

6 LITERATURE



Video Activity 1: EasyJet Support National Shakespeare Day

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kCZqUaL7MNO>

Produced by: easyJet
Uploaded: 11/04/2014
License: YouTube standard



1 Before watching, answer the following questions.

- What is easyJet?
- What is Shakespeare's day?
- What do you think easyJet did to support it?



2 Watch the video and take notes. What did easyJet do?



3 Watch the video again. What do the following people do? What do they say? Complete the table below with the following information.

PROFESSION

- A Member of Parliament from Shakespeare's birthplace.
- An old pensioner from Bristol.
- Shakespeare's daughter.
- The Communications Director of easyJet.
- The Managing Director of a Publishing Company.

WHAT THEY SAY

- If enough people sign the petition, there will be a Parliament debate.
- It's been the day of his life.
- Passengers are really supportive.

- d. People come to Britain because it is Shakespeare’s country.
- e. Shakespeare is a national icon.
- f. We tracked down the oldest living William Shakespeare.
- g. Writing his name is wonderful.
- h. 23rd April 2014 is the 450th anniversary of Shakespeare’s birth.

NAME	PROFESSION	WHAT THEY SAY
Paul Moore		
Nadhim Zahawi		
Kathy Rooney		
William Shakespeare		
Sara Stoney		



4

Would you sign the petition? Why/Why not? Find at least 3 reasons.

FURTHER MATERIALS

UNIT 1 - POETRY

A. ANGLO-SAXON POETRY

TEXT 1. From **Beowulf**: The fight with the dragon.

After reigning for fifty years, the old King must fight his final battle against a dragon (lines 2550-2575).

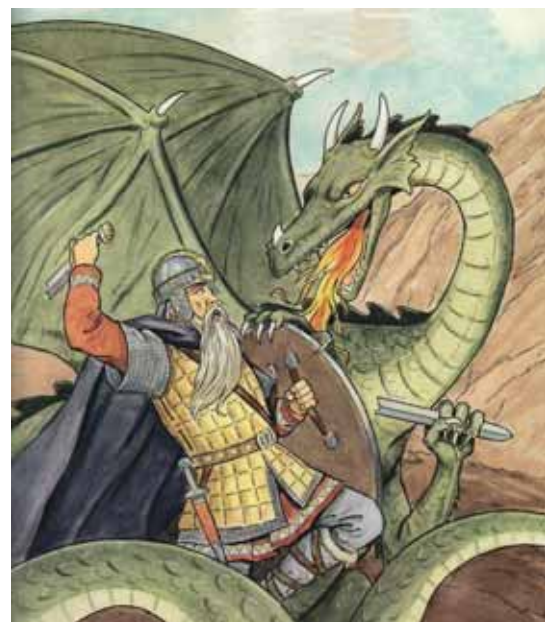
Then he gave a shout. The Lord of the Geats
 unburdened his breast and broke out
 in a storm of anger. Under grey stone
 his voice challenged and resounded clearly.
 Hate was ignited. The hoard-guard recognized
 a human voice, the time was over
 for peace and parleying. Pouring forth
 in a hot battle-fume, the breath of the monster
 burst from the rock. There was a rumble underground.
 Down there in the barrow, Beowulf the warrior
 lifted his shield: the outlandish thing
 writhed and convulsed and viciously
 turned on the king, whose keen-edged sword,
 an heirloom inherited by ancient right,
 was already in his hand. Roused to a fury,
 each antagonist struck terror in the other.
 Unyielding, the lord of his people loomed
 by his tall shield, sure of his ground,

2550

2555


2560

2565



while the serpent looped and unleashed itself.
 Swaddled in flames, it came gliding and flexing
 and racing towards its fate. Yet his shield defended 2570
 the renowned leader's life and limb
 for a shorter time than he meant it to:
 that final day was the first time
 when Beowulf fought and fate denied him
 glory in battle. 2575

GLOSSARY

	barrow: prehistoric mound (artificial hill) over a burial site	to loom: to appear indistinctly in a frightening way	rumble: deep, heavy continuous sound
	to glide: to move along smoothly and continuously	to loop: to move in a curve or circle	to swaddle: to cover or wrap
	heirloom: something handed down in a family for generations	outlandish: very strange and unusual	to unburden: to remove or relieve of a burden
	hoard: treasure, collection of valuable objects	to parley: to discuss	to unleash: to release, to set into action
	to ignite: to set on fire	to pour forth: to flow out	unyielding: not giving way, standing firm
	keen-edged: sharp	to race: to run quickly	to writhe: to twist in pain
	limb: arm or leg	to rouse: to provoke or make more active	



1

Read the extract and decide whether the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Beowulf fights without weapons. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Beowulf and the dragon fight inside a cave. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Beowulf knows that this is his last battle. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The dragon fights with a sword. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



2

How is the dragon described in the text?



3

Anglo-Saxon society was warlike, with a heroic code and a warrior king. Find expressions referring to Beowulf in the text and decide whether his description fits the standards of an Anglo-Saxon king.

TEXT 2. From **Beowulf**: The King's Funeral

Beowulf kills the dragon but is mortally wounded. Here is an extract on his funeral (lines 3156-3172).

Then the Geat people began to construct
 a mound on a headland, high and imposing,
 a marker that sailors could see from far away,
 and in ten days they had done the work.
 It was their hero's memorial; what remained from the fire 3160
 they housed inside it, behind a wall
 as worthy of his as their workmanship could make it.
 And they buried torques in the barrow, and jewels
 and a trove of such things as trespassing men
 had once dared to drag from the hoard. 3165

They let the ground keep that ancestral treasure,
gold under gravel, gone to earth,
as useless to men now as it ever was.
Then twelve warriors rode around the tomb,
chieftains' sons, champions in battle,
all of them distraught, chanting in dirges,
mourning his loss as a man and a king.

3170

GLOSSARY



- chieftain: leader of a clan or tribe
- dirge: slow song expressing sadness
- distraught: deeply agitated with grief
- to drag: to pull along
- gravel: small stones used for roads and paths
- headland: promontory
- marker: prominent and conspicuous structure
- mound: mass of earth, small hill
- to mourn: to manifest sorrow for someone's death
- torque: type of necklace
- to trespass: to enter the land or property of another without permission
- trove: collection of valuable objects
- workmanship: craft



Burial mound at Lejre, Denmark.



4 Read the text and answer the following questions.

- a. What type of tomb did the Geats build for their King?
- b. How long did it take them to build it?
- c. What was the purpose of such a monument?
- d. What did they put inside the tomb?
- e. How did they celebrate their King?



5 Read the following article and find differences and similarities with Beowulf's tomb. What is present in both tombs? What is missing in Beowulf's tomb?

ANGLO-SAXON KING'S BURIAL SITE FOUND (13TH FEBRUARY 2004)

Archaeologists have found the grave of an Anglo-Saxon king at Southend in Essex. The king's body is long gone, dissolved by the soil, but an amazing collection of treasures buried with him has survived.

The king was buried in a wood-lined chamber (a small room) along with over sixty objects. The room was about four metres square and one and a half metres high. The king was buried almost 1,400 years ago, in around 630 AD.

Among the objects found in the chamber were two gold foil crosses, a gold buckle, some gold braid, gold coins, coloured glass bowls and copper bowls.

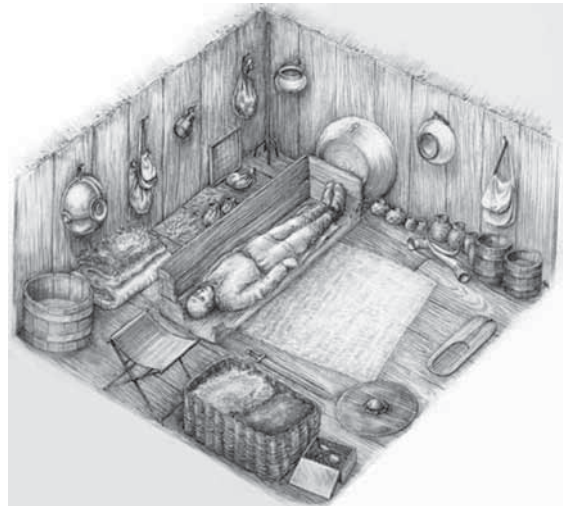
As well as precious treasures like these, there were some useful objects too. There were buckets, drinking cups, two cauldrons (cooking pots) and the remains of a casket that could have contained material.

(Adapted from <http://www.show.me.uk/site/news>)

GLOSSARY



- **bowl:** deep, round dish
- **braid:** strands of material woven into a band for decoration
- **bucket:** vessel for carrying water, milk, etc.
- **buckle:** fastener with a spike to go through a hole in a strap, for example in a belt
- **copper:** red-brown metal
- **foil:** thin sheet of metal
- **pot:** round vessel for liquids or solids



6

Write a short text (1-2 paragraphs) comparing the contents of the two tombs.

TEXT 3. From **Deor's Lament: The Last Stanza**

In this poem, contained in the Exeter Book and dating back to around 960-990, after telling stories of various heroes and heroines, the poet tells his own story in the final stanza (lines 30-44).

If a man sits long enough, **sorrowful** and anxious, **bereft of joy**, his mind constantly darkening, soon it seems to him that his troubles are endless. Then he must consider that the wise Lord often moves through the earth granting some men honour, glory and fame, but others only shame and **hardship**. This I will say for myself: that for awhile I was **Heodeninga's scop**, dear to my lord. My name was **Deor**. For many winters I held a fine office, faithfully serving a just lord. But now **Heorrenda** a man skilful in songs, has received the **estate** the **protector of warriors** gave me. *That passed away; this also may.*

30
35
40



A double harp

GLOSSARY



- **bereft of:** deprived of
- **Deor:** the name of a scop, mentioned only in this poem
- **estate:** property and possessions
- **Heodeninga:** a king or lord
- **Heorrenda:** a scop also present as Horant in the 13th century German epic Kudrun. It is said that he sang so sweetly that the birds fell silent as he did so.
- **hardship:** difficulty
- **protector of warriors:** the king or lord
- **sorrowful:** very sad



7

Read the extract in modern English and answer the following questions.

- a. What is the poet's state of mind?
- b. What happened to him?
- c. Who replaced him in his position? Why?
- d. What did the poet lose?



8

Look at the expressions from the text and decide who they refer to.

- a. the wise Lord (l. 34):
- b. my lord (l. 39):
- c. a just lord (l. 41):
- d. the protector of warriors (l. 43):



9

The final line "That passed away; this also may", repeated in each stanza, is ambiguous. Which interpretation below do you find most convincing? Justify your answer.

- A. The poet believes that things will work out for the best.
- B. The poet is ironic and does not believe that things will improve.



10

Imagine Deor as a successful contemporary film artist or sports champion now surpassed by a better rival. Fame is transitory – are there other, more important, values in life? In pairs/groups, identify the values which in your opinion really count, make notes and write a short text (1-2 paragraphs) on them.

C. THE ELIZABETHAN SONNET

■ EDMUND SPENSER (1552-1599)

Edmund Spenser was probably born in East Smithfield, London, the son of a cloth-maker. He entered the Pembroke College, Cambridge, in 1569 and took his Bachelor of Arts in 1573 and his Master Degree in 1576. He acted as a secretary to Dr. John Young, former master of Pembroke College in Cambridge, and it was probably there that he composed the *Shepherd's Calendar*, printed in 1579, and dedicated to Sir Philip Sidney, a famous sonneteer of the period.

He worked for Sir Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, and in 1580 he was appointed secretary to the new Lord Deputy in Ireland. He took a lease on property on the banks of the Liffey and that landscape provided the setting for *The Fairy Queen*.

In 1589, he met Sir Walter Raleigh who presented him and his poem to Queen Elizabeth I, to whom the poem was dedicated. At this time he arranged the publication of the first three books of *The Fairy Queen*. In 1594, he married Elizabeth Boyle and celebrated the event in the collection of sonnets *Amoretti*. In 1596, he published the second part of *The Fairy Queen*, from book 4 to book 6.

He died in London in 1599 and was buried in Westminster, close to Geoffrey Chaucer.

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1664)

William Shakespeare was born in Stratford-upon-Avon on about 23rd April 1564. His father was a successful local businessman and his mother was the daughter of a landowner. The family paid for his education, although there is no evidence that he attended university.

In 1582 William, aged only 18, married an older woman named Anne Hathaway. Soon after, they had their first daughter, Susanna. They had another two children but William's only son Hamnet died aged only 11.

After his marriage, it seems that he spent most of his time in London writing and performing his plays. By 1592, there is evidence that William Shakespeare earned a living as an actor and a playwright in London and possibly had several plays produced.

By the early 1590s, documents show that William Shakespeare was a managing partner in the Lord Chamberlain's Men, an acting company in London. After the crowning of King James I, in 1603, the company changed its name to the King's Men. The company was very popular, and records show that Shakespeare had works published and sold. Early in his career, Shakespeare was able to attract the attention of the Earl of Southampton, to whom he dedicated his first- and second-published poems: *Venus and Adonis* (1593) and *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594).

By 1597, 15 of the 37 plays written by William Shakespeare were published. Civil records show that at this time he purchased the second largest house in Stratford, called New House, for his family. By 1599, William Shakespeare and his business partners built their own theatre on the south bank of the Thames River, which they called the Globe.

Church records show he was interred at Trinity Church on April 5, 1616.

METAPHYSICAL POETRY

A century later, the term metaphysical was applied to a group of 17th century poets for their unnaturalness, i.e. the intricacy and originality of their poems.

They were forgotten during the 18th and 19th century, but their ability to deal with all kinds of experience was then rediscovered by 20th century readers and scholars.

John Donne (1572-1631), the most influential metaphysical poet, developed a style in which philosophical and spiritual subjects were approached with reason and often ended with a paradox. At the centre of his work is his personal relationship with spirituality, but his psychological analysis and sexual realism marked a dramatic departure from traditional courtly love sonnets. His best sonnets are contained in ***Holy Sonnets***, released soon after the death of his wife and published in 1633.



11

Answer the following questions.

- When was the term metaphysical poetry first used?
- Who does it refer to and why?
- What are the characteristics of John Donne's poetry?
- How did his sonnets differ from traditional love sonnets?



J. Donne



12

Read the text again and complete the following table.

CENTURY	What happened to Metaphysical Poetry?
17 th century	metaphysical poetry was born
18 th century	- the term metaphysical poetry was invented -
19 th century	
20 th century	

TEXT 4. From **Holy Sonnets** by John Donne: Sonnet 10.

This sonnet is an argument against the power of death, which depends on other forces.

Death, be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so;
For those whom thou think'st thou dost overthrow
Die not, poor Death, not yet canst thou kill me.
From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure; then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones, and soul's delivery.

5

Thou art slave to fate, chance, kings, and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swell'st thou then?

10



One short sleep past, we wake eternally
And death shall be no more; Death thou shalt die.

GLOSSARY



- | | | |
|--|--|---|
| canst: 2 nd person sing. negative of can (= cannot) | poppy: wild plant with red flowers | thee: object pronoun, 2 nd pers. sing. (= you) |
| dreadful: terrible | swellest: 2 nd person sing. of to swell | thinkest: 2 nd person sing. of to think |
| to dwell: to reside | | |



13

Put the sentences in order to make a summary of the poem.

- Even drugs can give more rest than Death.
- The poet praises Death's good qualities because he frees people from earthly sufferings.
- Death will die when the dead are resurrected.
- The poet addresses Death as a person, telling him not to be proud because those he kills do not really die.
- Death is a slave to other forces.



14

Look at the form and rhyme scheme of the sonnet and complete the text.

Donne's sonnet follows the (1) sonnet form in that it is made up of three quatrains and a concluding couplet. However, Donne has chosen the (2) sonnet rhyme scheme of (3) for the first two quatrains, grouping them into an octave typical of the (4) form. He switches rhyme scheme in the third quatrain to (5) and then the couplet rhymes (6) as usual.



15

Look at line 9 and make a list of situations in which Death is slave to other forces.

D. ROMANTICISM

■ WILLIAM BLAKE (1757-1827)

William Blake was born in London, where he spent most of his life. He was first educated at home, chiefly by his mother. His parents were also broadly sympathetic with his artistic temperament and they encouraged him to collect Italian prints. He found work as an engraver, joining the trade at an early age. He found the early apprenticeship rather boring, but the skills he learnt proved useful throughout his artistic life.

During his lifetime, Blake never made much money. It was only after his death that his genius was fully appreciated. His engravings and commissioned work drew enough money to survive, but at times he had to rely on the support of some of his close friends. Because of Blake's temperaments, he was not always suited to maintaining friendships. Blake was very much a free spirit who readily spoke his mind, so much so that some acquaintances thought he was mad. He died on August 12, 1827 and was buried in an unmarked grave at the public cemetery of Bunhill Fields (England).

■ WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770-1850)

William Wordsworth was born on 7th April 1770 in Cockermouth, in Northwest England. He was brought up by his mother's parents, but that was not a happy period and he developed a great love for nature, spending many hours walking in the area of the Lake District.

In 1787, he entered St. John's College, Cambridge. While still a student, in 1790, he travelled to revolutionary France and fell in love with a French woman, Annette Vallon, from whom he had a daughter. In 1792, he returned to France but despite his desire to marry, he came back alone due to political tension between the two countries.

In the same year, he met Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Somerset and they became close friends. In 1798, they published together *Lyrical Ballads*, the manifesto of the Romantic Movement.

In 1802, after returning from a brief visit to see his daughter, Wordsworth married a childhood friend, Mary Hutchinson.

In 1807, he published another important volume of poetry *Poems, in Two Volumes*, which included famous poems such as *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, *My Heart Leaps Up*.

In 1813, he moved to Grasmere, a picturesque location which inspired his late poetry.

By the 1820s, the critical acclaim for Wordsworth was growing and in 1843, he was persuaded to become the nation's poet laureate.

Wordsworth died on 23 April 1850 and was buried in St Oswald's Church, Grasmere.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE (1772-1834)

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in Ottery St. Mary, Devon in 1772. His father was a local vicar who was already 53 when Samuel was born. As a child, Samuel loved reading. After the death of his father, when he was only 6, he went to Christ's Hospital School in London, where he developed a love for the classic Greek poets and the two English immortals, Shakespeare and Milton. In 1791, he went to Jesus College, Cambridge University. Half way through his degree, he left college to join the Royal Dragoons, but this proved a failure; he couldn't cope with military life, and with the aid of his brother was discharged on the grounds of insanity. He returned to Jesus College, though he never completed his degree.

It was in Cambridge that he met the poet and radical Robert Southey; they planned to set up a utopian community in Bristol, but this plan never materialised. In 1795, he married Sara Fricker, but he never really loved her and after an unhappy marriage, they separated though they had a daughter. After drifting away from his own wife, he later fell in love with Sara Hutchinson, the sister of Wordsworth's future wife.

In the late 1790s, Coleridge developed a close and important friendship with William Wordsworth. Suffering from neuralgic and rheumatic pains, he was prescribed copious amounts of opium as a pain reliever; this almost inevitably led to addiction and increased mental disturbance. In 1817, his addiction was dominating his life and in this period he rarely ventured out. He continued to write prose, such as his *Biographia Literaria* (1817), poetry and also more theological and politico-sociological works. He died in Highgate, near London, on July 25, 1834.

GEORGE GORDON BYRON, LORD BYRON (1788-1824)

George Gordon Noel Byron, born in 1788, was the sixth baron of an aristocratic family. From 1805 to 1808, he attended Trinity College and fell deep into debt while engaging in sexual escapades, boxing, horse riding and gambling.

When he was 21, he took his seat in the House of Lords and a year later he embarked on a grand tour through the Mediterranean Sea and began writing *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, a poem on a young man's reflections on travelling in foreign lands.

In 1811, he returned to London after his mother's death and had a series of love affairs, included one with his half-sister Augusta who was married. The sense of guilt is reflected in some of his dark poems. In 1814, he married Annabella Milbanke and had a daughter. However, the marriage was not a happy one.

In 1816, Byron left England and never came back. He travelled to Switzerland where he met Percy Bysshe Shelley in Geneva and where he wrote the third canto of *Child Harold* and got inspiration for the Faustian poem *Manfred*. Then, he went to Italy and this period inspired his greatest poem, *Don Juan*. In 1818, he was introduced to the secret Carbonari Society and in 1823 he accepted an invitation to support Greek independence from the Ottoman Empire. He died in 1824 at the age of 36, deeply mourned in England and celebrated as a hero in Greece.

PERCEY BYSSHE SHELLEY (1792-1822)

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born into a minor aristocratic family. As a child, he was bullied by his classmates for his unorthodox views. He then withdrew into reading and developed an independent mind.

In 1810, he went to University College, Oxford and published his first poetry and novel *Zastrozzi* (1810). In the following year, he wrote another novel and a pamphlet, *The Necessity of Atheism*. In this pamphlet Shelley questioned the existence of God and the role of Christianity.

While in Oxford, he married a 16 year-old school girl, but then he left her when, in London in 1814, he met Mary Godwin-Wollstonecraft (who would become an accomplished writer herself, as Mary Shelley, the author of *Frankenstein*). He went on a tour of Europe with Mary and while

in Geneva he met Byron. In 1818 he was in Rome where he wrote *Prometheus Unbound*. He was a supporter of non-violent resistance and in 1822 he started a left wing journal called *The Liberal* with Byron and Leigh Hunt. He died during a storm on the Italian coast near Viareggio in the same year.

■ JOHN KEATS (1795-1821)

John Keats was born in Central London in 1795 from a middle-class family. He lost both parents when he was young.

In 1815, he started his apprenticeship as a surgeon at Guy's Hospital in London and the theme of the suffering of patients was incorporated in his poems. However, the next year he decided to try a career as a poet. In 1817, he spent time nursing his brother who was suffering from tuberculosis and in 1818 they went on a walking tour in the North of England and in Scotland. During the tour, Tom's conditions deteriorated and also John contracted the disease. However, this was Keats' most prolific period, during which he wrote five of his six odes, met William Wordsworth, and had his work *Endymion* published.

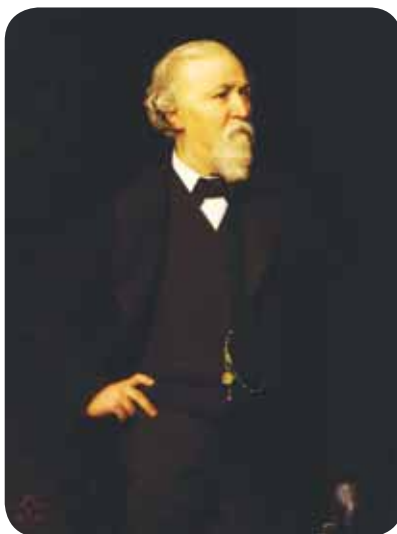
In the same period, he also came into contact with Fanny Brawne and a close friendship developed with the exchange of letters. Unfortunately, the relationship was cut short by the aggravation of tuberculosis and Keats booked a ship to Italy with a friend looking for a warmer climate. He died in 1821 and was buried in Rome.

● VICTORIAN POETRY AND THE DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE

Victorian poetry is a type of poetry written in England during Queen Victoria's reign (1837-1901). Victorian poets concentrated on social injustice – like child labour or abuse, and **slavery** – and wrote in a **harsh** and realistic way, with the intent of reforming and educating rather than entertaining. They used images to represent emotions and situations. The result showed a great struggle between reality and science. The major Victorian poets were **Alfred Tennyson** (1809-1892), whose contrast between industrialism and his **allegiance** to the eternal beauty of nature is typically Victorian, and **Robert Browning** (1812-1889), who invented the dramatic monologue. A **dramatic monologue** is a narrative poem that requires a speaker in the first person singular and a silent listener, i.e. the reader, who often a difference between what the speaker says and what is actually revealed – generally at a critical moment – and has to imagine the complete dramatic scene. Browning's most famous monologue is ***My Last Duchess***.



A. Tennyson



R. Browning

GLOSSARY



allegiance: loyalty or devotion
harsh: cruel
slavery: state of being a slave, not a free person



16

Read the text and decide if the following statements are true (T) or false (F).

- | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| | T | F |
| a. Victorian poetry was written during the first part of Queen Victoria's reign. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. The main theme of Victorian poetry is social injustice. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Victorian poetry is highly emotional. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Reality and science are in contrast. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



17

Read the text again and decide if the following characteristics refer to Tennyson (T) or Browning (B).

- | | |
|---|--------------------------|
| a. A critical moment | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. A silent listener | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Contrast between industrialism and nature | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Difference between what the speaker says and what is actually revealed | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Dramatic monologue | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Imagine a whole dramatic scene | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. The eternal beauty of nature | <input type="checkbox"/> |

TEXT 5. *In Memoriam* (1833) by Alfred Tennyson

These are the first two stanzas of Tennyson's most famous long poem.

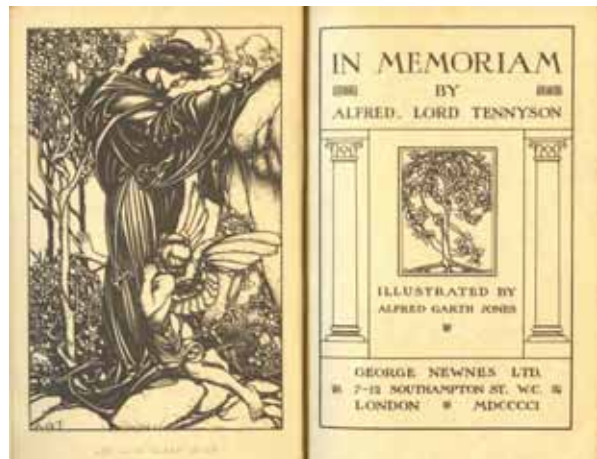
Strong Son of God, immortal Love, Whom we, that have not seen thy face, By faith, and faith alone, embrace, Believing where we cannot prove;

Thine are these **orbs** of light and shade; ⁵ Thou **madest** Life in man and brute; Thou madest Death; and **lo**, thy foot Is on the **skull** which thou hast made.

GLOSSARY



- lo:** (old use) exclamation used to call attention to something
- madest:** (old use) made, 2nd person singular
- orb:** sphere, globe or celestial body (sun, moon or planet)
- skull:** bone structure of the head
- thine:** (old use) your, 2nd person singular





18

Complete the comment on the following poem using one of the words below for each space. Which part of the comment – A, B or C – summarises Text 5?

astronomy – creation – development – faith – geological – Tennyson

- A. *In Memoriam* reflects Tennyson’s struggle with the Victorians’ growing awareness of another sort of past: the vast expanse of (1) time and evolutionary history. The new discoveries in biology, (2) and geology implied a view of humanity that distressed many Victorians, including (3)
- B. Although Tennyson associated evolution with progress, he also worried that the notion seemed to contradict the Biblical story of (4) and long-held assumptions about man’s place in the world. Nonetheless, in *In Memoriam*, he insists that we must keep our (5) despite the latest discoveries of science.
- C. At the end of the poem, he concludes that God’s eternal plan includes purposive biological (6); thus he reassures his Victorian readers that the new science does not mean the end of the old faith.



19

Read Text 5 again and decide whether the following statements are true or false.

- | | T | F |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Nobody has ever seen God’s face. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. We shouldn’t believe by faith. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. We should believe only what we can prove. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. God can distinguish between light and dark. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. God created both good and bad people. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Death was not created because it is a natural phenomenon. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. God is above Man. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

E. MODERN AMERICAN POETRY

■ WALT WHITMAN (1819-1892)

Walt Whitman was born in 1819, the second child in a family of 11, and grew up in the Brooklyn district of New York and Long Island. At the age of twelve, he began learning to work as a printer and discovered a great passion for literature.

In 1836, at the age of 17, he began his career as teacher in Long Island and continued to teach until 1841, when he turned to journalism as a full-time career. As well as journalism, Whitman became absorbed in poetry, writing in a unique and distinctive style. In 1855, he finished *Leaves of Grass*.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Whitman wrote “Beat! Beat! Drums!”, a patriotic poem and rally call for the North. In 1862, he traveled to Washington, D.C. to care for his brother who had been wounded in the war and stayed in the city for eleven years.

In the early 1870s, Whitman settled in Camden, where he had come to visit his dying mother at his brother’s house. He spent his declining years working on additions and revisions to a new edition of the *Leaves of Grass* and preparing his final volume of poems and prose, *Good-Bye, My Fancy* (1891). He died in 1892.

EMILY DICKINSON (1830-1886)

Emily Dickinson was born in 1830, in the town of Amherst, Massachusetts, fifty miles from Boston. As a young child, Emily proved to be a bright and conscientious student. However, her studies were often interrupted by ill health and when a persistent cough developed, her father decided to remove her from college and bring her back home. On returning home from college, Emily Dickinson learnt much of the domestic chores, helping her mother with cleaning, sewing and entertaining.

She occasionally visited Washington with her father, but because of her discomfort and shyness in social situations, she gradually reduced her social contacts and by her late twenties, this has led to an almost complete seclusion.

Emily Dickinson died at the age of 55 and her doctor suggested that the accumulation of stress throughout her life contributed to her premature death. After her death, her close sister Vinnie, had been instructed to burn her letters, but fortunately she did not and her poems survived.

WAR POETS

The expression **War Poets** is used for a group of English poets who fought as soldiers during World War One. Among them, the most famous are **Rupert Brooke** (1887-1915), **Wilfred Owen** (1893-1918), **Isaac Rosenberg** (1890-1918) and **Siegfried Sassoon** (1886-1967), the only one who survived the conflict.

Brooke enlisted out of patriotic enthusiasm, like many other young Britons. He became popular after his death and was seen as a romantic hero. His reputation as a poet rests on the five war sonnets that he wrote in 1914.

Owen went a step farther, giving voice to compassion in a sort of elegy of the soldiers he had come to love and admire. However, his poetry is full of painful and accurate **accounts** of his comrades' deaths.

Rosenberg had a more detached, unsentimental view of the lost generation as he was less concerned with pity and presented realistic and shocking details, sometimes with a touch of irony or through paradox. Furthermore, he differed from the others because he can be regarded as a **Modernist** in technique.

Sassoon realized the **lie** of war rhetoric and reacted bitterly and violently in his poems, denouncing the political errors and insincerity that led to the sacrifice of many young soldiers. He also made a public protest in July 1917 with his 'Declaration against the War', which was read in the House of Commons.

GLOSSARY



- account: description
- to enlist: to join the Army
- lie: opposite of truth
- Modernist: see Modernist novel in Unit 2



R. Brooke



W. Owen



I. Rosenberg



S. Sassoon



20

Read the text and complete the table with information on the different poets.

BROOKE	OWEN	ROSENBERG	SASSOON

TEXT 6. From the Poems of Wilfred Owen: **Dulce et decorum est.**

These two extracts are the first stanza (lines 1-8) and the final lines (lines 25-28) of the poem.

Bent double, like old beggars under sacks,
 Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,
 Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs
 And towards our distant rest began to trudge.
 Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots
 But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;
 Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots
 Of tired, outstripped Five-Nines that dropped behind.

...

My friend, you would not tell with such high zest
 To children ardent for some desperate glory,
 The old Lie: Dulce et decorum est
 Pro patria mori.



WW1, Third Battle of the Somme (1917).

GLOSSARY



- blood-shod: with shoes or feet covered in blood
- Five-Nines: 5.9 calibre grenades
- hag: witch
- hoot: short loud high sound
- haunting flare: frightening bright and unsteady light
- knock-kneed: with knees that touch each other
- lame: unable to walk well because of injuries
- to limp: to walk with difficulty because a leg or foot is injured
- to outstrip: (here) to be out of range
- sludge: mud
- to trudge: to walk slowly and heavily
- zest: enthusiasm



21

Paraphrase the first stanza, where Owen describes life in the trenches in realistic detail.



22

In the first stanza, find examples of alliteration and rhyme.



23

In the final lines, the poet quotes the Latin poet Horace (1st century AD) and tries to communicate the “pity” of war to future generations. Discuss the meaning of the term ‘Old Lie’ in the context of WW1 and with reference to what is called the ‘Lost Generation’.

TEXT 7. The Hero by Siegfried Sassoon

In this poem a piteous officer hides the truth from a poor mother.

“Jack fell as he’d have wished”, the Mother said,
 And folded up the letter that she’s read.
 “The Colonel writes so nicely.” Something broke
 In the tired voice that quavered to a choke.
 She half looked up. “We are so proud
 Of our dead soldiers.” Then her face was bowed.

5

Quietly the Brother Officer went out.
 He’d told the poor old dear some gallant lies
 That she would nourish all her days, no doubt.
 For while he coughed and mumbled, her weak eyes¹⁰
 Had shone with gentle triumph, brimmed with joy,
 Because he’s been so brave, her glorious boy.



British soldiers in the trenches.

He thought how “Jack”, cold-footed, useless swine,
 Had panicked down the trench that night the mine
 Went up at Wicked Corner; how he’d tried¹⁵
 To get sent home, and how, at last, he died,
 Blown to small bits. And no one seemed to care
 Except that lonely woman with white hair.

GLOSSARY



- to blow to bits: to reduce to small pieces by an explosion
- choke: sound caused by obstruction in the throat
- to nourish: to maintain with care
- to bow: to move one’s head forward and downward
- cold-footed: without courage
- to quaver: (of a voice) to shake or tremble
- gallant: polite and chivalrous
- swine: contemptible or unpleasant person
- brimmed: full



24

The following summary of Text 20 contains five mistakes – find and correct them.

The colonel sends an officer with a letter to Jack’s mother. The letter from the officer speaks of dead Jack in glowing terms to console the poor young mother for the death of her only son. The mother is filled with grief at having lost her son, but holds her head high with shame in the supposed glorious death of her son. The cruel officer who comes to meet Jack’s mother hides the harsh reality of Jack’s death from her. He does not want the old lady to be distressed. He rightly believes that her pride in the inglorious death of her son in the trench is the only consolation for her.



25

Identify the rhyme scheme and a series of rhyming couplets.



26

Write a text of about 100 words on one of the following themes:

- The poem expresses the hypocrisy behind the 'glory' of war. There is nothing glorious about it: many innocent lives are lost.
- Many young people are forced to join the armed forces and go to war, where they are then driven to a premature death, against their wishes.
- The painful death of a soldier is glorified as the death of a martyr. The people at home think and speak highly of soldiers and their deaths on the battlefield.

F. TWENTIETH CENTURY POETRY

■ THOMAS STEARNS (T.H.) ELIOT (1888-1965)

Thomas Stearns Eliot was born in St. Louis, Missouri in 1888, and lived there during the first eighteen years of his life. He attended Harvard University. In 1910, he left the United States for the Sorbonne.

After a year in Paris, he returned to Harvard to pursue a doctorate in philosophy, but returned to Europe and settled in England in 1914. The following year, he married Vivienne Haigh-Wood and began working in London, first as a teacher, and later for Lloyd's Bank. In London, he met Ezra Pound who recognized his poetic genius and assisted him in the publication of *The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock* in a magazine in 1915. His first book of poems, *Prufrock and Other Observations*, was published in 1917. With the publication of *The Waste Land* in 1922, his reputation began to grow. He became a British citizen in 1927 and received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1948. He died in London in 1965.

■ WYSTAN HUGH (W.H.) AUDEN (1907-1973)

Wystan Hugh Auden was born in York in 1907 but moved to Birmingham during childhood and was educated at Christ Church, Oxford.

In 1928, his collection *Poems* was privately printed, but it wasn't until 1930, when another collection titled *Poems* was published, that Auden was established as the leading voice of a new generation.

He visited Germany, Iceland and China, served in the Spanish Civil war, and in 1939 moved to the United States and became an American citizen.

W. H. Auden served as a Chancellor of the Academy of American Poets from 1954 to 1973, and divided most of the second half of his life between residences in New York City and Austria. He died in Vienna on September 29, 1973.

■ TED HUGHES (1930-1998)

Ted Hughes was born in 1930 in Mytholmrod, West Riding of Yorkshire and grew up in Mexborough. He attended the Mexborough Grammar School and wrote his first poem when he was 15 years of age. He pursued formal education in English language after winning a scholarship, from the Cambridge University in 1948.

After his graduation from university, Hughes worked many jobs from a gardener to watchman, zoo attendant and a school teacher. He met the American poet Sylvia Plath and married her. Soon after in 1957, he published a book of poems by the name of *Hawk in the Rain*, which received instant acclamation.

In 1958, Hughes and Plath moved to America where Plath took up a teaching post at Smith College and Hughes started teaching at the University of Massachusetts. After some time,

they moved back to England where Hughes pursued his writing career with a renewed vigour, producing several articles and essays. His poems were published in many magazines. In 1962, an affair started between Hughes and Assia Wevill that ultimately led to his separation with Plath. Plath committed suicide in February 1963 leaving behind a devastated Hughes. In 1966, his popularity saw a downfall as he came under the severe attack of Plath's friends and feminists. An unfortunate incident occurred again in 1969 just as Hughes reputation was beginning to restore. Assia Wevill took her own life along with her 4-year-old daughter in March 1969. In 1970, Ted Hugh married Carol Orchard and their marriage lasted till his death in 1998.



Video Activity 2: The History of English: Anglo-Saxon

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7wuzQdQfVE#t=44>

Produced by: Open University

Uploaded: 01/01/2014

License: YouTube standard



1 Before watching the video answer the following questions.

- a. What do you know about the history of English?
- b. Who were the original inhabitants of England?
- c. Would you define English a Germanic or a Romanic language?



2 Now watch the video twice and complete the summary below.

After the left England, a lot of Germanic tribes invaded Britain. Among others there were the the and the The Romans did not leave much of their behind. The Anglo-Saxon was more because it consisted in words that referred to everyday, such as house,, etc. days of the week were named after Anglo-Saxon

Christian brought a lot of words related to Christianity. Some of these words were martyr, bishop, font.

The, who came later, brought words which were related to battle and action, like drag, ransack, thrust and die, and the phrase They brought about words to English.



3 The following passage provides further information about the history of the English language.

The English language belongs to the West Germanic branch of the Indo-European family of languages.

The history of the English language has traditionally been divided into three main periods: Old English (450-1100 AD), Middle English (1100-circa 1500 AD) and Modern English (since 1500). Over the centuries, the English language has been influenced by a number of other languages.

Old English (450-1100 AD). During the 5th Century AD three Germanic tribes (Saxons, Angles, and Jutes) came to the British Isles from various parts of northwest Germany as well as from Denmark. These tribes were **warlike** and pushed out most of the original Celtic-speaking inhabitants from England into Scotland, Wales, and Cornwall. One group migrated to the Brittany Coast of France where their descendants still speak the Celtic Language of Breton today. Through the years, the Saxons, Angles and Jutes mixed their different Germanic dialects. This group of dialects forms what linguists refer to as Old English or Anglo-Saxon. The word “English” comes from the Old English “Englisc”, and that derives from the name of the Angles. The Angles were named from Engle, their land of origin. Before the Saxons, the language spoken in what is now England was a mixture of Latin and various Celtic languages which were spoken before the Romans came to Britain (54-55 BC). The Romans brought Latin to Britain, which was part of the Roman Empire for over 400 years. Many of the words passed on from this era are those **coined** by Roman merchants and soldiers. These include *win* (wine), *candel* (candle), *belt* (belt), *weall* (wall).

The influence of Celtic upon Old English was **slight**. In fact, very few Celtic words have lived on in the English language. But many of place and river names have Celtic origins: Kent, York, Dover, Cumberland, Thames, Avon, Trent, Severn.

The arrival of St. Augustine in 597 and the introduction of Christianity into Saxon England brought more Latin words into the English language. They were mostly concerned with the naming of Church dignitaries, ceremonies, etc. Some, such as church, bishop, baptism, monk, eucharist and presbyter came indirectly through Latin from the Greek.

Around 878 AD, Danes and Norsemen, also called Vikings, invaded the country and English got many Norse words into the language, particularly in the north of England. The Vikings, being Scandinavian, spoke a language (Old Norse) which, in origin at least, was just as Germanic as Old English.

Middle English (1100-circa 1500 AD). After William the Conqueror, the Duke of Normandy, had invaded and conquered England in 1066 AD with his armies and had become king, he brought his nobles, who spoke French, to be the new government. The Old French **took over** as the language of the court, administration and culture. Latin was mostly used for written language, especially that of the Church. Meanwhile, the English language, as the language of the now lower class, was considered a vulgar tongue.

By about 1200, England and France **had split**. English changed a lot, because it was mostly being spoken instead of written for about 300 years. The use of Old English came back, but with many French words added. This language is called Middle English. Most of the words **embedded** in the English vocabulary are words of power, such as crown, castle, court, parliament, army, mansion, gown, beauty, banquet, art, poet, romance, duke, servant, peasant, traitor and governor. Because the English underclass cooked for the Norman upper class, the words for most domestic animals are English (ox, cow, calf, sheep, swine, deer) while the words for the meats derived from them are French (beef, veal, mutton, pork, bacon, venison).

Modern English (1500 to the present). Modern English developed after William Caxton established his printing press at Westminster Abbey in 1476. Johann Gutenberg invented the printing press in Germany around 1450, but Caxton set up England’s first press. The Bible and some valuable manuscripts were printed. The invention of the printing press made books available to more people. The books became cheaper and more people learnt to read. Printing also brought standardization to English.

By the time of Shakespeare’s writings (1592-1616), the language had become clearly recognizable as Modern English.

England began the Industrial Revolution (18th century) and this had also an effect on the development of the language as new words had to be invented or existing ones modified **to cope with** the rapid changes in technology. New technical words were added to the vocabulary as inventors designed various products and machinery.

Britain was an Empire for 200 years between the 18th and 20th centuries and English language continued to change as the British Empire moved across the world – to the USA, Australia, New Zealand, India, Asia and Africa. They sent people to **settle** and live in their conquered places and, as **settlers** interacted with **natives**, new words were added to the English vocabulary.

English continues to change and develop, with hundreds of new words arriving every year. But even with all the borrowings from many other languages, the very heart of the English language remains the Anglo-Saxon of Old English. The grammar of English is also distinctly Germanic – three genders (he, she and it) and a simple set of verb tenses. However, some linguists call English a Germanic language with a Romance vocabulary. Anglo-Saxon words are about 25% of modern English; about 60% of the words have a Latin origin, mostly through French after the Norman conquest in 1066 (the Normans, in fact, spoke French); the rest comes from various other languages.

GLOSSARY



to coin: invent	to settle: establish a colony in	to take (took-taken) over: assume control of
to cope with: deal effectively with something difficult	settler: person who settles in an area	warlike: hostile, disposed to war
embedded: incorporated	slight: not strong	
native: original inhabitant of a country	to split (split-split): to break	



Video Activity 3: The Canterbury Tales (revisited version of *California Dreamin'* by The Mamas and The Papas)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBa5nN_JyPk

Produced by: Crazy History Teachers. The video you are going to watch was produced by a group of History teachers who call their project “History for Music Lovers” (follow them on Twitter: @historyteacherz). The History Teachers create music videos of their favourite pop songs, replacing the original lyrics with lyrics based on classic books and historical figures. They get all dressed up and dance around. They have produced fifty videos so far. Click on or copy and paste the link below and enjoy their songs.

<http://www.youtube.com/user/historyteachers/videos>

Uploaded: 08/01/2010

License: YouTube standard



1

Before watching the video *The Canterbury Tales*, answer the following questions. If you do not know the answers, look for the section on *The Canterbury Tales* on this site.

- Why did Chaucer’s pilgrims go to Canterbury?
- What did they have to do on their way to and back from Canterbury?
- Where did they stop for the night before starting their journey?



2

Watch the video, enjoy it and answer the questions below.

- There is a mistake in the subtitles (it may happen on YouTube or the Internet...): what is the sentence that has to replace "Before they got underway" (which is not the correct script)?
- Which language did Chaucer use in the *Tales*?
 - Old English
 - Middle English
 - Modern English
- Who will decide which tale is the best?
- Which month does the pilgrimage take place?
- Which pilgrims does the song mention?
- What does the sentence "The writing is vernacular" mean?

UNIT 2 - THE NOVEL

DANIEL DEFOE (1660-1731)

Daniel Defoe's early life was not easy. He was born about 1660 in London to a poor, but hard-working butcher who was, in addition, a **Dissenter** from the Church of England. Because of his father's religious position, Daniel was unable to attend traditional and prestigious schools such as Oxford and Cambridge. Instead, he had to attend a Dissenting Academy, where he studied science and the humanities, preparing to become a Presbyterian minister. However, after a short apprenticeship, he decided to set up his own **haberdashery** shop in a fashionable section of London. Defoe believed in religious freedom and over the next three years published several pamphlets protesting against the King's policies.

In 1662, the economic boom, which had

created many rich men and increased employment, suddenly collapsed. Foreign trade came to a sudden halt when war was declared with France, and Defoe was among the many whose fortunes disappeared. Then, after several years of trying to pay off his debts, he found himself imprisoned in **Newgate** for three months owing to the publication of a particularly sharp political satire. When he was released, his money had gone, his family was **destitute** and his own health had deteriorated.

In 1719, Defoe finished and published *Robinson Crusoe*, a long, imaginative literary work. Other novels soon followed, in addition to his multitude of articles and essays. But debts still **plagued** him and he died at 70, hiding in a **boarding house**, trying to evade a **bill collector**.

GLOSSARY



bill collector: official whose duty is to collect taxes

boarding house: private house where people pay for accommodation and meals

destitute: with no money, food, home or possessions

Dissenter: Christian who separated from the Church of England.

haberdashery: shop selling articles for sewing (eg, needles, pins, cotton, buttons)

Newgate: prison in London, originally at the site of Newgate,

a gate in the Roman London Wall. Extended and rebuilt many times, the prison remained in use for over 700 years, from 1188 to 1902.

to plague: to cause pain or trouble to someone/something over a period of time

● Robinson Crusoe (1719)

PLOT OVERVIEW

Robinson Crusoe is a young man who lives with his parents; they advise him to choose a **suitable** career such as the law, but Crusoe is attracted by a different kind of life, a life at sea. On 1 September 1651, Hull, a friend of Crusoe's, invites him on a trip on a ship going to London. They are caught in a great storm and Crusoe is so scared that he promises himself that he will give up his dreams and obey his parents.

Once the storm is over and they reach the coast, Crusoe soon forgets his promise and decides to set sail to Guinea. He also goes on a second voyage to Guinea, but this time is captured by **Moorish** pirates and sold as a slave in North Africa. After some time, equipped with a gun and some provisions, Crusoe escapes in a little boat with another slave, named Xury. Sailing, Crusoe is aware of the **threats** of the unknown West African coast, inhabited by wild animals and savage tribes.

Fortunately, Crusoe and Xury are rescued by a Portuguese ship **heading** to Brazil. There, Crusoe buys a sugar cane plantation, but **manpower** is needed to work the plantation, so he sails on a ship to Guinea in order to get slaves for his plantation.

Near the Caribbean islands, a violent storm **lashes** the ship, which is driven off course and finally **sinks**. Crusoe manages to reach the coast of a desert island, but is the only survivor. After an initial examination of the land, Crusoe is able to rescue some **provisions** from the **wrecked** ship: **muskets**, pistols, gunpowder, food, clothes, ink, paper, tools, bibles, two cats and a dog. He builds a hut to shelter from the tropical climate and to store all his provisions safely. He keeps a calendar, writes his experiences in a diary and teaches a parrot some words.

Initially, Crusoe hunts goats and turtles to eat. Later, he explores the island deeply and finds some other types of food.

One day, Crusoe sees land on the horizon, so he builds a small canoe and heads towards the land over the open sea, but nearly drowns.

One day, after twelve years of solitude on the island, Crusoe discovers footprints on the shore. Then he finds the remains of human bones. The idea of cannibals obsesses him – he can hear the cannibals' rituals taking place periodically on the island.

A couple of years later, a Spanish ship sinks near the island. There are no survivors, but the ship supplies Crusoe with fresh new provisions.

One night, Crusoe dreams that he saves a savage from death in a cannibal ritual and, in fact, as if the dream had been an omen, this is what then happens. The savage is given the name Friday and becomes Crusoe's servant. Crusoe teaches him English, the principles of Christianity, and civilised habits. Friday reveals to Crusoe that the cannibals have Spanish prisoners.

The cannibals visit the island again. Among their prisoners is a Spaniard and Friday's father, who Crusoe and Friday succeed in **rescuing** by shooting at the cannibals.

The Spaniard tells Crusoe that his compatriots live with Friday's tribe. After it is agreed that Crusoe will be the leader, a plan to rescue them is set up.

Meanwhile, some English **mutineers** arrive at the island to leave behind the captain of their ship and two **crew** members. Crusoe meets the three and together they make a strategic plan to retake the ship from the mutineers.

Eventually, after twenty years on the desert island, Crusoe returns to England with Friday. Crusoe is now a rich man, thanks mostly to his Brazilian plantations. In his last days, his adventurous spirit takes him to the East Indies as a tradesman and he also revisits his island, although in the end he returns to England.

GLOSSARY



<p>crew: all the people working on a ship</p> <p>to head: to move in a particular direction</p> <p>to lash: to hit something with great force</p> <p>manpower: power of the number of workers needed for a particular job</p>	<p>Moorish: North-African Arab people</p> <p>muskets: old guns</p> <p>mutineer: participant in armed rebellion against authority (especially by sailors)</p> <p>provisions: supplies of food and drink</p>	<p>to rescue: to save from a dangerous or harmful situation</p> <p>to sink: to go down to the bottom</p> <p>suitable: appropriate</p> <p>threat: indication of possible trouble, danger or disaster</p> <p>wrecked: destroyed or badly damaged</p>
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THEMES

Many of the important themes in *Robinson Crusoe* are embodied in the title and in his interaction with Friday. Through the story of Crusoe's sojourn on the island, Defoe comments on several social and philosophical concepts. The novel is an allegory for **progression from spiritual alienation to salvation**, in that Crusoe's life moves from rebellion to punishment to conversion and finally to being saved. But *Robinson Crusoe* is also an economic document, with its focus on **the taming of a wild environment**, its **portrayal** of Crusoe as a man who keeps a careful record of his projects and **crops**, and its **depiction** of **the colonial impulse in Crusoe's education of Friday**. Furthermore, Crusoe's journal contains several passages in which he reflects on time and **labour** and the acquisition of material possessions.

GLOSSARY



<p>crop: plant or plant product grown by a farmer</p> <p>depiction: description</p> <p>labour: physical work</p> <p>portrayal: depiction, description</p> <p>taming: act of making less wild or difficult to control</p>

JONATHAN SWIFT (1667-1745)

Jonathan Swift was an author, journalist and political activist best known for his satirical novel *Gulliver's Travels* and satirical essay on the Irish famine, *A Modest Proposal*.

Born of English parents in Dublin, Ireland, he studied at Kilkenny Grammar School and Trinity College in Dublin. The abdication of King James II drove him to England. During his time there, Swift realized his great talent for satire and wrote *A Tale of a Tub* and *The Battle of the Books*, published in 1704. When he returned to Ireland, Swift became a member of the Anglican clergy. During the reign of Queen Anne (1702-14), Swift began his political career as a member of the Whig political party, but in 1710 switched sides, becoming a Tory. Swift focused his time as a Tory on supporting their cause by writing long pamphlets and essays on religion and politics, continuing to satirize those with different views. In 1713, Swift was appointed Dean of St. Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin. When Queen Anne died in 1714, the Tories came under fire, so

Swift lost favour in England. He went back permanently to Ireland.

In 1724, Swift led Irish resistance against the continued English oppression. He wrote many public letters and political pieces with the purpose of rallying the people. One of his most famous essays, *A Modest Proposal*, satirically suggests that the Irish solve their problems of starvation and overpopulation by eating their children.

However, Swift is best known for *Gulliver's Travels*, a book of fantasy, satire and political allegory, much like his other shorter works. *Gulliver's Travels* was written in 1725 and published the year after. The book was a great success throughout the British Empire and it contributed to Swift's fame as a writer and social commentator.

For most of his life, Swift was a victim of Meniere's disease. When he was about 72, his disease began to keep him from his duties and social life, and he became withdrawn and deeply depressed. Swift died in October 1745 and was buried in St. Patrick's Cathedral.

GLOSSARY



to come (came-come) under fire: to be criticized

Dean: (in the Anglican Church) cleric of high rank

famine: extreme scarcity of food over a period of time in a region

Meniere's disease: disorder of the inner ear affecting hearing and balance

pamphlet: thin book with a paper cover, with information on a particular subject

to rally: to come together or bring people together to help or support a cause

starvation: condition of suffering or death caused by lack of food

Tory: member or supporter of the British Conservative party

Whig: in Britain in the past, member of progressive reform party (later, the Liberal Party)

withdrawn: introverted

● *Gulliver's Travels* (1726)

PLOT OVERVIEW

In *Gulliver's Travels*, Gulliver sets out on four separate voyages. Each journey is preceded by a storm. All four voyages bring new perspectives to Gulliver's life and new opportunities for satirizing English society.

The first voyage is to Lilliput, where Gulliver is huge and the Lilliputians are small. At first, the Lilliputians seem amiable but the reader soon sees them for the ridiculous and petty creatures they are. Gulliver is convicted of treason for "making water" in the capital (even though he was putting out a fire and saving countless lives).

The second voyage is to Brobdingnag, a land of Giants where Gulliver seems as small as

the Lilliputians were to him. Gulliver is afraid, but his **keepers** are surprisingly gentle. He is humiliated by the King when he is made to see the difference between how England is and how it could be. Gulliver realizes how revolting he must have seemed to the Lilliputians. Gulliver's third voyage is to Laputa and neighboring Luggnagg and Glubdugdribb. In a visit to the island of Glubdugdribb, Gulliver is able to **call up** the dead and discovers the **deceptions** of history. In Laputa, the people are **over-thinkers** and ridiculous in other ways. He also meets the Stuldrugs, an immortal race. Gulliver discovers that they are miserable. His fourth voyage is to the land of the Houyhnhnms, who are very intelligent horses. Their rational, clean and simple society is contrasted with the brutality of the Yahoos, beasts in human shape. Gulliver reluctantly comes to recognize their human **vices**. Gulliver stays with the Houyhnhnms for several years and likes them so much that he never wants to leave. When he is told that the time has come for him to leave the island, Gulliver **faints** from **grief**. On returning to England, he feels disgusted about other humans, including his own family.

GLOSSARY



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • amiable: pleasant, friendly and easy to like • to call up: to communicate with • deception: (here) trick, making something false seem true • to faint: to suddenly become unconscious for a short time, usually falling down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • grief: feeling of great sadness • keeper: (here) person who looks after a guest or a prisoner • "making water": urinating • over-thinker: person who thinks too much about something before actually doing it • petty: (here) with narrow minds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to put (put-put) out: to extinguish • vice: evil or immoral behaviour or quality in somebody's character
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THEMES

Gulliver's Travels implicitly poses **the question of whether physical power or moral righteousness should be the governing factor in social life**. Gulliver experiences the advantages of physical strength both as one who has it, as a giant in Lilliput, and as one who does not have it, as a miniature visitor to Brobdingnag, where he is **harassed** by the hugeness of everything from insects to pets. His first encounter with another society is one of **entrapment**, when he is physically **tied down** by the Lilliputians; later, in Brobdingnag, he is enslaved by a farmer. He also observes physical force used against others, such as the Houyhnhnms' enslaving the Yahoos.

Like many narratives about voyages to non-existent lands, *Gulliver's Travels* explores **the idea of utopia – an imaginary model of the ideal community**. The idea of a utopia is an ancient one, going back at least as far as the description in Plato's *Republic* of a city-state governed by the wise, and expressed most famously in English by Thomas More's *Utopia*. Swift refers to both works in his own narrative, though his attitude toward utopia is much more sceptical, and one of the main aspects he **points out** about famous historical utopias is the tendency to privilege the collective group over the individual.

GLOSSARY



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • entrapment: condition of being in a trap • to harass: to constantly annoy, torment or disturb • to point out: to direct attention to something 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • righteousness: being without guilt or sin • to tie down: to attach to a flat surface by using string, rope, etc.
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SAMUEL RICHARDSON (1689-1761)

English novelist **Samuel Richardson** was one of the pioneers of novel writing. His books, called “epistolary novels”, are written in the form of a series of letters.

Samuel Richardson was the son of a woodworker. He was born in Mackworth, Derbyshire in 1689; the actual birth date is unknown, but he was baptized on August 19, 1689. He began his career as apprentice to a printer. At 32, he set up a business of his own. Like many printers at that time, he was also a bookseller and publisher. A hard working man, Richardson became prosperous.

In the 1730s, Richardson began writing pamphlets. When he was 52, he published his first book, *Letters to and for Particular Friends* (often called *Familiar Letters*). He developed the idea with a purpose of teaching and helping uneducated people write their own letters, also giving advice on moral and social behaviour.

He then expanded the idea into his first

novel, *Pamela: or Virtue Rewarded*, which was also published when he was 52.

Pamela is about the story of a young girl, a servant, who falls in love with a man who tries to seduce her. She preserves her virtue and eventually he marries her. The book was immensely popular. To prevent other writers continuing the story, he immediately wrote *Pamela in Her Exalted Condition*. Not everyone liked the character of Pamela. His fellow author and friend, Henry Fielding, was quick to parody Pamela by writing a comic version of the novel, called *Shamela*, that made fun of her virtuousness. Richardson never forgave his friend for this.

Richardson’s third novel, *Clarissa: or the History of a Young Lady*, also written as a series of letters, is considered one of the longest novels ever written.

Samuel Richardson died on July 4, 1761, at the age of 71.

HENRY FIELDING (1707-1754)

Henry Fielding was born in 1707 to Lieutenant George Fielding and his wife Sarah, who was herself the daughter of nobility. Fielding lost his mother in 1718, and his father remarried just a year later. That same year Fielding began his education at Eton.

Fielding absorbed vast quantities of Greek and Latin and **pursued** a career in drama. His first play, *Love in Several Masques*, was produced in February of 1728 at the Drury Lane Theatre, with encouraging results. Fielding would go on to write over twenty plays and farces, the most successful of which was *The Tragedy of Tragedies, or The Life and Death of Tom Thumb the Great*. In the meantime, however, Fielding spent some time between 1728 and 1729 in Holland at the University of Leyden as a law student.

Fielding's life took a major turn in 1734 with his marriage to Charlotte Cradock. Fielding finished his study of the law, and in 1740 was called to the **bar**. He began to earn a living as a **barrister**, **supplementing** this work with extensive writings for political journals such as *The Champion* and later, the *Jacobite's Journal*.

Fielding's first major novel, *The Adventures of Joseph Andrews and His Friend, Mr. Abraham Adams*, was published in 1742. The novel was conceived as a satire of the popular novel *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded*

by Fielding's rival Samuel Richardson, but its characters and plot developed independently of that text.

The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling was published in 1749. Almost every aspect of Fielding's own life is apparent in the novel. In this same year, Fielding was **appointed** magistrate for Middlesex. Although he had satirized the law and lawmakers throughout his career as a dramatist and novelist, Fielding appears to have been an exemplary magistrate. As evidenced by *Tom Jones*, Fielding was also extremely interested in English politics, particularly in the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745, when the displaced Stuart family attempted to restore themselves to the throne by **ousting** George II.

Fielding published his last novel, *Amelia*, in 1751. Although it is considered inferior to Fielding's two earlier novels, *Amelia* was an immediate commercial success, and Fielding's own favourite among his writings.

His health was rapidly deteriorating and Fielding's doctor advised him to avoid England's bad weather; so Fielding decided to go to Portugal. Fielding left England in the summer of 1754 and documented his final travels in what would be published posthumously as *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*. Henry Fielding died on October 8 of the same year, in Junqueira, near Lisbon.

GLOSSARY



to appoint: assign a job or role to (someone)

bar: the profession of barrister

barrister: person called to the bar and entitled to practise as an advocate, particularly in the higher courts.

to oust: expel

to pursue: follow

to supplement: add an extra element or amount to

HORACE WALPOLE (1717-1797)

Horace Walpole, fourth Earl of Oxford, son of Sir Robert Walpole, introduced and named the Gothic Novel with *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (1764).

Educated at Eton and King's College Cambridge, between 1739 and 1741 Horace Walpole toured France and Italy with his friend, the poet Thomas Gray (1716-71). On his return to England, Walpole became a Member of Parliament

Shortly after taking up his seat, Walpole leased (1747) and then bought (1749) Strawberry Hill in Twickenham, London. Following his purchase, Strawberry Hill was remodelled in Gothic style, something resembling the set for a horror movie.

It was the Gothic atmosphere of Strawberry Hill that led to the writing of *The Castle of Otranto*. One night, in early June 1764, Walpole fell asleep in the gloom of Strawberry Hill and had a nightmare. The nightmare became *The Castle of Otranto*. It was a 'translation' of a lost manuscript, which was not unusual for the genre.

The Castle of Otranto inspired Mathew Lewis (1775-1818) to write *The Monk* (1796), as he noted in a letter to his mother 'a romance in the style of *The Castle of Otranto*'. Ann Radcliffe may have been influenced by Walpole's novel, as was Mary Shelley (1797-1851).

Other works by Walpole include *Catalogue of Royal and Noble Authors of England* (1758), *Mysterious Mother* (1768), *Historical Doubts on the Life and Reign of Richard the Third* (1768), *Anecdotes of Painting in England* in four volumes (1762-71).

At Strawberry Hill Walpole established the *Strawberry Hill Press*. One of the writers whose works he published was the poet Thomas Gray. Walpole is also known for his prodigious correspondence, amounting to some 3,000 letters.

Walpole succeeded his nephew as the fourth Earl of Oxford (1791). Six years later, he died unmarried at his home in Berkeley Square (1797).

● *The Castle of Otranto* (1765)

PLOT OVERVIEW

The Castle of Otranto is considered the first Gothic novel, a genre that loves melodrama, mystery, hidden places, ancestral **curse**s and **fainting** heroines. When *The Castle of Otranto* was first published, it was said to be a translation of a lost medieval transcript and received positive attention. But when it was next published, the truth was revealed – the story was quite modern. The critics then became unfavourable, but it survives today as the first Gothic literary novel.

The only son of Manfred, Lord of Otranto, is **crushed** to death by a mysterious giant helmet falling on him moments before his wedding. Connecting this event to a prophecy that the castle will pass from his line, Manfred resolves to banish his wife to a convent and marry his son Conrad's intended bride, Isabella. But his desire to produce an heir has tragic consequences, proving the severe moral that "the sins of fathers are visited on their children".

The Castle of Otranto is a little over the top. It is almost as though Walpole was writing a parody of the very genre he was creating. It contains all the set pieces of Gothic fiction, e.g. the crumbling Gothic castle; frightened Isabella, fleeing through a long subterranean passage, has almost become the trade-mark of the horror movie.

GLOSSARY



to crush: deform, pulverize, or force inwards by compressing forcefully

curse: solemn utterance intended to invoke a supernatural power to inflict harm or punishment on someone or something

to faint: lose consciousness for a short time

THEMES

There is no doubt that in *The Castle of Otranto*, Manfred **mistreats the women** in his life. When Conrad dies, Manfred demands a divorce from his current wife Hippolita and then tells Isabella that he will marry her to produce an heir, no matter what she wishes. This is a vile act on Manfred's part, as Hippolita has just watched her son die, and Isabella has lost her future husband. Manfred lowers himself even further as his daughter Matilda is traded away in an attempt to win the hand of Isabella.

In *The Castle of Otranto*, there are three very different **relationships between fathers and their children** and the way in which the fathers react when their children are endangered. Manfred the King is Conrad's father, however, when Conrad is crushed beneath the giant helmet, Manfred is too worried about finding another heir **to mourn** Conrad's death. However, Friar Jerome works diligently to save Theodore from certain death at Manfred's hand and, in the end, is rewarded by learning that Thomas is actually Manfred's son.

GLOSSARY



to mistreat: treat badly

to mourn: feel or show sorrow for the death of (someone)

MARY SHELLEY (1797-1851)

Mary Shelley was born in Somers Town, London, to well-known parents: author and feminist Mary Wollstonecraft and philosopher William Godwin. Unfortunately, her mother died soon after giving birth to Mary, who was therefore raised by her father and a **resented** stepmother.

When Mary was sixteen, she met the young poet Percy Bysshe Shelley. Together

with Mary's stepsister, they travelled around continental Europe. In 1816, they went abroad again, this time spending the summer with Lord Byron and his friend Polidori in Geneva. At Byron's suggestion that they should all write a horror story, Mary conceived the idea of 'Frankenstein', the only story of the four that was ever published as a novel.

● *Frankenstein* (1818)

PLOT OVERVIEW

An English explorer, Robert Walton, was on an expedition to the North Pole. One day they rescued a nearly frozen man, Victor Frankenstein, who told Walton the story of his life.

Victor grew up in Geneva and was brought up with an orphan, Elizabeth, but also had two younger brothers. He did not have many friends, Henry Clerval being the only exception. Victor became interested in natural philosophy, electricity, chemistry and mathematics and left for Ingolstadt, Germany, to attend university. There, he was particularly fascinated with the principle of life. After four years of intense study, he was able to "**bestow** animation upon lifeless matter" and created a monster of gigantic proportions from assembled body parts taken from graveyards and **dissecting rooms**. As soon as the creature opened its eyes, however, Victor realised he had made a mistake in creating this monster and fled from his

laboratory. On his return the next day, the monster had disappeared. Victor spent the next months suffering from nervous fever, but was assisted by his friend Clerval. On the **eve** of the return to his parental home, he received a letter informing him that his youngest brother had been found murdered. On his way home, Victor saw the monster he had created and immediately realised that it was responsible for his brother's death. As he arrived home, he was informed that his brother's murderer had been found. The accused person was Justine, a good friend of the family, who was found guilty and **hanged**. Full of grief, Victor could not stay in the house and started wandering in the Alpine valleys, where he met his creation and heard his story.

After leaving Victor's laboratory, the monster went to the village, where he was insulted and attacked by the frightened villagers. He eventually went to the country and found refuge next to a small house inhabited by an old, blind man and his two children. By observing the family and looking through their books, the monster learnt how to speak and read. He felt compassion for the family and anonymously helped them. Then he decided to meet them. He was talking with the blind man when the children returned unexpectedly. Horrified by his appearance, they beat him and he ran away. The monster was filled with rage and decided to find his creator. By chance he met Victor's younger brother in the forest, and on as soon as he discovered the boy's identity, he killed him. He also placed the boy's **locket** in the **lap** of a sleeping young girl, Justine, thus incriminating her with his crime. The monster asked Victor to create another being: a female to accompany him. If Victor accepted, he and his **bride** would stay away from other people. Victor agreed to do as asked and left for England to finish his work, accompanied by his friend Clerval, promising to marry Elizabeth on his return. When the work on his second creation was advanced, he started to **question** his promise, being afraid that the two creations might hate each other or produce a whole race of monsters, so he destroyed his work. When the monster learned about this, he **swore** revenge and promised to be with Victor on his wedding night. The following day, a body was found and Victor was accused of murder. He was taken to the body, which he identified as that of Henry Clerval. He was eventually **cleared of all charges** and returned to Geneva, where he married Elizabeth. Victor was convinced that he would be killed on his wedding night, but the monster killed Elizabeth instead. It was now Victor who wanted revenge. He **pursued** the monster everywhere, which eventually **led** him to the Arctic region where Victor was taken aboard Walton's ship.

After telling Walton his story, Victor asked him to kill the monster if he died before he could do it himself. After Victor died, Walton found the monster standing over Victor's body. Because of all the murders he had committed, the monster now hated himself and disappeared into the Arctic darkness.

GLOSSARY



to beat (beat-beaten): to hit repeatedly	lap: area between the knees and the hips of a person
to bestow: to present as a gift or honour	to lead (led-led): to take
bride: woman who has just married or is about to be married	locket: small case, often containing a miniature portrait, worn on a chain around the neck
to clear of charges: to be declared innocent	to pursue: to follow in order to capture or overtake
dissecting rooms: rooms where dead bodies are cut apart for scientific research or legal reasons.	to question: to have or express doubts about something
eve: day or evening before an event	resented: greatly disliked
to hang (hanged-hanged): to execute by suspending by the neck	to swear (swore-sworn): to promise or solemnly declare

THEMES

At the heart of *Frankenstein* is **the pursuit of knowledge**: Victor attempts to go beyond human limits and access the secret of life; Robert Walton tries to surpass current limits of human exploration and reach the North Pole. This pursuit of knowledge **proves** dangerous, as Victor's act of creation eventually results in the destruction of everyone he loves, and Walton finds himself trapped in ice. While Victor's obsessive **hatred** of the monster drives him to his death, Walton learns from Victor's example how destructive the thirst for knowledge can be. **The sublime natural world**, embraced by Romanticism (late 18th to mid-19th century) as a source of emotional experience for the individual, initially offers the characters the possibility of spiritual renewal. In depression and remorse after the deaths of William and Justine, for which he feels responsible, Victor wanders in the mountains to lift his spirits. **Likewise**, after a winter of cold and abandonment, the monster feels his heart lighten as spring arrives. The influence of nature on **mood** is evident throughout the novel. At the end, as Victor chases the monster obsessively, nature, in the form of the Arctic desert, functions simply as the symbolic backdrop for his struggle against the monster. Obviously, **monstrosity** pervades the entire novel. Eight feet tall and extremely ugly, the monster is rejected by society. However, his monstrosity results not only from his grotesque appearance but also from the unnatural manner of his creation, which involves animation of a mix of stolen body parts and strange chemicals. He is not a product of collaborative scientific effort but of dark, supernatural workings.

GLOSSARY



- **hatred**: very strong dislike
- **likewise**: in a similar way
- **mood**: state of mind or predominant emotion
- **to prove**: to turn out to be
- **pursuit**: (here) process of trying to reach something

JANE AUSTEN (1775-1817)

Jane Austen was an English novelist whose works of romantic fiction, set among the country gentry, earned her a place as one of the most widely read writers in English literature.

She was born on December 16, 1775, to Rev. George Austen and Cassandra Leigh in Steventon, Hampshire, the seventh of eight children. Like the central characters in most of her novels, the Austens were a large family of respectable **lineage** but no fortune; her father supplemented his “living” – his **clergyman’s** income – by farming.

In 1801, Rev. Austen retired and the family moved to Bath, perhaps so that the still-unmarried Jane and Cassandra might have a better chance of meeting men. Although

she never married, Jane had several romantic **liaisons**.

After her father’s death in 1805, the family moved to Southampton, and in 1809 her **wealthy** brother Edward was able to install Jane, Cassandra and their mother in a “pretty cottage” back in Hampshire.

She was a writer from her teens until her death, although hardly anyone outside her immediate family knew it, since all her novels were published anonymously. Her identity became known only after her death. From 1809 on, Austen lived happily with her mother and sister, her time employed in writing. Her fatal illness, then thought to be **consumption**, now known to be Addison’s Disease, first appeared in 1816. She died the following year.

GLOSSARY



clergyman: male priest or minister in the Christian Church

consumption: archaic name for pulmonary tuberculosis

liaison: connection

lineage: one’s ancestors or family line

wealthy: rich

● *Pride and Prejudice* (1813)

PLOT OVERVIEW

The novel’s plot is based on the Bennet family, who are country gentry. It is set at Longbourn, a small country village in Hertfordshire, where Mr and Mrs Bennet live with their five daughters, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Lydia and Kitty. One day a rich **bachelor**, Charles Bingley, and his two sisters rent Netherfield Park, a large estate in the neighbourhood. After a series of balls and parties that bring the members of this little society together, Mr Bingley falls in love with Jane. His best friend, aristocratic Fitzwilliam Darcy, begins to feel attracted to Elizabeth. But she dislikes him because of his snobbish behaviour and because she considers him responsible for the separation of Bingley and Jane. When Mr Darcy declares his love, he cannot help showing **contempt** for her inferior social position, so Elizabeth rejects him and accuses him of separating her sister and Bingley, and of ill-treating George Wickham, a young officer who was the son of Darcy’s former steward. Darcy writes her a letter where he reveals that Wickham is an unscrupulous adventurer. Meanwhile Wickham **elopes** with Lydia; Darcy finds them and provides for their marriage. Elizabeth realizes that she was mistaken about Darcy and accepts his renewed proposal, in spite of the opposition from Lady Catherine de Bourgh, Darcy’s arrogant aunt. Bingley comes back and becomes **engaged to** Jane, so the novel ends with the happy marriages of the two couples.

GLOSSARY



bachelor: unmarried man

contempt: attitude of regarding someone or something as inferior or without value

to elope: to go away secretly to get married

engaged to: having agreed to marry somebody

THEMES

Pride and Prejudice contains one of the most famous **love stories** in English literature: the **courtship** between Darcy and Elizabeth. As in any good love story, the lovers must overcome numerous obstacles. Elizabeth's pride makes her **misjudge** Darcy on the basis of a poor first impression, while Darcy's prejudice against Elizabeth's poor social **standing** does not allow him to see, **for a time**, her many virtues. In each case, anxieties about social connections, or the desire for better ones, interfere with the workings of love. Darcy and Elizabeth's realization of a mutual and tender love implies that Austen views love as something independent of social forces and which can be reached only when an individual is able to escape the effects of hierarchical society. Austen also shows another more realistic view about love, with the character of Charlotte Lucas, who marries Mr Collins for his money, to demonstrate that marriage is not always a question of the heart.

Pride and Prejudice **depicts** a society in which a woman's **reputation** is very important. A woman is expected to behave in certain ways, and **stepping** outside the social norms makes her vulnerable to **ostracism**. This theme appears in the novel when Elizabeth walks to Netherfield and arrives with **muddy** skirts, shocking the reputation-conscious Miss Bingley and her friends. At other points, Mrs Bennet's **ill-mannered**, ridiculous behaviour gives her a bad reputation with the more refined Darcys and Bingleys. Austen makes gentle fun of the snobs in these examples but later in the novel, when Lydia lives with Wickham out of wedlock, the author treats reputation as a very serious matter.

The theme of **class** is related to reputation, both of which reflect the nature of life for the middle and upper classes in **Regency** England. The lines of class are strictly **drawn**. While the middle-class Bennets may socialize with the upper-class Bingleys and Darcys, they are clearly their social inferiors and are treated as such. Austen satirizes this kind of class-consciousness, particularly in the character of Mr Collins, who spends most of his time **toadying** to his upper-class patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Of course, this whole discussion of class must be made with the understanding that Austen herself is often criticized as being a classist: she doesn't really represent anyone from the lower classes. Austen criticizes class structure, but only a limited **slice** of that structure.

GLOSSARY



courtship: period in a couple's relationship before engagement or marriage

to depict: to describe

to draw (drew-drawn): (here) to make clear

for a time: for a short period

ill-mannered: impolite, discourteous, rude

to misjudge: to form a wrong opinion about a person or situation

muddy: covered in mud, like after walking across fields in the rain

ostracism: act of deliberately excluding someone from a group

Regency: period from 1811-1820, when the Prince of Wales ruled, since his father, King George III, was unfit to do so

slice: part

standing: status or reputation within a group of people or an organization

to step: to move in a particular direction

to toady: to praise and help a more powerful person in order to gain their favour or help

MOVING
DEEPER**Background of the Novel of Manners**

Changes in English society in the 19th century that eroded the **boundaries** between the various groups provided the background for the novel of manners. Industrialization, urbanization, and revolutions in transportation and communication were accompanied by profound changes in the social hierarchy. As the aristocracy lost power to industrial and business interests, the standard **markers** for determining an individual's position in society were becoming increasingly unreliable. In some sense, the Novel of Manners emerged to clear up this uncertainty by offering detailed **renderings** of how the various groups behaved in everyday situations, and by both describing and prescribing codes of conduct. Many works contrasted the customs of the various groups, examining not only class and economic differences, but also the differences between city and countryside, between an earlier agrarian culture and a contemporary industrial order.

GLOSSARY



- **boundary:** a real or imagined line that marks the edge or limit of something
- **marker:** indicator
- **renderings:** representations

CHARLES DICKENS (1812-1870)

Charles Dickens was born in Portsmouth on 7 February 1812, to John and Elizabeth Dickens. The good fortune of being sent to school at the age of nine was cut short because his father was sent to Marshalsea prison, London, because of his debts. The rest of the family, apart from Charles, later joined him there, as was the practice at the time. Charles was sent to work in a factory and **endured** hard conditions as well as loneliness and **despair**. After three years, he returned to school, but his experiences were never forgotten and became **fictionalised** in novels such as *David Copperfield* and *Great Expectations*.

Like many others, he began his literary career as a journalist. His own father became a reporter and Charles began with the journals “The Mirror of Parliament” and “The True Sun”. Then, in 1833, he became a parliamentary journalist for “The Morning Chronicle”. With new contacts in the press he was able to publish a series

of **sketches** under the pseudonym ‘Boz’. In April 1836, he married Catherine Hogarth, daughter of George Hogarth, who edited ‘Sketches by Boz’. In the same month came the publication of his highly successful *Pickwick Papers*.

As well as a long list of novels, he edited weekly periodicals, including “Household Words” and “All Year Round”, wrote travel books and administered charitable organisations. He was also a theatre enthusiast, wrote plays, and performed before Queen Victoria in 1851. He spent much time abroad – for example, lecturing against slavery in the United States and touring Italy accompanied by his close friends, artist Augustus Egg and writer Wilkie Collins.

In 1858, he separated from his wife Catherine, mother of their ten children, but maintained relations with his **mistress**, the actress Ellen Ternan. Dickens died of a **stroke** in 1870 and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

GLOSSARY



despair: feeling of having lost all hope
to endure: to experience and deal with pain or suffering, especially without complaining
fictionalised: transformed into fiction

mistress: long-term female lover and companion, especially to a married man

sketch: short story

stroke: serious illness caused when a blood vessel in the brain suddenly breaks or is blocked

● *Oliver Twist* (1838)

PLOT OVERVIEW

Oliver Twist is born in a workhouse in 1830s England. His mother, whose name no one knows, is found in the street and dies just after Oliver’s birth. Oliver spends the first nine years of his life in a badly-run home for young orphans and is then transferred to a **workhouse** for adults. After the other boys bully Oliver into asking for more food at the end of a meal, Mr Bumble, the parish **beadle**, offers five pounds to anyone who will take the boy away from the workhouse. Oliver narrowly escapes being **apprenticed** to a **brutish chimney sweep** and is eventually apprenticed to a local **undertaker**, Mr Sowerberry. When the undertaker’s other apprentice, Noah Claypole, insults Oliver’s mother, Oliver attacks him. Desperate, Oliver runs away at dawn and travels toward London.

Outside London, Oliver, starved and exhausted, meets Jack Dawkins, a boy his own age. Jack offers him **shelter** in the London house of his benefactor, Fagin. It turns out that Fagin is a career criminal who trains orphan boys to **pickpocket** for him. After a few days of training,

Oliver is sent on a pick-pocketing mission with two other boys. When he sees them steal a handkerchief from an elderly gentleman, Oliver is horrified and runs off. He is caught but narrowly escapes being convicted of the theft. Mr Brownlow, the man whose handkerchief was stolen, takes the feverish Oliver to his home and cures him. Mr Brownlow is surprised by Oliver's resemblance to a portrait of a young woman that hangs in his house. Oliver thrives in Mr Brownlow's home, but two young adults in Fagin's gang, Bill Sikes and his lover Nancy, capture Oliver and return him to Fagin.

Fagin sends Oliver to assist Sikes in a burglary. Oliver is shot by a servant of the house and, after Sikes escapes, is taken in by the women who live there, Mrs Maylie and her beautiful adopted niece Rose. They like Oliver and he spends an idyllic summer with them in the countryside.

But Fagin and a mysterious man named Monks are determined to recapture Oliver. Meanwhile, it is revealed that Oliver's mother left behind a gold locket when she died. Monks obtains and destroys the locket. When the Maylies come to London, Nancy meets secretly with Rose and informs her of Fagin's intentions, but a member of Fagin's gang overhears the conversation. When news of Nancy's disclosure reaches Sikes, he brutally murders her and goes to London. Pursued by his guilty conscience, he inadvertently hangs himself while trying to escape.

Mr Brownlow, with whom the Maylies have reunited Oliver, confronts Monks and discovers that Monks is Oliver's half brother. Their father, Mr Leeford, was unhappily married to a wealthy woman and had an affair with Oliver's mother, Agnes Fleming.

Monks has been pursuing Oliver to deprive him of his share of the family inheritance. Mr Brownlow forces Monks to sign over Oliver's share to Oliver. Moreover, it is discovered that Rose is Agnes's younger sister, hence Oliver's aunt. Fagin is hung for his crimes.

In the end, Mr Brownlow adopts Oliver, and they and the Maylies retire to a peaceful existence in the countryside.

GLOSSARY



<p>affair: (here) adulterous relationship</p> <p>apprenticed: working for an employer for a fixed period of time to learn the skills needed for the trade or job</p> <p>beadle: ceremonial officer of a church, college, or similar institution</p> <p>brutish: unkind and violent</p> <p>burglary: crime of entering a building illegally and stealing things from it</p> <p>chimney sweep: person who cleans the inside of chimneys</p> <p>to convict: to decide and declare officially in a court that a person is guilty of a crime</p>	<p>to deprive: to prevent somebody from having or doing something,</p> <p>disclosure: act of making known or public something previously secret or private</p> <p>elderly: old</p> <p>feverish: with a fever</p> <p>to hang (hanged-hanged): execute by suspending by the neck</p> <p>locket: small case, often containing a miniature portrait, worn on a chain around the neck</p> <p>to overhear (overheard-overheard): to hear a conversation without intending to and without the speakers' knowledge</p>	<p>to pickpocket: to steal money, etc. from other people's pockets, especially in crowded places</p> <p>to pursue: to follow in order to capture or overtake</p> <p>share: part</p> <p>shelter: (here) refuge, a place to stay</p> <p>to thrive: to become, and continue to be, successful, strong, healthy, etc.</p> <p>undertaker: person who arranges funerals and prepares dead bodies for burial or cremation</p> <p>workhouse: (in Britain in the past) building where poor people were sent to live and work</p>
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THEMES

Much of the first part of *Oliver Twist* **challenges** the organizations of **charity** run by the church and the government in Dickens' time. The system Dickens describes was put into place by the Poor Law of 1834, which stipulated that the poor could only receive government assistance if they moved into government workhouses. Residents of those workhouses were essentially **inmates** whose rights were limited by heavy regulations. Labour was required, families were almost always separated and rations of food and clothing were scarce. The workhouses operated on the principle that poverty was the consequence of laziness and that the terrible conditions in the workhouse would inspire the poor to improve their situation. Yet the economic conditions of the Industrial Revolution made it impossible for many to do so, and the workhouses did not provide any means for their social or economic improvement. Furthermore, as Dickens points out, the officials who ran the workhouses violated the values they preached to the poor. Dickens describes with great sarcasm the greed, laziness and arrogance of **charitable** workers like Mr Bumble and Mrs Mann.

Throughout the novel, Dickens confronts the question of whether the **terrible environments** he depicts have the power to corrupt the soul and change it forever. By examining the **fates** of most of the characters, we can assume that his answer is that they do not. Certainly, characters like Sikes and Fagin seem to have **sustained** permanent damage to their moral sensibilities. Oliver is above any corruption, though the novel removes him from unhealthy environments relatively early in his life. Nancy, who though she considers herself "lost almost beyond redemption", ends up making the ultimate sacrifice for a child she **hardly** knows. In contrast, Monks, perhaps the novel's most inhuman villain, was brought up **amid** wealth and comfort. All the injustices and privations suffered by the poor in *Oliver Twist* occur in cities. When the Maylies take Oliver to the **countryside**, he discovers a "new existence". Country scenes have the potential to "purify our thoughts" and erase some of the **vices** that develop in the city. Oliver and his new family **settle** in a small village at the novel's end, as if a happy ending would not be possible in the city. Dickens's portrait of rural life in *Oliver Twist* is far less realistic than his portrait of urban life. This fact supports the general **estimation** of Dickens as a great urban writer. It is Dickens's distance from the countryside that allows him to idealize it.

GLOSSARY



amid: in the middle of, surrounded by
to challenge: to question
charitable: connected with a charity or charities
estimation: reputation
fate: destiny
hardly: almost not

inmate: person confined to a prison or mental hospital
to settle: go to live
to sustain: (here) to suffer, to experience something bad
vice: evil or immoral behaviour or quality in somebody's character



1

Listen to the following information about how people were classified in workhouses and their daily routines and fill in the blanks.

13 – 16 – bell – boys – breakfast – children – Christmas Day – classes – could – entered – girls – had – hour – husbands – living – married – meal – men – mothers – old – prayers – punished – reasonable – separated – silence – speak – stay – strictly – talk – under – weak – workhouse – years

Classification and Segregation

After 1834, people in workhouses were divided into seven or sections:

1. or weak men.
2. Strong, and young people over
3. over 7 years old and 13.
4. Old or women.
5. Strong women and over 16.
6. Girls over 7 old and under
7. Children under 7 years of age.

Each class its own area of the workhouse., wives and children were as soon as they the workhouse and could be if they tried to to one another. From 1847, couples over the age of sixty ask to stay in the same bedroom. under 7 could in the female areas and, from 1842, their could stay with them "at all times". Parents could also to their children "at some time in each day". The daily routine was the following:

	Time to get up	Interval for breakfast	Time to start work	Interval for dinner	Time to stop work	Interval for supper
25 March to 29 September	6 o'clock	From 6.30 to 7.00	7 o'clock	From 12.00 to 1.00	6 o'clock	6.00 to 7.00
29 September to 25 March	7 o'clock	From 7.30 to 8.00	8 o'clock	From 12.00 to 1.00	6 o'clock	6.00 to 7.00

Half an after the rang for getting up, the Master or Matron checked if everyone was present in each section of the The bell also announced breaks. During these breaks people had to keep ", order and decorum".

..... were read before and after supper every day; Mass was said every Sunday, Good Friday and

MOVING DEEPER

Workhouses

Three years before the publication of *Oliver Twist*, the British Parliament passed a controversial amendment to the nation's "Poor-Laws" stipulating that the poor could receive public assistance only if they resided in official workhouses and obeyed their regulations. In these workhouses, husbands were separated from wives, and living conditions were extremely bad.

The staff of a workhouse included a:

- Master
- Medical Officer
- Porter
- School-teacher
- Matron
- Chaplain

Workhouses provided almost everything that was needed onsite:

- dining-hall for eating
- school-rooms
- chapel
- tailors for making clothes
- small farm
- dormitories for sleeping
- nurseries
- bakery
- shoe-maker
- mortuary
- kitchen
- rooms for the sick
- laundry
- vegetable gardens
- surgery



2

Read the passage below from Chapter XXXII – describing Oliver’s stay in the countryside with Mrs. Maylie and Rose – and then the ‘Moving Deeper’, an in-depth analysis which describes urban living conditions during the Industrial Revolution. How do you think Oliver felt living in the countryside after leaving the city? Imagine you are Oliver and complete the sentences below.

CHAPTER XXXII

Who can describe the pleasure and delight, the peace of mind and soft tranquillity, the sickly boy felt in the **balmy** air and among the green hills and rich woods of an inland village! Who can tell how scenes of peace and quietude **sink** into the minds of **pain-worn dwellers** in close and noisy places, and carry their own freshness deep into their **jaded** hearts! Men who have lived in crowded, **pent-up** streets, through lives of **toil**, and who have never wished for change – men to whom **custom** has indeed been second nature, and who have come almost to love each brick and stone that formed the narrow **boundaries** of their daily walks – even they, with the hand of death upon them, have been known to **yearn** at last for one short **glimpse** of Nature’s face, and, carried far from the scenes of their old pains and pleasures, have seemed to pass at once into a new state of being.

GLOSSARY



- balmy:** mild and pleasant
- boundary:** limit
- custom:** (here) tradition
- dweller:** inhabitant
- glimpse:** rapid, incomplete look or view
- jaded:** (here) made dull through excess
- pain-worn:** having suffered too much pain
- pent-up:** (here) confined
- to sink (sank-sunk):** to go down to the bottom
- toil:** hard tiring work
- to yearn:** to have a strong, often melancholy desire

E.g.: *It’s so quiet and peaceful in the countryside, while
It’s so quiet and peaceful in the countryside, while in the town it’s so noisy.*

- a. Here in the countryside, people do not live
- b. In the city, houses were but here
- c. The air is so fresh and clean here in the countryside, while in the city
- d. Living here is so healthy, while in the city

MOVING DEEPER

Early industrial towns

Most cities and towns were not prepared for the great increase in the numbers of people looking for accommodation to live near their work place. There were not enough houses, so many people had to share a room in other peoples' houses. Rooms were rented to whole families or more than one family. Often ten or twelve people shared one room. If there were no rooms to rent, people stayed in **lodging houses**. Many manufacturers built houses for their workers near their factories. The houses were built close together really quickly and cheaply, and often had two rooms downstairs and two upstairs, so they were not really big enough for the large families people tended to have in Victorian times.

The houses did not have running water and toilets either, and up to a hundred houses had to share an outdoor pump for their water and share an outside toilet. To make things worse, the water from the pump was often polluted. The household rubbish was thrown out into the narrow streets and the air was filled with black smoke from the factory chimneys.

Dirty streets and **cramped** living conditions created a perfect environment for diseases. More than 31,000 people died of cholera in 1832 and many more were killed by typhus, smallpox or dysentery.

GLOSSARY



- cramped:** uncomfortably small or restricted
- lodging house:** house offering temporary accommodation

THE BRONTË SISTERS

The English **Brontë** family, originally of Irish **descent**, produced three 19th century novelists: **Charlotte, Emily** and **Anne**. The three grew up in a girls' school in living conditions that led to the deaths of the two elder sisters. The children developed their literary talents in the Yorkshire **moors** after leaving Cowan Bridge School. Charlotte worked as a **governess** and as a teacher at the school of Constantine Héger,

where she and Emily studied. She based many of the scenes in *Villette* (1853) on her frustrating experiences there. Charlotte also published a volume of poetry written by the three sisters under **pen names**. She is best known for *Jane Eyre* (1847), which achieved spectacular success. Emily is generally considered the best writer of the three. *Wuthering Heights* is her best known work.

GLOSSARY



- descent:** (here) family origins
- governess:** woman employed to educate and train the children of a private household
- moors:** areas of high, open land with few trees (e.g. Yorkshire, England)
- pen-name:** pseudonym used by a writer

CHARLOTTE BRONTË (1816-1854)

Charlotte Brontë was born in 1816, the third daughter of the Rev. Patrick Brontë and his wife Maria. Her brother Patrick Branwell was born in 1817, and her sisters Emily and Anne in 1818 and 1820. In the same year, the Brontë family moved to Haworth where Mrs Brontë died the following year. In 1824, the four eldest Brontë daughters were enrolled as pupils at the Clergy Daughter's School at Cowan Bridge. The following year, Maria and Elizabeth, the two eldest daughters, became ill, left the school and died: Charlotte and Emily were brought home.

In 1831 Charlotte became a pupil at the school at Roe Head, but she left school the following year to teach her sisters at home. She returned to Roe Head School in 1835 as a governess. For a time her sister Emily attended the same school as a pupil, but became homesick and returned to Haworth. Ann took her place from 1836 to 1837.

In 1838, Charlotte left Roe Head School. In 1839, she accepted a position as governess in the Sidgewick family, but left after three months and returned to Haworth. In 1841, she became governess in the White family, but left, once again, after nine months.

Upon her return to Haworth, the three sisters, led by Charlotte, decided to open their own school after the necessary preparations had been completed. In 1842,

Charlotte and Emily went to Brussels to complete their studies. After a trip home to Haworth, Charlotte returned alone to Brussels, where she remained until 1844.

Upon her return home, the sisters embarked upon their project to found a school, which proved to be a failure. The following year, Charlotte discovered Emily's poems and decided to publish a selection of the poems of all three sisters. 1846 brought the publication of their *Poems*, written under the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell. Charlotte also completed *The Professor*, which was rejected for publication. The following year, however, Charlotte's *Jane Eyre*, Emily's *Wuthering Heights* and Ann's *Agnes Grey* were all published, still under the Bell pseudonyms.

In 1848, Charlotte and Ann visited their publishers in London and revealed the true identities of the "Bells". Ann died the following year.

Charlotte's *Villette* was published in 1853. In 1854, Charlotte married Rev. A. B. Nicholls, curate of Haworth. In 1854, Charlotte, expecting a child, caught pneumonia and after a lengthy and painful illness, she died. 1857 saw the posthumous publication of *The Professor*, which had been written in 1845-46, and in that same year *Mrs. Gaskell's Life of Charlotte Brontë* was published.

EMILY BRONTË (1818-1848)

Emily Brontë was born on 30th July 1818 in Thornton, Yorkshire, in the north of England. She was the fifth child of Maria Branwell, and Patrick Brunty, an Irish clergyman who was such an admirer of Nelson that he changed his name from Brunty to Brontë after the King of Naples created Nelson "Duke of Bronte" (the diaeresis means that "e" must be pronounced). In 1820, he became parson of Haworth, a remote village on the Yorkshire moors. Her mother died when she was only three, followed by her two elder sisters, Marie and Elizabeth,

who both caught tuberculosis while at school. Emily and her elder sister Charlotte returned to the parsonage, where their aunt had come to look after them, with their brother Branwell and their little sister Anne.

Here their education was the freedom of the wild, desolate moors and the intense, emotional contact with nature it gave them, as well as easy access to their father's library, where they not only devoured books such as the Bible, Homer, Virgil, Shakespeare, Milton, Scott and Byron, but

also magazines on current affairs. Their vivid imaginations were inspired by a box of toy soldiers that their father brought home to Branwell from Leeds. This gift and the lonely childhood they lived led to their invention of a magical, imaginary world in which they played, and about which they began to write plays and poetry. Charlotte and her brother created the island of “Angria” while, in 1834, Emily and Anne branched off into “Gondral”. Their writing was to find its inspiration in these make-believe worlds.

Most of Emily’s excursions into the outside world ended in disillusionment and retreat home. In 1835 she attended Roe Head School but became ill and returned to Haworth. Two years later, in 1837, she spent six months as a governess at a girls’ school near Halifax, but once again came back unwell.

Their independence, financial included, was of great importance to the sisters, so in 1842 Charlotte and Emily went to Brussels to learn French and widen their education with the view to opening their own school. However, their aunt died, and she came home after only a few months. The school was never opened.

Emily was often alone at home, where she took on the responsibilities of housekeeper after the death of her aunt. She was never without animals, and would never miss an opportunity to escape to the moors to which she was intensely attached and

which were her solace in times of trouble. In 1845, Charlotte happened to come across a book of Emily’s early poems and was deeply impressed by them. With great difficulty she persuaded her to publish a volume of the sisters’ joint poems, under the pseudonyms of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell, which disguised their female identity. Its publication encouraged them to have faith in their ability to earn a living by writing, so each sister began to write a novel: Emily *Wuthering Heights*, Charlotte *The Professor* and Anne *Agnes Grey*.

In the meantime, their beloved, handsome, sensitive brother, Branwell, had become addicted to drink and drugs, unable to cope with personal problems. Emily and her sisters watched his tragic decline, until he finally caught tuberculosis and died on 24th September 1848. It was very probably at his funeral that Emily contracted the same disease, and not long afterwards it became clear that she too had the fatal cough and weakness.

Emily’s stoicism and quiet, unspoken courage remained with her to the end. On the morning of 19th December 1848, Charlotte took a walk to find a sprig of heather to place on her sister’s pillow. She was deeply moved by Emily’s “stern, simple, undemonstrative” death later that day, as she helplessly watched her “turning her dying eyes reluctantly from the pleasant sun”.

GLOSSARY



branched off: left a path and took another direction

clergyman: a minister of the Christian church

to enrol: officially register as a member of an institution or a student on a course

governess: a lady employed to educate the children of a wealthy family in their own home

heather: a wild plant with white or purple flowers which grows on open land and hills

make-believe: imaginary, like a child’s game of pretending

moor: an open area of hills covered with rough grass

moved: had strong feelings of sadness

parson: a protestant clergyman who looks after a church and its parish

parsonage: a parson’s house (a parson is a member of the Protestant clergy)

pneumonia: lung inflammation caused by bacterial or viral infection

to reject: refuse

sprig: a very small stem with leaves on it picked from a bush or plant

solace: something or someone which makes you feel better when you are sad or disappointed

● *Wuthering Heights* (1847)

PLOT OVERVIEW

The book starts with Lockwood's story about the first time he visits his landlord, Heathcliff, at Wuthering Heights, once the Earnshaws' house. Lockwood is **renting** Thrushcross Grange, the Lintons' old house now in Heathcliff's possession, from Heathcliff.

He falls sick travelling to Wuthering Heights and when he returns to his own place he has to be taken care of. Nellie is working at his house at this time and she tells him the story of the Earnshaws and the Lintons.

Mr and Mrs Earnshaw were nice people with two children, Catherine and Hindley, living at Wuthering Heights, which was a nice happy home. Mr Earnshaw went to Liverpool one day and came home with Heathcliff, a child who he had seen **wandering** the streets alone, and had decided to adopt. Heathcliff and Catherine were the same age so they played together all the time and were best friends. Hindley was always **mean** to Heathcliff and Heathcliff **swore revenge**. Mr and Mrs Earnshaw died and Hindley was left to care for Catherine and Heathcliff. Hindley was depressed because his wife had just died and he had to raise his own child, too, and started drinking heavily. Heathcliff made some money in the city and when he came back, he started his mission to make Hindley **miserable**. Hindley drank a lot and Heathcliff took advantage of this to win all Hindley's property and possessions through **gambling**. Hindley was really mean to his child, Hareton, and was miserable all the time. Meanwhile, Catherine started seeing Edgar Linton and was impressed by his manners and wealth. She eventually married him but still met Heathcliff every now and then, which Edgar didn't like. Catherine eventually realized she loved Heathcliff, but by this time she was already married. Edgar's sister Isabella married Heathcliff. Catherine was pregnant and stopped seeing Heathcliff. She died, although her baby survived.

Meanwhile, Isabella left Heathcliff because he was mean to her and she was afraid of him. While she was away, she gave birth to Linton, their son. Isabella eventually died and sent Linton to live with her brother Edgar and his daughter Catherine. He did not stay there long because Heathcliff wanted Linton to be moved into his house, not because Heathcliff loved his son, but because he wanted what belonged to him.

Catherine was sad that Linton had to leave and tried to see him and sent him letters, and eventually married him. When she moved into Wuthering Heights after marrying Linton, Heathcliff took control over her.

Catherine started to regret her life. Her husband was **childish** and always sick. He eventually died and she was trapped at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff now owned everything, including her. She became miserable, along with everyone else at Wuthering Heights.

After being there and learning to accept her place, Catherine started to become friends with Hareton. She taught him to read and they spent a lot of time together. They ended up getting married. Heathcliff died, after he had revenged against Hindley and Edgar, coming to peace with himself.

GLOSSARY



childish: immature

to gamble: to play a game of chance for money

mean: unkind

miserable: very unhappy

to rent: to occupy or use another person's property in exchange for regular payments

revenge: action of harming or hurting someone in return for a perceived injury or wrong

to swear (swore-sworn): to promise or solemnly declare

to wander: to walk without any particular purpose or direction

THEMES

The **destructiveness of a love that never changes**: Catherine and Heathcliff's passion for one another seems to be the centre of *Wuthering Heights*, stronger and more **lasting** than any other emotion in the novel and the source of most of the major conflicts in the plot. It is not easy to decide whether Brontë wants the reader to condemn these lovers or to idealize them as romantic heroes whose love transcends social norms and conventional morality. The book is actually structured around two parallel love stories: the first half of the novel centres on the love between Catherine and Heathcliff, while the less dramatic second half **features** the developing love between young Catherine and Hareton. The most important **feature** of young Catherine and Hareton's love story is that it involves growth and change. Early in the novel, Hareton seems brutal, savage and illiterate, but over time he becomes a loyal friend to young Catherine and learns to read. On the other hand, Catherine and Heathcliff's love **is rooted in** their childhood and is marked by the refusal to change.

In choosing to marry Edgar, Catherine seeks an easier life, but she refuses to adapt to her role as wife, either by sacrificing Heathcliff or choosing Edgar.

Moreover, Catherine and Heathcliff's love is based on their shared perception that they are identical. Catherine famously declares, "I am Heathcliff"; while upon her death, Heathcliff cries that he cannot live without his "soul", meaning Catherine.

Their love, which **denies** difference and is strangely asexual, is based upon their refusal to change over time or to embrace difference in others.

Finally, *Wuthering Heights* presents **a vision of life as a process of change** and celebrates this process over and against the romantic intensity of its principal characters.

The precariousness of social class is another theme in the novel. As members of the **gentry**, the Earnshaws and the Lintons occupy a precarious place within the hierarchy of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British society. At the top of British society was royalty, followed by the aristocracy, then the gentry, and then the lower classes who made up the vast majority of the population. Although the gentry, or upper middle class, possessed servants and often large **estates**, the fact that they held no titles meant that their social status was fragile and subject to change.

Considerations of class status often crucially affect the characters' motivations in *Wuthering Heights*. Catherine's decision to marry Edgar so that she will be "the greatest woman of the neighbourhood" is only the most obvious example. The Lintons are relatively firm in their gentry status but **take great pains** to prove this status through their behaviour. The Earnshaws, on the other hand, have less land and their house, as Lockwood says, looks like that of a "**homely**, northern farmer" and not that of a gentleman. The shifting nature of social status is demonstrated in Heathcliff's trajectory from homeless to young gentleman-by-adoption and from common labourer to gentleman again.

GLOSSARY



to be rooted in: to have its origins in

to deny: (here) to refuse to recognise

estate: large area of land, usually in the country, owned

feature: characteristic

to feature: to present

gentry: people of good social position

homely: simple and unpretentious

lasting: enduring

to take (took-taken) great pains: to try very hard to do something

MOVING
DEEPERThe Moors in *Wuthering Heights*

Moors play an important part in establishing the mood of the novel. Moors are open areas, wet, wild and infertile. Catherine and Heathcliff spend much of their childhood **rambling** on the moors, symbolizing their wild inclinations, and are both buried on the moors, because of their **fondness** for them and the wildness that they represent. However, the moors also represent danger: as the novel opens, Lockwood fears walking through them at night, Nelly and Catherine Linton are feared to have drowned there, and it is also very easy to get lost in such wild areas.

GLOSSARY



- **fondness**: affection for something
- **to ramble**: to walk for pleasure

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850-1894)

Robert Louis Stevenson was born in Edinburgh, Scotland, on 13th November 1850. His father Thomas was an engineer. From his mother, Margaret, Robert **inherited lung** disease: in fact he was a **frail** child who was often ill. When he was forced to stay in bed, he liked listening to adventure stories very much: his nurse 'Cummy' read Victorian **novels** and religious **tales** to him.

He followed his father's **wish** to study engineering but his real interest was the art of writing. He also studied **Law** at Edinburgh University. He rebelled against his family's middle-class **values** and **quarrelled** with his father because Robert Louis was against the strict Calvinistic doctrine in which he was educated.

He started a bohemian life in Edinburgh: he liked going into the Old Town dressed in an original way, so that people gave him the **nickname** of 'Velvet Jacket'.

Then he went to France to cure his bad health and there he met his future wife, Fanny Osbourne, who was American. She was already married and had two children, so she divorced, went to California where Robert Louis followed her and they got married in 1880.

Robert's bad health and love of adventure made him decide to take a South Seas **cruise** on board the yacht Casco: he **sailed** from

San Francisco to the Marquesas Islands. He also visited Tahiti, the Hawaiian Islands and the Samoan Islands. In the letters that he wrote to his friends, Robert described his cruises and adventures with great enthusiasm. He also wrote a book of **essays** on the various islands: 'In the South Seas'. The beauty of those islands impressed him so much that he bought some land in Apia, one of the Samoan Islands, where he built the 'Vailima' house. Fortunately his health improved a little, thanks to the good climate. However, he died suddenly on 3rd December 1894 at the age of 44.

R.L. Stevenson wrote essays, poems, short stories and novels. He is famous in particular for his adventure stories. His best-known novels are:

- *Treasure Island*, published in **serial form** in the boy's magazine "Young Folks" in 1882 and then as a book in 1883; it is set on a remote desert island and tells the story of a treasure **hunt** with pirates. The book brought him money and fame.
- *The Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, published in 1886; it deals with the theme of good and evil.
- *Kidnapped*, published in the same year as Dr Jekyll; it is set in Scotland and is the story of a young orphan, David Balfour, who is **defrauded** and **kidnapped** by his uncle.

– *The Master of Ballantrae: A Winter's Tale*, published in 1889; it is a historical novel and is the story of a **struggle** between two

brothers, the Master of Ballantrae and his younger brother Mr Henry, who represent respectively good and evil.

GLOSSARY



cruise: holiday on a large ship	kidnap: to take somebody away illegally and keep them as a prisoner, especially in order to get money	quarrelled: had a disagreement
defraud: to get money illegally from a person or an organization by tricking them	Law: the system of rules that people in a country must obey	sailed: started a journey by boat or ship
essay: short piece of writing about a particular subject	lung: organ in your body that you breathe with	serial form: printed in numerous separate parts
frail: weak	nickname: an informal name	struggle: fight, battle
hunt: act of looking for something that is difficult to find	novel: long, imaginary, written story	tales: stories about exciting imaginary events
inherited: had the same characteristics as his parents		values: ideas about what is right and wrong
		wish: desire

● **Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde (1886)**



3

Read the passage below, taken from the first paragraph of the novel, in which Stevenson describes the character of Mr Utterson, a lawyer who witnesses an event which represents the bulk of the novel, then do the activity below.

Mr. Utterson the lawyer was a man of a **rugged** countenance that was never lighted by a smile; cold, **scanty** and embarrassed in discourse; backward in sentiment; **lean**, long, dusty, **dreary**, and yet somehow lovable. (...) He was austere with himself; drank gin when he was alone to mortify a taste for vintages; and though he enjoyed the theatre, he had not crossed the doors of one for twenty years. But he had an approved tolerance for others; sometimes wondering, almost with envy, at the high pressure of spirits involved in their **misdeeds**; and in any extremity inclined to help rather than to reprove. (...) [It] was frequently his fortune to be the last reputable **acquaintance** and the last good influence in the lives of down-going men.

GLOSSARY



acquaintance: person that you know but who is not a close friend	lean: thin and fit
dreary: that makes you feel sad, dull and not interesting	misdeed: a bad or evil act
	rugged: having strong, attractive features
	scanty: too little in amount for what is needed



4

Underline the words in the text which describe Utterson.



5

Discuss with your classmates if Stevenson's description of Utterson results in an a. interesting passionate character; b. uninteresting yet unusual character.



6

There are some contradictions emerging from the description of Utterson. Write them down by completing the following sentences.

- Utterson looked somehow lovable, despite
- Utterson was very rigid with himself, but
- He had never been to a theatre for ages though



7

Which positive feature of Utterson's personality emerges from the description?

.....

.....

.....



8

Read this quotation from Chapter 1, "Story of the Door". Here Enfield relates to Utterson how he watched Hyde trample a little girl underfoot. Then answer the questions below.

"He is not easy to describe. There is something wrong with his appearance; something displeasing, something downright detestable. I never saw a man I so disliked, and yet I scarce know why. He must be deformed somewhere; he gives a strong feeling of deformity, although I couldn't specify the point. He's an extraordinary-looking man, and yet I really can name nothing out of the way. No, Sir; I can make no hand of it; I can't describe him. And it's not want of memory; for I declare I can see him this moment."

GLOSSARY



- downright: just
- make no hand of (something): succeed in doing something
- want (of something): lack of something

- Can Enfield describe the man he saw in detail?
- Which words convey the idea of Enfield's incapability to formulate a clear portrait of Hyde?
- Does the lack of details improve or lessen the mystery around the figure of Hyde?



9

This quotation comes from Chapter 10, "Henry Jekyll's Full Statement of the Case", which refers to the letter that Jekyll leaves for Utterson. The letter allows the reader to see the events from the inside. In the lines below, Jekyll summarizes the years of research which led him to the creation of the potion and his theory of humanity's dual nature. Read and answer the questions which follow.

It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man; I saw that, of the two natures that contended in the field of my consciousness, even if I could rightly be said to be either, it was only because I was radically both; and from an early date ... I had learned to dwell with pleasure, as a beloved daydream, on the thought of the separation of these elements. If each, I told myself, could be housed in separate identities, life would be relieved of all that was unbearable; the unjust might go his way, delivered from the aspirations and remorse of his more upright twin; and the just could walk steadfastly and securely on his upward path, doing the good things in which he found his pleasure, and no longer exposed to disgrace and penitence by the hands of this extraneous

evil. It was the **curse** of mankind that these incongruous **faggots** were thus bound together-that in the agonised **womb** of consciousness, these **polar** twins should be continuously struggling.

GLOSSARY



curse: something that causes harm or evil
faggot: a bunch of sticks tied together
polar: completely opposite
thorough: complete

unjust: behaving badly
upright: behaving in a moral and honest way
womb: the organ in women and female animals in which babies develop before they are born

- Does Jekyll think that the two sides in man are equally strong?
- Does he think that the two natures coexisted peacefully?
- Which part does he think is extraneous, the good or the evil one?
- Why does he want to separate them?



10

Fill in the chart below with words from the text expressing the concepts of duality and conflict.

DUALITY	CONFLICT
duality	

THE THEME OF THE DOUBLE

Other famous English novels have dealt with the theme of the good and evil aspects of a character. We need only remember *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* by Stevenson among the most famous. The first novel is one of the outstanding works of Gothic literature: the monster that Victor Frankenstein manages to create represents in a certain way his **double**, that part of his personality he has **freed** through his manipulations of nature. Stevenson’s novel deals with the theme of the divided soul too: here the respected Doctor Jekyll discovers a potion which divides the good part of him from the evil one and changes him into a monstrous being.

All these novels are based on contrasts: interior and exterior – public and private – youth and old age – beauty and ugliness – fashionable clubs and ill-famed taverns in London.

In Wilde’s novel the portrait represents Dorian’s double: his youth and beauty lasts to the end of the story while his soul is corrupted by his numerous sins.

The theme of the divided personality is quite common in Victorian literature. Also in *Our Mutual Friend* by Charles Dickens a respected teacher changes into a murderer by night – perhaps because of the typical social characteristic so that we can talk about a double standard of Victorian morality. In this Chapter Dorian says to Basil: “Don’t you know that we are in the native land of the hypocrite?”

All these novels have a moral message: sooner or later human beings are punished for their sins, even though, in the case of Dorian Gray, Wilde’s primary **concern** was not to write a morality tale but a “well-written book”, as the author **stated** in his preface to the novel.

GLOSSARY



double: consisting of two things or parts
free: let someone leave a place

primary concern: the most important interest
state: declare

JOSEPH RUDYARD KIPLING (1865-1936)

Poet, novelist and short-story writer **Rudyard Kipling**, the first English language writer to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature, was the most popular literary figure of his time. He was born on December 30, 1865, in Bombay, India, to John Lockwood Kipling and Alice MacDonald. His father, who was an anthropologist and curator, inspired the character of the Keeper of the Wonder-House in *Kim*.

Kipling spent his early childhood in India and was cared for by a Hindu **nanny**; as a young child he spoke Hindi. However, as was the custom of the time, at the age of six, Kipling was sent to a boarding school in Britain, where he was unfortunately subjected to severe **strictness** and bullying. His poor eyesight kept him from a military career, so at the age of sixteen, Kipling returned to his parents in Lahore, India, and began his career as a journalist. He became quite popular with his work, especially his satirical and humorous verse. When he returned to England in 1889 at the age of twenty-four, he was already **regarded as** a national literary hero.

In 1892, Kipling married an American, Caroline Balestier, and moved to Vermont.

The Kiplings returned to England in 1896 but travelled regularly around the world.

Although Kipling did not live for a long period of time in India after his childhood and his early adult years, his love for India and interest in the subcontinent, and his memories of the India of his childhood figured greatly in his writing. Kipling is best known for his works about India, most **notably** *Kim*, a novel that covers all corners of the continent.

His **receipt** of the Nobel Prize in 1907 met with the disapproval of other literary critics and writers, who considered him vulgar and lacking in **craftsmanship**.

The death of his son, John, in World War I, combined with his own **failing** health, deeply affected Kipling's writing, and his output decreased dramatically after this period. He died on January 18, 1936, and is buried at Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

Among Kipling's other well-known works are *Captains Courageous* (1897), *The First and Second Jungle Books*, and the poems "If", "White Man's Burden", and "Recessional".

GLOSSARY



craftsmanship: skill at making things by hand

failing: weakening

nanny: woman who takes care of young children in their own home

notably: especially

receipt: act of receiving something

regarded as: considered

strictness: rigorous discipline

● *Kim* (1901)

PLOT OVERVIEW

The novel takes place at a time contemporary to the book's publication; its **setting** is India under the British Empire. The title character is a boy of Irish descent who is orphaned and grows up independently in the streets of India, taken care of by a "**half-caste**" woman, a keeper of an **opium den**. Kim, an energetic and playful character, although **full-blooded** Irish, grows up as a "native" and acquires the ability to **blend into** the many ethnic and religious groups of the Indian subcontinent. When he meets a wandering Tibetan **lama** who is in search of a sacred river, Kim becomes his follower and starts on a journey covering the whole of India. Kipling's **account** of Kim's travels throughout the subcontinent gave him the opportunity to describe the many peoples and cultures

that made up India, and a significant part of the novel is devoted to such descriptions, which have been both **praised** as magical and visionary and derided as stereotypical and imperialist.

Kim eventually **comes upon** the army regiment that his father had belonged to and **makes the acquaintance of** Colonel Creighton. The colonel recognizes Kim's great talent for blending into the many diverse cultures of India and trains him to become a spy and a mapmaker for the British army.

GLOSSARY



account: written record

to blend into: to appear or behave as a harmonious part of a greater whole

to come (came-come) upon: to accidentally meet

full-blooded: completely

half-caste: person of mixed race or ethnicity

lama: spiritual leader in Tibetan Buddhism

to make the acquaintance of: to meet

opium den: place where opium is smoked

to praise: to express approval or admiration

setting: place and time at which the action of a play, novel, etc. takes place

THEMES

The ideal of the **equality** and unity of men **echoes** across several **motifs** in Kim, most notably through the Buddhist teachings of Teshoo Lama, who tells Kim, “To those who follow the Way, there is neither black nor white, **Hind** nor **Bhotiyal**. We are all souls seeking to escape.” This ideal of the equality and unity of men **transcends** the strict caste, or class, distinctions of the predominantly Hindu society that Kim has known.

The lama carries with him a diagram called the Wheel of Life, which is a symbolic representation of the Buddhist doctrine that all lives are equally **bound** in the cycle of life and that all souls seek release from this cycle by reaching Enlightenment. The numerous references to the Wheel of Life throughout the novel serve to reinforce the message of equality and unity.

Kipling also uses the theme of **unity** to portray an ideal India that is not divided by imperialism but rather is unified under it. This is especially evident in the relationships between the characters: Mahbub Ali, an Afghan; Lurgan Sahib, a person of “mixed” race; Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, a Bengali; and Colonel Creighton, an Englishman, an officer, and therefore a member of the ruling class. Despite their disparate backgrounds, all these characters are united in a tight **brotherhood** of espionage that functions specifically to protect the interests of the British Empire in India. It is especially significant that Kipling shows both British and Indian characters similarly operating on an equal basis for the good of the empire. This serves to promote an idealized portrayal of a specifically united, British India.

Kipling presents the imperialist presence in India as positive. This is done most effectively through the main plot of the novel – the efforts of Indian and British spies to protect the northern **border** of British India from Russia and thereby the imperial interests of the British Empire. It is especially significant that Indian spies are shown protecting British interests – in this way, Kipling constructs an India in which the native population supports the British Empire and he thus presents Britain's imperialist presence as a positive good.

The character of Kim represents a search for **identity**: Kim, an Irish orphan, grows up in the streets of the Indian city of Lahore and adapts to the culture and languages of India – so well, in fact, that he can pass himself off as a member of almost any religious or cultural group of India. He is at once a Sahib and, by virtue of his **upbringing**, a part of the colonized society. Kim, who is known as “Friend of All the World” and includes “this great and beautiful land” as all his people, begins to **undergo** a crisis of identity when he

is first made to go to school to become a Sahib. This question of identity and belonging disturbs him throughout the novel, leaving him with a feeling of **loneliness**. Through Kim's eventual ability to reconcile his Indian and British roots, Kipling symbolizes his larger ideal of a unified British India.

GLOSSARY



border: official line separating two countries or states

Bhotiyal: Tibetan ethnic group

bound: forced to do something

brotherhood: friendship and understanding between people

to echo: to repeat an idea

Hind: (here) Indians

loneliness: state of being lonely

motif: subject, idea or phrase repeated and developed in a literary work

to transcend: to go beyond

to undergo: to experience something, especially a change or something unpleasant

upbringing: education and training received in childhood

JOSEPH CONRAD (1857-1924)

Joseph Conrad (1857-1924) was born in Berdichev, Ukraine, on December 3rd, 1857. He was born Polish but he would become **renowned** for his English short stories and novels.

His father, Apollo Korzeniowski, worked as a translator of English and French literature, so Joseph had significant exposure to literature while still young.

In 1861, his family was exiled to Northern Russia as a result of his father's political activities. Then in 1869, both of Conrad's parents died of tuberculosis and he went to live with his uncle in Switzerland.

Conrad dreamt of the sea and in the 1870s he joined the French merchant marines. While working on ships, Conrad made voyages to the West Indies and was even involved in **arms smuggling**. Eventually Conrad joined the British merchant navy and swiftly **climbed the ranks**. By 1886, he was commanding his own ship and was given British citizenship. It was at this time that he officially changed his name to Joseph Conrad.

Conrad spent the next part of his life sailing all over the world; it was this experience that provided him with the material for the exotic locations in many of his novels. He visited Australia, various islands in the Indian Ocean and South Pacific, South America, and even sailed up the Congo River in Africa. In 1894, at the age of 36, Conrad finally left the sea behind him and settled down in England. Two years later, he married an Englishwoman by the name of Jessie George and had two sons.

Even though he was settled down and had a family, Conrad still travelled occasionally, but for the most part just wrote his novels, the first of which, *Almayer's Folly*, appeared in 1895. That novel would be followed by many others including *Heart of Darkness* in 1902 and *Nostromo* in 1904. Conrad continued to write until the year he died, publishing his last novel, *The Nature of Crime*, in 1924. He died on August 3rd, 1924 of a heart attack.

GLOSSARY



arms: weapons

to climb the ranks: to rise in rank or status

renowned: known and appreciated

to smuggle: to move (goods or people) from one country into another, illegally and secretly

● Heart of Darkness (1899)

PLOT OVERVIEW

Heart of Darkness centres on Marlow, an **introspective** sailor, and his journey up the Congo River to meet Kurtz, reputed to be an idealistic man of great abilities who trades in **ivory**. Marlow takes a job as a riverboat captain with the Company, a Belgian **concern** which trades in the Congo. As he travels to Africa and then in the Congo, Marlow encounters **widespread** inefficiency and brutality. The native inhabitants of the region have been forced into the Company's service and they suffer terribly from overwork and **ill-treatment** at the hands of the Company's agents. The cruelty of imperial ill-treatment contrasts sharply with the **impassive** and majestic jungle that surrounds the white man's settlements. Marlow arrives at the Central Station to find that his **steamship** has been sunk, and spends several months waiting for parts to repair it. His interest in Kurtz grows during this period. The parts Marlow needs to repair his ship eventually arrive and he and the manager **set off** with a few agents and a **crew** of cannibals on a long, difficult voyage up the river. The dense jungle and the oppressive silence make everyone aboard **moody**. The ship is attacked by an unseen band of natives, who fire arrows from the safety of the forest. Not long after, Marlow and his companions arrive at Kurtz's Inner Station, expecting to find him dead, but a **half-crazed** Russian trader **claims** that Kurtz has expanded his mind and cannot be subjected to the same moral judgments as normal people. Apparently Kurtz has established himself as a god with the natives and has gone on brutal **raids** in the surrounding territory in search of ivory. The pilgrims bring Kurtz out of the station-house on a **stretcher** and a large group of native warriors comes out of the forest and surrounds them. Kurtz speaks to the natives and they disappear back into the woods.

The manager brings Kurtz, who is quite **ill**, aboard the steamship. A beautiful native woman, apparently Kurtz's **mistress**, appears on the **shore** and looks at the ship. After **swearing Marlow to secrecy**, the Russian reveals to him that Kurtz had ordered the attack on the steamship to make them believe he was dead in order that they might turn back and leave him to his plans. They set off down the river the next morning, but Kurtz's health is **failing** fast. Marlow listens to Kurtz talk while he pilots the ship and Kurtz gives Marlow a packet of personal documents, including an eloquent **pamphlet** on civilizing the savages which ends with a message that says, "Exterminate all the brutes!" The steamship breaks down and they have to stop for repairs. Kurtz dies, his last words are "The horror! The horror!" Marlow falls ill soon after and **barely** survives. Eventually he returns to Europe and goes to see Kurtz's fiancée, who **praises** him as a **paragon** of virtue. She asks what his last words were, so Marlow lies and tells her that Kurtz's last word was her name.

GLOSSARY



barely : hardly	pamphlet : thin book with a paper cover, containing information about a particular subject
to claim : to say or assert that something is true	paragon : person who is a perfect example of a particular quality
concern : company, business	to praise : to express approval or admiration for someone/something
crew : people who operate the ship	raid : short surprise attack
to fail : (here) to become weaker	to set off : to leave
half-crazed : insane, mentally deranged	shore : land along the edge of the sea, ocean, lake or other large area of water
ill : not healthy, sick	steamship : ship driven by steam
ill-treatment : cruel behaviour towards someone	stretcher : framework used to carry an injured or dead person
impassive : (here) calm, serene	to swear someone to secrecy : to make someone promise not to reveal a secret
introspective : tending to examine one's own thoughts a lot	widespread : existing or happening in many places or situations, or among many people
ivory : hard white substance of the tusks of animals such as elephants	
mistress : long-term female lover and companion, especially to a married man	
moody : temperamental	

THEMES

Heart of Darkness explores the **issues** surrounding **imperialism** in complicated ways. As Marlow travels, he witnesses scenes of torture, cruelty and near-slavery. The scenery of the book offers a picture of **colonial enterprise**. The men who work for the Company describe what they do as “**trade**”, and their treatment of native Africans is part of a benevolent project of “civilization”. Kurtz, on the other hand, is open about the fact that rather than trade ivory, he takes it by force. However, for Marlow as much as for Kurtz or for the Company, Africans are mostly objects. For Marlow, Africans become a human screen against which he can **play out** his philosophical and existential **struggles**.

Madness is closely **linked** to imperialism in this book. Africa is responsible for mental disintegration as well as physical illness. Madness, in *Heart of Darkness*, is the result of being removed from one’s social context and being allowed to be the **sole arbiter** of one’s actions.

GLOSSARY



- arbiter: judge
- enterprise: development of businesses
- issue: problem
- linked: connected
- to play out: to develop
- sole: only
- struggle: (here) mental fight
- trade: activity of buying and selling

MOVING DEEPER

A brief history of the ivory trade

Historically, elephant ivory was exported from Africa and Asia to society’s elites in Europe, where it often became billiard balls, piano keys and other symbols of **wealth**. During the colonization of Africa, ivory hunters did much to provide for the demand of this white gold. Under the rule of King Leopold II, the Congo Free State was founded with the purpose of providing tariff-free business for Europe. The **tyrant** controlled over half of the territory (as well as its 30 million inhabitants), with the rest divided between France and Portugal. For twenty-three years, Leopold II profited from the land’s resources, including ivory, while working millions of Congolese to death. By the beginning of the 20th century, the African elephant was extinct or facing extinction in most of Africa’s sub-regions.

GLOSSARY



- **tyrant**: a ruler who has unlimited power over other people, and uses it unfairly and cruelly
- **wealth**: a large amount of money or valuable possessions that someone has

JAMES JOYCE (1882-1941)

Born in Dublin, **James Joyce** left his native city never to go back to live there, but he kept writing about it all his life. He wrote *Dubliners* (1914), *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man* (1917), *Ulysses* (1922) and *Finnegan's Wake* (1939).

He was an author who experimented with ways to use language, symbolism, **interior monologue** and **stream of consciousness**.

Joyce was born on February 2, 1882, in Rathgar, a suburb of Dublin, Ireland. His father had several jobs including a position as tax collector for the city of Dublin, while his mother, Mary Jane Murray Joyce, was a talented piano player. James's father was not very successful and the family had to move fourteen times from the time James was born until he left Ireland.

Joyce was educated entirely in **Jesuit** schools in Ireland. He was good at philosophy and languages. After his graduation in 1902, he left Ireland and lived in Trieste (Italy), Zurich (Switzerland) and Paris (France) with his wife and two children.

Most of Joyce's fiction is autobiographical, that is, it is based on his own life experiences. Even though he left his native country, his work is based mainly on Ireland, the family and Roman Catholicism.

Dubliners is a collection of fifteen short stories. He finished writing it in 1904, but it could not be published until ten

years later. *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, published in 1916, is a semi-autobiographical novel of adolescence. It is the story of Stephen Dedalus, a young writer who rebels against the surroundings of his youth. For Joyce and others after him, Stephen Dedalus became a symbol for all artists. Stephen appears again in *Ulysses*, perhaps Joyce's most respected novel.

Published in 1922, many consider *Ulysses* Joyce's most mature work. Indeed, some consider it one of the most important books in the development of the modern novel.

Finnegans Wake, published in 1939, is the most difficult of all of Joyce's works to understand: the novel has no real plot, relying instead on sound, the rhythm of the language and **puns**. These parts create a surface, under which are the meanings. Most people consider *Finnegans Wake* a novel, although others have called it a poem. The novel was not well-received, and Joyce **relied on** the help of friends for financial assistance after its publication.

Joyce knew his family was not safe in France when it was invaded by the Germans during World War II. He borrowed money and escaped to Switzerland with his family. Joyce died in Zurich, Switzerland, on January 13, 1941.

GLOSSARY



interior monologue: character's inner thoughts and emotions presented in writing

Jesuit: a Catholic religious order

pun: a play on words

to rely on: to depend on

stream of consciousness: uninterrupted, continuous flow of a character's thoughts

● Ulysses (1922)

PLOT OVERVIEW

Ulysses is probably the most characteristic novel of this period. It was published in Paris and for a long time was **censored** in Ireland. It has no real plot, following instead the wanderings and thoughts (stream of consciousness in interior monologues) of Leopold Bloom in Dublin on a single day (Bloom's day). Each chapter corresponds to an episode in Homer's *Odyssey* and has a distinct style of its own.

The plot and theme of James Joyce's *Ulysses* centre on life as a journey. Joyce based the **framework** of his novel on the structure of one of the greatest and most influential works in world literature: *The Odyssey* by Homer. In this epic poem of ancient Greece, Homer presents the journey of life as a heroic adventure. The protagonist of this epic tale, Odysseus (Roman name, Ulysses), encounters many **perils** – including giants, angry gods, and monsters – during his voyage home to Ithaca in Greece after the Trojan War. In Joyce's 20th century novel, the author also **depicts** life as a journey, in imitation of Homer. But Joyce presents this journey as **humdrum, dreary and uneventful**. Joyce's *Ulysses* is a Jew of Hungarian origin, Leopold Bloom, who lives in Dublin, Ireland. His adventure consists of getting breakfast, feeding his cat, going to a funeral, doing **legwork** for his job, visiting pubs or restaurants and thinking about his **unfaithful** wife. His activities **parallel** in some way the adventures of Homer's Ulysses. For example, Bloom's attendance at a funeral in the chapter entitled "Hades", which parallels an episode in *The Odyssey* where Ulysses visits Hades, the land of the dead (or Underworld) in Greek mythology. Bloom's unfaithful wife, Molly, represents the faithful wife of Ulysses, Penelope. A young aspiring writer, Stephen Dedalus, represents the son of Ulysses, Telemachus, who searches for his father. Although Dedalus is not Bloom's son, Dedalus is depicted as searching for a father figure to replace his own drunken father.

GLOSSARY



• censored: banned	• legwork: routine practical work or preparation that is necessary for a job
• to depict: to describe	• to parallel: to be similar to
• dreary: boring, depressing and sad	• peril: danger
• framework: structure	• uneventful: with no significant events
• humdrum: monotonous, boring and unchanging	• unfaithful: not true or constant to one's partner

THEMES

Ulysses is an **experimental novel** in the modernist tradition. It uses parody in its imitation of *The Odyssey*. It also uses satire and **burlesque** in **ridiculing** religion, culture, literary movements, other writers and their styles, and many other people, places, things and ideas. The author writes in the third-person with frequent use of allusion, symbols, Jungian and literary archetypes and the **stream-of-consciousness** technique, all of which make the novel difficult to comprehend for even the most intelligent and informed readers. In stream of consciousness – a term **coined** by American psychologist William James (1842-1910) – an author portrays a character’s continuing “stream” of thoughts as they occur, **regardless of** whether or not they make sense or one thought in a sequence relates to the previous thought. At its most basic level, *Ulysses* is a book about Stephen’s search for a symbolic father and Bloom’s search for a son. In this respect, the plot of *Ulysses* parallels **Telemachus’** search for **Odysseus**, and vice versa. Stephen already has a biological father, Simon Dedalus, but considers him a father only in “flesh”. Stephen feels that his own ability to **mature** and become a father himself (of art or children) is restricted by Simon’s criticism and lack of understanding. Thus, Stephen’s search involves finding a symbolic father who will, in turn, allow Stephen himself to be a father. Both men are searching for paternity as a way to reinforce their own identities.

The phrase *agenbite of inwit*, a term in Kentish dialect meaning “remorse of conscience,” comes to Stephen’s mind again and again in *Ulysses*. Stephen associates the phrase with his guilt over his mother’s death – he suspects that he may have killed her by refusing to kneel and pray at her bed when she asked. The theme of remorse runs through *Ulysses* and refers to feelings associated with modern breaks with the family and tradition. Bloom, too, has guilty feelings about his father because he no longer observes certain traditions his father observed. In nearly all senses, the notion of Leopold Bloom as an epic hero is laughable – his job, talents, family relations, public relations and private actions all suggest his ordinariness. It is only Bloom’s extraordinary capacity for sympathy and compassion that makes him a sort of a hero in the course of the novel. Bloom’s fluid ability to empathize with such a wide variety of beings – cats, birds, dogs, dead men, vicious men, blind men, old ladies, a woman in **labour**, the poor, and so on – is the modern-day equivalent of Odysseus’s capacity to adapt to a wide variety of challenges.

Parallax, an astronomical term, refers to the difference of position of an object when seen from two different viewpoints, which can be collated to better approximate the position of the object. As a novel, *Ulysses* uses a similar tactic: three main characters – Stephen, Bloom and Molly – and a set of narrative techniques that affect our perception of events and characters. Our understanding of particular characters and events must be continually revised as new perspectives are revealed.

GLOSSARY



burlesque: writing which makes a serious subject seem humorous or ridiculous

regardless of: paying no attention to

to coin: to invent

labour: period of time or the process of giving birth to a baby

to mature: to grow older and more sensible

Odysseus: also known by the Roman name Ulixes (*Ulysses*)

to ridicule: to make fun of in a cruel or unkind way

Telemachus: son of Odysseus and Penelope and a central character in Homer’s *Odyssey*

VIRGINIA WOOLF (1882-1941)

Virginia Woolf was born Adeline Virginia Stephen in London (England) in 1882. She did not have a formal education but was educated by her parents. Her mother died when she was thirteen, causing the first of several mental **breakdowns** Virginia would have throughout her life.

Virginia Woolf started to work as a **tutor** at Morley College in 1904 and wrote book reviews for the “Times Literary Supplement”. In 1905 she started meeting with friends to discuss literary and artistic topics. This group of people would later become known as the ‘Bloomsbury Group’. Virginia Woolf also became a member of the People’s Suffrage Federation and the Women’s Cooperative Guild. In 1912, she married the writer, Leonard Woolf. A year later, she had a severe mental breakdown, but was greatly supported by her husband and recovered. In 1915, her first novel *The Voyage Out* was published. Both Virginia and her husband were very interested in literature, and together founded the “Hogarth Press” in 1917. The novel *Night and Day* appeared in 1919 and in 1922 *Jacob’s Room* was published. In 1925 came *Mrs. Dalloway*, *To the Lighthouse* (1927) and in *The Waves* (1931). Virginia Woolf also published a series of non-fiction books: *A Room of One’s Own*, which appeared in 1929, later became important in the history of feminism, and in *Three Guineas*, she again covered the theme of women’s liberation. In 1941, Virginia completed her novel *Between the Acts*. This would become her last novel. Throughout her life, Virginia had battled against depression. On March 28, 1941 she committed suicide by **drowning herself**. In her life, she had published over five hundred essays and about ten novels. Virginia Woolf did not use the traditional writing styles of her time. During her lifetime, Virginia had become a leader in the modernist literary movement.

GLOSSARY



breakdown: (here) collapse after prolonged stress

tutor: private instructor

to drown oneself: to kill oneself by suffocating in water

● *To the Lighthouse* (1927)

PLOT OVERVIEW

To the Lighthouse is divided into three sections: “The Window”, “Time Passes” and “The Lighthouse”. Each section is fragmented into stream-of-consciousness contributions from various narrators.

“The Window” opens just before the start of World War I. Mr and Mrs Ramsay bring their eight children to their summer home in the Hebrides (a group of islands west of Scotland). Across the bay stands a large **lighthouse**. Six-year-old James wants to go there and Mrs Ramsay tells him that they will go the next day if the weather is good.

The Ramsays host some guests, including Charles Tansley (who admires Mr Ramsay’s work as a philosopher) and Lily Briscoe (a young painter who begins a portrait of Mrs Ramsay). Mrs Ramsay wants Lily to marry William Bankes, an old friend of Mr. Ramsay’s, but Lily decides to remain single. Mrs Ramsay manages to arrange another marriage, between Paul Rayley and Minta Doyle, two of their **acquaintances**.

During the course of the afternoon, Paul **proposes to** Minta, Lily begins her painting, Mrs Ramsay calms the resentful James, and Mr Ramsay periodically turns to Mrs Ramsay for comfort. That evening, the Ramsays have a dinner party. Paul and Minta are late returning from their walk on the beach with two of the Ramsays’ children. Lily reacts at comments made by Charles Tansley, who suggests that women can neither paint nor write.

Mrs Ramsay leaves her guests in the dining room and later joins her husband in the **parlour**. The couple sits quietly together, night falls, and one night quickly becomes another.

The novel enters the “Time Passes” segment. War breaks out across Europe. Mrs Ramsay dies suddenly one night. Andrew Ramsay, her oldest son, is killed in battle and his sister Prue dies from an illness related to childbirth. The family no longer goes on holiday to their summerhouse, which falls into a state of abandonment, and ten years pass before the family returns there. Mrs McNab, the **housekeeper**, employs a few other women to help and everything is in order when Lily Briscoe returns.

In “The Lighthouse” section, time returns to the slow detail of **shifting** points of view, similar to “The Window”. Mr Ramsay says that he and James and Cam, one of his daughters, will journey to the lighthouse. On the morning of the voyage, there is some **delay**. He turns to Lily for help. The Ramsays set off and Lily takes her place on the **lawn**, determined to complete a painting she started but abandoned on her last visit. Across the bay, Lily puts the finishing touch on her painting. She makes a definitive **stroke** on the canvas and puts her brush down, finally having **achieved** her vision.

GLOSSARY



to achieve: to reach

acquaintance: person you know, but not a close friend

delay: situation where something is later or slower than expected or desired

housekeeper: person who looks after a house

lawn: area of ground covered in short grass

lighthouse: tower, on or near the sea, with a powerful light to guide ships away from danger

parlour: room in a private house for sitting in, entertaining visitors, etc.

to propose to: to ask somebody to marry you

shifting: moving

stroke: mark made by moving a pen, brush, etc. once across a surface

THEMES

Art as a means of preservation is a crucial theme. Despite a world without order or meaning, Mr and Mrs Ramsay employ different strategies to make their lives significant: he **devotes himself** to philosophy, while she cultivates social interaction. Unfortunately, Mr Ramsay does not obtain the philosophical understanding he desires, and Mrs Ramsay’s life, though **filled with** memorable moments, ends. Only Lily Briscoe finds her way: beginning her portrait of Mrs Ramsay at the beginning of the novel (Woolf notes that the aim of Lily’s project is to connect elements – “hedges and houses and mothers and children”) and, at the end of the novel, ten years later, finishing it. Art is, perhaps, the only hope in a constantly-changing world.

Beauty is seen to have a soothing effect throughout the novel: with references to the beauty of Mrs Ramsay, the arrangement of fruit **cans** at Mrs Ramsay’s dinner party, but also the scenery of the bay and the landscape surrounding the house.

The differing behaviours of men and women are constantly observed. The dynamics between the sexes can be understood by considering the behaviour of Mr and Mrs Ramsay. She has a rather traditional notion of **gender roles**, she always excuses her husband’s behaviour. This attitude of understanding puts on women the responsibility for soothing men’s damaged egos in order for there to be some kind of harmony between them. Lily Briscoe, who wishes to remain single, seems to resist this task the longest.

GLOSSARY



can: closed metal container for preserving food or drink

to devote oneself: to spend one’s time and life

to fill with: to make something full

gender roles: behaviours, attitudes and activities expected or common for males and females

soothing: calming

UNIT 3 - THE SHORT STORY



1

Do the statements below refer to the short story or the novel? Complete the table below by writing each statement in the correct column.

- a. At the end, the characters find themselves in a state of affairs which has changed completely since the beginning.
- b. It tends to be written from a single character's point of view.
- c. It usually contains several episodes, with a rising structure of complication-resolution-new complication leading to a climax.
- d. It moves through dramatic steps (when present) more quickly.
- e. It tends to be constructed around a single climactic event which may or may not permanently change the central character(s).
- f. It tends to be more unified in time and place.
- g. It tends to have more than one central character, with a central need or fear to be worked out.
- h. It often offers more than one point of view, or shifting point of views.
- i. It often contains subplots related to, but not as central as, the main story line or story lines.
- j. It tends to employ a line of increasing risks to reach the central climax.
- k. It tends to explore characters in a broader social situation.

SHORT STORY	NOVEL



2

Complete the table with the names of short-story writers from around the world.

BRITAIN	IRELAND	FRANCE	ITALY	GERMANY	THE U.S.A.	RUSSIA	OTHER COUNTRIES
<i>Agatha Christie</i>	<i>James Joyce</i>	<i>Guy de Maupassant</i>	<i>Giovanni Verga</i>	<i>E.T.A. Hoffmann</i>	<i>Mark Twain</i>	<i>Nikolai Gogol</i>	<i>Katherine Mansfield (New Zealand)</i>

GEOFFREY CHAUCER (c. 1343-1400)

Telling short stories has been part of human culture since man began to talk, but in English literature, certainly the first English writer to **gain** fame with this kind of narrative was **Geoffrey Chaucer**, in *The Canterbury Tales*.

Chaucer was born in London in the early 1340s, the only son in his family. His father was originally a wine merchant and became so rich that he was able to send young Geoffrey to be a **page** to the Countess of Ulster. Chaucer served in the Hundred Years' War between England and France as a soldier but also as a diplomat because he was fluent in French and Italian, and knew Latin and other languages. His diplomatic travels brought him twice to Italy, where he probably met Boccaccio and Petrarch, whose writing influenced Chaucer's work.

Around 1378, Chaucer began to develop his personal idea of an English poetry that could be linguistically accessible to all, making use neither of French (the official language of the court) nor Latin (the official language of the Church). Instead, he wrote in the vernacular, the kind of English that was spoken in and around London at that time. No doubt he was influenced by the writings of the Florentines Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio, who wrote in the Italian vernacular.

GLOSSARY



to gain: to obtain or achieve something, usually after much effort

page: (in the Middle Ages) boy who served a knight while training to be a knight himself

● *The Canterbury Tales*

At the Tabard Inn, a tavern in Southwark, London, the narrator joins a company of twenty-nine pilgrims. Like the narrator, these pilgrims are travelling to the **shrine** of the martyr Saint Thomas Becket in Canterbury. The narrator gives a description of twenty-seven of these pilgrims.

The **Host**, Harry Bailey, suggests that the group ride together and entertain one another with stories. Each pilgrim will tell two stories on the way to Canterbury and two on the way back. The best storyteller will receive a meal at Bailey's tavern, paid for by the other pilgrims. The pilgrims **draw lots** and decide that the Knight will tell the first tale. So Chaucer's original plan was for each character to tell four tales, but, instead of 120 tales, the text ends after just twenty-four, when the party is still on its way to Canterbury.

Writers and printers soon recognized *The Canterbury Tales* as a highly original work. We know that Chaucer had been influenced by the great French and Italian writers of his age, but works like Boccaccio's *Decameron* were not accessible to most English readers, so the format of *The Canterbury Tales* and the intense realism of its characters were new to English readers in the 14th century. Poetry critic George Puttenham (1529-1590) identified Chaucer as the father of the English language because of his success in creating a literature and a poetic language for all classes of society.

The Canterbury Tales were published by William Caxton, England's first printer, in the 1470s. The text of the Tales itself does not survive complete, but in ten fragments. Due to the fact that there are no links between these ten fragments in most cases, it is extremely difficult to determine precisely in which order Chaucer intended the tales to be read.

GLOSSARY



to draw (drew-drawn) lots: to make a decision by choosing from a set of objects which are all the same except one

host: manager-owner of the Inn

shrine: place of worship that is holy because it is connected with a holy person or object

MOVING
DEEPER

Thomas Becket

The **shrine** that was close to Chaucer's heart was that of **Thomas Becket** of Canterbury. In 1162, Becket was made Archbishop of Canterbury. At that time, the Church reserved the right to **try** clerical crimes in their own religious courts of justice and not in those of the crown. King Henry II wanted to end this custom and his great opportunity arose in 1163. After a church court had **acquitted** a **canon** accused of murder, King Henry tried to change the laws to extend his courts' jurisdiction over the **clergy**. Becket stood against Henry and was forced to leave the country. Six years later on November 30th, 1170, Becket crossed the Channel and returned to his post at Canterbury. Unfortunately, the fight between Becket and the King continued until the afternoon of December 29th, when knights of the King killed Becket at the altar of Canterbury Cathedral. Soon after Becket's death, people started to report miracles. This helped to accelerate Becket's canonization, the creation of his tomb, and the beginning of the great **pilgrimage to Canterbury**.

GLOSSARY



shrine: tomb (of a saint)

try: (here) examine and judge legally

acquitted: decided in a court of law that someone was not guilty of a crime

canon: a Christian priest who has special duties in a cathedral

clergy: members of the Church



3

Read the original version of the first lines of the General Prologue and a modern version of it. What are the similarities? Which words are more difficult to understand in the original? Underline them in the Old English text.

Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote
 The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,
 And bathed every veyne in swich licour
 Of which vertu engendred is the flour,
 Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth
 Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
 The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
 Hath in the Ram his halve cours yronne,
 And smale foweles maken melodye,
 That slepen al the nyght with open ye
 (so priketh hem Nature in hir corages),
 Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
 And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
 To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
 And specially from every shires ende
 Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,
 The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
 That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.

Bifil that in that seson on a day,
 In Southwerk at the Tabard as I lay

*Redy to wenden on my pilgrimage
 To Caunterbury with ful devout corage,
 At nyght was come into that hostelrye
 Wel nyne and twenty in a compaignye,
 Of sondry folk, by aventure yfalle
 In felaweshipe, and pilgrimes were they alle,
 That toward Caunterbury wolden ryde.
 The chambres and the stables weren wyde,
 And wel we weren esed atte beste.
 And shortly, whan the sonne was to reste,
 So hadde I spoken with hem everichon
 That I was of hir felaweshipe anon,
 And made forward erly for to ryse,
 To takeoure wey ther as I yow devyse.*

*But nathelees, whil I have tyme and space,
 Er that I ferther in this tale pace,
 Me thynketh it acordaunt to resoun
 To telle yow al the condicioun
 Of ech of hem, so as it semed me,
 And whiche they weren, and of what degree,
 And eek in what array that they were inne;
 And at a knyght than wol I first bigynne.*

When April with his showers sweet with fruit
 The drought of March has pierced unto the root
 And bathed each vein with liquor that has power
 To generate therein and sire the flower;
 When Zephyr also has, with his sweet breath,
 Quickened again, in every holt and heath,
 The tender shoots and buds, and the young sun
 Into the Ram one half his course has run,
 And many little birds make melody
 That sleep through all the night with open eye
 (So Nature pricks them on to ramp and rage)-
 Then do folk long to go on pilgrimage,
 And palmers to go seeking out strange strands,
 To distant shrines well known in sundry lands.
 And specially from every shire's end
 Of England they to Canterbury wend,
 The holy blessed martyr there to seek
 Who helped them when they lay so ill and weak.

Befell that, in that season, on a day
 In Southwark, at the Tabard, as I lay
 Ready to start upon my pilgrimage
 To Canterbury, full of devout homage,
 There came at nightfall to that hostelry
 Some nine and twenty in a company

Of sundry persons who had chanced to fall
 In fellowship, and pilgrims were they all
 That toward Canterbury town would ride.
 The rooms and stables spacious were and wide,
 And well we there were eased, and of the best.
 And briefly, when the sun had gone to rest,
 So had I spoken with them, every one,
 That I was of their fellowship anon,
 And made agreement that we'd early rise
 To take the road, as you I will apprise.

But none the less, whilst I have time and space,
 Before yet farther in this tale I pace,
 It seems to me accordant with reason
 To inform you of the state of every one
 Of all of these, as it appeared to me,
 And who they were, and what was their degree,
 And even how arrayed there at the inn;
 And with a knight thus will I first begin.



4 Now answer the questions below.

- What is the most popular time of the year for pilgrimages?
- Where do most pilgrims in England choose to go on pilgrimages?
- Where does Chaucer, the narrator, meet the pilgrims?
- Why is Chaucer there?
- How many people does he meet?
- What will Chaucer do before the journey begins?



5 Now read the description, in modern English, of the Prioress and summarize it in your own words (max 150).



There was also a nun, a prioress,
 Who, in her smiling, modest was and coy;
 Her greatest oath was but "By Saint Eloy!"
 And she was known as Madam Eglantine.
 Full well she sang the services divine,
 Intoning through her nose, becomingly;
 And fair she spoke her French, and fluently,
 After the school of Stratford-at-the-Bow,
 For French of Paris was not hers to know.
 At table she had been well taught withal,
 And never from her lips let morsels fall,
 Nor dipped her fingers deep in sauce, but ate
 With so much care the food upon her plate
 That never dribble fell upon her breast.
 In courtesy she had delight and zest.
 Her upper lip was always wiped so clean

That in her cup was no **iota** seen
 Of grease, when she had drunk her **draught** of wine.
Becomingly she reached for meat to dine.
 And certainly delighting in good sport,
 She was right pleasant, amiable- in short.

.....
 But, to say something of her moral sense,
 She was so charitable and piteous
 That she would weep if she but saw a mouse
 Caught in a trap, though it were dead or **bled**.
 She had some little dogs, too, that she fed
 On roasted flesh, or milk and fine white bread.
 But **sore** she'd weep if one of them were dead,
 Or if men smote it with a rod to smart:
 For pity ruled her, and her tender heart.
 Right decorous her **pleated wimple** was;
 Her nose was fine; her eyes were blue as glass;
 Her mouth was small and therewith soft and red;
 But certainly she had a fair forehead;
 It was almost a full span broad, I **own**,
 For, truth to tell, she was not undergrown.
 Neat was her **cloak**, as I was well aware.
 Of coral small about her arm she'd bear
 A **string of beads** and **gauded** all with green;
 And therefrom hung a **brooch** of golden **sheen**
 Whereon there was first written a crowned "A",
 And under, Amor Vincit Omnia.

GLOSSARY



<p>becomingly: in an appropriate way</p> <p>to bleed (bled-bleed): to lose blood because of a wound or injury</p> <p>brooch: piece of jewellery on a pin</p> <p>cloak: sleeveless coat that fastens at the neck and hangs loosely from the shoulders, worn especially in the past</p> <p>coy: appearing or pretending to be shy and innocent; coquettish</p> <p>to dip: to put quickly into a liquid and then remove</p> <p>divine: connected with God</p> <p>draught: amount swallowed</p> <p>dribble: small amount of liquid from a person's mouth</p> <p>gauded: adorned</p> <p>iota: (here) tiny piece</p>	<p>morsel: small amount or piece of food</p> <p>oath: swear word or phrase, used to express anger or surprise</p> <p>to own: (here) to admit that something is true</p> <p>pleated wimple: </p> <p>sheen: quality of being soft, smooth and shiny</p> <p>sore: (here) sure</p> <p>Stratford-at-the-Bow: site of a Benedictine nunnery, presumably where the Prioress was educated</p> <p>string of beads: </p> <p>was not hers to know: she did not know</p> <p>withal: despite that; nevertheless</p> <p>zest: enthusiasm</p>
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6 Re-read the text and answer the questions below, discussing them with your classmates.

- What qualities do you usually associate with a nun?
- Chaucer calls the nun 'Madam Eglantine'. What quality does the name suggest?
- How does the nun wish to appear?

- d. Why does Chaucer underline the way she feels about animals?
- e. Is it usual for a nun to wear jewels?
- f. What kind of love do you think the engraving on the medal refers to?
- g. Does Chaucer like her or not? Give reasons.



7

Below is an adapted version of The Pardoner's Tale with seven parts removed. Which sentence (1-7) best completes each space (a-g)?

The Pardoner's Tale

There was once a group of three young men in **Flanders** who spent their entire time **gambling**, drinking, dancing and visiting **brothels**. **a.**

One night the three men were drinking in a tavern when they heard the sound of a bell, which meant that a **corpse** was being carried to its **grave**. One of the men asked his servant, "Go and find out whose corpse it is."

The servant replied,

"I already know that. It is your old friend. He was suddenly killed last night by a **sneaky** thief named Death, a very dangerous man."

The host of the tavern agreed,

"That's right, everybody was killed by Death in a village near here, during the **Plague**."

"Death! We must go and find him!" said one of the three friends.

"Yes, I'm not afraid! Let's **avenge** our friend!" added another.

So the three **revellers** decided to find Death and kill him. Drunk and angry they left in the direction of the village. When they had travelled about half a mile, they met a poor old man. **b.**

"God be with you, Lords!", the old man replied politely. "I'm old and tired and have been travelling for years in vain, looking for a young man who wants to exchange his youth for my old age; but nobody wants me, not even Death!"

One of the three friends then whispered to the others,

"He knows Death! He might even be his friend. Let's ask him about that!"

So they asked the old man where he had last seen Death.

The old man answered,

"Under an **oak tree** not far from here."

The three men rushed to the **spot** and to their surprise found eight purses of gold coins! They were extremely happy at their **stroke of luck** and decided to keep the gold. But they decided to move the treasure at night to avoid being accused of robbery.

"Let's draw **straws** to decide who goes to the town to buy food and wine, while the two others guard the treasure."

The youngest of the men drew the shortest straw and left towards the town. As soon as he had gone, the other two started conspiring. **c.**

"If we kill him when he returns, we'll be able to divide his **share** between us." suggested the first young man.

While the youngest man was approaching the nearest village, he, too, was thinking of keeping the entire treasure for himself. **d.**

So he went to a chemist's and bought some very strong poison. **e.**

With that he then poisoned the wine in two of the bottles but kept the third one clean for himself.

He then returned to the others, but as soon as he arrived, they killed him. **f.**

The two sat down satisfied.

"Let's have a rest now and drink some wine. We'll hide our friend's body later." **g.**

They drank all the wine and fell dead in terrible pain. They had been looking for Death and they finally found it!

So the Pardoner ended his story saying,

“Wickedness, greed, gambling and lust will send you to Hell! My dear pilgrims, desist from avarice and buy my pardons to save your souls.”

He promised to put down their names on his prayer roll and absolve them by his holy power.

“You, Host, are certainly the most sinful! Make your offer first!”

At this the Host got furious and insulted the Pardoner. Luckily, the good Knight resolved the quarrel and restored normality, and the company of pilgrims could continue on their way to Canterbury.

1. According to the plan they had devised, one started to fight with him and the other stabbed him in the back.
2. “I’ll buy some strong poison and three bottles of wine. I will then mix the poison with the wine in two bottles and keep a third one pure. I will offer the two poisoned bottles to my friends and drink from the third one.”
3. “Look at him!”, said one of the young men. “How old and ugly he is! It is time for him to die!” said another of the revellers angrily.
4. “This is the strongest I sell. It can kill any kind of animal!” the chemist said.
5. One of the three men took the bottles of wine, opened one and started drinking, then passed it to his friend.
6. “Here is a treasure we can divide between the two of us. That would mean more gold for each of us...,” said one. “That’s not possible; he knows we have the gold,” replied the other.
7. They used to drink a lot, and as you know, many bad actions come from wine. A drunken Herod ordered innocent John the Baptist to be killed. Do not indulge in gluttony, because violence and sins come from wine. Remember Lot, who committed incest because he was drunk, and Samson, who revealed his secret to Delilah because of too much wine,” said the Pardoner.

GLOSSARY



to avenge: to react to a wrong by punishing or hurting the wrongdoer

brothel: place where people pay to have sex with a prostitute

Flanders: medieval principality, now divided between Belgium, France and the Netherlands

gambling: betting money on card games


gluttony: eating or drinking to excess

grave: 

greed: excessive desire for something not really needed

Lot: biblical character whose two daughters got him drunk, had sex with him and eventually gave birth to two sons

lust: very strong desire for

oak tree: 

Plague: bubonic plague (also known as the Black Death), an infectious disease that killed millions of people during the Middle Ages

poison: substance that can kill when eaten or drunk

prayer roll: list of people to pray for

quarrel: angry disagreement

reveller: person celebrating with others in a noisy way, often with alcohol

Samson's secret: it lay in his long hair which gave him superhuman strength

share: part

sinful: immoral

sneaky: doing things in a secret and unfair way

spot: place

stabbed: pushed a knife into

straws: 

stroke of luck: unexpected fortunate event

wickedness: immorality



8

From memory, can you write what the sentences below suggest? If not, check in the text.

- a. What the three revellers were doing.
- b. Where they were.
- c. What they heard.
- d. Who the dead man was.
- e. Who killed him.
- f. Where the three revellers went.
- g. Who they met.
- h. What they asked him.
- i. What they found under an oak tree.
- j. Which of the three went to town.
- k. What he bought.
- l. What the other two planned to do.
- m. How these two died.



9

Are the following statements true or false? Correct the false ones.

- | | T | F |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. The three friends were on a pilgrimage. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. They stopped at a tavern to spend the night. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. A friend of theirs had been killed by a thief named Death. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. The host told them where to find the killer of their friend. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. They were afraid of the murderer. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. They left to find him. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. They met an ugly old man. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. They spoke to him politely. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. He told them where to find Death. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. They found Death under an oak tree. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. The youngest of the three decided to poison his friends. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. He was killed by them. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. The two kept the treasure for themselves. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



10

Act it out! In groups act out these scenes from The Pardoner's Tale in front of the class.

SCENE 1. At the Tavern. Characters: Revellers (2) – servant – host

Reveller 1: ask about the corpse

Servant: answer saying you know who he is

Reveller 2: ask about Death

Host: answer

SCENE 2. The old man. Characters: Revellers (3) – old man

Reveller 1: point at the old man and comment on his appearance

Reveller 2: talk to the old man rudely saying he is too old and should die.

Old man: answer that you know you are old; mention Death saying even Death doesn't want you

Reveller 3: tell your friend you suspect the old man knows Death

Old man: say where you last saw Death

NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE (1804-1864)

Nathaniel Hawthorne was born on July 4, 1804 in Salem, Massachusetts. The town was home to the infamous **witch trials** of 1692, and was Hawthorne's favorite setting for his novel's plots. Indeed, two of his most famous novels, *The Scarlet Letter* and *The House of Seven Gables*, were set there.

Some of Hawthorne's earliest **ancestors** were among those who persecuted and interrogated the presumed witches during the Salem trials, and their actions apparently **haunted** Nathaniel, while the rich, **shady** history of Salem itself gave his novels a shadowy atmosphere. There is a popular story that, in the effort to distinguish himself from his predecessors, Nathaniel changed his name from the family spelling of "Hathorne" to "Hawthorne."

Little is known about his early life. What we do know is that he **was** quite **fond of** poets, such as Shakespeare and Milton, and also of being alone with nature. It was during this early period of his life that he began taking his writing abilities seriously. Although his editorial beginnings were not financially good, Hawthorne was able to establish himself as a **professional**. In 1842, at the age of thirty-six, Nathaniel married Sophia Peabody; they had three children - two daughters and a son. For a short time, Nathaniel moved his family abroad to Liverpool, England, while he was the U.S. Consul there, and where he met England's famous playwright and poet, Robert Browning. During his lifetime he became friends with President Franklin Pierce and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (poet, writer and educator). He died on May 19, 1864. His wife continued on some of his works until her death in 1871.

Hawthorne is best-known today for his many short stories (he called them 'tales') and his four major novels of 1850-60: *The Scarlet Letter* (1850), *The House of the Seven Gables* (1851), *The Blithedale Romance* (1852), and *The Marble Faun* (1860). Another **book-length novel**, *Fanshawe*, was published anonymously in 1828.

Before publishing his first collection of tales in 1837, Hawthorne wrote many short stories and **sketches**, publishing them anonymously or pseudonymously in periodicals. It was only after collecting a number of his short stories into the two-volume *Twice-Told Tales* in 1837 that he began to attach his own name to his works. *Tanglewood Tales* (1853) was a re-writing of some of the most famous ancient Greek myths in a volume for children.



GLOSSARY

ancestor: family relation who lived long ago

book-length novel: novel as long as a book

to be fond of: with a liking or affection for

to haunt: (used of ghosts, spirits) to visit repeatedly

professional: person in a job requiring special training and high level of education

shady: probably dishonest or illegal

sketch: short report or story giving only basic details of events

trial: formal examination of evidence in court by a judge, and often a jury, to decide the guilt or innocence of the accused

witch: woman believed to have magic powers, especially to do evil things

MOVING
DEEPER

The Salem Witch Trials, 1692

The seeds of the hysteria that afflicted Salem Village, Massachusetts, were **sown** in January 1692 when a group of young girls began to display bizarre behavior. The community could not explain the convulsive **seizures**, blasphemous screaming and trance-like states that afflicted the girls. The physicians called in to examine them could find no natural cause for their disturbing behavior. If the source of the affliction was not attributable to a physical illness, the community reasoned, then it must be the work of Satan. Witches had invaded Salem.

In February, the village began praying and **fasting** in order to **rid itself** of the devil's influence. The girls were pressured to reveal who in the community controlled their behavior. Three women were identified and examined. One, Tituba (a slave), confessed to seeing the devil, who appeared to her "sometimes like a **hog** and sometimes like a great dog." Even more **troubling**, Tituba confessed that a conspiracy of witches permeated Salem Village.

In March, the afflicted girls accused Martha Corey. The three women previously denounced as colluding with the devil were marginal to the community, but Martha Corey was different. She was an **upstanding** member of the Puritan congregation, so the discovery that she was a witch demonstrated how Satan's influence had reached to the very core of the community. Events grew more and more serious as the accusatory atmosphere intensified. During the period from March into the **fall**, many more women (and men) were **charged**, examined, **tried** and condemned to death.

The **hangings** started in June with the death of Bridget Bishop and continued through September. As winter approached, criticism of the procedures grew. In October, the colonial governor dissolved the local Court of inquiry and the **convictions** and condemnations for witchery stopped. Nineteen victims of the witch-hunt had been hanged, one **crushed** to death under the weight of stones and at least four died in prison awaiting trial.

GLOSSARY



conviction: (here) act of a court finding a person guilty of a crime

to charge: to accuse a person formally of a crime so that there can be a trial in court

to crush: to press or squeeze a person and kill them

fall: (AmE) autumn

to fast: to eat little or no food for a period of time, especially for religious or health reasons

hanging: execution by being suspended by the neck

hog: a big domestic swine (pig)

to rid oneself of: to free oneself of (something undesirable)

seizure: sudden attack of an illness, especially one that affects the brain

to sow (sowed-sown): (here) to introduce or spread ideas, especially ones that cause trouble

troubling: causing worry

to try: to examine evidence in court and decide whether a person is innocent or guilty

upstanding: honourable, honest and morally upright

● The Birthmark (1843)

PLOT OVERVIEW

Aylmer, a scientist, marries Georgiana, a beautiful woman with a small birthmark on her **cheek**. Since the mark is red, it nearly disappears when she **blushes**, but stands out **starkly** when her face is pale. The mark is shaped like a tiny human hand. Many of Georgiana's admirers love the mark, but others call it a bloody sign that destroys her beauty.

Her husband, Aylmer, finds himself in the **latter** group after they are married. The mark seems to be more and more intolerable to him with every day that passes, becoming a symbol of the imperfection of Man, and horrifying him.

One day, Georgiana reminds Aylmer of a dream he had the previous night. Aylmer remembers that in the dream, he was with his assistant Aminadab, a rude and very physical man. They were attempting to remove the birthmark, but the deeper the knife went, the deeper the mark **sank**, until it appeared to have **grasped** Georgiana's heart. Aylmer feels guilty about the dream, but his wife tells him that if there is the remotest chance that the mark might be removed, she will take it.

The next day, the two move into apartments that Aylmer uses as a laboratory. There, Aylmer tries to calm his wife by showing her certain phenomena. Each show, however, turns into a small failure. To entertain herself in his laboratory, Georgiana turns to reading Aylmer's journal of experiments. She realizes that, compared to his original aims, her husband's successes are failures. Aylmer finds her in tears over the journal.

After reassuring her, Aylmer departs to his laboratory, but Georgiana follows him to tell him that her birthmark has been **giving off** a sensation that makes her **restless**. Entering the laboratory, she witnesses her husband working, pale and anxious. After looking at her, Aylmer pulls her away, asking if she has no trust in her husband. Georgiana wants him to tell her the true risk of the experiment. She tells him that she would drink whatever he gives her, even if it is poison, if offered by his hand.

Her husband returns with some fluid and assures her that it cannot fail. He tests the fluid on a plant, and the two watch as the **blotches** on its petals disappear. Georgiana drinks the potion and almost immediately falls asleep.

As time passes, the mark on her cheek seems to **fade**. Aylmer is happy, as he believes he has succeeded – but when he awakens Georgiana, she murmurs that she is dying.

GLOSSARY



• blotch: irregular mark on skin, plants, material, etc.	• to grasp: to take a firm hold of someone/something
• to blush: to become red in the face, especially from embarrassment or shame	• latter: the second (of two)
• cheek: either side of the face below the eyes	• restless: unable to relax or be still
• to fade: to become paler or less bright	• to sink (sank-sunk): to go down below the surface towards the bottom of a liquid or soft substance
• to give (gave-given) off: emanate	• starkly: strongly

THEMES

Georgiana's mark is seen as an external sign of her human condition. To be human, the story suggests, is to be imperfect. Science, which attempts to control and manipulate nature, aspires to a notion of reality which is too idealistic. When Aylmer attempts to remove the mark of nature, he is also opposing the original act of creation.

Hawthorne also introduces cultural elements from the time. For example, Aylmer's dominance over Georgiana exemplifies prevalent **gender** roles in the nineteenth century, and she becomes **the prototype of the good wife**, who is **his willing subject**, even in the face of death.

Aylmer, on the other hand, can be regarded both as a heartless scientist seeking the impossible, but also as a loving husband who believes his wife deserves nothing less than perfection. Hawthorne is critical of Aylmer's actions at the close of the tale. This can be interpreted as criticism of man's attempts to control nature or women.

Some have observed a **similarity between Aylmer and vampires**, which were among the most well-known characters in nineteenth-century romanticism. Like in vampire myths, the victim, Georgiana, participates in her own destruction.

The symbolism of the birthmark is open to a variety of interpretations. Aylmer views the mark as the symbol of his wife's **liability** to sin, **sorrow**, **decay** and death. There may also be a connection between the "bloody" mark and menstruation. At the time, menstruation was considered a mysterious and secret subject, unclean, requiring **seclusion**, toxic to others and **hindering** certain labors. Aylmer's disdain for the birthmark **arises** only after the couple are married, which gives a sexual undertone to the birthmark as well.

Aylmer's assistant Aminadab is contrasted sharply with his master. Though he is physically equipped to assist Aylmer, he cannot understand the experiments. At the end of the tale, Aminadab laughs once in **delight** at the success of the experiment, and once again when Georgiana dies. Aminadab's name is also considered a variant of Amminadab, a high priest and a **Levite** in the Bible. If Hawthorne indeed meant to link the two characters, the story's crude assistant could be viewed as representative of a religion that, although in decline, **retains** greater respect for human life than does "amoral science".

GLOSSARY



to arise (arose-arisen): to happen; to start to exist

decay: decomposition

delight: joy, extreme pleasure

gender: personal sexual identity of an individual (not biological or visible)

to hinder: to prevent the development or progress of

Levite: in Jewish tradition, member of the Hebrew tribe of Levi.

liability to: (here) being subject to suffer from

to retain: to continue to have, to keep

seclusion: state of being private or having little contact with others

sorrow: feeling of great sadness

willing subject: person happy or ready to do something without needing to be persuaded



11

The following passage deals with Georgiana's feelings about her husband, who is determined to take the birthmark off her face – no matter what it takes. Underline the words and phrases that describe her feelings, then discuss the two statements below.

She considered the character of Aylmer, and did it completer justice than at any previous moment. Her heart exulted, while it trembled, at his honorable love – so pure and lofty that it would accept nothing less than perfection nor miserably make itself contented with an earthlier nature than he had dreamed of. She felt how much more precious was such a sentiment than that meaner kind which would have borne with the imperfection for her sake, and have been guilty of treason to holy love by degrading its perfect idea to the level of the actual; and with her whole spirit she prayed that, for a single moment, she might satisfy his highest and deepest conception. Longer than one moment she well knew it could not be; for his spirit was ever on the march, ever ascending, and each instant required something that was beyond the scope of the instant before.

- Georgiana's commitment to her husband is a good thing; every wife should try everything to please her husband.
- Alymer is forcing Georgiana to do things he, not she, wants.

GLOSSARY



to tremble: to shake in an uncontrollable way
 lofty: exalted; very high and impressive
 earthly: terrestrial, not divine or spiritual
 treason: (here) betrayal; deliberate disloyalty
 scope: (here) aim, purpose

EDGAR ALLAN POE (1809-1849)

Edgar Poe was born on 19th January 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts, U.S.A. where his mother, Elizabeth Arnold Poe, worked as an actress. He was the grandson of Baltimore Revolutionary War patriot, David Poe Sr. His father disappeared a short time after his birth and his mother died of tuberculosis when he was only two. Fortunately, Edgar was brought up by the Allans, who lived in Richmond, West Virginia. Even though they never adopted him, he took their surname.

John Allan was a tobacco merchant and was able to give him a good education. Edgar attended school in America and in England and then entered the University of Virginia. He soon proved to be a good student, showed a deep interest in literature and became a member of the *Jefferson Literary Society*. Unfortunately, because of his gambling debts, he quarrelled with his foster father and was sent away from the family with no money. He had to leave his studies, went to Boston and in 1827 entered the army under the name of Edgar A. Perry. When Mrs Allan was dying, there was some sort of reconciliation and his foster father started helping him financially again. That allowed him to leave the army after serving in it for two years and enter West Point Military Academy. He was expelled from it the following year, though.

Meanwhile, he published two volumes of poetry in Boston. When John Allan remarried and had a son, he sent Edgar no more money.

In 1832 Poe went to Baltimore, Maryland, where he lived with his widowed aunt, Maria Poe Clemm, who had **rented** a house at 3 Amity Street, later been transformed into a museum. It was then that Poe, so far a poet, decided to write short stories and won the \$50 prize offered by a Baltimore newspaper for best short story. The winning story was called *MS Found in a Bottle*. Another volume of poetry was published in 1832 and five of his prose tales appeared in *The Philadelphia Saturday Courier*.

Poe lived in Baltimore until 1835, then he moved to Richmond, Virginia, to **edit** the Southern Literary Messenger. In 1836 he **sent for** Maria and Virginia Clemm, who were in financial difficulties. He and Virginia got married when he was 27 and she was only 13. Poe was always devoted to his wife.

In 1838 his book *Arthur Gordon Pym* was published. In the same year he moved to Philadelphia, where he lived until 1844. We have little information about that period. We know that he was an editor of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine* from July 1839 to June 1840, and of *Graham's Magazine* from April 1841 to May 1842.

Those were difficult years: it was very hard for him to **earn a living** for his three-member family. In April 1844, Poe went to New York where he worked for the *New York Evening Mirror*. Meanwhile other poems and tales were published. He also joined C. F. Briggs to publish *The Broadway Journal*.

The year 1846 was tragic: *The Broadway Journal* failed, and Virginia became very ill. Poe rented a little cottage at Fordham, where he lived for three years. In 1847 his wife died, leaving him sad and **addicted to** alcohol, whose effects were terrible on him. He took an interest in numerous women and decided to marry his first love, Mrs Sarah Elmira Shelton, at that time a widow. He never married her, though, as he was found unconscious in Baltimore, while he was travelling north. He died after three days, on Sunday, 7th October 1849, but the circumstances of his death remain a mystery. He was **buried** in the **graveyard** of Westminster Presbyterian Church in Baltimore.

Poe was a poet, a journalist, a literary critic, a writer of long tales and short stories. Here are a few.

- **Poems:** *Tamerlane, Al Aaraaf, Lenore, Israfel, The Raven, A Valentine, Ulalume, An Enigma, For Annie, To My Mother, Annabel Lee.*
- **Long tales:** *The Murders In The Rue Morgue, The Mystery Of Marie Roget, The Gold Bug, The Narrative Of Arthur Gordon Pymm Of Nantucket.*
- **Short stories:** *Ms. Found In A Bottle (1833), The Fall Of The House Of Usher, The Masque Of The Red Death (1842), The Pit And The Pendulum (1842), Ligeia, A Descent Into The Maelstrom, The Black Cat (1843), The Tell-Tale Heart (1843).*

GLOSSARY



• **addicted to:** incapable of stopping drinking

• **buried:** put in the ground during a funeral ceremony

• **churchyard:** area around/in front of a church where people are buried

• **earn a living:** earn money to live on

• **edit:** make a book or magazine ready to be published by correcting it

• **expelled:** sent away

• **foster father:** person that looks after a child as if he were his/her real father

• **gambling debts:** money you lose when you risk it in the hope of winning more

• **quarrelled:** had an argument

• **rented:** paid a monthly sum of money to live in a house which was not his

• **sent (send – sent – sent) for:** asked her to go to him

MOVING
DEEPER

Poe's theory of the short story

Poe and Hawthorne never met, but the conjunction of their two talents occasioned a crucial moment in the history of the short story. In addition to his activities as a poet and fiction writer, Poe was a remarkable literary critic. In 1842, he enthusiastically reviewed the then-obscure Hawthorne's first volume of short stories, *Twice-Told Tales*. In his influential review, Poe both recognized and articulated Hawthorne's powerfully innovative aesthetic. The defining characteristic of the short story, Poe affirmed, was its "unity of effect". The "skillful literary artist" should build a story carefully to create a "preconceived effect". In the whole composition there should be no word written of which the tendency, direct or indirect, is not to one pre-established design. What Poe essentially wanted was for short fiction be written in the manner of lyric poetry. Poets had traditionally aimed at integrating every element of style and theme to create a unified effect, but Poe's requirement was a revolutionary standard to apply to prose fiction, which had traditionally been more loosely constructed and casually executed. Poe's review also made another revolutionary gesture – not usually noted by later critics. He proclaimed the short story, previously the underdog of literary forms, to be the greatest prose genre – "unquestionably the fairest field for the exercise of the loftiest talent, which can be afforded by the wide domains of mere prose."

The short story's great advantage, Poe maintained, was its ideal length, which was ample enough to produce "an intense and enduring impression" but short enough to be experienced at one sitting to produce a temporary "exultation of the soul" in the reader. The short story's length allowed the artist the opportunity to unify the total work for a single effect – to transform it, that is, from a mere narrative into a perfectly integrated work of art.

GLOSSARY



- to aim: to have as an objective
- lofty: exalted
- loosely: not in a rigid or taut way
- to maintain: to strongly express a belief
- underdog: the weaker one (person, team etc), not expected to succeed and often treated badly

● *The Black Cat* (1843)

PLOT OVERVIEW

The story is presented in the first-person by an unreliable narrator, who tells us that from an early age he has loved animals. He and his wife have many pets, including a large black cat named Pluto. This cat is especially fond of the narrator, and vice versa. Their mutual friendship lasts for several years, until the narrator becomes an alcoholic. One night, after coming home drunk, he believes the cat is avoiding him. When he tries to seize it, the panicked cat bites him and he deliberately cuts out the cat's eye.

From then on, the cat runs away at his master's approaches. At first, the narrator is remorseful but then becomes irritated and, one day, he takes the cat out in the garden and hangs it from a tree, killing it. That night, his house mysteriously catches fire, forcing the narrator, his wife and their servant to flee.

The next day, the narrator returns to the ruins of his home to find, imprinted on the single wall that survived the fire, the figure of a gigantic cat, hanging by its neck from a rope.

At first, this image terrifies the narrator, but gradually he finds a logical explanation for it, and begins to miss Pluto. Some time later, he finds a similar cat in a tavern. It is the same size and color as the original and is even missing an eye. The only difference is a large white patch on its chest. The narrator takes the cat home, but soon begins to fear it. After a time, the white patch of fur begins to take shape and, to the narrator, forms the shape of the gallows.

Then, one day when the narrator and his wife are going to the **cellar** in their new home, he almost falls down the stairs when the cat gets under his feet and nearly **trips** him. In a fury, the man **grabs** an **axe** and tries to kill the cat, but is stopped by his wife. Angry, he kills her with the axe instead. To hide her body, he removes **bricks** from the wall, places her body in the space and closes the hole. When the police come to investigate, they find nothing and the narrator goes free. The cat, which he intended to kill as well, is missing.

On the last day of the investigation, the narrator accompanies the police into the cellar. Certain that his crime cannot be discovered, the narrator comments on the solidity of the building and raps on the wall he had built around his wife's body. A sound comes from behind the wall. The alarmed police **tear down** the wall and find the wife's corpse, and on her head, the black cat.

GLOSSARY



- **axe**: tool with a wooden handle and a heavy metal blade, used to chop wood, cut down trees, etc.
- **to bite (bit-bitten)**: to pierce the skin of with the teeth
- **brick**: individual block of baked clay used for building walls, houses, etc.
- **cellar**: underground room used for storage
- **to flee**: to leave very quickly, especially to avoid danger
- **gallows**: wooden structure used for execution by hanging
- **to grab**: to quickly take and hold with your hand
- **patch**: small area, especially one which is different from the area around it
- **rope**: very strong thick string made by twisting thinner strings, wires, etc. together
- **to seize**: to take possession of rapidly and forcibly
- **to tear (tore-torn) down**: to pull down or knock down
- **to trip**: to catch one's foot on something and fall or almost fall
- **unreliable**: cannot be trusted or depended on

THEMES

Poe's psychological insight anticipates the theories of Sigmund Freud, the Austrian founder of psychoanalysis and one of the twentieth century's most influential thinkers. The narrator uses **the alter ego** to separate himself from his insanity. He projects his inner **turmoil** onto his alter ego and is able to forget that the trouble **resides** within him. **The alter ego becomes a rival of the self** because its **resemblance** to the self is unmistakable. In *The Black Cat*, the narrator changes from a gentle animal lover into an evil cat-killer. The horror of *The Black Cat* derives from this sudden transformation and the cruel act – the narrator's killing of his cat Pluto – which accompanies it. Pluto's reincarnation as the second cat haunts the narrator's guilty conscience. Although the narrator wants to forget his murder of Pluto, a patch with the shape of the gallows appears in the color of the cat's **fur**. The fur symbolizes the **suppressed guilt** that **drives him insane** and causes him to murder his wife.

GLOSSARY



- **insight**: ability to see and understand the truth about people and situations
- **turmoil**: state of great anxiety and confusion
- **to reside**: to live in a particular place
- **resemblance**: similarity
- **fur**: soft thick mass of hair on the body of some animals
- **to drive (drove-driven) somebody insane**: to make someone lose their rational judgment

I do not expect anybody to believe what I'm going to tell you. I find it difficult to believe it myself. But tomorrow I'll die, and today I want to free my soul. I'm going to reveal a series of **household** events that have terrified and destroyed me.

Since my childhood I've always been **docile** and humane, with a kind heart. I was particularly fond of animals and my parents allowed me to have various pets. I spent most of my time with them and I was very happy when I was **feeding** and **stroking** them. Even when I grew up, I continued to take pleasure in it. I don't need to explain that kind of satisfaction to those who are fond of dogs. There is something that goes directly to the heart in the **unselfish** and self-sacrificing love of a dog.

I got married early and I was happy to see that my wife was like me. We had birds, goldfish, a fine dog, rabbits, a small monkey and a cat.

The cat was big and beautiful, all black, and very intelligent. Even though my wife was not superstitious at all, various times she mentioned an ancient popular **belief**, according to which, black cats were **witches in disguise**. Pluto – this was the cat's name – was my favourite pet and playmate. I fed him and he followed me everywhere. It was even difficult to stop him following me through the streets.

Our friendship lasted this way for several years, but then my character changed for the worse. Little by little I became more nervous, more moody and I **cared less for** others. I became rude to my wife, even violent. I ill-treated all the animals, except Pluto. But my disease – Alcohol is a disease – grew upon me and, in the end, even Pluto began to experience the effects of my ill personality.

One night, returning home drunk from town, I imagined that the cat **avoided** me. I **seized** him and he, frightened, bit my hand. Immediately, the fury of a devil possessed me. I no longer knew myself. It was as if my soul had left my body. I took a **penknife** from my pocket and I cut one of the cat's eyes out of its **socket**!

When reason returned in the morning, I experienced a sentiment half of horror, half of remorse for my crime. But my soul remained evil and I again started drinking heavily. Meantime, the cat slowly got better. The socket of his lost eye was awful, but he didn't seem to be suffering any longer. He went about the house as usual, but ran away in terror every time he saw me. At the beginning I suffered because of this, but this feeling soon **turned into** irritation.

And then came the feeling of **PERVERSENESS**. I am convinced that perverseness is one of the primitive impulses of the human heart. Who has not committed a stupid action only because he should *not*? It was the wish of my soul to **vex** itself – to do wrong for wrong's **sake** only – that made me continue.

One morning, in cold blood, I slipped a **noose** about his neck and hanged him on the branch of a tree – hanged him with tears in my eyes – hanged him because he had loved me and because he had never offended me – hanged him because I knew I was committing a **sin**.

That night I was woken by the noise of fire. My bed was in flames. The whole house was on fire. It was with difficulty that my wife, a servant and myself escaped from it. The destruction was complete. I lost everything I had.

The day after the fire, I visited the ruins. The walls, with one exception, had fallen into the ground. This exception was a wall, not very thick, which stood about the middle of the house. It was the wall against which the head of my bed had been positioned. Here, the **plastering** had resisted the action of the fire. There were a lot of people examining it carefully. The words 'strange!', 'singular!' attracted my attention. I went close to the place and saw, as if **engraved** upon the white wall, the figure of a gigantic cat. There was a rope around the animal's neck.

At first, my wonder and terror were extreme. But then I started to think. Maybe someone, alarmed by the fire, had seen the cat hung in the garden near my house. Maybe they had cut it from the tree and thrown it into my bedroom. It had **stuck** to the wall, that had recently been plastered. The plaster, not completely dry, and the **ammonia** from the **carcass** had formed the figure I saw. Despite this possible explanation, for months I could not **get rid** of the phantasm of the cat. During this period I started feeling a half-sentiment of remorse again. I even missed the animal and I started to look for another pet of the same species.

One night, as I was sitting half-drunk in an **infamous** place, I suddenly saw a black object on one of the very big containers of gin. I walked to it and touched it with my hand. It was a black cat – a very large one – as large as Pluto. It was very similar to him except for one detail. Pluto had had no white hair on his body, but this cat had a big but indefinite area of white hair. It nearly covered his whole breast.

When I touched the cat, it immediately arose, **purred** loudly, **rubbed** against my hand and seemed pleased with my attentions. This, then, was the creature I was looking for. At once,

I offered to buy it of the landlord; but he said he had never seen the cat before. I continued to stroke it, and, when I started to walk home, the animal accompanied me. I allowed it to come with me, and I touched it now and then. At home, it domesticated itself immediately and became a great favourite with my wife.

For my own part, I soon started to feel a dislike within myself. It was just the opposite of what I had expected. The cat grew fond of me and that annoyed and disgusted me. Little by little, my feelings turned into **hatred**. It was only the memory of my **previous** cruelty that prevented me from being violent with it. But I hated its presence and I avoided it. My hatred grew further when one morning I discovered that, like Pluto, one of its eyes had been cut out. This fact, however, made the cat even dearer to my wife. She still had the humanity of feeling I had lost long before. While my hatred of the cat was growing, its love for me seemed to grow. It followed me, sat near my chair, jumped upon my knees, rubbed against me. I wished to destroy it but the memory of my cruelty and the fear of the animal blocked me.

This fear was not exactly the fear of physical evil. I am almost ashamed to say – yes, even in this cell – that the fear, the terror was increased by what my wife had shown me. She had often drawn my attention to the mark of white hair on the cat's breast. It had originally been large but very indefinite. **By degrees**, it had become more and more distinct and it was now the representation of an object I am afraid to name – the image of a terrible thing – the **GALLOWS!** Oh! Terrible engine of Horror and Crime – of Agony and Death.

A beast – whose similar I had destroyed – a beast that procured me – a man made in the image of the High God – so much **woe!** I could rest no more either by day or by night. I was scared of finding the breath of the thing on my face – a nightmare upon my heart! Under all that pressure, all the good in me died. I could only have the darkest and most evil thoughts. I hated all things and human beings, and my wife became the usual and most patient of my victims. We had become very poor and had to live in an old building now. One day my wife accompanied me into the cellar. The cat followed me down the **steep** stairs and nearly made me fall down. Forgetting my fear, I lifted an **axe** to hit the animal. I was stopped by the hand of my wife, though. That made me even more furious and I hit her on the head with the axe. She fell dead upon the spot without a cry.

With determination, I started hiding the body. I could not remove it from the house: a neighbour might see me. Many projects came into my mind: I could cut the body up and burn it, or **dig** a grave in the floor of the cellar, or pack it in a box. Finally, I decided to **wall it up** in the cellar, as the monks of the Middle Ages used to do.

The walls of the cellar were particularly suited to my purpose, as they were **loosely** built. The recent **plaster** was quite rough; besides, it had not **hardened** properly because of the humidity. In one of the walls there had originally been a fireplace, later filled up. This way it looked like the other walls of the cellar. I could easily take away the bricks there, insert the body and wall it up again.

I was right. I did everything and made the structure exactly as it had been before. When I had finished, I was satisfied that everything was all right. The wall showed no sign of modification. My next step was to look for the beast that had been the cause of all that. In fact, I had decided to kill it, too. I would have done it if I had found it. But it had disappeared, maybe frightened by my violence. Its absence **relieved** me very much and allowed me to sleep very well. Yes, I slept, even with the memory of my murder.

Two nights went by and the cat still had not come back. Once again I felt relieved. The monster, the horror had gone forever! I couldn't have been happier! The murder I had committed did not disturb me very much. The police had investigated a little, but I had answered their questions. They had started a **search** but they could not find anything. I looked at my future happiness! On the fourth day after the murder, some policemen came to the house and started investigating the **premises**. I was still certain they couldn't find anything, though. They asked

me to accompany them and searched everywhere. I felt calm and behaved normally. The policemen were satisfied and were going to leave the place. My happiness was so great that I had to add a word of triumph, to assure them of my innocence again.

'Gentlemen', I said at last, as they were walking up the stairs. 'I'm happy you are satisfied with your investigation. I wish you a good day. You see, this is a well-built house, I may say an excellently built house. These walls – are you going, gentlemen? – these walls are solid.' At that point, with a stick, I hit the part of the wall where I had buried my wife.

As soon as I did it, a voice from the wall – a cry, at first like the sobbing of a child and then rising into a long scream that had something inhuman in it, a scream half of horror and half of triumph, that seemed to come from hell – answered me.

I cannot describe my thoughts. Nearly fainting, I staggered to the opposite wall. For a moment the others remained still, with a terrified expression. After a while, they started demolishing the wall. The body, already decaying, stood erect before the eyes of the policemen. Upon its head, with a red, wide mouth and eyes of fire, sat the cat that had made me a murderer and would now send me to the hangman. I had walled the monster up in my wife's tomb.

GLOSSARY



ammonia: poisonous gas/liquid with an unpleasant smell	plaster: paste that becomes hard when it dries, used to cover walls and ceilings
axe: tool used for cutting wood	plastering: substance spread on the walls to form a hard surface
avoided: tried not to be seen by	premises: place, building, rooms
belief: conviction, feeling that something is true	previous: ex, of before
by degrees: little by little	purred: made a quiet continuous sound that showed it was happy
cared for: loved, did the necessary things for	relieved: made me feel better, lighter
carcass: body of a dead animal	rubbed: pressed and moved
decaying: rotting, decomposing	sake: purpose, aim
dig: make a hole in the ground	search: investigation to find somebody/ something
docile: quiet, easy to control	seized: caught, took
erect: in an upright, vertical position	sin: action that is wrong according to religion or to your morality
engraved: cut into a surface	sobbing: crying and taking short breaths
feeding: giving food	socket: hole containing the eye
gallows: frame where criminals are hanged	staggered: walked without control
get rid: free myself	steep: almost vertical
hangman: person in charge of hanging (killing at the gallows) people sentenced to death	stroking: caressing
hardened: become hard, solid	stuck (stick – stuck – stuck): fixed
hatred: very negative feeling, opposite of love	turned into: became, was transformed into
household: related to home	unselfish: generous
in disguise: wearing something that hides their identity	vex: annoy
infamous: with a bad reputation	wall up: put the body inside the wall and rebuild the wall
loosely: not precisely	witch: a woman who has magic powers
noose: piece of rope with a circle at the end	woe: sorrow, pain
penknife: small knife that folds into the handle	
perversness: determination to behave badly	

● *Eveline* (1914) by James Joyce

Eveline sat at the window watching the evening invade the avenue. She was tired. There were few people outside. A man passed on his way home. He lived in one of the new red houses at the end of the road. Once there used to be a field there. Then a man from Belfast had bought it and built houses, not like their little brown houses but bright brick ones with shining roofs. All the children of the avenue used to play in the field: the Devines, the Waters, the Dunns,

little Keogh the **cripple**, she and her brothers and sisters. Ernest, however, never played: he was too grown-up. Her father used often to **hunt them in** out of the field with his stick, but usually little Keogh **stood guard** and called out when he saw him coming. They were happy then. Her father was not so bad and, besides, her mother was still alive.

That was a long time ago. Now she and her brothers and sisters were all grown-up; her mother was dead and the Waters had gone back to England. Everything changes. And she, too, was going to go away like the others, to leave her home.

Home! She looked round the room, reviewing all the familiar objects which she had dusted once a week for so many years, wondering where on earth the dust came from. She had never found out the name of the priest whose yellowing photograph hung on the wall above the broken **harmonium** beside the coloured print of the promises made to **Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque**. She had consented to go away, to leave her home. Was that wise? She tried to **weigh** each side of the question. In her home she had food and shelter. She had her family, those who had known her all her life. Of course, she had to work hard, both in the house and at the **Stores**. What would they say about her at work, when they found out that she had run away with a man? They would say she was a fool, maybe, and look for another shop-assistant. Miss Gavan, the manageress, would be glad. She had always been **nasty** to her, especially whenever there were people listening: "Miss Hill, don't you see those ladies are waiting?" or "Look lively, Miss Hill, please." She would not cry many tears at leaving the Stores.

But in her new home, in a distant unknown country, it would not be like that. She would be married then, and people would treat her with respect. She would not be treated as her mother had been. Even now, although she was over nineteen, she sometimes felt herself in danger of her father's violence. That was the cause of her palpitations. Her father had never **gone for** her as he used to do with Ernest and Harry, because she was a girl. But lately he had begun to **threaten** her and she had nobody to protect her anymore. Ernest was dead and Harry, who was in the church-decorating business, was always somewhere else in the country. Besides, the squabble¹¹ for money on Saturday nights had become unbearable. She always gave her father her entire wages – seven shillings – and Harry always sent up what he could. The trouble was to get some money from him. Her father said that she **squandered** the money, that she had no head and he wasn't going to give her his hard-earned money to throw about the streets. He was fairly bad on Saturday night. In the end he gave her some money and she had to rush out as quickly as she could to do the shopping for Sunday's dinner. She had a hard time to keep the house together and look after the two young children that had been left under her **charge**. It was hard work and a hard life. But now that she was leaving it, it did not seem so bad.

She was about to explore another life with Frank. Frank was very kind, manly and open-hearted. She was going away with him by the night-boat to be his wife and live with him in Buenos Aires, where he had a home waiting for her. How well she remembered the first time she had seen him. He lived in a house on the main road where she used to visit. He was standing at the gate, his cap pushed back on his head and his face tanned. They had come to know each other. They used to meet outside the Stores every evening and walk together to her home. Once he took her to the opera. He was very fond of music and sang a little. First it had been an excitement for her to have a boyfriend, then she had begun to like him. He told her tales of distant countries. He had started as a **deck boy** on a ship going to Canada. He could list the names of all the ships he had been on and the different services he had done. He had travelled through the Straits of Magellan and told her stories of the terrible Patagonians. Then he had **fallen on his feet** in Buenos Aires, he said, and had come over to the old country just for a holiday. Of course her father had found out about their affair and had forbidden her to have anything to do with him: "I know these sailors", he said. One day he had quarrelled with Frank and after that she had to meet her lover secretly. It was darker outside. The white of two letters in her **lap** grew indistinct. One was to Harry, the other to her father. Ernest had always been her favourite but she liked Harry, too. Her

father was becoming old lately. He would miss her. Sometimes he could be very nice. Not long before, when she had been ill, he had read her a ghost story and made toast for her at the fire. Another day, when their mother was still alive, they had all gone for a picnic, and he had put on her mother's bonnet to make the children laugh.

The time was running out but she continued to sit by the window. Down the avenue she could hear a street organ playing. She knew the air. It was strange that it should come that very night to remind her of the promise made to her mother: that she would keep the family together as long as she could. The last night of her mother's illness she had heard a melancholy air of Italy coming from the street. The organ-player had been given sixpence and ordered to go away. She remembered her father saying: "Damned Italians! Coming over here!"

The pitiful vision of her mother's life, a life of sacrifices closing in final craziness, touched the deepest part of her being. She trembled as she heard again her mother's voice saying constantly with foolish insistence: "Deveraun Seraun! Deveraun Seraun!"

* *
*

She stood up in a sudden impulse of terror. Escape! She must escape! Frank would save her. He would give her life, perhaps love, too. But she wanted to live. She had a right to happiness. Frank would take her in his arms. He would save her.

She stood among the crowd in the station at the North Wall. He held her hand and she knew he was speaking to her, saying something about the passage over and over again. She caught a glimpse of the black mass of the boat, lying in beside the quay. She answered nothing. She felt her cheek pale and cold and prayed to God to direct her, to show her what was her duty. The boat blew a long mournful whistle into the mist. If she went, tomorrow she would be on the sea with Frank, sailing towards Buenos Aires. Their passage had been booked. Could she still draw back after all he had done for her? Her distress awoke nausea in her body and she kept moving her lips in silent fervent prayer.

A bell clanged, she felt him seize her hand: "Come!"

All the stormy seas of the world were raging in her heart. He was drawing her into them: he would drown her. She gripped both hands at the iron railing.

"Come!"

No! No! It was impossible. Her hands clutched the iron in a frenzy.

"Eveline! Evvy!"

He rushed beyond the barrier and called to her to follow him. She looked at him, white and passive like a helpless animal. Her eyes gave him no sign of love, or farewell or recognition.

GLOSSARY



Blessed Margaret Mary Alacoque: a French nun who had several visions of Christ, during which he made twelve promises of domestic security for all those who display a representation of the Sacred Heart in their homes.

charge: responsibility.

clutched: held firmly.

cripple: handicapped person.

deck boy: servant on a ship.

Deveraun Seraun: although these words sound like Gaelic, their meaning is not clear.

distress: the feeling of being unhappy and worried.

fallen (fall-fell-fallen) on his feet: had good luck.

frenzy: state of great anxiety.

harmonium: an instrument similar to an organ.

gone (go-went-gone) for: attacked (physically or verbally).

hunt them in: make them go back home.

lap: the front part of a seated person between the waist and the knees.

mournful: very sad.

nasty: mean, unpleasant.

North Wall: Dublin port.

passage: journey by ship.

quay: long platform beside the sea.

squandered: wasted.

stood (stand-stood-stood) guard: watched if somebody was coming.

squabble: argument.

Stores: the name of a department store.

threaten: menace.

weigh: consider.

UNIT 4 - DRAMA

B. ELIZABETHAN AND JACOBEAN DRAMA

■ WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE (1564-1664)

See Unit 1 online.

■ CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE (1564-1593)

Christopher Marlowe was born in 1564, the same year as William Shakespeare, in Canterbury, the son of a shoemaker. He was awarded a scholarship to Corpus Christi College in Cambridge and, possibly, while still at University, he became a secret agent for the Queen. He graduated in 1584 and got his master degree in 1587. In the same year, the first part of *Tamburlaine the Great* was played in London and it was a success. Marlowe's private life, with accusations of blasphemy, atheism and subversion, contributed to his success.

After *Tamburlaine the Great*, Marlowe continued to dramatise the aspirations of overreaching heroes whose bold defiance of social, political and religious morality, inspired both admiration and condemnation: *The Jew of Malta*, *Edward II* and *Dr Faustus*. When he was killed in a tavern, he had just finished his narrative poem *Hero and Leander*.

■ THOMAS KYD (1558-1594)

Thomas Kyd was born in London in 1558. He was arrested for heresy in 1593 because of his association with Christopher Marlowe, was probably tortured and died soon after his release. This is almost all the information available on Kyd.

The Spanish Tragedy was attributed to him by Thomas Heywood in his *Apology for Actors* (1612).

● RESTORATION COMEDY

Comedies written and performed between 1660 and 1710 are called **Restoration Comedies** because the period corresponds to the return to England of Charles II and to his reign. They are comedies of manners, with the main goal of **mocking** contemporary society.

One of the major themes is marriage and the game of love. However, if marriage is a mirror of society, the couples in the plays show something very dark and sinister about order. Many critiques of marriage that we see in the plays are devastating, and the game of love itself does not give much hope. Although the endings are happy and the man invariably gets the woman (or, at least, this is implied), there are also marriages without love and love affairs that are rebellious breaks with tradition. Restoration comedies range from **William Wycherley's** play, *The Country Wife* (1675), to **William Congreve's** play, *The Way of the World* (1700). In Congreve, marriage becomes a contractual agreement and **greed** more than love.



W. Congreve

GLOSSARY



greed: excessive desire for more (wealth, power, etc)

to mock: to make fun of, to treat with ridicule

TEXT 1. From *The Way of the World* by William Congreve: 'Discussing marriage conditions'.

In this extract from Act 4, Scene 5, Millamant and Mirabell discuss the conditions of their marriage.

MIRABELL: Have you any more conditions to offer? **Hitherto** your demands are pretty reasonable.

MILLAMANT: **Trifles**; as liberty to pay and receive visits to and from whom I please, to write and receive letters, without interrogatories or **wry** faces on your part; to wear what I please, and choose conversation with regard only to my own taste; to have no obligation upon me to converse with **wits** that I don't like, because they are your **acquaintance**, or to be intimate with fools, because they may be your relations. Come to dinner when I please, dine in my dressing-room when I'm out of humour, without giving a reason. To have my **closet** inviolate; to be sole **empress** of my tea-table, which you must never presume to approach without first asking leave. And lastly, wherever I am, you shall always knock at the door before you come in. These articles subscribed, if I continue to endure you a little longer, I may by degrees **dwindle** into a wife.

MIRABELL: Your **bill of fare** is something advanced in this latter account. Well, have I liberty to offer conditions: that when you are dwindled into a wife, I may not be beyond measure enlarged into a husband?

MILLAMANT: You have free leave: propose your **utmost**, speak and spare not.



Mirabell and Millamant in the 2008 RSC performance

GLOSSARY



acquaintance: person you know that is not a close friend
bill of fare: menu
closet: place to store things
to dwindle: to become gradually smaller in size or amount, or fewer in number

empress: the female ruler of an empire
hitherto: until now
trifle: thing of little value or importance
utmost: greatest amount possible
wit: clever and amusing person
wry: amused but annoyed or critical



1 Answer the following questions.

- a. What are Millamant's conditions?
- b. Is she asking for something immoral or is she affirming her independence?
- c. Is Mirabell's answer serious or ironical?
- d. Look at the last line. What is their relationship like?



2 Complete the comment below with the following words.

battle – conditions – feelings – relationship – seriousness – wits

It's comical to see the two (1) going at it, but, when we look deeper, there is an edge of (2) behind their words. After they list their (3), Mirabell says that he can be a tractable husband. Love may be the basis of their (4), as Mirabell appears honest; however, their alliance is a sterile romance, without the (5) we hope for in a courtship. Mirabell and Millamant are two wits perfect for each other in the (6) of the sexes; nevertheless, the pervading sterility and greed reverberates as their relationship becomes more confusing. But then, that is the way of the world.



3

Some rich or famous people make a contract before marrying. What are possible reasons for this and possible contractual conditions? What is your opinion of pre-marriage contracts?

C. OSCAR WILDE AND THE COMEDY OF SOCIETY

■ OSCAR WILDE (1854-1900)

Oscar Fingal O’Fhahertie Wills Wilde was born in Dublin in 1854 in an aristocratic family. He studied at Trinity College in Dublin and later at Magdalen College in Oxford. Brilliant classicist, he won the Newdigate Prize in 1878 for his poem *Ravenna*. He followed the Aesthetic Movement, declared himself a socialist and went on a lecture tour to the United States. In 1883, he attended the first night of his play *Vera* in New York, but it was unsuccessful. In 1888, he wrote *The Happy Prince and Other Fairy Tales* for his two sons, then in 1890 his only novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. He is best remembered for his plays, especially *An Ideal Husband* and *The Importance of Being Earnest* (both 1895).

He was prosecuted and imprisoned for homosexuality in 1895 and his poem *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (1898) was a reaction to the pain of imprisonment. On his release, in 1897, he went to Paris, where he died in 1900.

D. THE THEATRE OF THE ABSURD

■ SAMUEL BECKETT (1906-1989)

Irish-born, **Samuel Beckett** left Dublin for Paris after graduating at Trinity College in 1927 and met James Joyce. He won his first literary prize for his poem entitled *Whoroscope*. He then travelled through Ireland, France, England and Germany and continued to write poems and stories.

Beckett permanently made Paris his home in 1937. Shortly after moving there, he was stabbed in the street by a man who had begged him for money. During World War II, he joined the Resistance in Paris and remained in the group until 1942 when several members were arrested. At the end of the war, he soon reached the pinnacle of his writing career, producing *Waiting for Godot*, *Eleutheria*, *Endgame*, the novels *Malloy*, *Malone Dies*, *The Unnameable*, and *Mercier et Camier*.

All of Beckett’s major works were written in French and then translated by himself. Samuel Beckett also became one of the first absurdist playwrights to win international fame. In 1969, he received the Nobel Prize for Literature and continued to write until his death in 1989.

● THE ANGRY YOUNG MEN

This term was applied to a group of English writers of the 1950s whose heroes shared certain rebellious and critical attitudes towards society. The phrase originally came from Leslie Paul’s autobiography, but became popular with **John James Osborne**’s (1924-1994) play, *Look Back in Anger* (1956).

The group expressed discontent with the hypocrisy of English society and establishment, while also expressing a sort of disillusionment.



John Osborne

TEXT 2. From **Look Back in Anger** by John James Osborne: 'Like a rhino'.

In this extract, Jimmy, from a working-class family, expresses sharp irony against his wife's upper-middle class mother.

JIMMY:

There is no limit to what the middle-aged mummy will do in the holy crusade against ruffians like me. Mummy and I took one quick look at each other, and, from then on, the age of chivalry was dead. I knew that, to protect her innocent young, she wouldn't hesitate to cheat, lie, bully and blackmail. Threatened with me, a young man without money, background or even looks, she'd bellow like a rhinoceros in labour – enough to make every male rhino for miles turn white, and pledge himself to celibacy.

GLOSSARY



- to bellow: to shout in a loud, deep voice
- to blackmail: to extort money or something of value from somebody by threats or intimidation
- to cheat: to deceive by trickery
- to pledge: to make a formal promise



4 Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)?

- a. The upper-middle classes try to protect themselves.
- b. Jimmy and his wife's mother were on good terms from the start.
- c. The mother would do anything to separate her daughter from Jim.
- d. Jimmy is a handsome young man.
- e. The mother will frighten any young man without money.

T	F
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



5 In your own words, explain the following words and expressions from the text.

- a. holy crusade
- b. chivalry was dead
- c. like a rhinoceros in labour
- d. pledge to celibacy



6 Do you think that society today is still divided into classes? Is it easy for people from different social backgrounds to meet and marry? Discuss with the class.