I have also helped my brothers to start businesses. It is all because of this country that all this has been possible. There are many women like me in India, tortured by their mother-in-laws, but they do not have any option. For me, God helped in the form of America. I feel extremely happy here and do not feel like going back."

**Migrated Indians feel alienated and isolated in America:** The second category is represented by the migrated Indians who settled in America, earned a lot of money, and, maintained a luxurious and comfortable life. They are contented and happy in their professional life but in the personal domain, they are not happy at all as they feel alienated due and isolated the culture and language of America. They miss their own country, its culture, its rituals, and their family and relatives which they do not find in America. They want to return back to their home, but the struggles to live a comfortable life in India, stop them from coming back. Chandru Shekhar and Radha Krishna fall in this category of Indians as Chandru said "Everyone here thinks that it is easy to earn in dollars. They do not understand we have to struggle far away from home, family, and culture. We worry about our children who are confused between the two value systems. Actually, the price we pay is very high. "Chandru's friend Radha Krishna mentioned "As far as work is concerned, I am very happy. I do not have any complaints. America has been more than fair to me. But on the personal side, I am unhappy because Savitri is unhappy. She insists that we should return to India. But I am scared to face the same life again." Radha Krishna once again praised America, he said "Like a colourful web spun by a spider, an insect walks in and gets trapped. At first, we are drawn by the best technology and the handsome remuneration. Once we stay here for some time, it is difficult to go back. We get used to the easy living conditions and the professional work atmosphere. The conditions in our country are far below what we expect."

**Migrated Indians deceived their fellow Indians:** The third category is represented by the migrated Indians who deceived their fellow Indians to fulfil their own American Dream. The case of Shama (the older daughter of Radha Krishna and Saritha) and Surendra fall into this

category. Surendra, an Indian was married to Shama (a migrated Indian girl in America) so that he can settle in America. As Shama's mother remarked "Surendra belonged to a middle-class family and was very intelligent. We celebrated their wedding on a lavish scale, spending an enormous amount of money. Surendra came to the US along with us and we gifted them an apartment. He wanted to study further we paid his tuition fee too. Once Surendra got his scholarship his whole attitude towards Shama changed completely." This case falls in the category in which people make others their prey to full fill their American dream.

The case of Tara and Ramesh also falls into this category. Tara, an Indian girl from a middle-class family, married Ramesh (a migrated Indian in America). Tara's parents sold their property to give her a lavish wedding. After the wedding, Tara came to the US and she learned that Ramesh was already married to a white girl and had a son. She decided to get divorced but did not want to go back to India.

To conclude, we can say that Sudha Murthy has portrayed the stark reality of migrated Indians in her novel. She has portrayed the obsession of Indians with the life of America. Through the stories of Tara and Ramesh, Shama and Surendra, and Shrikant and Roopa, Sudha Murthy has depicted the migrated Indians who make prey to their fellow Indians for the sake of fulfilling their own American dream.

## **Q2. Write a character sketch of Gouramma.**

Sudha Murthy is an Indian novelist, prose writer, and also a writer of famous children's books. She is an activist and social worker who works for the upliftment of women. She draws her characters with minute details. Gouramma is the central character of the novel 'Dollar Bahu' and the major events and actions of name the novel revolves around her character. Gouramma is a middle-aged lady belonging to a middle-class family, wife to a school teacher (Shamanna), and mother of three children(Chandru, Girish, and Surbhi), who lives in a small house in Jayanagar, Bangalore. She is a clever woman who knows how to run a family. She is a homemaker who works hard to keep the domestic expenses within the budget.

**An ambitious lady:** Gouramma is an ambitious lady who always dreamt of diamonds, gold and silver jewelry, cars, a big house, and servants. Since her husband had been unable to fulfill her dreams, she had pinned her hopes on her children. Whenever she attended a marriage or a family function, she always looked at the women wearing expensive sarees and diamond earrings with envy. Gouramma feels that people ignored her because none of her children were based abroad.

**Her life in poverty:** The novel depicts that Gouramma lived in poverty during her childhood. She was deprived of education due to lack of money. As Shamanna mentioned "Gouri is not a bad human being, but she is misguided" Her marriage to Shamanna did not give her the opportunity to live in luxury.

**Her love for Chandru:** Gouramma had three children but she loved Chandru the most. She associated her happiness with Chandru who will fulfill her dream of going abroad and being a proud mother. She makes Chandru a medium to realize her American dream. When she came across that Chandru got a job in America, she was extremely happy because "now she will be able to boast about herself that one of her sons lives in America. She would dream about a dollar that magical green currency, which could change her house and fulfill her dreams."

**Her greedy and hypocritical nature:** Everyone in the family of Gouramma is aware of her greedy nature. Her husband removed about her "Her greed burnt the peace and harmony in our family". Chandru was also aware of her nature therefore when Girish was getting married, he sent a gift of five hundred dollars, knowing that for his mother, money would matter more than his presence.

**Her aspirations for her daughter:** Gouramma had a plan to settle her daughter in America so that she can live in luxury. When she became aware of the relationship between Surbhi and Gopinath (a neighboring boy), she hurriedly married her to a lawyer in Hyderabad. At the end of the novel, she came to know Malti was the wife of Gopinath, who was working in America, she thought "She had always felt that her daughter should have plenty of money. Today Malti was enjoying all that. She remembers how Girish had been positive about Gopinath but she had been blind."

**A typical mother-in-law:** Gouramma is a typical mother-in-law who makes a constant comparison between her two daughters-in-law i.e., Vinuta and Jamuna and treats them differently. Being from riches Gouramma also has a soft corner for her 'Dollar Bahu' Jamuna, the only daughter of her wealthy parents. She lives in America with her husband Chandru. She brings a lot of gifts, silk and shiffon sarees, and dollars for Gouramma which makes her happy. On the other hand, Vinuta lives in Bangalore, and being a devoted woman serves the family well but Gouramma never appreciates her. For instance, she was ready to buy expensive sarees for Jamuna, but for Vinuta she said "She does not wear such expensive sarees, it would be wiser to buy two printed saris for the same amount."

**Her realization:** After visiting America (Chandru and Jamuna), Gouramma realized the true nature of Jamuna who gifted cheap gifts brought from India and told her she brought them from America. Gouramma came to know about the used saris which Jamuna gifted to Surbhi at her wedding. She discovered the clever and mean nature of Jamuna to whom she always praised and neglected Vinuta. She expressed to herself "I was crazy about all American things and expensive silks, but it does not mean I will accept a used sari as a gift." She felt she was only a servant in her son's house and everything had to be decided by her dollar bahu.

**Conclusion:** Sudha Murthy has drawn a very realistic character of Gouramma. She has portrayed a woman living in the middle class, and how she behaves when she suddenly gets the money. Her greed her aspirations, her hypocrisy, her love for Chandru, and her favoritism to Jamuna, and at the end, her realization is well portrayed by Sudha Murthy.

### **Q 3 Compare and contrast the character of Vinuta and Jamuna.**

Vinuta and Jamuna are the major female characters of the novel 'Dollar Bahu', written by an Indian English novelist Sudha Murthy. Vinuta and Jamuna are the daughters-in-law of Shammanna and Gouramma. The former is the younger and the latter is the elder daughter-in-law. Sudha Murthy has used a technique of contrast and foil in delineating the characters of Vinuta and Jamuna. Jamuna stands as an antagonist to Vinuta. Vinuta is portrayed as fair with bold and beautiful blue eyes, a sight-sharp nose, and long black hair in plaits. On the other hand, Jamuna is portrayed with a dusky complexion with unattractive personality. The parents of Vinuta died when she was young and left the house of Dharwad as her inheritance. She lived in her house with a distant relative Bheemanna and his mother Seetakka. She shifted to Bangalore to live with her aunt, Indu. She got married to Girish, the younger son of Shammanna and Gouramma. On the other hand, Jamuna is the 'only' daughter of her wealthy parents and therefore has a superiority complex. She got married to Chandru who lives in America, therefore 'Dollar Bahu' is the title used for Jamuna.

**Devotion vs Selfishness:** Vinuta is an emotional girl who has devoted herself to her in-laws. Her attitude was "totally unselfish and willing to adjust to any situation". Gouramma has confidence in Vinuta that she will take care of everything. She said, "Amma, you go to the airport, tell me what Chandru likes, and I will get everything ready". On the other hand, Jamuna is very selfish and opportunistic. After marriage, Chandru left for America leaving her to get a visa. She got the opportunity to serve her

in-laws, but instead, she asked to visit her cousin at her parent's home and returned a day before her departure to America. Jamuna is depicted as a mean and self-centered person. She does not bother to talk to Vinuta and develop relations with her.

**Dollar vs Rupees:** The title of the novel 'Dollar Bahu' stands for Jamuna, who lives in America and earns dollars. On the other hand, Vinuta represents a rupee whose value against the dollar is less. The proverb 'If you have money, like the sun you will shine, if you don't have money, like the dog you will wane' reflects the situation of Vinuta in which Jamuna is a sun who shines every day while the life of Vinuta become more like that of a dog.

**Dutiful and Disrespectful:** Vinuta was a dutiful and responsible woman. She looked after Gouramma and frequently took leave to take her to the hospital. She delightfully worked for the welfare of the family, therefore when she saw Surbhi, her sister-in-law with Gopinath in a cinema hall, she told it to Shamanna. She even bore the harsh words spoken by Gouramma and Surbhi. She even enquired about Suresh when Surbhi was about to get married to him. On the other hand, Jamuna is a very selfish, mean, and disrespectful person. When Gouramma visits America, she never cared about her. Jamuna treated Gouramma, her mother-in-law like a servant by keeping her busy in the kitchen all the time. On the other hand, Vinuta took the whole responsibility of household work and left Gouramma free.

**Truthful vs Deceitful:** Vinuta is depicted as a truthful wife, daughter-in-law, and sister-in-law. On the other hand, Jamuna is a very deceitful person. She gifts used silk and chiffon sarees to Surbhi at her wedding. She brings cheap gifts from India and presents them as if she brought them from America. When Gouramma is acquainted with the reality of Jamuna, she wept for the whole night for showing love and affection for Jamuna and ignoring Vinuta.

### Short Answer Type Questions

**Q1 How does Sudha Murthy portray the hybridity of the Indian and western values in her novel *Dollar Bahu*?**

The hybridity of the Indian and western values is prominently depicted in the present Indian societal scenario through the portrayal of the characters in the *Dollar*



Bahu. The fascination of western values and lifestyle has been a trend for most of the Indians who prefer to follow the western values on the account of disregard and negligence towards Indian values.

Sudha Murty strongly exposes the reality of Indian society in which people are inclined towards the western values through her novel *Dollar Bahu*. She tried to show the various reasons of the changing mindsets of Indians who are highly fascinated to the western values rather than Indian values through the character of Gouramma,

Chandra Shekhar, Jamuna and Surabhi. Fascination of western values make the characters suffer from the conflicts and identity crisis. At last, Sudha Murty has explored the significance of Indian values through the characters of Vinuta, Shamanna, Girish and transformation of Gouramma in *Dollar Bahu*

### **Q2 What was Gouramma's dream?**

Gouramma always dreams to live an aristocratic life like her rich friends. Ultimately her dream comes true to some extent through Chandru who gets job in America. Her happiness remains no bound. She is immensely fascinated to the America and its lifestyle. When Chandru tells her about American Dollar and the lifestyle of America, she completely immerses in the dream of going to America and wishes to enjoy the lifestyle.

Gouramma makes the distinction between Vinuta and Jamuna through comparison. She calls Jamuna as Dollar Bahu and Vinuta as Indian rupees. It shows her hedonistic mindset which has come from her fascination towards the western values. She does not have any adherence towards Indian values. She does not follow the human values. The aim of her life is to seek pleasure from money and the materialistic assets.

### **Q3 How and through whom Sudha Murthy tries to show that Indian values are the paradigm of human life?**

Indian values are the paradigm of human life which embodies the Indian society from the humanitarian perspectives. The intrinsic forms like eternal pleasure, love, affection, human relationship, humanity, brotherhood, peace, duties, politeness etc are embedded in Indian values. *Dollar Bahu* is metaphorically a literary

panopticon of Indian values which are unveiled by Sudha Murty through her own experiences and profound knowledge.

Being a corporate leader, she has witnessed to the changing mindsets of Indian people. She explores the significance of Indian values which are in real sense the lighthouse of mankind. Her adherence towards Indian values is reflected through the characters of Shamanna, Girish and Vinuta in *Dollar Bahu*

Shamanna is one of the most important character who belongs to old generation of Indian society but shown with strong believer of Indian values. Being a Sanskrit teacher in school, he understands the value of Indian cultures, customs, history, and land. He feels happy that his younger son, Girish follows his father's ways of life

When Girish is married, his wife, Vinuta is exploited by Gouramma. Shamanna feels very sad for her. He treats Vinuta like his daughter. He always looks after her and encourages her to go ahead in life

#### **Q4 Outline the salient features of Girish's Character.**

Girish is shown a free and amiable person who is already ready to help the people out like his father. He is a bank clerk and happy in life. He does not crave for more money and luxuries like his elder brother and mother.

He feels very proud of his father's ways of life. He has great love and adherence for Indian values that he cherishes through his helpful nature.

Girish is scolded by his practical mother for his humanitarian perspectives. But he ignores his mother. He is seen happy and content throughout the novel.

As a result of his good nature, he gets a good better half of having same kind of nature, Vinuta.

#### **Q5 Vinuta becomes the favourite of Gouramma by the end of the novel. How and why?**

Vinuta is too a simple, educated and responsible girl. Though she is badly treated by mother-in-law, but loved and respected by Shamanna. She never complains against her mother-

in-law though she is not ever appreciated by Gouramma. She is a parentless child who was grown by her uncle in Dharwad.

So, she craves for the motherly love from Gouramma. But she is frustrated. She loves and respects her husband who never hurts her. So, she remains happy due to the good nature of her husband and father-in-law. She is hurt when Gouramma shows hatred for her and likes Jamuna, Chandru's wife. The notable aspect in the character of Vinuta is that she does not get affected by the jealousy of Jamuna for her rich life.

At the end of Dollar Bahu, it is clearly shown that Vinuta's good nature and her selfless duties towards her in-laws are highly appreciated by Gouramma after her transformation from a selfish and greedy woman to a responsible and lovable one.

### **Very Short Answer Type Questions:**

#### **Q1 What act as the omnipresent figure of the novel?**

Gouramma, the main character of the novel, feels isolated at parties when women congregate and discuss the foils of their NRI (non-resident Indian) sons and daughters and the foreign exchange they send back home. She too dreams of boasting of an NRI (specifically, American) son/daughter-in-law or daughter/son-in-law one day. Gouramma and her obsession with dollars and the NRI tag is an omnipresent figure.

#### **Q2 Who in the novel shared a similar dream like Gouramma's?**

Chandrashekhar and Surabhi shared Gouramma's 'American Dream'. For Chandrashekhar, this means somehow landing up in the USA, getting permanent residence by hook or by crook; while for Surabhi, it means either 'capturing' an NRI husband or getting married to someone in India and then goading him to move abroad.

#### **Q3 What does the journeys in the novel in and outside of India showcases?**

The intertwined journeys of the characters in the novel in and out of India and North America provide us a cross section of the Indian diaspora. Indians innocently arrive in the US, with visions of paradise, and are suddenly struck with a culture remarkably different from their own. The novel traces their initial mild amusement at remarkably different cultural attitudes towards alcohol, drug-abuse, social affiliations, sexuality and relationships turning into very real fears as they have children of their own.

**Q4 What is the concept of contemporary marriages in India as presented in this novel by Sudha Murthy?**

Sudha Murthy presents 'arranged' marriage in late twentieth and twenty-first century India what it truly is – an extremely well-oiled machinery, enough to put American dating apps or even Mexican drug cartels to shame.

For the author, it is no longer just a system used by parents to get their children married to people of *their* choice; but is also a system cleverly milked by eligible bachelors and bachelorettes to find wives and husbands earning in dollars and living plush lives abroad.

**Q5 Gouramma's visit to America acts as an eye opener for her. How?**

Gouramma's one-year visit to Chandrashekhar in the US forms a significant part of the novel.

Her desensitisation process begins right from the first day when her son tells her that he is paying a heavy mortgage on his house and car.

She also encounters a wide spectrum of Indians. There are the Radhakrishnas, who hail from a family of Vedic scholars in India, who are distraught because their daughter works as a waitress in a restaurant and is living-in with a Brazilian man

Then there are other Indians, like Vatsala or Padma, who have accepted that these altered relations with their children was a price they simply had to pay for financial and professional growth.

The final nail in the coffin is driven by Jamuna, whom Gouramma overhears badmouthing her and her entire family and even saying Chandru was considered eligible for marrying her just because of his green card.

She also overhears Jamuna and her friends talking of how they push their discarded things to folks back home in India as 'gifts from America.'

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**Model Question Paper**

**Paper Code: - A040502T**

**B.A. SEMESTER V EXAMINATION**

**NEP**

**ENGLISH**

**Fiction**

**Time: Two Hours**

**Maximum marks :75**

**Note:1. This paper consists of three sections-A B &C**

**Attempt questions from all sections as directed**

**2. The candidates are required to answer only in serial order. If there are many parts of a question, answer them in continuation**

**3. B copy will not be provided**

**Section A**

**Short Type Questions**

- a) Write in short, the importance of narrative technique and structure in the development of the plot of a novel.
- b) What is the difference between round and flat characters?
- c) Discuss the key features of a Domestic novel.
- d) What is a Space Fiction?
- e) In *A Tale of Two Cities*, how and why does Lucie Manette's personality change?

**or**

**How do Bathsheba's three suitors serve as different models of masculinity?**

- f) What is entailment, and what role does it play in the novel *Pride and Prejudice*?

**or**

**George Eliot in her Novel *Mill on the Floss* propogates the The Claim of the Past**

Upon Present Identity Can you Explain how?

- g) Who do you think is the most sympathetic character in the novel *Bluest Eye* and why?

or

How did Jem break his arm in *To kill a Mocking Bird*?

- h) What is the role of the sea in *The Old Man and the Sea*?

or

What is Jim Casy's role in the novel *Grapes of Wrath*? How does his moral

philosophy govern the novel as a whole?

- i) What according to Balram in *The White Tiger* were his strengths that made him a successful entrepreneur?

- j) What was Sheila Chandra's initial Occupation in *Dalit Dynasty and She* ?

Or

What does the journeys in the novel in and outside of India showcases?

### Section B

#### Long Answer Type Questions

**Note:** This section contains four questions. Attempt any one question. Each question carries 15 marks [15X1=15]

2. Theme plays the most important role in the narrative structure of a novel. Explain

or

3. Describe the term Picaresque citing examples from some novels.

or

4. Define Meta Fiction?

or

5. Elaborate Dickens as a novelist. or

Draw a character sketch of Gabriel Oak.

Section C

Long Answer Type Questions

**Note:** This section contains four questions. Attempt any one question. Each question carries 15 marks [15X1=15]

**6 Write a summary of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*.**

or

**Symbols play an important role in the novel *Mill on The Floss*, explain in detail**

**7. What is the significance of the title of the novel "The Bluest Eye"? Discuss with illustrations.**

or

**Critically analyse Harper Lee as a novelist.**

OR

**8. Give a character sketch of Santiago.**

Or

**How does Steinbeck develop the plot of the novel. Explain.**

OR

**9. Discuss Aravind Adiga as a novelist who satirizes the prevailing social evils of contemporary society through his novel 'The White Tiger'**

OR

**10 Draw a Character Sketch of Shanti Devi**

or

**How did Sudha Murthy portray the concept of the American Dream through her novel**

*Dollar Bahu?*

