**Faculty of Arts and Science**

**ARTS BOARD-2019**

**B.A ENGLISH LITERATURE**

**Subject: Discipline Specific Core Course 1 Subject code:** **U19ENC2BL**

**Subject title: British Literature (Poetry, Drama, Fiction and Short Story) Pattern: Theory**

**No. of Credits: 6 No. of hours: 90**

**Syllabus**

**Objective:**

To understand comprehend and enjoy the various genre in British Literature.

1. To highlight the impact of the literature of this era

2. To understand the different writers and their contributions to literature.

**Course Outcome**

**By the completion of this course**

1. Students will get an exposure on the chronicles of England and to be cognizant with their evolution

2. Students will get an exposure to British Literature

3. Students will understand the impact of the literature of this era

**UNIT I Hours: 18 hours**

The Mock-epic and Satire

The Comedy of Manners

The Enlightenment and Neoclassicism

Restoration Comedy

The Country and the City

The Novel and the Periodical Press

**UNIT II**–**Poetry Hours: 18 hours**

John Milton- *Paradise Lost: Book 9*

Thomas Gray- *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*

Alexander Pope- *The Rape of the Lock*

Samuel Johnson ‘*London’*

**UNIT III**–**Drama Hours: 18 hours**

John Webster -*The Duchess of Malfi*

William Congreve- *The Way of the World*

**UNIT IV –Fiction Hours: 18 hours**

Jonathan Swift Gulliver’s Travels (Books III and IV)

Laurence Sterne The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman

**UNIT V -Short Story Hours: 18 hours**

Catherine Mansfield- A Cup of Tea

George Orwell- Shooting of an Elephant

W. Somerset Maugham- Ant and the Grasshopper

**Readings& Reference**

1. John Dryden, -‘A Discourse Concerning the Origin and Progress of Satire’, in *The Norton Anthology of English Literature,* vol. 1, 9th edn, ed. Stephen Greenblatt (New York: Norton 2012) pp. 1767–8.

2. Daniel Defoe, -‘The Complete English Tradesman’ (Letter XXII), ‘The Great Law of Subordination Considered’ (Letter IV), and ‘The Complete English Gentleman’, in *Literature and Social Order in Eighteenth-Century England*, ed. Stephen Copley (London: Croom Helm, 1984).

UNIT -I

**Epic:**

An extended narrative poem in elevated or dignified language, celebrating the feats of a legendary or traditional hero.

**characteristics of epic in literature.**

* The [hero](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hero) is outstanding. They might be important, and historically or legendarily significant.
* The setting is large. It covers many nations, or the known world.
* The action is made of deeds of great valour or requiring superhuman [courage](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Courage).
* [Supernatural](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Supernatural) forces—gods, angels, demons—insert themselves in the action.
* It is written in a very special style ([verse](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Verse) as opposed to [prose](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prose)).
* The poet tries to remain objective.
* Epic poems are believed to be supernatural and real by the hero and the [villain](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Villain)

**Conventions of epics:**

* It starts with the theme or subject of the story.

In epics inspired from [Western civilization](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_civilization) the writer invokes a [Muse](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Muse), one of the nine daughters of [Zeus](https://simple.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeus). The poet prays to the Muses to provide divine inspiration to tell the great story.

* Narrative opens *in medias res*, or in the middle of things, usually with the hero at his lowest point. Usually flashbacks show earlier portions of the story.
* Catalogues and genealogies are given. These long lists of objects, places, and people place the finite action of the epic within a broader, universal context. Often, the poet is also paying homage to the ancestors of audience members.
* Main characters give extended formal speeches.
* Use of the epic simile.
* Heavy use of repetition or stock phrases.
* It presents the heroic ideals such as courage, honour, sacrifice, patriotism and kindness.
* An epic gives a clear picture of the social and cultural patterns of the contemporary life. Beowulf thus shows the love of wine, wild celebration, war, adventure and sea-voyages.

Mock-epic and Satire:

Mock –epic, references classical works that use humor in order to make a new point. Because it draws on well- known heroes or literary themes, mock- epic poetry is often able to form observations about contemporary culture, religion, and social issues in a funny, meaningful style.

(Or)

Mock-epic (also known as mock heroic) poetry draws heavily on the technique of satire, which means that it uses irony, exaggeration, and sarcasm to mock its original subject, usually in an undignified and grandiose manner.

A type of high burlesque, the mock epic is a lengthy poem written in the lofty and exalted style of the epic but that deals with an utterly trivial subject. Mock epics are not generally intended to mock the epic form or style, but rather to mock the subject by treating it with a dignity it does not deserve.

As numerous scholars and critics have pointed out, however, mock epics inevitably “cut both ways”; that is to say, when ordinary events are described in lofty terms using classical conventions, the reader is to some extent made aware of the amusing inappropriateness of heroic language and style as a means of representing life in the world as most human beings have experienced it.

Mock heroic is often used synonymously with mock epic, but the former term refers more broadly to any work (not just the epic) in which a trivial subject is satirized or ridiculed by discussing it in a lofty or grandiose manner. In this sense, the mock heroic is a style of writing that may be applied to any work burlesqued in this manner.

Alexander Pope’s mock-epic poem The Rape of the Lock which concerns the cutting and theft of a lock of a lady’s hair, begins with an invocation to a muse and later describes a card game as if it were a major military battle.

**Satire:**

Satire is a technique employed by writers to expose and criticize foolishness and corruption of an individual or a society, by using humor, irony, exaggeration or ridicule.

**Different types of Satire in literature:**

* Horatian Satire
* Juvenalian Satire
* Menippean Satire

**Menippean Satire:**

Instead of focusing on societal norms, Menippean satire tends to satirize an individual character flaw and /or a particular personality trait such as a mental attitude.

**Horatian satire:**

Horatian Satire, named for the Roman Satirist Horace, playfully criticizes some social vice through gentle, mild and light- hearted humor.

A Horatian satirists’ goal is to heal the situation with smile, rather than by anger.

**Juvenalian Satire:**

Juvenalian Satire, named for the writings of the Roman Satirist Juvenal, is more contemptuous and abrasive than the Horation.

A Juvenalian Satirist mocks ‘Societal structure, power and civilization by exaggerating the words or position of his opponent in order to jeopardize their opponent’s reputation and power.

**characteristics of satire**

* Satire relies on humor to bring about social change. When our vices are made humorous, the idea is that it will encourage us to change.
* Satire is most often implied. The reader has to pick up on the humor or he/she will miss the satirical nature of the writing.
* Satire, most often, does not go over individual people. Instead, satire is directed at society as a whole, or types of people in society-the politician, the adulterer, the prideful, etc.
* The wit and irony of the satire are exaggerated-it is in the exaggeration that people are made aware of their foolishness.

**Satire relies on the following literary elements:**

* Humor
* Irony
* Comic Juxtaposition
* Understatement and Diminution
* Inflation
* Grotesque
* Parody

**Comedy of Manners**.

The comedy of manners, also called anti sentimental comedy, is a form of [comedy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comedy) that satirizes the manners and affectations of contemporary society and questions societal standards. Social class stereotypes are often represented through [stock characters](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stock_characters) such as the [*miles gloriosus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Miles_gloriosus) ("boastful soldier") in [ancient Greek comedy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greek_comedy) or the [fop](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fop) and [rake](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rake_(character)) of English [Restoration comedy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Restoration_comedy), which is sometimes used as a synonym for "comedy of manners".[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Comedy_of_manners#cite_note-1) A comedy of manners often sacrifices the plot, which usually centers on some scandal, to witty dialogue and sharp social commentary. [Oscar Wilde](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oscar_Wilde)'s play, [*The Importance of Being Earnest*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Importance_of_Being_Earnest) (1895), which satirized the [Victorian morality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victorian_morality) of the time, is one of the best-known plays of this genre.

**The characteristics of a comedy of manners include:**

* the use of double entendre and other forms of risque language
* elaborate plots
* cross-dressing (usually women in men's clothing)
* physical seduction
* extramarital affairs
* cynicism
* the meeting of the aristocracy and common folk
* intrigues such as forgeries and spying

**The Age of Enlightenment.**

The Age of Enlightenment, sometimes called the Age of Reason, refers to the time of the guiding intellectual movement, called The Enlightenment. It covers about a century and a half in Europe, beginning with the publication of [Francis Bacon](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Francis_Bacon)'s *Novum Organum* (1620) and ending with [Immanuel Kant](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Immanuel_Kant)'s *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781). From the perspective of socio-political phenomena, the period is considered to have begun with the close of the Thirty Years' War (1648) and ended with the [French Revolution](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/French_Revolution) (1789).

The Enlightenment advocated [reason](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Reason) as a means to establishing an authoritative system of [aesthetics](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Aesthetics), [ethics](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Ethics), government, and even [religion](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Religion), which would allow [human beings](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Human_being) to obtain objective truth about the whole of reality. Emboldened by the revolution in physics commenced by [Newtonian](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Isaac_Newton) kinematics, Enlightenment thinkers argued that reason could free humankind from superstition and religious authoritarianism that had brought suffering and death to millions in religious wars. Also, the wide availability of knowledge was made possible through the production of [encyclopedias](https://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Encyclopedia" \o "Encyclopedia), serving the Enlightenment cause of educating the human race.

**Neoclassicism literature:**

The neoclassical era is nestled between the renaissance and romantic periods of literature. ... The term neo means new while classical refers to the Roman and Greek classics, hence the name is aptly coined as neoclassical. Neoclassical literature emulated the Greek and Roman styles of writing.

**Neoclassical Assumptions and Their Implications:**

      Neoclassical thinkers could use the past as a guide for the present because they assumed that human nature was constant--essentially the same regardless of time and place. Art, they believed, should express this essential nature: "Nothing can please many, and please long, but just representations of general nature" (Samuel Johnson). An individual character was valuable for what he or she revealed of universal human nature. Of course, all great art has this sort of significance--Johnson made his statement about Shakespeare. But neoclassical artists more consciously emphasized common human characteristics over individual differences, as we see in the type-named characters of Moliere.

      If human nature has remained constant over the centuries, it is unlikely that any startling new discoveries will be made. Hence neoclassical artists did not strive to be original so much as to express old truths in a newly effective way. As Alexander Pope, one of their greatest poets, wrote: "True wit is nature to advantage dressed, / What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed." Neoclassical writers aimed to articulate general truth rather than unique vision, to communicate to others more than to express themselves.

**Social Themes (neoclassical age):**

Neoclassical writers saw themselves, as well as their readers and characters, above all as members of society. Social institutions might be foolish or corrupt--indeed, given the intrinsic limitations of human nature, they probably were--but the individual who rebelled against custom or asserted his superiority to humankind was, like Alceste in *The Misanthrope*, presented as presumptuous and absurd. While Renaissance writers were sometimes fascinated by rebels, and later Romantic artists often glorified them, neoclassical artists expected people to conform to established social norms. For individual opinion was far less likely to be true than was the consensus of society, developed over time and embodied in custom and tradition. As the rules for proper writing should be followed, so should the rules for civilized conduct in society. Neither Moliere nor Jane Austen advocate blind following of convention, yet both insist that good manners are important as a manifestation of self-control and consideration for others.

**Restoration comedy:**

Restoration comedy is kind of comedy written in the Restoration Period. It identical to the comedy of manners as it also ridicules the manners and conventions, the faithlessness and intrigues of the members of the upper-class society of the Restoration Period.

**Restoration period:**

THE RESTORATION AGE (1660-1700) the period from 1660 to 1700 is known as the Restoration period or the Age of Dryden because monarchy was restored in England. ... The beginning of the Restoration began the process of social transformation

**Restoration Comedy.**

**Restoration comedy is kind of comedy** written in the Restoration Period. It identical to the comedy of manners as it also ridicules the manners and conventions, the faithlessness and intrigues of the members of the **upper-class society** of the Restoration Period. The comedy of manners is originated from France with Moliere’s **Les Precieuses Ridicules**. This is also called artificial comedy or old comedy. In the twentieth century it was made fashionable by **Noel Coward and Somerset Maugham**. The characters in Restoration comedies are largely types, whose dispositions are sufficiently indicated by study of their names. **Wycherley, Etheredge, Congreve, Vanbrugh and Farquhar** are the five famous writers of the Restoration comedy. **Farquhar’s** *The Recruting Officer*, **Congreve’s** *Love of Love* and *The Way of the World* and **Vanbrugh’s** *The Provoked Wife* are bright examples of the Restoration comedy.

**The comedy of manners/ The Restoration comedy** is a peculiar product of the restoration era, and it reflects the very spirit of the age. It depicts faithfully the life and manners of the upper-class society. This is a genre of comedy which deals with the behavior and manner of men and women living under special social codes. It depicts the relations and intrigues of men and women belonging to polished and sophisticated society. It is characterized by **the ridiculous violations** of social conventions and decorum by stupid characters such as would-be-wits, jealous husbands and foppish dandies. In short, this comedy is said to be the mirror of the manners of the society about which it is written.

**Unit II**

Paradise Lost

Book 9

## Summary

[Book 9](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/book-9-summary/) details the climax of [Adam](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/character-analysis/#Adam) and [Eve](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/character-analysis/#Eve)'s story, the fall of man. The story begins with [Satan](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/character-analysis/#Satan), who has been in hiding after being banished from the [Garden of Eden](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/symbols/#Garden_of_Eden). Satan sneaks back into the Garden disguised as a mist. Once inside the Garden, he transforms into a snake. He experiences one final moment of hesitation over what he's about to do to Adam and Eve, but his resentment of them prompts him to continue.

Adam and Eve arise in the morning and argue over whether to work in the Garden together or separately. Adam experiences a sense of foreboding at Eve's suggestion that they work separately, believing that they are more likely to give in to temptation if they aren't by each others' side. However, Eve points out that there is a lot of work to be done and argues that she can't really be considered virtuous if she is always being protected and her virtue is never actually tested. So they separate, unaware that this will be their last innocent experience together in the Garden.

Satan finds Eve alone and speaks to her in the form of a serpent. Eve asks him how he learned to speak, and Satan tells her about eating fruit that gave him the power to speak and understand everything. He offers to show her where to find the fruit and leads her to the Tree of Knowledge. Eve recognizes it as the tree from which [God](https://www.coursehero.com/lit/Paradise-Lost/character-analysis/#God) has forbidden her and Adam to eat. Satan tries to persuade her that the knowledge the fruit gave him revealed that Eve should, in fact, disobey God to show Him that she is able to think for herself. Satan points out that he ate from the tree and is still alive. He reassures Eve that God would never punish her for something as trivial as eating fruit. Satan also flatters Eve, saying that if she eats the fruit, it is likely that she will gain the knowledge required to become a goddess.

Eve considers Satan's argument and takes into account that the snake ate it and did not die. She's tempted by the fruit's beauty and taste, and, attracted by the idea of having greater knowledge and intelligence, she finally takes a bite. Satan slithers away into the forest, and Eve continues to feast on the fruit.

Eve considers offering Adam some of the fruit because she believes that eating it has raised her up to his level and she treasures the idea of being his equal. Eventually she decides to share the fruit since if she must die for her disobedience, she wants Adam to die with her. She finds Adam and explains what has happened and how she came to eat the fruit. Adam is shocked and upset but resolves to eat the fruit as well because he does not want to live without Eve. He eats the fruit, and he and Eve consummate their newfound knowledge, having sex because of physical lust rather than marital love. They wake later only to lament what they have done and feel shame. They begin to fight, blaming each other for what has transpired.

**Milton’s Paradise lost as classical epic.**

In the division and style, Milton's poem follows Homer's *'Iliad'* and Virgil's *'Aeneid'.*

* The action deals with a great subject, derived from the scriptures. It deals with the fall of man and to this all other episodes are related and subordinated.
* The action is entire, having a beginning, middle and an end.
* As all other epics, it has a hero, though there has been a controversy as to who it is.
* The style of *'Paradise Lost'*has all the grandeur which the epic poem demands. Milton is the mighty mounted inventor of harmonies. The meaning of the words, the syntax, and the division of sentences constantly reminds the scholarly reader of classical writers. The opening sentence, the first lines of Satan's speech on looking at his surrounding, his words to Beelzebub, and the description of Satan's shield and spear—all these reflect Milton's grand style.
* In the tradition of Homer and Virgil, Milton states the theme of his poem in the very first lines.

**Of Man's first disobedience, and the fruit**

**Of that forbidden tree, whose mortal taste**

**Brought Death into the world.**

* In a typical fashion Milton begins the poem in the middle of the story. He begins by describing the state of the fallen angels.
* According to the classical convention established by Homer, Milton invokes the Muse to help him in his great task of writing the epic.

**And chiefly thou O' spirit...**

**Instruct me, for thou knowest**

* A roll call of the devils is given according to the classical convention. It can be compared with the catalogue of ships in Homer's *'Iliad'.*
* A prominent convention of the classical epic is the use of similes, especially the elaborate and extended type. There is no dearth in *'Paradise Lost'.*
* The first epic simile which compares Satan's huge bulk with Leviathan goes into seven lines. A series of similes are employed by Milton to indicate the huge number of Satan's followers. The fallen angels lie thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks in Vallambrosa. The term ‘autumnal leaves’ conveys the diminished glory of the angels. The simile produces the effect of the confusion in which they lie. When they are compared to the locusts called up by Moses, not merely is their vast number suggested, but also the evil and destruction associated with locusts.
* Above mentioned devices are found, to a large extent, in the epics of Homer, Virgil, and Dante and so in Milton. Thus, *'Paradise Lost'* can be discussed as a classical epic. What is more, the vastness of the theme, encompassing the whole of the human race, makes it a unique epic.

**2. Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard. (summary)**

The speaker is hanging out in a churchyard just after the sun goes down. It's dark and a bit spooky. He looks at the dimly lit gravestones, but none of the grave markers are all that impressive , most of the people buried here are poor folks from the village, so their tombstones are just simple, roughly carved stones.

The speaker starts to imagine the kinds of lives these dead guys probably led. Then he shakes his finger at the reader, and tells us not to get all snobby about the rough monuments these dead guys have on their tombs, since, really, it doesn't matter what kind of a tomb you have when you're dead, the speaker reminds us, we're all going to die someday.

But that gets the speaker thinking about his own inevitable death, and he gets a little freaked out. He imagines that someday in the future, some random guy might pass through this same graveyard, just as he was doing today. And that guy might see the speaker's tombstone, and ask a local villager about it. And then he imagines what the villager might say about him.

At the end, he imagines that the villager points out the epitaph engraved on the tombstone, and invites the passer-by to read it for himself. So basically, Thomas Gray writes his own epitaph at the end of this poem.

**Setting of Gray’s Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard**

Gray's "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard" takes place in a country churchyard. And that means that it was written among all the gravestones of the dead members of that church. It's shaded by elm and yew trees, and there's an owl hooting in the background.

This isn't about dead people coming back to haunt the living, it's about how the living remember the dead. And as the speaker imagines what these dead people's lives were like, the setting of the poem shifts—the speaker imagines their everyday lives in their country cottages. Most of these people were farmers, so he imagines them plowing their fields, and coming home to their wives and children at night.

But then the speaker imagines what people will say about him, when he dies, and the setting of the poem shifts again. Now we're in the shoes of some passer-by who happens to see the name of the poet on a gravestone, and happens to ask someone what he was like. The speaker imagines that he'll be remembered mostly as a thoughtful guy who loved nature, who was often seen lost in thought under a tree or by the creek.

So, in spite of the poem's title, the setting really isn't creepy town. The emphasis is on the average, every day, simple "country" part of the setting. There are lots of trees, and creeks, and farms, and no ghosts in the graveyard at all—unless you count the memories of the past that we all carry with us.

## **Analysis of Literary Devices in “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”**

[Literary devices](https://literarydevices.net/literary-devices/) are tools used by writers and poets to convey their emotions, feelings, and ideas to the readers. Thomas Gray has also used many literary devices to make the poem appealing. Here is the analysis of some literary devices used in this poem.

1. [**Assonance**](https://literarydevices.net/assonance/)**:** Assonance is the [repetition](https://literarydevices.net/repetition/) of vowel sounds in the same line such as the sound of /o/ in “There at the foot of yonder nodding beech” and the sound of /i/ in “Hands, that the rod of empire might have sway’d”.
2. [**Consonance**](https://literarydevices.net/consonance/)**:** Consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds in the same line such as the sound of /r/ in “Approach and read (for thou canst read) the lay” and the sound of /l/ in “And all the air a solemn stillness holds”.
3. [**Alliteration**](https://literarydevices.net/alliteration/)**:** Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds in the same line in quick succession such as the sound of /h/ in “Haply some hoary-headed swain may say” and the sound of /w/ in “The plowman homeward plods his weary way”, and the sound of /l/ in “Or wak’d to ecstasy the living lyre”.
4. [**Imagery**](https://literarydevices.net/imagery/)**:** Imagery is used to make readers perceive things involving their five senses. For example, “There at the foot of yonder nodding beech”, “The next with dirges due in sad array” and “Each in his narrow cell forever laid.”
5. [**Personification**](https://literarydevices.net/personification/)**:** Personification is to give human qualities to inanimate objects. For example, “Let not Ambition mock their useful toil”, “Or Flatt’ry soothe the dull cold ear of Death” and “But Knowledge to their eyes her ample page.”
6. [**Enjambment**](https://literarydevices.net/enjambment/)**:** It is defined as a thought in [verse](https://literarydevices.net/verse/) that does not come to an end at a [line break](https://literarydevices.net/line-break/); instead, it rolls over to the next line. For example,

**“**The next with dirges due in sad array  
 Slow thro’ the church-way path we saw him borne.”

**Analysis of Poetic Devices Used in “Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard”**

Poetic and literary devices are the same, but a few are used only in poetry. Here is the analysis of some of the poetic devices used in this [rhyme](https://literarydevices.net/rhyme/).

1. [**Stanza**](https://literarydevices.net/stanza/)**:**A stanza is a poetic form of verses and lines. There are thirty-two stanzas in this poem, each comprises of four lines.
2. [**Quatrain**](https://literarydevices.net/quatrain/)**:**A quatrain is a four lined stanza. Here, each stanza is quatrain.
3. [**Rhyme Scheme**](https://literarydevices.net/rhyme-scheme/)**:**The poem follows the ABAB rhyme scheme and this pattern continuous till the end.
4. [**End Rhyme**](https://literarydevices.net/end-rhyme/)**:** End rhyme is used to make the stanza melodious. For example, “array/lay”, “dawn/lawn” and “hide/pride.”

**The Rape of the lock as mock- epic**.

**Mock**- **epic:**

Mock-epic (also known as mock heroic) poetry draws heavily on the technique of satire, which means that it uses irony, exaggeration, and sarcasm to mock its original subject, usually in an undignified and grandiose manner.

**The Rape of the Lock as mock- epic**:

The mock-heroic quality of ‘The Rape of the Lock’ lies in the very beginning of the poem which parodies the conventional epic invocation that we find in Homer’s Iliad, Virgil’s Aenied and Milton’s Paradise Lost. The opening lines echo classical epic:

***‘What dire offence from am’rous causes springs,***

***What mighty contests rise from trivial things,***

***I sing- This Verse to caryll, Muse! Is due;’***

* The statement of the central problem of the poem is presented in an epic manner. Belinda’s dream reminds us of the Eve’s dream in Paradise Lost. If Eve dreams of Satan’s instigation, Belinda dreams of Ariel’s advice and suggestion.
* The trait of the ***mock epic*** is that the theme is very trivial and ridiculous. In Iliad, Homer glorifies war and heroism, in Paradise Lost Milton justifies the ways of God of man but in The Rape of the Lock Pope deals with the cutting of a lock of hair from the fashionable lady’s head, the quarrel and battle between the two opposite sexes. Instead of genuine passions and deep thought, we found mock passions and artificial sentiments and emotions in The ***Rape of the Lock.***
* Another important aspect of a mock epic is its satiric and moral tone and The Rape of the Lock satisfies the requirement completely. In the poetry Pope attacks the so called fashionable 18th century English society where young men and women passed their time in making flirtations and false love, visiting club and park, drinking and pleasure seeking. Pope exposes the ills and evils, faults and follies of his society.
* Pope uses ***mock heroic*** aspects in handling the ‘machinery’ or supernatural elements in The Rape of the Lock. In this poem Pope has used spirits such as Sylphs and Gnomes. They play various functions and even take part in the battle of the mortals. In fact his futile function of the spirits cannot but mock us laugh.
* There is also a ***mock epic*** quality in the presentation, description and allusions of combat and battle that takes place between male and female sexes. The heroic bombast of the Baron must parody Hectorian orations. Then the battle between the Beaux and the Belles is a right royal Homeric battle, even the game of Ombre is a delicate parody of epical fights. Holden observes this mock epic manner.
* To wind up, we can say that ***The Rape of the Lock*** is the finest of all epic poems we have ever read. It is mock heroic not only in content but also in its style.

**Samuel Johnson’s *London.***

* *London*, published in 1738, represents Johnson’s attempt to satirize the grubby world of London and also to rise above it. The poem is an “imitation” of the Third Satire of the Roman poet Juvenal, who imagines a friend, named Umbricius, who is sick and tired of the city of Rome and is leaving for the countryside for good. In doing an imitation of his classical source, Johnson is not simply *translating* Juvenal’s poem (a modern translation of which is included here for purposes of comparison), but updating it, finding modern correlations to the Latin original.
* Here, London stands in for Rome, “Thales” stands in for Juvenal’s Umbricius, and the Tuscan countryside to which Umbricius was headed becomes Wales. Exhausted by the filth, crowds, noise of London, and the difficulty of making a living as a writer, Thales (believed by some scholars to refer to Richard Savage, another hack writer who had become a friend of Johnson’s) in some ways expresses Johnson’s own frustrations. But *London* itself, published in a handsome folio edition, written in the heroic couplet form that to readers of the 1730s identified the high style of serious poetry, using the form of the imitation to signify its neoclassical aspirations, and hyped in the pages of the *Gentleman’s Magazine* (which published ads for the poem, and also excerpted it), is clearly an attempt on Johnson’s part to get out of hackdom as soon as possible, to become a poet like Alexander Pope, making a good living independent of the whims and tight fists of the booksellers and magazine editors. In this, it is clear that Johnson failed.
* *London* seems to have sold reasonably well, but it was a dead end, and Johnson had to continue to grind out work for hire for another decade and a half. It was not until he achieved fame in the 1750s, first as the author of a *Spectator*-like series of journalistic essays called *The Rambler* and then as the editor of the *Dictionary of the English Language*, which made him a kind of national treasure, since he had single-handedly accomplished for English what it had taken large teams of scholars to do for other European languages. Here, let’s read Johnson as Grub Street’s finest product–and its most perceptive critic.

**UNIT – III**

* + 1. The Duchess of Malfi

**John Webster**

**symbol of Blood in *The Duchess of Malfi.***

In *The Duchess of Malfi*, [blood](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/symbols/blood) works classically as a multifaceted symbol. First and most simply, blood symbolizes violence. When an act is particularly violent or cruel it is described as bloody. Blood is also used to refer to both status and family; it represents rank and lineage. Thus when [Ferdinand](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/characters/ferdinand-duke-of-calabria) and the [Cardinal](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/characters/the-cardinal) kill the [Duchess](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/characters/the-duchess-of-malfi), they are spilling the noble blood of their own blood (i.e. family member). Finally, blood is used by Ferdinand to represent passion when he says, “Whether we fall by ambition, blood, or lust, / Like diamonds we are cut with our own dust.” In the Renaissance it was common to believe that people were ruled by the four humors, all of which run through the blood (blood itself was also a humor). Ferdinand’s dying words contain multiple meanings for the word blood, including family and violence, but they also seem to evoke notions of passion and the four humors.

**Historical context of John Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*:**

Webster wrote *The Duchess of Malfi* ten years into the Jacobean era in England and only a few years before Shakespeare’s death. The play is based on an Italian novella, which in turn is based on true historical events. The real Duchess, Giovanna d'Aragona, married Antonio Beccadelli in secret and bore him three children. She was murdered by her brothers, one of whom was a Cardinal, in 1510. Webster’s main changes to the true story are that Antonio didn’t die until a few years after the Duchess’ death, and Bosola’s repentance and ultimate betrayal and murder of the brothers is fictionalized, as the two were never accused or killed.

**Symbol of poison in The Duchess of Malfi:**

Antonio introduces the symbol of poison in the play’s opening while making a political analogy about the ideal government, which, he says, should function like a fountain. Goodness should flow through the country, but if someone poisons the well then death and [disease](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/symbols/disease) will spread. From this point forward, poisons serve as tools of the corrupt government and become symbols for corruption itself, for hidden threats, and for secrecy. The [Cardinal](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/characters/the-cardinal), for example, tells [Julia](https://www.litcharts.com/lit/the-duchess-of-malfi/characters/julia) that his secrets are like lingering poisons that would slowly spread through her veins and cause her death. Once she gets the secrets out of him, the Cardinal then kills Julia by making her kiss a literally poisoned book.

***Duchess of Malfi* is as a Revenge Tragedy**

**Introduction:**

A ***revenge tragedy*** is a [tragedy](http://englishliterature24.blogspot.com/2017/09/discuss-macbeth-as-tragic-hero.html) in which the tragic calamity is brought about by the pursuit and accomplishment of revenge. Webster’s ***The Duchess of Malfi*** is considered to be a revenge tragedy. It has several features of a revenge tragedy.

**The common and fundamental features of a revenge tragedy are:**

* The motive of revenge,
* Heaping of horror upon horror,
* presence of the supernatural,
* violent imagery ,
* Bestial cruelty,

An avenging hero, often a rascally servant. In the Duchess of Malfi we find a beautiful fusion of these elements that give it the rank of a revenge tragedy.

The Cardinal and Ferdinand, the two brothers of the Duchess, are guided by their excessive passion of taking revenge on their sister for violating moral code of life as a widow injuring the family tradition, status and pride through making love with Antonio and marrying him. When Bosola reveals this remarriage below rank, the two brothers go mad and crazy for taking revenge on the Duchess.

In a ***revenge tragedy*** we find a common character called a revenge hero who is malcontent, corrupt hypocrisy, stupidity of courtly society and immoral and crazy in his goal and Machiavellian in nature. Bosola is such a character. A former servant of the Cardinal and now is engaged by Ferdinand to spy on the Duchess as her Provisory of Horse. Bosola is involved in vulgar activities, violence and killing. Thus, Bosola proves himself to be rascally servant of the English revenge plays.

Horror associated with murder is an important aspect of a ***revenge tragedy***. In “***The Duchess of Malfi***” we find plenty of horror scenes. The Duke, in order to horrify the Duchess, gives a dead man’s hand to her and she kisses it to be the Duke’s hand. The spectacle of the oxen images of the dead bodies of Antonio and his children are presented before the Duchess which is really horrible. The crazy and unruly dance of the madmen before the Duchess, the appearance of Bosola as a tomb maker and a bellman, and the appearance of the executioners with bell and cord are intended to create further horror. At last she is strangled to death.

Avenge is an important aspect of a revenge tragedy. After the death of the Duchess, Ferdinand suddenly experiences an unexpected remorse. He rebukes Bosola for not having opposed his order to murder the Duchess. Bosola accuses him ingratitude and demands the promised reward. But Ferdinand calls him a villain for killing his sister. Now Bosola is able to understand his misdeeds and feels mercy for the Duchess. He wishes that he could undo what he has done and he decides to avenge the death of the Duchess. With an intention to kill the cardinal , he enters his room and kills Antonio by mistaking him for the Cardinal. [Bosola](http://englishliterature24.blogspot.com/2017/09/critically-discuss-character-of-bosola.html" \t "_blank) then proceeds to meet the cardinal and kill him. When he stabs the Cardinal, he cries for help. On his crying for, Ferdinand enters the room and gives mortal wounds both to Bosola and the Cardinal. Bosola in return stabs Ferdinand. Thus the villains, Ferdinand, the Cardinand and Bosola meet their doom at the end of the play.

**Conclusion:**

To conclude we can say that ***The Duchess of Malfi*** is a perfect revenge [tragedy](http://englishliterature24.blogspot.com/2017/09/is-macbeth-tragedy-of-ambition.html). There is no denying the fact that Webster raises the original theme of revenge to a higher plan.

* + 1. **Way of the World**

**William Congreve**

**Summary of The Way of the World.**

Mirabell, once a womanizer, seeks to marry a girl he loves, Ms. Millamant. Unfortunately, her aunt, Lady Wish fort, holds power over her 6,000-pound inheritance and despises Mirabell because he once pretended to love her. Mirabell and Ms. Millamant devise a plot in which his servant, Wait worth, will marry Lady Wishfort's servant, Foible, and then woo Lady Wish fort in disguise as Mirabell's uncle, Sir Rowland. The scheme proceeds as planned until Ms. Marwood, who unrequitedly desires Mirabell, overhears the plot when Foible fills in Lady Wishfort's daughter, Mrs. Fainall. Ms. Marwood tells the man to whom she is mistress, Mr. Fainall, about the scheme and the fact that Mirabell was also once romantically involved with his wife, Mrs. Fainall. Incensed by this situation, the two plan to foil Mirabell's scheme.

Sir Wilfull, a nephew of Lady Wishfort's, comes to town before departing to go abroad, and Lady Wish fort desires for him, though a bumbling man, to marry Ms. Millamant. The situation comes to a head when Lady Wish fort, while visiting with "Sir Rowland," receives a letter from Ms. Marwood revealing Mirabell's scheme. Fainall attempts to use Lady Wish fort and her daughter's precarious social situation as leverage to gain Ms. Millamant's inheritance and all of Lady Wishfort's money through control of his wife's inheritance. However, he is foiled by Ms. Millamant announcing she will marry Sir Wilfull and Mirabell announcing that he has had claim to Mrs. Fainall's inheritance since before her marriage to Fainall. Once Fainall and Ms. Marwood leave, Ms. Millamant rescinds her offer to Sir Wilfull and she and Mirabell receive Lady Wishfort's blessing for marriage, her reputation having been saved by the two lovers.

**UNIT IV**

* + - 1. ***Gulliver's Travels***

**Jonathan Swift**

**Why is Gulliver’s Travel satire?**

During the eighteenth century there was an incredible upheaval of commercialization in London, England.  As a result, English society underwent significant, “changes in attitude and thought”, in an attempt to obtain the dignity and splendor of royalty and the upper class (McKendrick,2).  As a result, English society held themselves in very high regards, feeling that they were the elite society of mankind.  In his novel, Gulliver’s Travels, Jonathan Swift satirizes this English society in many ways.  In the novel, Swift uses metaphors to reveal his disapproval of English society.  Through graphic representations of the body and its functions, Swift reveals to the reader that grandeur is merely an illusion, a facade behind which English society of his time attempted to hide from reality.

On his first voyage, Swift places Gulliver in a land of miniature people where his giant size is meant as a metaphor for his superiority over the Lilliputians, thus representing English society’s belief in superiority over all other cultures.  Yet, despite his belief in superiority, Swift shows that Gulliver is not as great as he imagines when the forces of nature call upon him to relieve himself.  Gulliver comments to the reader that beforehand he, “was under great difficulties between urgency and shame”, and after the deed says that he felt, “guilty of so uncleanly an action” (Norton,2051). By revealing to the reader Gulliver’s shame in carrying out a basic function of life, Swift comments on the self-imposed supremacy of English society.  By humbling their representative, the author implies that despite the belief of the English to be the most civilized and refined society, they are still human beings who are slaves to the same forces as every other human being regardless of culture or race.

On the second voyage, Swift turns the tables on Gulliver and places him among a race of giant people, the Brobdingnagians, where Gulliver is viewed as the inferior.  Due to his miniature size, Gulliver is able to examine the human body in a much more detailed manner.  Upon witnessing the undressing of the Maids of Honor, Gulliver expresses his aversion to their naked bodies. They were, “very far from being a tempting sight”, and gave him, “any other emotions than those of horror and disgust”, because of the acuteness to which he was able to observe their, “course and uneven [skin], so variously colored” (Norton,2104). Gulliver also talks of their moles, “here and there as broad as a trencher, and hairs hanging from (them) thicker than pack-threads” (Norton,2104).  Earlier in the novel, upon witnessing the suckling of a baby, Gulliver tells the reader that upon seeing the woman’s breast he, “[reflected] upon the fair skins of [his] English ladies, who appear so beautiful… only because they are of [his] own size” (Norton,2088).

In showing Gulliver’s disgust at the sight of such prestigious and beautiful women of Brobdingnag, Swift again comments on English society through a graphic portrayal of the human body.  Swift uses the Maids of Honor as a metaphor to comment on the women of England, whom, among eighteenth century English society, were believed to be the most beautiful of all the world.  Showing that despite their apparent beauty, they are not perfect, and suffer the same flaws and imperfections of appearance as any other women.

At one point during Gulliver’s stay in Brobdingnag, Swift comments almost directly on his distaste for the self-imposed supremacy of English society over all other cultures. It happens when the King of the land, his Majesty, comments on, “how contemptible a thing was human grandeur, which could be mimicked by such diminutive insects as [Gulliver]”(Norton,2097). Here, Swift bluntly criticizes the attitude of English society for considering themselves to be so high in rank and eminence, by implying that even the smallest and least civilized creature could assume such a high degree of superiority.

Gulliver’s Travels is a satirical novel of the eighteenth-century English society, a society with superficial ideas of grandeur and nobility.  Through clever representations, Jonathan Swift successfully humbles this society’s pride and human vanity. He reveals the flaws it their thinking by reducing them to what they are, human beings, which, like any other group of human beings is able to do, have merely adopted a superficial self-righteous attitude. In doing so, Swift makes a broader statement about mankind today. Despite all the self-acclaimed advances in civilization and technology, we are still merely human; suffering from the same forces and flaws, impulses and imperfections as everyone else.

**Different themes of Swift’s Gulliver’s Travel.**

**The abuse of power**  
 Who holds power, why they hold it, and how they use or abuse it, are recurring themes throughout Gulliver's Travels. The Lilluptians, despite their small size, wield considerable power over Gulliver, taking advantage of his well-meaning, non-aggressive, and gullible nature to attack him with arrows, hold him prisoner, and finally try to entrap him through treachery. Lilliput is governed by a vain and despotic ruler who has his subjects tortured and executed for trivial matters. His ministers are appointed to office not based on their suitability, wisdom, or virtue, but on their skill at "leaping and creeping." The correspondences between Lilliputian people and events and English political life means that Swift intended his portrayal of Lilliput to reflect abuses of power in the English monarchy and government.  
 The Brobdingnagians could, if they wished, dominate through their superior size, but they do not. Although they treat the relatively tiny Gulliver as a plaything and one of them, the farmer, is prepared to work him to death for personal gain, in general the Brobdingnagians do not abuse their power. The King of Brobdingnag is a wise ruler who only wishes to do good for his nation. When he is offered the secret of gunpowder, he refuses on humanitarian grounds, even though this would vastly increase his nation's power.  
 Swift implicitly questions the reasons why certain people hold power over others. The Laputan king assumes that he has a right to hold power over the Balnibarbians on the mainland simply because he is more devoted to abstract and theoretical knowledge than they are. To the reader, on the other hand, he appears ridiculously impractical and not fit to hold power. Similarly, the Laputans view Lord Munodi as hopelessly backward because he does not embrace the reforms of the professors of Lagado Academy; it seems likely that his estate and house will be seized by the government. The reader, however, can clearly see that common sense lies on the side of Munodi, and that if he held power, the kingdom would prosper.  
A more ambiguous example of power is that wielded by the Houyhnhnms over the Yahoos. Difficult moral questions can be asked about whether the Houyhnhnms have the right to dominate and exploit the Yahoos because they are more rational, intelligent, moral, and virtuous. These qualities may take on a different light when seen from the point of view of the Yahoos, whose very right to exist is debated by the Houyhnhnms in their council.

**The absurdity of pride**  
 Many examples of misplaced pride occur in the novel. The Lilliputians are proud of their military capability, although if Gulliver-sized human beings launched an invasion they would be instantly crushed. Swift draws attention to the absurdity of their pride by having them arrange a military parade in view of Gulliver's exposed nether regions.  
 Gulliver's stay among the Brobdingnagians punctures human pride and vanity as it relates to appearance. Gulliver sees the bodily features and functions of the Brobdingnagians in magnified form. Hence he notes how even a woman who might appear beautiful to her similarly sized compatriots appears to him as a mass of unattractive huge skin pores and mountainous pimples, who is in the habit of voiding gallons of urine.  
 The Laputans are proud of their knowledge of mathematics and music and their habit of abstract contemplation, but the reader can see that these qualities only make them so impractical that their houses fall down, their clothes fail to fit, and their subjects starve.  
 Although Gulliver attacks pride in his final chapter, he fails to notice that he himself has fallen victim to it in his rejection of humanity on the grounds that they are Yahoos. His pride blinds him to genuine virtue, such as that of Don Pedro, and makes him cruelly reject his wife and family. Excrement and bodily functions  
Swift's emphasis on bodily functions and excrement provides a satirical counterweight to the tendency of his age, which championed man as a rational creature and became known as the Enlightenment. Swift was eager to remind humanity that underneath their pretensions to rationality and superiority, they were made of the same skin, blood, and bone as the animals, and shared their basic needs, appetites, and functions.

**The individual and society**

Most of the time during his travels, Gulliver feels isolated from the societies he visits. He does not fit in anywhere, and even during his brief returns to England, he expresses no wish to stay and leaves as quickly as he can. This has led to some critics calling Gulliver's Travels the first novel of modern alienation.  
 The country of the Houyhnhnms is unique among the nations Gullliver visits because of its subjugation of the individual to the good of society as a whole, which leads to an orderly and well-run nation. The price is that there is little room for human-style individuality. Nobody can become attached to their children because they may be assigned to another family that has a shortage of children; mates are chosen not by individual preference, but for the good of the race; servanthood is genetically mandated.

Only during his stay with the Houyhnhnms does Gulliver wish to assimilate into society. His attempts are ridiculous, leading to his taking on the gait and speech patterns of his horse hosts. More seriously, they are doomed to fail: the Houyhnhnms decide that he is not one of them and expel him. The only society to which Gulliver wishes to belong will not have him. Swift raises questions about the conflict between the individual and society, but does not resolve them.

**Knowledge versus wisdom** Swift emphasizes in Gulliver's Travels that knowledge is not equivalent to wisdom. Certain Lilliputian politicians are knowledgable about the leaping and creeping necessary to gain power, but the people live in fear of their rulers' edicts condemning the innocent to death. Laputans study abstract mathematics and music, and research high-flown theories in their academy, while the ordinary people starve.

***Gulliver's Travels* is an adventure story** (in reality, a misadventure story)

involving several voyages of Lemuel Gulliver, a ship's surgeon, who, because of a series of mishaps en route to recognized ports, ends up, instead, on several unknown islands living with people and animals of unusual sizes, behaviors, and philosophies, but who, after each adventure, is somehow able to return to his home in England where he recovers from these unusual experiences and then sets out again on a new voyage.

**Book I:** When the ship Gulliver is traveling on is destroyed in a storm, Gulliver ends up on the island of Lilliput, where he awakes to find that he has been captured by Lilliputians, very small people — approximately six inches in height. Gulliver is treated with compassion and concern. In turn, he helps them solve some of their problems, especially their conflict with their enemy, Blefuscu, an island across the bay from them. Gulliver falls from favor, however, because he refuses to support the Emperor's desire to enslave the Blefuscudians and because he "makes water" to put out a palace fire. Gulliver flees to Blefuscu, where he converts a large war ship to his own use and sets sail from Blefuscu eventually to be rescued at sea by an English merchant ship and returned to his home in England.

**Book II:**As he travels as a ship's surgeon, Gulliver and a small crew are sent to find water on an island. Instead they encounter a land of giants. As the crew flees, Gulliver is left behind and captured. Gulliver's captor, a farmer, takes him to the farmer's home where Gulliver is treated kindly, but, of course, curiously. The farmer assigns his daughter, Glumdalclitch, to be Gulliver's keeper, and she cares for Gulliver with great compassion. The farmer takes Gulliver on tour across the countryside, displaying him to onlookers. Eventually, the farmer sells Gulliver to the Queen. At court, Gulliver meets the King, and the two spend many sessions discussing the customs and behaviors of Gulliver's country. In many cases, the King is shocked and chagrined by the selfishness and pettiness that he hears Gulliver describe. Gulliver, on the other hand, defends England.

One day, on the beach, as Gulliver looks longingly at the sea from his box (portable room), he is snatched up by an eagle and eventually dropped into the sea. A passing ship spots the floating chest and rescues Gulliver, eventually returning him to England and his family.

**Book III:**Gulliver is on a ship bound for the Levant. After arriving, Gulliver is assigned captain of a sloop to visit nearby islands and establish trade. On this trip, pirates attack the sloop and place Gulliver in a small boat to fend for himself. While drifting at sea, Gulliver discovers a Flying Island. While on the Flying Island, called Laputa, Gulliver meets several inhabitants, including the King. All are preoccupied with things associated with mathematics and music. In addition, astronomers use the laws of magnetism to move the island up, down, forward, backward, and sideways, thus controlling the island's movements in relation to the island below (Balnibarbi). While in this land, Gulliver visits Balnibarbi, the island of Glubbdubdrib, and Luggnagg. Gulliver finally arrives in Japan where he meets the Japanese emperor. From there, he goes to Amsterdam and eventually home to England.

**Book IV:**While Gulliver is captain of a merchant ship bound for Barbados and the Leeward Islands, several of his crew become ill and die on the voyage. Gulliver hires several replacement sailors in Barbados. These replacements turn out to be pirates who convince the other crew members to mutiny. As a result, Gulliver is deposited on a "strand" (an island) to fend for himself. Almost immediately, he is discovered by a herd of ugly, despicable human-like creatures who are called, he later learns, Yahoos. They attack him by climbing trees and defecating on him. He is saved from this disgrace by the appearance of a horse, identified, he later learns, by the name Houyhnhnm. The grey horse (a Houyhnhnm) takes Gulliver to his home, where he is introduced to the grey's mare (wife), a colt and a foal (children), and a sorrel nag (the servant). Gulliver also sees that the Yahoos are kept in pens away from the house. It becomes immediately clear that, except for Gulliver's clothing, he and the Yahoos are the same animal. From this point on, Gulliver and his master (the grey) begin a series of discussions about the evolution of Yahoos, about topics, concepts, and behaviors related to the Yahoo society, which Gulliver represents, and about the society of the Houyhnhnms.

Despite his favored treatment in the grey steed's home, the kingdom's Assembly determines that Gulliver is a Yahoo and must either live with the uncivilized Yahoos or return to his own world. With great sadness, Gulliver takes his leave of the Houyhnhnms. He builds a canoe and sails to a nearby island where he is eventually found hiding by a crew from a Portuguese ship. The ship's captain returns Gulliver to Lisbon, where he lives in the captain's home. Gulliver is so repelled by the sight and smell of these "civilized Yahoos" that he can't stand to be around them. Eventually, however, Gulliver agrees to return to his family in England. Upon his arrival, he is repelled by his Yahoo family, so he buys two horses and spends most of his days caring for and conversing with the horses in the stable in order to be as far away from his Yahoo family as possible.

**The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman**

Laurence Sterne's Tristram Shandy is narrated by the title character in a series of digressions and interruptions that purportedly show the "life and opinions" — part of the novel's full title — of Tristram. Composed of nine "Books" originally published between 1759-1767, the novel has more to do with Shandy family members and their foibles and history than it seemingly does with Tristram himself. However, it is through Tristram's relating the actions, beliefs, and opinions of his family members — primarily his father, Walter Shandy, and his paternal Uncle Toby — that the reader gets a clearer picture of Tristram's character.

Books 1-6 revolve around Tristram's conception (the novel begins the evening of his conception); his birth (with a smashed nose that supposedly bodes ill warnings for his future); his mistaken naming (according to his father prior to Tristram's birth, "Tristram" is the worst possible name for a child); and his circumcision (while urinating out a window, the window falls). However, these events actually take up very little of these first six books' action. Instead, the narration is continuously interrupted by stories, diatribes, and opinions concerning family history, Walter Shandy's hypotheses and theories, and Uncle Toby's penchant for military fortifications to the point that readers today might easily become frustrated with Tristram's inability to get to the point (which, ironically, is the point — Tristram is relating his "life and opinions," and they come to him in a disjointed fashion).

Book 7 concerns an older Tristram traveling in France for health reasons. The book seems isolated from the story that precedes and follows it.

Books 8 and 9 revolve around Uncle Toby's affair with the Widow Wadman, who is concerned about Uncle Toby's supposed groin injury and seeks to find out just how injured his groin is. Again, as in earlier books in the novel, numerous digressions and interruptions are spread throughout these two books, and Tristram through his mother, Mrs. Shandy, finally asks, "What is all this story about?"

**UNIT V - Short Story**

**1. Cup of Tea**

**--Katherine Masefield**

**Summary of Katherine Masefield’s A Cup of Tea.**

***A Cup of Tea*** is set in 1920s London. **Rosemary Fell**, the protagonist, is wealthy young matron. We meet her while she is on a shopping trip in town. In an antique shop, she examines an expensive jewelry box that she would love to own. Yet, after inquiring about the price, she decides against the purchase - at least for that day.

Without the longed-for purchase, Rosemary returns to the street, where she is approached by a poor, raggedy looking young woman about her own age. The young woman asks for the price of a cup of tea and says she has no money; which Rosemary finds unimaginable.

Suddenly, inspired by the tales of Dostoevsky that she has recently read, Rosemary experiences a charitable inspiration and takes the girl home. Of course, the reader questions (as Mansfield intended) the true sincerity of Rosemary's impulse. We all believe in helping the less fortunate; however, this wealthy young woman seems more taken with her own fantasy of philanthropy than any real desire to help. At any rate, the young Miss Smith does go home with Rosemary and is given an abundant tea with all the trimmings.

While they're having tea, Mr. Fell (Phillip) comes into the bedroom and finds this unexpected guest. He takes Rosemary into another room, where he first expresses disapproval of what his wife has done and then speaks appreciatively about their poor visitor's beauty.

Once back with her charitable case, Rosemary now feels odd and without direction. What should she do? Ultimately, she gives Miss Smith some cash and sends her on her way. Anxious about her own appearance, Rosemary takes great care in dressing for dinner and seeks reassurance of her charms from Phillip.

**2. Shooting of an Elephant**

**- George Orwell**

**Shooting an Elephant Summary**

"[Shooting an Elephant](https://www.gradesaver.com/shooting-an-elephant)" by [George Orwell](https://www.gradesaver.com/author/george-orwell) is a narrative essay about Orwell's time as a police officer for the British Raj in colonial Burma. The essay delves into an inner conflict that Orwell experiences in his role of representing the British Empire and upholding the law. At the opening of the essay Orwell explains that he is opposed to the British colonial project in Burma. In explicit terms he says that he's on the side of the Burmese people,who he feels are oppressed by colonial rule. As a police officer he sees the brutalities of the imperial project up close and first hand. He resents the British presence in the country.

Inevitably then, he faces challenges as a police officer representing British imperial power. The people of Burma hate the empire too, and thus they hate Orwell, for he is the face of the empire. They harass him and mock him and seek opportunities to laugh at him. He explains that at the time of the events, he is too young to grasp the dilemma of his situation, or to know how to deal with it. He thus finds himself resenting the Burmese people as well. The one thing that the Burmese have over the British is the ability to mock and ridicule them. Orwell's entire focus as a police officer thus becomes about avoiding the ridicule of the Burmese.

The narrative centers around the event of a day when all of these conflicted emotions manifest themselves and Orwell faces them and understands them. On this day, Orwell learns that an elephant has broken its chain and it is undergoing a bout of "must" (a passing hormonal disorder that causes elephants to become uncontrollably violent). The elephant is rampaging through a bazaar, wreaking havoc. Feeling compelled to do some decent policing, Orwell sets out with a small rifle to see what's happening. He states that he has no intention of killing the elephant.

When he arrives in the shanty town area he finds the mess the elephant has made. It has trampled grass huts and turned over a garbage disposal van and it has killed a man. Orwell sends for an elephant rifle, though he still has no intention of killing the elephant. He states that he merely wants to defend himself. With the rifle, he's led down to the paddy fields where he sees the giant elephant peacefully grazing.

Upon laying eyes on the elephant he instantly feels that it would be wrong to kill it. He has no inclination to destroy something so complex and beautiful. He describes the beauty and great value of the animal. It would go against everything in him to kill it. He says it would be like murder. But when looks back to see the people watching, he realizes that the crowd is massive (at least two thousand people)

He feels their eyes on him, and their great expectations of his role. They want to see the spectacle. But more importantly, he feels, they expect him to uphold the performance of power that he is meant to represent as an officer of the British Empire. At this stage Orwell has the clear revelation that all white men in the colonized world are beholden to the people whom they colonize. If he falters, he will let down the guise of power, but most of all, he will create an opportunity for the people to laugh. Nothing terrifies him more than the prospect of humiliation by the Burmese crowd. Now, the prospect of being trampled by the elephant no longer scares him because it would risk death. The worst part of that prospect would rather be that the crowd would laugh. In this way, he realizes that the entire enterprise of the empire is kept afloat by the personal fear of humiliation of individual officers.

He thus gets down on the ground, takes aim with the powerful elephant gun with cross-hairs in the viewer, and he fires at the elephant's brain. He hits the elephant and the crowd roars. But the elephant doesn't die. A disturbing change comes over it and merely seems to age. He fires again and this time brings it slowly to its knees. But still it doesn't go down. He fires again and it comes back up, dramatically rising on hind legs and lifting its trunk before thundering to the earth. Still however, it remains alive. Orwell goes to it and finds that it's still breathing. He proceeds to unload bullet after bullet into the elephant's heart, but it won't die. The people have swarmed in to steal the meat. Without describing his shame or guilt, he leaves the elephant alive, suffering terribly. He learns later that it took half an hour for the elephant to die. There's some discussion among the other police officers about whether or not he did the right thing. The older ones think he did. The younger ones feel that it's a shame to shoot an elephant for killing a Burmese collie.

**Allegory in shooting of an Elephant by George Orwell**

The actual shooting of the elephant works as an allegory for the British colonial project in Burma. Orwell feels that it's wrong to kill such a large and wild animal. This feeling represents the guilt of attempting to commandeer an entire culture and society. On top of this, shooting the elephant does not kill the elephant; just as policing Burmese society does not put them under the colonizer's control. Orwell puts multiple bullets into the elephant, but in the end, he has to leave to bleed to death. This scene reflects the nature of colonial power of Burmese society: the British are incapable of ultimately fulfilling the punitive end of their project in Burma.

* + 1. **. Ant and the Grasshopper**

**W. Somerset Maugham**

When the story opens, we are introduced to the two main characters as referring to them as George and Tom. The characters are introduced after a short introduction about the story of the ant and the grasshopper. In this fable we learn that the ant in the story is much like the character of George. The ant begins working away throughout the summer collecting his food and building his shelter in order to prepare for the upcoming winter. The Grasshopper on the other hand enjoys his summer months by “sitting on a blade of grass singing to the sun”. The characteristics of the grasshopper are also seen through the character of Tom. George is considered “hardworking, decent, respectable and straightforward”, whereas Tom is portrayed as an idle, worthless, dissolute, and dishonorable rogue”. We cannot help but feel drawn to sympathize with George’s character because throughout the story George is seen to be the individual that has worked for everything he has. We see evidence of this when the narrator states, “Poor George, only a year older than a fortnight’s holiday in the year for a quarter of a century. He was in his office every morning at nine thirty and never left it till six. He was honest, industrious, and worthy. He made a point of saving a third of his income and his plan was to retire at fifty-five to a little house in the country. Maugham uses this character to portray the preferred life that we as humans try to live each day. By going to work and supporting a family we are much like the ant in the story living each day in order to prepare ourselves for the future. Within the story Maugham created Toms character to portray the characteristics of the grasshopper. “He stopped working and wanted to enjoy himself. He had little money and he spent two happy years in the various.

**The Ant and the Grasshopper**

In The Ant and the Grasshopper by W. Somerset Maugham we have the theme of justice, trust, fear, morality, embarrassment, happiness and struggle. Taken from his Collected Short Stories collection the story is narrated in the first person by an unnamed narrator and after reading the story the reader realises that Maugham may be exploring the theme of justice or rather the lack of it. George Ramsey has worked all his life and has set aside some money to provide for his retirement. He has been diligent and astute unlike his brother Tom. However rather than being satisfied that he will have a peaceful retirement George can’t believe that Tom has inherited a half a million pounds. There is a sense that George feels as though there has been an injustice done.  It is very much the ant (George) versus the grasshopper (Tom). Just as the grasshopper made no provisions for the winter. Tom too made no provisions for his future though he still appears to have landed on his feet. The narrator’s reaction to Tom’s success in life is also interesting as it mirrors his feelings towards the ant. Whether it is insensitive of the narrator to laugh there is no disputing that he likes and supports Tom Ramsey. Something that is noticeable by the fact that the narrator attends dinners with Tom. If anything the narrator has been true throughout the story favouring the grasshopper over the ant.

It is also clear to the reader that George has struggled through life. Looking after his wife and family and at the same time making sure that he has a substantial pension to help him in retirement. Tom on the other hand has not struggled at all. He has gone from one calamity to another and has often been bailed out of trouble by George due to George’s fear of embarrassment. If anything George lives his life to a moral code while Tom on the other hand appears to live his life recklessly. It is also noticeable that Tom shows George no allegiance. His number one concern is living a good life, one that is subsidised by others. Regardless of the individual Tom’s number one concern is himself and his own happiness. He has borrowed money off not only George but others too and never paid any of the money back. To an outsider Tom might be considered to be untrustworthy. However he is charming enough that people find it easy to lend him money even though they may never get the money back. In modern terms Tom might be considered, rightly or wrongly, to be a lovable rogue or scoundrel. A man who charms people by deception yet the same people can’t help but like Tom’s character.

Tom also appears to have remarried due to the fact that his new wife is wealthy. There is no sense that he has changed his ways and has married for love. At all stages in the story the most important person in Tom’s life is Tom himself. He acts selfishly without consideration for others. However some critics may suggest that though Tom may be lax in morals he is only living his life as he wishes to live it. Something that most people would long to do. Tom is not confined or restricted to society’s views or morals. He is his own man even if he may be morally corrupt.  In reality there are also times in the story in whereby Tom is simply playing on George’s fears. Which might suggest to some that the problem lies with George and not Tom. George at any stage of the story, should he have overcome any sense of embarrassment, could have refused Tom assistance. Tom does not mind embarrassing himself in order to profit while George looks upon some of Tom’s actions as being an embarrassment to him.

There is also no doubting that the happiest character in the story is Tom. Not only because he has inherited half a million pounds but because he has lived his life as he wants to. Even if that life has been at the expense of others. It is also ironic that though Tom has made no significant contribution to society he at the end of the story is the most successful of all the characters. That is if success is gauged by monetary worth. Which appears to be how George evaluates success. Something that becomes clear to the reader when George discusses with the narrator how much money he will have when he retires. This may be important as it suggests that both George and Tom have one thing in common. A love for money. Though money is a necessity in life both men are also aware of its power and its ability to influence others. George may feel as though he will be placed on a pedestal by others when he retires due to the fact that he has set aside so much money while Tom is obviously aware of the power of money. He has used money, other people’s money, to get what he wants in life.