



**MASTER OF ARTS (1<sup>st</sup> Year) Third Sem**

**ENG-302**

**LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

**AMERICAN LITERATURE**



**Directorate Of Distance Education**

**Guru Jambheshwar University Of**

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## Table of Contents

Unit	Chapter	Author	Page No.
1	Song of Myself (Norton Anthology) Walt Whitman	Sh. Jarnail Singh	1-28
2	The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn - Mark Twain	Sh. Jarnail Singh	29-72
3	A Farewell to Arms-Ernest Hemingway	Sh. Jarnail Singh	73-118
4	Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf ? Edward Albee	Sh. Jarnail Singh	119-175
5	Preparation for Examination:	Sh. Jarnail Singh	176-177



### Chapter One

### ENGLISH

### ENG-302

<b>Subject: American Literature</b>	
<b>Course Code: 302</b>	<b>Author: Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Lesson No. : 01</b>	<b>Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Song of Myself : Walt Whitman</b>	

### STRUCTURE

#### 1.0 learning Objectives

#### 1.1 Introduction



## **A Brief About the Poet**

### **1.2 About the Poem**

### **1.3 Main body of the text : Song of Myself**

### **1.4 Check your progress**

#### **1. 4.1 Literary criticism**

### **1.5 Summary**

### **1.6 Self –Assessment**

### **1.7 Answers to check your progress.**

### **1.8 Suggested readings**

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**Song of myself - Walt Whitman**

## **1.0 Learning Objectives -**

- 1 It will enable the students to get a close analysis of Walt Whitman's Song of Myself:**
- 2 It will throw light on socio historical view of American Literature.**
- 3 Literary texts, illustration, and critical analysis of Song of Myself is explained.**

## **1.1 Introduction**

### **A Brief About the Poet:**

Walt Whitman, Edgar Allan Poe, Sylvia Plath, Robert Frost, T. S. Eliot, and Ezra Pound are some prominent poets in American literature. One of the greatest American poets was Walt Whitman. On May 31, 1819, at West Hill, Long Island, is where Whitman entered the world. Louisa Velsor is his mother and Walter is the name of his father. Whitman's family had nine children. He worked as a journalist. His father died in 1865. In 1892, when he was 72 years old, Whitman passed away. He is considered a humanist and a great American poet, believing in the value of human beings, individuality and nature. Walt Whitman mostly wrote poems on the human mind, nature, body and soul. He believed in the perfection of nature. He has created the atmosphere of emotional upheavals in his poems. His best poems include "I Hear It Was Charged Against Me", "O Captain! My Captain", "On The Beach At Night", "Song Of Myself", "To Think Of Time", "Faces", "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry", "A Woman Wait For Me", and "Song Of The Open Road" etc.



Every second of every day is an unfathomably exquisite miracle for me. Whitman,

-Whitman's Mysticism: or Mystic element in his poems.

" I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey- work of the stars.

Whitman's poetry abounds with mysticism and mystic element. He says that a mystic is unsystematic and intuitive. In Section 6 of Song of Myself, "grass" is employed as a symbol to indicate that "I" is not a singular person. It could be the poet's personal flag or the Lord's hanky. In section 3, the "loving bed fellow" sleeping at the poet's side symbolizes God who keeps company with God. The twenty-eight young guys in Section 11 represent the twenty-eight flaws in human nature. In the poem ' The Sleepers ' night signifies the grave and "sleep" symbolizes death. The Song of Myself is good poem. It's first edition was published in 1855 with Leaves of Grass. The second edition was published in 1856 and third in 1860, fourth in 1867 and last in 1891-92. The twenty-eight young guys in Section 11 represent the twenty-eight flaws in human nature. Song of Myself is written in free verse style. It is a literary device; it is an open form of Poetry. Some critics noted transcendentalist influence in his poetry. The poem seems to anticipate realism in United States and the influence of American Civil War. Concept of Self is an important term used by the poet in Song of Myself. Whitman emphasizes " I" in a powerful way. He considers every bit of his possessions to be equally yours.

Mysticism is more of a state of mind than a set of beliefs or an organized worldview. A mystic is someone who believes that the world of ordinary perception conceals and contains a divine reality. He has the impression that the external cosmos communicates with him on a deep, spiritual level through his senses. He is curious about the identity of the voice in his head. Whence comes this life or soul of nature, he wonders, having concluded that the external universe must be animated by a soul or life of its own? It has the same origin requirements as the human spirit. The highest Soul, or God, in the eyes of a mystic, is indivisible, but takes on many forms. It's what gives life to everything from plants to animals to humans. Therefore, the mystic not only considers the entire natural world to be alive, but also holds the view that Man, Nature, and God are essentially the same thing. That "one undivided changeless life in all lives, one inseparable in the Separate" is what he perceives. In the eyes of a mystic, "all things in the visible world are but forms and manifestation of the One Divine Life," and while physical manifestations may come and go, the spirit that gives them life endures forever. A mystic's attitude towards reason and science is completely hostile. He rejects logic and intelligence, and he finds no significance in sensory experience. He sees past it and even through it. Throughout the Song of Myself, he writes about his spiritual experience and his sense of "oneness." In one of the chapters, he explains it to us." And I know that the hand of God is the elder hand of my own,

And I know that the spirit of God is the eldest brother of my own,

And that all men ever born are also my brothers....and the women.



my sisters and lovers,

And that a kelson of the creation is love." - Song of Myself, V

In another section of the poem the poet looks back through the epochs to the first, Infinite Nothing, to the time when his wandering began:

"..... I waited unseen and always,

And slept while God carried me through the lethargic mist and took.

my time.....

Immense have been the preparations for me,

Faithful and friendly the arms that have helped me."

Whitman's search for the divine: despite his acceptance of Darwinian evolution, Whitman maintains a strong belief in God or the divine. In his "Myself" song, he reflected:

" I accept Reality and dare not question it,

Materialism first and last imbuing,

Hurrah for positive Science! long live exact demonstration."

Use of symbolism to express Divine Reality:

Sometimes, like a mystic, Whitman goes beyond the realm of physical appearance and seeks to imply the intangible by placing himself on the plane of the senses and describing the visible in straightforward terms. "I help myself to material and immaterial....." he says.

"In this way he explained the co-existence in his work of descriptive passages and of somewhat obscure lines where he tried to express the inexpressible and translate those mysterious hieroglyphics which all material objects were in his eyes". The problem of the inexpressible haunted him:

What comes to one now and forever is not what is printed, preached, or discussed; rather, it is something that defies description and cannot be put into writing.

You can't be any further away from it than your own ears and eyes can pick it up.

What comes to one now and forever is not what is printed, preached, or discussed; rather, it is something that defies description and cannot be put into writing.

You can't be any further away from it than your own ears and eyes can pick it up.

Whitman shows the transcendental reality and makes extensive use of symbols. Like other mystic he uses symbol to convey his sense of the transcendental mystery. He makes use of highly sensuous and concrete imagery to convey his perception of divine reality. O' Conner called the Leaves, " a sort of American Bible" and John Burroughs



referred to it as , " the Bible of nations". According to Whitman scholar James Miller, "although it is difficult at first glance to reconcile Whitman's mysticism with his strong materialism, his assertion of the self, and his celebrated sexuality, he shows the mystical theme asserts itself in the Leaves by its sheer power and vitality."

" I am the poet of the body, and I am the poet of the soul."

## 1.2. About The Poem

### Song of Myself: Appreciation and Interpretation

Song of Myself is classic work. It was composed by the famous American poet Walt Whitman. There are 1300 lines and 52 stanzas in this poem. It was initially released to the public in 1855 in the book Leaves of Grass. It is widely agreed that this anthology of poems is Whitman's magnum opus. The poem revolutionized in English literature. Critics like James Miller, and Malcolm Cowley trace a direct pattern of mystical evolution in it. The American epic, the American song, the Bible of Democracy: that is Song of Myself. The "I" represents the poet writing the piece. The mystical condition is depicted in sections 1–5. Self-Purification is covered in Chapters 7–32, while Self-Awakening is covered in Chapters 6–16. The Illumination and the dark night of the soul are the subjects of sections 33–37. Starting with Section 33,

What I guessed about space and time while idly lounging on the lawn has been proven correct.

Section 39-43 talks about union which emphasis on faith and love. Section 38 opens,

Enough! Just stop it!

I'm completely shocked, so please step back.

Union is discussed in sections 41–49; an emphasis is placed on perception; and the emergence from the mystical state is discussed in sections 50–52.

The theme of the Song of Myself is American Democracy, it's spiritual, pantheistic basis. To conclude it is a complex work of art.

### Song of Myself: A Brief Idea

Sec.1. The poet invites his soul to loaf with him, as he carelessly observes a speck of summer grass. He refers to the soul where he was born thirty-seven years ago. He is in perfect health and hopes to remain active till death.

Sec.2. In this section the poet found interesting things and experience in him. This portion describes the sound of his voice, the smell of fresh and dried leaves, and the echoes and buzzed whispers of his own breath, his inspiration, and the beating of his heart.



**Sec. 3.** The poet is not interested in the beginning or the end. Every part of himself and every man who is "hearty and clean" are lauded by him.

**Sec. 4.** The poet had an epiphany when he sees the hand of God as his own promise and the spirit of God as his own brother. This is the moment when the mystic realises the actuality of the Divine.

**Sec. 5.** A bit of guesswork is done in order to interpret the significance of grass. It could be the poet's personal banner, an offering to God, a product of nature, or a universal emblem for all nations and cultures.

**Sec. 6.** We see in this section the poet's faith in immortality; he has full belief in the goodness of all things; and his all-embracing interest in mankind.

**Sec. 7.** A young woman whose life has been "all so lonesome" observes the twenty-eight young swimmers in private, pining for and imagining herself among them.

**Sec. 21.** In section 21 we get a picture of writer's passionate love of all that he sees on the earth, and his optimistic attitude of life. Through himself, he hopes to deepen the spiritual's "pleasure of heaven" and "translate the pains of hell into a new tongue."

**Sec. 23.** The poet is not rejecting materialism or reality. He expresses his liking for science, geology, mathematics, chemistry etc. He honours the scientists for their useful discoveries.

**Sec. 24.** He looks upon his body and his organs as miracles. He considers his head or mind to be 'more than church, bible, and all the creed'. He is a worshipper of his body.

**Sec. 25.** We can find the tremendous self-conceit of the poet in this section. He compares himself to sun rise and claims that he can encompass worlds with the 'twirl' of his tongue.



Sec. 27. The poet declares that he has ‘instant conductors all-over his body so that the very proximity of things sends sensations through his body. It makes him happy to feel the existence of things with his fingers.

Sec. 28. The poet speaks of his reaction to the touch of another human being in language that is full of sensuality-‘prurient provokers’, ‘behaving licentious toward me’, ‘unbuttoning my clothes’ etc.

Sec. 32. In his imagination the poet picks out one of the animals, a stallion and goes with it on “brotherly terms.” The size, beauty, suppleness, and well-built limbs of the stallion, which is responsive to the poet’s caress, are described vividly in six lines. Animals are useful and important to human beings.

Sec. 50. The poet looks upon all mankind as his brothers and sisters. In his view, order and life are not the ultimate goals of the universe. There is a plan behind this universe. This universe offers an eternal life, and it offers happiness.

Sec. 51. The poet looks hopefully towards the future. He asks an imaginary listener if he has something to confide to the poet.

Sec. 52. In a rare burst of hatchability poet says that he bequeaths himself to the dirt, in order to grow from the grass which, he loves, adding: “If you want me again, look for me under your boot soles.

### **1.3 Main body of the text -song of myself**

#### **Section 1**

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,

And what I assume you shall assume,

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you

I loafe and invite my soul,

I lean and loafe at my ease observing a spear of summer grass.

My tongue, every atom of my blood, formed from this soil, this air,

Born here of parents born here from parents the same, and their parents the same,

I, now thirty-seven years old in perfect health begin,

Hoping to cease not till death.

Creeds and schools in abeyance,

Retiring back, a while sufficed at what they are, but never forgotten,

I harbour for good or bad, I permit to speak at every hazard,





**Nature without check with original energy.**

**Houses and rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded.**

**with perfumes,**

**I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it,**

**The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.**

**The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the distillation,  
it is odorless,**

**It is for my mouth forever, I am in love with it,**

**I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and  
naked,**

**I am mad for it to be in contact with me.**

**Interpretation: or Critical Appreciation**

**In this poem the poet sings of himself. He finds complete identify between himself and others, in singing himself he would also sing of others. The poet invites his soul to observe a blade of grass. He prepares himself for his mystical journey towards unity with the divine. The 'I' stands not for the Whitman but also for the average American. The 'spear of grass' symbolizes the progress power of nature. The 'grass' also symbolizes separateness in union which is the characteristics of democracy.**

**2**

**Houses rooms are full of perfumes, the shelves are crowded with perfumes,**

**I breathe the fragrance myself and know it and like it,**

**The distillation would intoxicate me also, but I shall not let it.**

**The atmosphere is not a perfume, it has no taste of the distillation, it is odourless,**

**It is for my mouth forever, I am in love with it,**

**I will go to the bank by the wood and become undisguised and naked,**

**I am mad for it to be in contact with me.**

**The smoke of my own breath,**

**Echoes, ripples, buzzed whispers, love-root, silk-thread, crotch and vine,**

**My respiration and inspiration, the beating of my heart, the passing of blood and air  
through my lungs,**

**The sniff of green leaves and dry leaves, and of the shore and dark-coloured sea-rocks,  
and of hay in the barn,**

**The sound of the belched words of my voice loosed to the eddies of the wind,**

**A few light kisses, a few embraces, a reaching around of arms,**

**The play of shine and shade on the trees as the supple boughs wag,**

**The delight alone or in the rush of the streets, or along the fields and hillsides,**



The feeling of health, the full-noon trill, the song of me rising from bed and meeting the sun.

Have you reckoned a thousand acres much? have you reckoned the earth much?

Have you practised so long to learn to read?

Have you felt so proud to get at the meaning of poems?

Stop this day and night with me and you shall possess the origin of all poems,

You shall possess the good of the earth and sun, (there are millions of suns left,)

You shall no longer take things at second or third hand, nor look through the eyes of the dead, nor feed on the spectres in books,

You shall not look through my eyes either, or take things from me,

You shall listen to all sides and filter them from yourself.

### Interpretation: Critical Appreciation

In this section the poet expresses his intention of freeing himself. He says all man associated things to allow nature to speak to him with all her original energy. The poet says that the houses, rooms, selves etc.. are all full of perfumes. The poet loves the smoke of his own breath, echoes, buzzed whispers his inspiration and the beating of his heart, the smell of green leaves and dry leaves, the sound of his own voice. In the opinion of the poet worldly power and pelf knowledge gained at second hand from books is useless and meaningless. He invites his readers to come with him to the open woods and there in contact with nature they would acquire knowledge in the true sense. They should learn to use their own eyes and ears and acquire knowledge and wisdom directly to nature.

The delight alone - in loneliness.

3

I have heard what the talkers were talking, the talk of the beginning and the end,

But I do not talk of the beginning or the end.

There was never any more inception than there is now,

Nor any more youth or age than there is now,

And will never be any more perfection than there is now,

Nor any more heaven or hell than there is now.

Urge and urge and urge,

Always the procreant urge of the world.



Out of the dimness opposite equals advance, always substance and increase, always sex,  
Always a knit of identity, always distinction, always a breed of life.

To elaborate is no avail, learned and unlearned feel that it is so.

Sure as the most certain sure, plumb in the uprights, well intertied, braced in the beams,  
Stout as a horse, affectionate, haughty, electrical,

I and this mystery here we stand.

Clear and sweet is my soul, and clear and sweet is all that is not my soul.

Lack one lacks both, and the unseen is proved by the seen,

Till that becomes unseen and receives proof in its turn.

Showing the best and dividing it from the worst age vexes age,

Knowing the perfect fitness and equanimity of things, while they discuss I am silent, and go  
bathe and admire myself.

Welcome is every organ and attribute of me, and of any man hearty and clean,

Not an inch nor a particle of an inch is vile, and none shall be less familiar than the rest.

I am satisfied I see, dance, laugh, sing.

As the hugging and loving bed-fellow sleeps at my side through the night, and withdraws at  
the peep of the day with stealthy tread,

Leaving me baskets covered with white towels swelling the house with their plenty,

Shall I postpone my acceptation and realization and scream at my eyes,

That they turn from gazing after and down the road,

And forthwith cipher and show me to a cent,

Exactly the value of one and exactly the value of two, and which is ahead?

### **Interpretation: Critical Appreciation**

The poet is not interested in the philosophical discussion regarding the beginning or end of the creation. He is interested in the present and the blessings of God which he can enjoy now. The creation has always been there, and it would continue forever. The procreative urge pervades in nature. In man it manifests itself as the sex instinct. Sex is



natural and it cannot be an evil. Thus, sexual union symbolizes the fact that all have body and soul, and both are equally important. Both the body and the soul are equally clear and sweet. It is through body one can realize the soul. The divine mystery can be understood only through the senses. Therefore, the poet is proud of body and celebrates it. His body is healthy and upright, stout and strong as that of a horse. It is electrical extremely sensitive, and alive, clean and sweet. The poet is fully satisfied with his body and so sings and dances with joy. The poet uses sex symbolism to convey to his readers his perception of divine mystery. The poet would accept the gift of God, this divine bliss. He is determined to start on his mystical journey fiat the end of it much bliss awaits him. In the glorification of the body Whitman differs from the traditional mystics. Instead of negation of the body and the senses there is an exception, even the glorification of the physical and the sensuous. James Miller calls it "" inverted Mysticism". For Whitman body alone is the means of self- realization.

Electrical- alive, sensitive.

5

I believe in you my soul, the other I am must not a base itself to you,  
And you must not be abased to the other.  
Loafed with me on the grass, loose the stop from your throat,  
Not words, not music or rhyme I want, not custom or lecture, not even the best,  
Only the lull I like, the hum of your valved voice.  
I mind how once we lay such a transparent summer morning,  
How you settled your head athwart my hips and gently turned over upon me,  
And parted the shirt from my bosom-bone, and plunged your tongue to my bare-strips  
heart,  
And reached till you felt my beard, and reached till you held my feet.  
Swiftly arose and spread around me the peace and knowledge that pass all the argument of  
the earth,  
And I know that the hand of God is the promise of my own,  
And I know that the spirit of God is the brother of my own,  
And that all the men ever born are also my brothers, and the women my sisters and lovers,  
And that a kelson of the creation is love,  
And limitless are leaves stiff or drooping in the fields,  
And brown ants in the little wells beneath them,  
And mossy scabs of the worm fence, heaped stones, elder, mullein and pokeweed.

**Interpretation: Critical Appreciation**



The poet begins by pointing out that both the body and the soul are of equal importance. Therefore, he would not degrade the body for the sake of the soul, nor the soul for the body. The poet then invites the soul to recline with him at ease on the grass. The soul or God is the pictured of poet's his beloved. No other company is welcomed to him now. He would not like to listen to any other voice. He would like to be there in perfect silence. The poet then remembers an earlier occasion when he lay there on the grass on a clear summer morning. Then his soul like a beloved, made love to him and came in the most intimate contact with his body. This woman soul placed her head on his lips, licked his breast with his tongue, and passed her hands all over his body. In this way does the poet use sexual symbolism to describe a mystical experience in which he was one with the divine, the super soul or God.

As a result of this mystical union with the divine his soul was suffused not only with peace, but also with knowledge wisdom far greater than earthly knowledge. It was then the poet realized that both his body and soul are the creation of God, and both are equally sacred. He thus became a believer in democracy for he realized that all men are his brothers, and all women are neither his sisters or his beloveds, for the father all is one and same, the Supreme. Whitman's conception of democracy is spiritual and pantheistic.

Pass- surpass, excel.

Kelson - stay or support.

## 6. Grass

A child said What is the grass? fetching it to me with full hands; How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he.

I guess it must be the flag of my disposition, out of hopeful green stuff woven.

Or I guess it is the handkerchief of the Lord,

A scented gift and remembrancer designedly drop,

Bearing the owner's name someway in the corners,

that we may see and remark, and say Whose?

Or I guess the grass is itself a child, the produced babe of the vegetation.

Or I guess it is a uniform hieroglyphic, and it means, sprouting alike in broad zones and narrow zones, Growing among black folks as

among white, Kanuck, Tuckahoe, Congressman, Cuff, I give them the same, I receive them the same.

And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves.

Tenderly will I use you curling grass,

It maybe you transpire from the breasts of young men,

It may be if I had known them, I would have loved them,



It maybe you are from old people, or from offspring taken soon out of their mothers' laps,  
and here you are the mothers' laps.

This grass is very dark to be from the white heads of old mothers,

Darker than the colourless beards of old men,

Dark to come from under the faint red roofs of mouths.

O I perceive after all so many utterings And I perceive they do not come from the roofs of  
mouths for nothing.

I wish I could translate the hints about the dead young men and women,

And the hints about old men and mothers, and the offspring taken soon out of their laps.

What do you think has become of the young and old men? And what do you think has  
become of the women and children?

They are alive and well somewhere, the smallest sprout shows there is really no death,

And if ever there, was it led forward.

life, and does not wait at the end to arrest it and ceased the moment life appeared.

All goes onward and outward, nothing collapses.

And to die is different from what any one supposed, and luckier.

### **Interpretation: Brief Idea**

A child talks about grass to the poet and questions him about its nature. The child wants to know the real significance of a spear of summer grass. The finds it difficult to answer the question because he is not sure about its nature. The grass may be the expression of his own personality. So, he tells the child that it is the symbol of his own disposition. The poet is optimistic. Like him, the grass is also not gloomy and sad. It may be the handkerchief of the almighty, a gift full of scent which reminds us of his presence. There is a purpose in its being on earth. This purpose is to prove the existence of God. He is the maker of all things in the universe. The grass is also a key to the sacred mysteries relating to the working of the vast. It is also a symbol of the democracy. It knows no discrimination. It grows at all places. It loves equality. It gives all white, black the same delight. It regards them all equal. The grass is also beautiful uncut hair of graves. It tells the poet what happens after death. Some people believe that death ends life, but the poet does not agree with them. The grass grows over the graves of those who die. They may be young children or people or old. They may be people also. This shows that death is not end but beginning of new life. Death extends life. life continues even after death. Death is simply a birth into new life. The grass also brings out the optimistic and hopeful nature of the poet. Thus mysticism and science combine to make this section a crucial important.

The grass speaks of life. Even the poet admits that "death" does not exist because "the smallest sprout shows there is really no death, and if there ever was, it led forward life." New life can also be seen in the grass. In this poetry, the grass represents freedom and equality. It does not care about social status. Grass is a metaphor for everlasting



life. You can't beat death. It also highlights the poet's upbeat and positive outlook. To him, death is not the end of life but merely a new phase. Thus, through the symbol of grass, Whitman conveys the theme of optimism and immortality of human soul.

### 32 Animals

Because they are so calm and independent, I often wonder whether I wouldn't be happier if I were an animal instead.

For what seems like an eternity, I just stare at them.

They don't complain and sweat excessively,

They don't spend the night in a dark room, wailing over their shortcomings.

Discussions of their spiritual responsibilities are not nauseating.

No one is unhappy or driven mad by the need to accumulate possessions.

None of them bow down to one another or to his ancestors from many centuries before.

There is not a single decent or unhappy person in all of Earth.

So, they introduce themselves to me as relatives, and I accept them.

They openly flaunt their possession of mementos I've given them to me.

Whence do they procure such tokens?

Did I lose them as I walked by that way a gazillion times?

In the past, in the present, and into the future, I, myself,

More evidence is amassing at an ever-increasing rate,

Infinite and all-encompassing, with others like them,

Those that choose to access my recollections won't feel too excluded,

I've chosen this one I adore and am going with him as a brother.

A stallion of truly colossal beauty, young and receptive to my touches.

Your ears are set far apart, your brow is broad,

Smooth and shiny limbs, a tail that brushes the ground,

With bright, mischievous eyes and delicately sculpted, pliable ears.

As my heels squeeze him, his nostrils flare.

His muscular arms and legs shake with excitement as we race around and back.

Just a moment more, and I'll be done with you, stallion.



I don't need your paces if I can outrun them.

While I'm sitting or standing still, you're being passed.

### **Critical views or Ideas of the poem Animals:**

This is the most famous section in Song of Myself. In the first eight lines the poet describes the peace, contentment and innocence of animals. In the next six lines the poet describes vividly the beauty of a horse which he selects for a ride. In the last three lines, the poet declares that he doesn't need a horse for he can gallop faster than the horse.

Poetically, the author demonstrates his affection for those independent creatures. He hopes to live among them for at least part of his life. He feels at peace and contentment with animals and would like to adopt such lifestyle. They don't need anything else because they're independent. Because of their independence, he is interested in sharing a home with them. Their existence is one of utter ease. They have nothing to worry about at all. He stares at the animals for a long time, in awe of their natural beauty. He looks at how easygoing they are. They don't have to work hard for money; therefore, they don't worry or feel sorry for themselves. They are happy with where they are at in life. They don't keep losing sleep over it or beat themselves up over it. Since they are oblivious to evil, they also don't sin. They contain no ill will, corruption, or hostility. They appear to be living a pure and happy life. Poets are not made ill by discussions about their religious responsibilities. They are happy, and they don't put in crazy hours for.

worldly wealth and power. They do not pay homage to heroes who may be thousands of years dead and neither do they flatter the living.

The poet feels that the animals are closely to him. And he has similar qualities to them. He has affinities with all creatures. The animals are his brothers. And he would live with them like a brother. He likes the gigantic beauty of male horse. The male horse has a high head and wide forehead between the ears. His limbs are glossy and tender, delicate. His tail is so long that it keeps on dusting the ground when he moves. His eyes are full of sparkling wickedness. He moves flexibly. In the last line the poet realizes that he doesn't need a horse to encompass the world. Man should not feel superior. It is unjustified. He should learn the lesson of contentment, peace, and innocence from the animals. Whitman like Wordsworth condemns the materialistic craze of his contemporaries.

The central theme of this section is that when compared to animals, man is found deficient in many virtues which animals possess. Man is never satisfied with his position. But animals are content and don't complain. They don't commit sin. Whitman praises their contentment and self - sufficiency. Men are service, egoistic, hypocritical and greedy. Animals are free from all these vices. He sees a big and strong horse and praises its strength.

Living with animals is better than living in the company of human beings. That "they are so placid, and self-contained" is how he describes them. They appeal to the poet because:

They don't complain and sweat excessively,

They don't spend the night crying over their mistakes,

Talking about their spiritual responsibilities doesn't make me queasy.

Whitman feels attached to the animals. Killingworth discusses Whitman's portrayal of animals in relation to human beings. Whitman's poem this desire because





they constantly drew connections between modernity and nature. Thus, Whitman expresses respect towards animals. Animals don't make attempts based on greed and power. The poet feels that he can live comfortably in the company of animals. Whitman expresses: " Myself moving forward then and now and forever."

Demented- crazy.

Omnigenous- containing all.

#### 1.4 Check your progress

**Question 1 : Whitman's egotism as a poet. Or The Function of the Individual in Whitman's Poetry.**

**Question2 : Examining the Theme of Animals in brief .**

**Question3 : Discuss Walt Whitman embodies democracy in his poetry.**

##### 1.4.1 Literary Criticism:

American Civil War is a powerful event in American literature. From 1861 to 1865, the United States was at war. It is about the enslavement of Black people. It became the symbol of a fight for equality of rights, liberty and end of oppression. Slavery, Abolitionist and Territorial crisis, States rights sectionalism, Protectionism, Nationalism are key factor of this American civil war. Main causes are the Slavery in American Society.

**Abraham Lincoln:** He was the political leader of America, and he was very great.

**Death Sex and Prostitution** is found in Whitman's poetry.

**Whitman** is America's National Poet.

The term "open form" verse is often used to describe free verse. It developed into its current form in the French verse libre. The rhythmic structure sets it apart from verse. There is no discernible rhyme scheme, meter, or melodic rhythm throughout. As a result, it mimics the cadence of regular speech.

The literary and cultural movement known as "Modernism" originated in England. It's a tool for spotting novel themes, structures, ideas, and approaches to writing that emerged in the years following World War 1 (about 1914-1918). It developed in response to widespread societal shifts in the Western world at the turn of the twentieth century.

Modernism is a period in literary history that began in the early 1900s and lasted until the early 1940s, spanning two world wars, and is characterized by an emphasis on



abstraction, new kinds of painting, photography, sculpture, and poetry. The straightforward narratives and formulaic poetry of the 19th century were a point of contention for modernist authors.

Individualism, experimentation, absurdity, symbolism, and formalism are central to modernist literature. Modernist literature includes works by authors such as Henry James and Joseph Conrad. After World War One, a new literary movement known as modernism emerged. The desire for rebirth amid a barren and spiritually empty terrain, with its shattered pictures and obtuse modern worldview, is central to T.S. Eliot's magnum opus, the lengthy poem *The Waste Land* (1922).

#### Theme in Whitman's poetry-

Walt Whitman is a major 19th century poet of America. Some of prominent themes of his poetry are as under:

The Egoism is prominent theme of Whitman's poetry. He glorifies his own self in his poetry. Everything in his mysticism, including love, death, and the democratic urge, is connected to the individual. Whitman's poetry has a strong mystic undercurrent. The soul, according to mystics, is far more important than the physical body. Nature is also theme of his poetry. Whitman shares the Romantic poet's relationship with nature. Main topics in Walt Whitman's poetry include time, death, Transcendentalism, and democracy. Whitman was a nationalist with a strong sense of patriotism. Sensuality is another key component of Whitman's poetry. Whitman referred to his work as "*Leaves of Grass, the Song of Sex*" in his own writing. In short Egoism, the self, mysticism, body and soul, Nature and time are some of prominent themes of Walt Whitman's poetry. Seeking one's own truth and developing one's own independence were fundamental ideas in Transcendentalist thought. Individualism, idealism, and the pursuit of progress are three defining features of the movement.

divinity of nature. Ralph Waldo Emerson and Henry David Thoreau were among the pioneers of the Transcendentalist movement that developed in the middle of the nineteenth century.

Its core tenet is that one must turn inward, rely on one's intuition, and connect with nature to find true spiritual fulfilment. Simply put, transcendentalists maintain that spirituality is beyond language and can only be experienced. The transcendentalists were big on the value of the mind and the ability to think outside the box. Major topics in Walt Whitman's poetry include egotism, mysticism, the body and soul, Nature, death, transcendentalism, democracy, patriotism, and nationalism.

#### Symbolism in Whitman's poetry

Whitman's use of symbolism in his poetry- Anything that stands for something else is a symbol. Symbolism permeates every written word. A symbol stands for what it represents. As examples, we have "the cross" and "the Red, White, and Blue" as common examples of public symbols. Symbols have more than just connotative meaning; they can also evoke strong feelings. The word "lily" simply refers to a type of flower, but it also conjures up ideas of purity and beauty. The poetry of Walt Whitman is rife with symbolism. D.H. Lawrence called the concrete or substantial, although he was trying to convey the spiritual truth, the fluidity, and the oneness or identity of all. The things found in nature are metaphors for the spiritual truth. Whitman doesn't get



the "I" treatment, but it represents the contemporary American and the contemporary man. It's possible that I represent a soldier in war or a comet hurtling across the sky.

I depart as air; I shake my white locks at the runaway sun.

I effuse my flesh in Eddie's, drift in lacy jags.

At other times, I assume the role of the intrepid explorer whose mission it is to learn about the cosmos. The road represents the way to enlightenment. Democracy is represented by the Grass. The land represents the physical body, the water the spiritual self, and the sea beach the dividing line between the two in a mockingly contrasting way. The Sun is a metaphor of our innate sanity; birds represent different aspects of our humanity; the hawk represents democracy; the hermit thrush represents religion; and so on. The tree in Song of Myself represents the birth of new life. The poet expresses his sorrow in When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed by writing:

Falling star of the West, you are mighty.

Shades of darkness, O sad, weeping night.

The magnificent star has vanished; the black spot that concealed it is gone.

When the Dooryard Lilacs Were in Full Bloom

**1.6 Summary** - He says this of a blade of grass in "Song of Myself": "I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey work of the stars." In what ways does Whitman emphasize minutiae in "Song of Myself"? Is there any particular significance to the title "Leaves of Grass"? What does Whitman imply by the phrase "a leaf of grass"?

Whitman writes in "Song of Myself, "Do I contradict myself? / Very well then I contradict myself,/ I am large, I contain multitudes." These are some of the contradictions you discover while reading. How do these contradictions resonate for you, you will find after reading of this.?

**Question 1 - Whitman's egotism as a poet. Or The Function of the Individual in Whitman's Poetry.**

**Ans.** Whitman's Egoism is the most significant feature in his poetry. His poetry is full of egotistical praise. His egotism is made clear by the title of his poem: Song of Myself. Among poets, Whitman stands out as one of the most democratic. As far as Thoreau is concerned, Walt Whitman was "the greatest democrat the world has ever seen." An egoist is someone who constantly uses the first-person pronoun. Despite Whitman's frequent use of "I" in his lyrics, we cannot label him an egoist.

**Whitman's theory of Poetry:** Whitman describes his ideal poetry in his own words. As he puts it, a poem is "an attempt of a naive masculine, affectionate, contemplative, sensuous imperious person to cast into literature not only his own grit but also the grit of the world."

. The effects he produces in his poems are of the original eye, arm, atmosphere, of tree or bird.

There's a lot of self-talk in Song of Myself. In his words:

When I think of myself, I rejoice and sing.

What I take for granted, you take for granted.



According to A. E. Briggs, Whitman sings of himself, but his imaginative self is composed of the selves of the exhaustive variety of mankind.

Thus, we find that Whitman is an egoist. But his Egoism is universal. He considers himself as a part of nature. He is not arrogant. He says that he is part of the whole mankind or universe.

### **Question:2 Examining the Theme of Animals in brief .**

**Ans:** The poem's central idea, "Animals, "Innocence and a lack of complexity are two qualities that animals have maintained while humans have ruined them through carelessness and greed. The poet laments the decline of humanity and expresses a desire to join the ranks of the animal kingdom. Fine mystic illusions were expressed in literature, and human beings developed relationships with the mountain, the earth, and the sea. Whitman tried to highlight the differences between people and other animals. Animals live a peaceful life, it has hidden meaning, it shows the poet's dissatisfaction with human life. Animals world is ordinary but in the human society it is a sin and different.

In "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry," Whitman speculates that future passengers on the boat would look out at the water and see the same sights he did. Closer yet I approach you...I thought long and seriously of you before you were born, he writes. Whitman seems to address nature and the reader of his poetry directly in several of the poems in Leaves of Grass. Describe your sensations.

The assassination of President Abraham Lincoln, a great American leader, is the subject of two of Whitman's most well-known poems: "When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloom'd" and "O Captain! My Captain!"

### **Question.3 Discuss Walt Whitman embodies democracy in his poetry.**

**Ans. INTRODUCTION:** To say that Walt Whitman is the greatest American poet is an understatement. Democracy is the keynote of his poetry. It's the main idea of his poetry. In his poetry we find newness and clarity. As a revolutionary poet he gives voice to the new urges and aspirations of man in an age of science and democracy. His contribution to the American poetry is praiseworthy, great. He earned wide acclaim for his technical innovations through his poetry.

The Bible of Democracy "The Bible of Democracy" is how Whitman's Leaves of Grass are often referred to. His father was a radical democrat and a fine thinker. And his mother was Quaker who believed that it is up to each individual to follow his or her own inner light.

When it comes to American democracy, Whitman stands out as a brilliant poet. Many people believe him to be America's finest democratic poet. It is Whitman's belief in the innate dignity and nobility of the common man that serves as the bedrock of his democracy. Humans are of utmost importance to him. He thinks there should be no distinction between men and women, and that all jobs should be treated with respect.



Whitman emphasized the importance of freedom, equality, and brotherhood. Democracy cannot exist apart from these principles. Whitman frequently writes about himself in his poems. The celebration of himself, though, is a celebration of his masculinity and his American citizenship. This distinguishes him as the poet laureate of the democratic nation of America. Whitman's version of democracy is both universal and perfect. He holds nationalist and democratic views in his writings. His brand of democratic rule also includes a spiritual dimension. This is due to his belief that all people may live in harmony and tolerance under a democratic government. In sum, Whitman is more than just a democratic thinker; his brand of democracy is grounded in humanism and practicality. His democratic ideal is more grounded and concerned with people than with abstract principles. All people, regardless of gender, are created equal in his eyes. Use of 'I' in Whitman's poetry makes him a unique writer. He has full sympathy and fellow feeling to all people of America. He says:

I have a party and sing praises to myself...

Since everything that is mine is yours and vice versa...

I relax and let my mind wander...

I protect in good times and bad, I let my guard down, when necessary,

Unrestrained nature, full of vitality from the start.

He presents a universal idea.

Whitman provides the "password of democracy" in "Song of Myself," where he also sings not about riches that has been amassed or kept, but rather about the shared prosperity that will lead to freedom and progress for all people.

By God! Nothing less than a perfect symmetry between all parties is acceptable to me.

Article 24

And again, toward the end of the poem, he asserts,

And anyone who can walk a furlong without feeling compassion.

moves around in his coffin while he cries.

In addition, little exists in the way of commerce or

A young man who follows it could end up being a hero.

A hub cannot be made from a particularly soft object.

To conclude his national pride and his sense of individuality makes him a poet of American democracy. The democratic note runs through his poetry *Leaves of Grass* represents his lifelong ambition to create a global institution dedicated to "the mankind or comrades."

**Question.4** Discuss the primary topics of Walt Whitman's poetry using "Song of Myself" as an example.

**Ans.**

Whitman's poetry largely centers around the ideas of unity, equality, human dignity, and progressive democracy. In the history of American literature, Whitman stands as the most unwavering advocate for freedom, justice, and equality. Death is where the



concept of togetherness reaches its pinnacle. 'When Lilacs Last in the Dooryard Bloomed' is about the death of Abraham Lincoln, the president and a hero of the American democracy. Whitman's treatment of this subject marks him as an undisputed pioneer of socialist poetry. The theme of labor was initially introduced by Whitman.

Walt Whitman, the progenitor of free verse poetry, is a literary legend. He has a lot of feelings and is quite spiritual. He created poems about the outdoors that celebrated the universal bonds of brotherhood. Life, the ego, sexuality, nature, and spirituality are common threads throughout his canon.

It is generally agreed that he was one of the most significant poets of the 19th century to emerge from the United States. In the eyes of many, he is on par with the great Emily Dickinson. The influence Walt Whitman had on other poets is a distinctive aspect of his work. His poetic power, his symbolism, image, language, diction make him a great American poet. He was seen as the successor to some of the all-time great poets, such as Shakespeare,

'Song of Myself' is a poem by Walt Whitman. It is often regarded as one of the finest examples of American poetry to appear in the canon of English literature. Walt Whitman's views on America, democracy, spirituality, sexuality, nature, and personal identity were radical to say the least. He preached self-awareness, freedom, and acceptance around the world, and he utilized "Song of Myself" to go into these themes. The poem "Song of Myself" has a distinct theme. Whitman has presented many ideas, characters, images, and symbols throughout his writings, even though there are recurring themes. Reading this poem by Whitman is like trying to stop a galloping horse: you can't stop it, so you might as well enjoy the ride.

Whitman's poetry deals with a wide range of ideas, including egotism, mysticism, nature, death, time, transcendentalism, democracy, and sensuality.

**Question.5** Walt Whitman, as discussed in terms of Song of Myself, is a poet of the body and the soul.

**Ans.** 'Song of Myself' is a poem by Walt Whitman. The poet writes this poetry in the first person. He was happy, so he sung to himself. To his readers, he simply wanted to convey the idea that they were just like him. Everything that can exist in his body, down to the tiniest molecule, is a part of his soul, and he wanted everyone to know it. And everything is created by Supreme God. Everything he wrote about in this poem came straight from his heart, and he wanted the readers to know it. The poet believed that all humanity shared a common bond with the smallest particles of matter. He stressed the idea that two people shared the same soul. According to the poet, souls live forever. In the summer, he observed the prickly green grass that seemed to sprout everywhere. Thus, the soul is comparable to grass. naturalist or He was a scientist. He even said that his tongue and

All the tiny red blood cells in his body were created from the grass and air they were breathing. He went on to describe his deep appreciation for nature and the harmonious way the universe functions. Whitman's view of History and scientific inventions make him true poet. He says the poet is a seer and prophet.

The poet claims that just as he was born from his parents, so too did they from theirs. The poet, although being 37 years old, was in excellent health. He intended to





maintain his physical fitness till the day he died. The importance of health is emphasized.

This wonderful theory of God and world caused the poet to abandon his religious convictions. He was encouraging his readers to "retire" their academic knowledge, which he defined as "suspend your formal learning but never forget it." The poet argued that people should always look for meaning in their lives. Be joyful always and seek the joy of others. The poet claimed he had unwavering faith in both good and evil, and that he was prepared to face any threat posed by nature without first consulting the source of that energy. The poet was well-prepared for any peril he might face. He understood that life wasn't going to be easy for him. It was not without its challenges, but success is possible with effort.

Walt Whitman wrote poems about body and soul. He scornfully describes the process of disintegration of human body in the poem. In his poems all the sights and sounds and the experiences of human being are depicted. He knows that everything has got a form and perfect in its own way.

The experience of soul is never contradicted by Whitman. He says that everything has an eternal soul. He believes that there is nothing but immortality in the world. He believes in the purposefulness of life. No human life is wasted, every human individual is a reality and his arrival in the World is a result of a plan.

I celebrate myself; the poem explains the concept of self. Song of Myself is a philosophical poem. It is blend of spirituality and patriotism.

### **1.7 SELF-ASSESSMENT.**

**Question 1 : Write a critical appreciation of Song of Myself?**

**Question 2 : What is the "unconventional style" Whitman claims about?**

**Question 3 : Whitman: Language, Diction, Versification, Technique.**

### **Q. 1 Write a critical appreciation of Song of Myself?**

**Ans.** In this poem the poet speaks about himself. He is celebrating and singing himself. He believes that whatever he assumes appeals to the readers also because every atom belonging to him also belongs to others. He is prepared to speak about himself without any restraint. We breathe the fragrance of several perfumes. He breathes the fragrance of green leaves and dry leaves of the shore and dark coloured sea-rocks and of hay in the barn. He listens to soft whispers, echoes and ripples. He tells the reader that he too



can possess the origin of all poems. What he must do is simply stop “this day and night” with Walt Whitman.

The reader need not see through the eyes of the poet. He need not accept any second-hand thoughts. He should only listen to all sounds and music that swell up around him.

The sounds also should be filtered, and it can be done only by the realization of the powers of the self.

Whitman had listened many people talking to each other. He doesn't talk like others with a beginning or end for the talk. Now there is more youth and perfection and there is an urge, the procreant urge of the world. Always there is a distinction and identity and a form. His soul is clear and sweet, he admires himself for having proved the unseen by the seen. He is satisfied with himself, but he wants no words, music, rhyme, custom or lecture “What he wishes to listen to is a soft full, the hum of “your valued Voice”. He realizes that all men and women are his brothers and sisters. He knows that the spirit of God is his own brother. When a child asks the question “What is the grass?”. He tries to find out a suitable answer for it and stumbles on imageries like “The handkerchief of the Lord” and “A scented gift and remembrance designedly drop.” Then he ponders over the subject ‘grass’ and tries to juxtapose it with numerous situations and tries to give a suitable identity to it on all occasions.

In Section 7, Whitman makes a statement that “The earth good and the stars good, and there adjunct all good.” He says that it is lucky to be born as well as to die. He says that he is fathomless and immortal. He tries to find an identity for himself in different circumstances, and says, “Every kind for itself and its own, for me mine male and female.

In Section 12, the poet defines himself as the poet of the body and the poet of the soul. The body and soul are equally important to him. He won't denigrate the body in order to exalt the soul. He loves the fascinating sights of the earth like the slumbering and liquid trees, sunset, fur-covered mountains, the full moon, bright and clear clouds, and apple blossoms.

He sings of democracy and declares his faith in common humanity in section 23. He accepts materialism symbolized by “Positive” science. The temperament and personality of Walt Whitman are revealed fully in Section 24. He calls himself “turbulent, fleshy, and sensual.” He is a true democrat. Through him one will hear the forbidden voices-those of sex and lust. He looks upon his body and his organs as miracles. He dotes on himself and worships his own body.

Soon the subject of soul becomes the topic for discussion. He and his soul “ascend dazzling and tremendous as the sun.” The self-conceit of the poet is expressed in abundance in this part of the poem. His extreme sensitivity is now revealed. He does not live within a shell. He is alive and responds to whatever that happens in this world. The





physical contact between human beings is glorified after this brief Section 27. The touch of a human being is a tremendous source of joy for him. His language gets a touch of intense sensuality in Section 28. He speaks about “prurient provokers”, “unbutton-in my clothes”, “behaving licentious toward me”.

Then he describes the simplicity, innocence, and contentment of the life of animals. Later, he ennoble and celebrates the traits frequently considered evil. Now we find Whitman speaking about something indefinable in his personality. He also expresses his optimistic view of life. A hopeful look toward the future and requesting the imaginary readers to confide to him if they have something to say. Towards the end of the poem Whitman accuses himself of talking too much and loitering about aimlessly. He also degrades himself to something that is unimportant and meaningless.

*“If you want me again to look for me under your boot-soles*

*He tells the imaginary reader:*

*“Missing me one place reach another.*

*I stop somewhere waiting for you.”*

The poem ‘Song of Myself’ doesn’t have the integrity with which the whole sections are united together to read like a whole poem on a single idea. It has got different sections and in each section the poet speaks about at least one thought or idea or describes something he spotted suddenly. Perhaps these sections were written on different occasions and this is why some ideas are found repeated in different sections. Whitman’s self-worshipping attitude and to use sensual imagery for purely mundane things and his departure from the main theme is seen everywhere. Perhaps he had used this technique purposely. As he claimed in the beginning of his literary career he always wanted to remain as unconventional and truly democratic. These two qualities are well expressed in his poem ‘Song of Myself’.

## **Q.2 What is the “unconventional style” Whitman claims about?**

Ans. When we read the poems of Wordsworth, Keats, Shelley, Milton or Alexander Pope we find a unity of form and structure. In poems of Wordsworth the description of natural beauty and his worship of nature are seen well expressed. The language used in poetry, even though reads simple, it is different from the colloquial language. Keats being poet of romanticism used only a selected vocabulary. He paid much attention to use resonant words. Milton’s style and language were truly traditional. Alexander Pope paid attention to all aspects because he never wanted to see his poems degraded in any respect. But Whitman’s poems neither have musical overtones nor any uniformity in style. He wrote as he wished as it occurred to him. This kind of poetry gave birth to the

so called modern poetry which in our own days has acquired various forms and much popularity.



Poems being the language of poet need a different sort of diction. The poet finds it easy to express more than what is desired in two or three lines. A prose writer may need more than two-three pages to illustrate an idea. But the poet can express the same idea in one or two lines. This felicity has made the poets more free to experiment with new styles. Whitman was also influenced by the traditional romantic verse-forms. But he

diversified them further to suit his purpose. He discarded meter and rhyme and adopted an irregular chant which contain a lot of repetitions and parallelisms. These poems are in no way dissimilar to biblical Psalms. Wordsworth had asked the poets to use common man's language. But his poems could not fully depend on such sort of a language, because he was also obsessed with beauty of the language. Whitman practiced what Wordsworth had preached. He catalogued the place and geographic details of America. He blended mysticism with sensuality. His frank expression of sexual imageries again added feathers to his cap making him truly unconventional. The structure of some of his poems also resembles that of opera with overture, recitative, musical meditation, the song of the bird as lyric. 'Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking' is an example of such a poem.

He discarded the traditional style and devised a new style for him. This unconventional style suited him best to satisfy his intentions. Being a democratic poet, it was but natural that Whitman used a prosaic frank language for his poetry that everybody could understand despite its romantic overtones. Walt Whitman is a great American poet and stylish.

### **Question: 3 Whitman: Language, Diction, Versification, Technique.**

**Ans -** Whitman was a great revolutionary not only in his subject-matter and attitude to life, but also in his style, diction and Versification. He rightly believed that language derives its life and vitality when it springs from the poet's own experience and not from books. Therefore, an American poet must write an American-English different from the older language, because he must express new scenes and sights, a new kind of life, culture and ideals. It must arise out of an absorption of the life around, and not from any dictionary. further, like Wordsworth he wanted to increase the expressive range of his language, to open out new potentialities of speech and thus to develop for American, "a cosmopolitan range of self-expression." Whitman's poem is written in free verse style. The term was popularized by William Carlos Williams and Allen Ginsberg whom Whitman inspired.

**Whitman's Expressive Power of Language:** Whitman uses slangs, and colloquialism into the language of his poetry. He makes free use of words from factories and forms and trades. He imports words from foreign languages such as the French and the Spanish. In his language there is a curious and fantastic mixture of words. James Miller writes, "Whitman's wit inheres in his language; in his sometimes-indiscriminate



mixture of levels of usage; in his comic grotesque, use of foreign words and phrases; in his babbling, gabbling, and yapping in a multitude of mingled voices. His wisdom is folk wisdom which lives in the sayings of the people, in their chants, in their spells in their incantations in their language.

Whitman's poetic style is a mixture of several discordant elements. Thus while Emerson found in it , " the most extraordinary piece of wit and wisdom ", Swinburne, a sympathetic critic, condemned it as " being cabined, cribbed, confined, bound in, to limits of a thoroughly unnatural, imitative, histrionic and affective style", while admiring the , " cosmical beauty ", and " antique pantheism", of *Leaves of Grass*, disapproved of Whitman's poetic style which according to him, " was uncouth and rough."

He certainly had a power of phrasing, a fresh power as equivalent to Shakespeare, Homer, and Dante. Whitman's use of imagery and specific details lend his writing a striking vividness. To convey the poet's gloomy mood, the line "The dump of the night derives deeper into my soul" employs a striking image that appeals to the reader's senses. His writing style is jarringly discordant, combining elements from "Bhagavad Gita and the New York Herald," as Emerson puts it. Lyrical flights, as penned by Roger Asselin au, coexist with banalities and mystical effusions with commonplace terms.

Baby is sound asleep in its crib.,

In silence, I brush away flies with my hand as I lift the gauze and stare intently.

Whitman uses imaginative rendering of divine reality: Whitman is a mystic, and as such ever conscious of the divine reality at the back of the physical and the concrete. His sensuality often modifies the image of things which he gives to us:

Smile Earth, you cool-breathed voluptuousness.

Planet of sleeping, ethereal forests...

He says it best:

I take what I want, both literally and figuratively.

Whitman's use of symbols

The problem of inexpressible haunted him:

There's this thing that hits you right now and stays with you forever,

It is not what is written, preached, or discussed; rather, it avoids both.

Thus grass, sea, rivers, plants, trees, earth, birds the various heavenly bodies are all used as symbols to convey the poet's perception of Transcendental mystery. In short, the song of *Myself* glorifies the idea of self, the poet's relationship with nature and the universe.



**" Either define the moment or the moment will define you." - Walt Whitman**

**" Happiness, not in another place... not for another hour, but this hour." -Walt Whitman**

**Quotes:**

**Song of Myself by Walt Whitman**

**"I discover myself on the verge of a usual mistake." ...**

**"I do not ask the wounded person how he feels, I myself become the wounded person."  
...**

**"I celebrate myself, and sing myself, ...**

**"Let your soul stand cool and composed before a million universes."**

**I celebrate myself, and sing myself,**

**And what I assume you shall assume,**

**For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.**

**32. I think I could turn and live with animals, they're so placid and self-contained,**

**I stand and look at them and long.**

**They do not sweat and whine about their condition.**

**They do not lie awake in the dark and weep for their sins.**

**They do not make me sick discussing their duty to God,**

**References/**

**Suggested Reading:**

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- 2. Chase, Richard. The American Novel and Its Tradition.**
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- 4. Lettie, Richard et. al. Huck Finn and His Critics.**
- 5. Pearce, Roy Harvey, ed. Whitman: A Collection of Critical Essays.**
- 6. Pearce, Roy Harvey. The Continuity of American Poetry.**
- 7. Waggoner, Hyatt Howe. American Poets**



## Chapter Two

### ENGLISH

### ENG-302

<b>Subject: American Literature</b>	
<b>Course Code: 302</b>	<b>Author: Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Lesson No. : 02</b>	<b>Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>The Adventures of Huckleberry : Mark Twain</b>	

### Lesson Structure

#### 2.0 Learning Objectives

##### 2.1 Introduction

**A Brief About the Novelist: Mark Twain.**

##### 2.2 About the Novel: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.



## **2.3 Main body of the text**

### **2.3.1 Huckleberry Finn**

**Pap Finn**

**Jim**

**Tom Sawyer**

**Aunt Polly**

## **2.4 Check your progress**

### **2.4.1 literary criticism**

## **2.5 Summary**

## **2.6 Self –Assessment**

## **2.7 Answer to check your progress.**

## **2.8 Suggested Readings**

**DDE GJUS&T, HISAR**

## **THE ADVENTURES OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN - MARK TWAIN**

### **2.0 learning Objectives: -**

- 1. It will enable the student to get a close analysis of Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.**
- 2. It will throw light on Socio historical view of American Novel.**
- 3. Literary texts, illustration and critical analysis of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is explained.**

### **2.1 Introduction**

#### **A Brief About the Novelist: - Mark Twain**

**" Wrinkles should merely indicate where the smiles have been."**

**" Good friends, good books and a sleepy conscience: this is ideal life." -Mark Twain**

**Samuel Langhorne Clemens is known by his pen name Mark Twain. He was an American writer, humorist, entrepreneur, publisher, and lecturer. He was praised as the "greatest humorist of the United States ", and William Faulkner called him "the father of American literature".**

**Mark Twain, pseudonym of Samuel Langhorne Clemens is a very powerful novelist. He was born on November 30, 1835, Florida, Missouri, U. S .and died on April 21, 1910. Mark Twain was an American greatest humorist, journalist, lecturer, and novelist who**



acquired international fame for his travel narratives, such as *The Innocents Abroad* (1869), *Roughing It* (1872), and *Life on the Mississippi* (1883). He is also known for his adventure stories of boyhood, such as *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885). He became a popular public figure and one of America's best and most beloved writer of America.

His novels include *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876) and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), the latter of which has often been called the "Great American Novel".

## 2.2 About the Novel:

"One lives to please God and not man. "

" Society is not always right, it is imperative to come to a decision by oneself and act upon it." - Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

### Brief study of novel:

**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn:** Huckleberry Finn is remembered for the jokes and adventures and funny writing in American literature. It is great novel too. It is the hero's journey to find an internal moral compass beyond what he had been offered by society.

*Huckleberry Finn* is a humanistic novel. Slavery is the main theme of this novel. Huck is the main character of this novel. The hero is a mixture of low impulsive behaviour. He learned from his drunken father and rote understanding of morality taught by an uptight small town church woman. For him, things that are "good", the things that the kindly spinster beat into him. And things that are "bad" are the lazy easy things his father taught him. And then Huck ends up traveling down river with an escaped slave Jim. Huck Finn is the hero of this novel. *Huckleberry Finn* is a complex work of art. The novelist has skillfully interwoven many themes. Most critics agree that the theme of freedom is the most prominent one, Huck with Jim who is equally on the quest for Freedom. Huck had been a neglected boy. He used to loaf about and sleep in sugar hogsheads. Tom gang's member indulges in all romantic adventures. Huck is adopted by Widow Douglas who sends him to school, washes him clean and provides him better clothes to wear. She also teaches him at home, lectures on manners and behavior expected of a member of the civilized society. For some time, he joins Tom's gang but finds no internet in his romantic adventures. One day he finds his Pap's foot prints in the snow. He is goaded by fear and sign away his money to judge Thatcher. Pap wants the custody of his son. He has interested the money that Huck possesses. Pap is a confirmed drunkard and often beats the boy. Unable to get the money he beats the boy and takes him to a far-off place close to the river. Huck is often threatened and beaten up. The boy plans to get rid of Pap's clutches. He enacts of self-murder and slips out of the cabin. He goes to the Jackson Island in the middle of the river where he finds himself safe. Where he discovers Jim who narrates his tragic tale and informs Huck that he has run-off. The boy sympathizes with him, and both make a search for a better hiding place. Soon they find a big cavern near the top of the island. They find the place suitable safe and hidden. Some people were after Jim. Jim is a runaway slave but then he is also accused of having murdered Huck. He has a reward of 300 dollars for



catching of a runaway slave. Freedom for both is different. Huck is running away from the world of Tom's adventurism, Widow Douglas's civilizing world and cruelties of his father. He is on the quest for Freedom where all such impositions do not exist. However, Jim's Quest for freedom is not against slavery but the fear of his being sold and separated from his wife and children. When he speaks of buying his wife and children after he has made good amount of money by working in free states. He also speaks of stealing his children if the owner refused to sell them back to him. In some ways his quest is for freedom from slavery and for a world where all men are treated as human beings and not mere chattels. Thus, we see that the quest for Freedom is the main thrust of the novel and slavery is a marginal theme. In *Huckleberry Finn* it is Jim in whose comradeship Huck becomes fully aware of the world around him. The novel can also be read as a satire against institutionalisms. Irony becomes a strong weapon in the hands of the satirist. The white community which prides itself on racial and intellectual superiority. Miss Watson chooses to sell Jim. Miss Watson is the symbol of "all the outstanding traits of the valley society." The novel is about money motif. Behind most of serious action, money is a driving factor. When Huck comes to possess six thousand dollars, he becomes prize figure in the eyes of civilized society. Judge Thatcher invests the money which brings Huck a dollar a day all through the year. Pap's treatment to Huck is of his greed for money. Because of this Huck remains illiterate and dirty. Jim is a faithful slave. He plans to run off when Miss Watson plans to sell Jim. The novel is a plea for humanism. Huck is running away not so much from the slavish behaviorism that prevails in the widow's household. The novel is introducing us to the novelist vision of an ideal society.

## **2.3 Main Body of the Text:**

### **Chapter 1**

**Civilizing Huck. —Miss Watson.—Tom Sawyer Waits.**

### **CHAPTER II.**

**Jim's Gang Gets Split Up and the Boys Get Away.**

### **CHAPTER III.**

**A Thorough Examination. —The Reigning Grace. —"A Lie from Tom Sawyer."**

### **CHAPTER IV.**

**Superstition and Huck and the Judge.**

### **CHAPTER V.**

**Huck's Dad, the Caring Parent, the New Man.**

### **CHAPTER VI.**

**Judge Thatcher was his target. Huck has made up his mind to go. —Economic Politics. Getting into a Scuffle.**



**CHAPTER VII.**

Judge Thatcher was his target. Huck has made up his mind to go. —Economic politics. Getting into a Scuffle.

**CHAPTER VIII.**

Camping out in the woods; resurrecting the dead. The Island Is Being Explored. In search of Jim. —Jim Gets Away. —Signs. —Blum.

**CHAPTER IX.**

The Den — The House on the Water.

**CHAPTER X.**

The Discovery. The Old Hank Bunker. The Masked Man.

**CHAPTER XI.**

A Woman and Huck. —The Quest. —Prevarication. —In route to Goshen.

**CHAPTER XII.**

Navigation that is painfully slow. The practice of borrowing. We're getting on the Wreck. —The Conspirators. In search of the boat.

**CHAPTER XIII.**

Getting Away from the Wreck; The Watchman; Going Down.

**CHAPTER XIV.**

Enjoyable Times for All. The French Harem.

**CHAPTER XV.**

Huck's Raft Disappears in the Mist. —In the end, Huck does find the raft.—Trash.

**CHAPTER XVI.**

Expectation. —An innocent fib. Currency floats freely. By Cairo, I mean. To Swim Into Land.

**CHAPTER XVII.**

The Farm at Arkansaw, Interior Decorations, Stephen Dowling Bots, Evening Call. Expressions of Poetic Flux.

**CHAPTER XVIII.**

Ford Granger, colonel. —Aristocracy. —Feuds. In the Testament. The Raft Was Recovered. —a stack of wood. Pig and kale.

**CHAPTER XIX.**

Commander Granger Ford. —Aristocracy. —Feuds. From the Testament. To get the Raft back. The Wood stacks. Cabbage with Pork.

**CHAPTER XX.**

Granger Ford, the colonel. —Aristocracy. —Feuds.—"The Testament."—Bringing Back the Raft. The Wood Stack, in other words. Ham and cabbage.

Read Chapter 21- 42

**CHAPTER ONE 1**



**HUCKLEBERRY FINN's depiction of the Mississippi Valley between the years 1940 and 1950 Unless you've read a book simply titled "The," you have no idea who I am.**

Tom Sawyer's Exploits, but that's none of my business. Mark Twain, the author of that work, mostly told the truth throughout. There were some exaggerations, but for the most part he was telling the truth. Totally insignificant. Aunt Polly, the widow, and maybe even Mary are the only people I can think of who I have never caught lying. That book, which is basically true with some stretchers, as I indicated earlier, tells the stories of Tom's Aunt Polly, Mary, and the Widow Douglas. Now, the book concludes as follows: Tom and I unearthed the loot hidden by the bandits in the cave, and we became filthy rich. Each of us received 6,000 in gold dollars. When the cash was all stacked up, it was an ugly sight. Well, Judge Thatcher took it and invested it, earning us each a dollar per day for an entire year. That's more money than anyone needs or knows what to do with. The Widow Douglas adopted me as her son and said she would try to teach me manners, but life in the house was difficult since the Widow was so dreadfully regular and decent in every respect that I eventually ran away. I changed back into my favourite tattered clothes and sweet hogshead and felt liberated and content. But Tom Sawyer tracked me down and had an offer I couldn't refuse: if I returned to the widow and behaved myself, he'd create a gang of robbers and I could join. So, I doubled-back. The widow wept for me, and she referred to me as a "poor lost lamb" among other things, but she never meant any harm. Again, she dressed me in brand-new threads, and I felt suffocated and overheated in them. So, it seems like we're back to square one. The widow had rung the dinner bell, and you had to be there promptly. You couldn't immediately start eating once you sat down at the table; instead, you had to wait for the widow to tuck her head and murmur a bit about the food, despite the fact that there wasn't actually anything wrong with it.

The food prepared itself. Things are different in a barrel of odds and ends; the juice kind of swaps around, and everything works out for the best. My curiosity in Moses and the Bulrushes was piqued when she read to me from her book after dinner, but my interest quickly waned when she revealed that the man had been deceased for quite some time; from that point on, I stopped caring about him because I don't put any value on the dead. Soon I had to have a cigarette, so I politely requested permission from the widow. She didn't, though. She warned me that the behaviour was unkind and unsanitary, so I've been trying to stop. Some folks are just wired that way. When individuals have little to no information about something, they form an opinion about it. Now look at her, finding fault with me for doing something that had some good in it while worrying about Moses, who was neither related to her nor of any service to anyone now that he was dead. She also used snuff, which was perfectly acceptable since she initiated the practise. HUCKLEBERRY FINN 2's aunt, Miss Watson, a respectably skinny old maid who wore goggles, had recently moved in with her and was taking a swing at me with a spelling book. After roughly an hour of moderate abuse, the widow stopped her. I just couldn't take it any longer. Finally, over the next 60 minutes I was becoming restless since it was so boring. Miss Watson would tell Huckleberry, "Don't put your feet up there," "Don't scrunch up like that," and "Don't gap and



stretch like that," and eventually, "Why don't you try to behave?" She went on to describe the terrible location, at which point I expressed my desire to be there. Even though I didn't intend any damage, she became angry. I didn't have any specific destination in mind; all I wanted was a change of scenery. She called what I said wicked, said she wouldn't say it for the rest of the world, and insisted that she wanted to keep living till she reached the good place. So, I decided I wouldn't try to go in the direction she was headed because I saw no benefit in doing so. But I kept quiet about it, knowing it would raise more problems than it would solve. Now that she had a foot in the door, she continued telling me about the wonderful location. She claimed that the only thing to do in that place was to carry a harp and sing continuously throughout the day. And so I didn't give it much thought. No, I never implied that. When I inquired if she thought Tom Sawyer would visit, she said he probably wouldn't. That made me happy since I really did want us to be together. Madame Watson It was wearing and lonely as she continued to nibble at me. Soon enough, they brought the grumblers inside for prayers before turning in for the night. I took the candle fragment upstairs and set it on the nightstand. I went and sat in a chair near the window and attempted to come up with some upbeat thoughts, but it was no use. I hoped I were dead because I was so lonely. The wind was trying to whisper something to me, but I couldn't make out what it was, and so the chills ran over me. The stars were shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods with a mournful heaviness. I heard an owl, far off, who-whooping about somebody that was dead, and a whippoorwill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die. Then, far away in the woods, I heard the sort of noise a ghost makes when it has something to say but can't find the right words; a ghost that, because of this, can't find peace in its grave and instead spends each night wandering the forest in anguish. When I was feeling lonely and afraid, I wished I had someone else there with me. I flicked it off and it lighted in the candle, and before I could move, the spider was all shrivelled up and dead. Most of my clothing were shook off because I was so frightened, and I didn't need anyone to tell me that it was a very horrible omen that would bring me nothing but misfortune. I climbed to my feet and doubled back on myself three times and

I always crossed my arms and my chest, and if I were worried about witches, I'd tie a knot on a small section of hair. However, I lacked assurance. You do it when you find a lost horseshoe instead of fastening it over the door, but I'd never heard that after killing a spider, it would ward off bad luck. There was complete silence in the house now, and the widow wouldn't know if I smoked my pipe or not, so I sat back down, trembling all over. After what seemed like an eternity, I heard the town clock go boom, boom, boom, twelve licks, and then all was silent again, more silent than before. Within a little while, I heard a twig shatter, signalling movement among the trees in the night. I paused to listen quietly. A distant "me-yow! me-yow!" was all I could make out directly from below. Well done! Saying "me-yow! me-yow!" as quietly as possible I was able to, so I turned out the light and climbed out the window onto the shed. Then I slid to the floor and crawled towards the forest where I knew I would find Tom Sawyer. Huck Finn Book Four We crouched so that the tree limbs wouldn't hit our heads as we made our way back to the end of the widow's garden through a path through the trees.



On the way to the kitchen, I tripped over a root and made a loud noise. We got on all fours and lay very quietly. We could see Miss Watson's large nigger, Jim, clearly because of the light behind him as he sat in the kitchen door. He stood up and strained his neck for a whole minute, taking everything in. His next words are, "Who dah?" He listened some longer, then crept over and stood so close to us that we almost touched him. Considering how close we were, it was probably minutes before anyone spoke again. My foot started to itch, but I refrained from scratching it, then my ear, and finally the middle of my back. Not being able to scratch felt like the end of the world. Well, I've picked up on that phenomenon numerous times since then. Wherever you are, whether it be with the quality, at a funeral, or attempting to sleep when you aren't sleepy, you will itch run more places than you can count. Soon enough, Jim asks, "Say, who are you? What's up? Doggy my kitties Nope, I missed something. So, Islwyn, you can just sit down and listen to it again; that's what I'm going to do. To accomplish this, he sat down on the floor in between me and Tom. He propped himself up against a tree, legs spread out until one of them hit the ground.

## CHAPTER TWO

my most sentimental possession. Now my nose is itching. My eyes were watering from the irritation. However, I will not scratch. Then an internal itch set in. Then, my undercarriage started to itch. I didn't think I could sit still if my life depended on it. Six or seven minutes passed, although it seemed like much longer than that. The itch has spread to eleven new spots on my body. I didn't think I could take it for more than a minute, but I gritted my teeth and prepared to give it my all anyhow. Jim started to snore just then, and I was soon back to being completely at ease. Tom made a sign for me, making a small noise with his mouth, and we crept away silently on the ground. Tom whispered to me when we were 10 feet away that he wanted to tie Jim to the tree just for kicks. But I said no because he may wake up and cause a scene, and then they'd know I wasn't in. Then Tom admitted that he needed additional candles and sneaked off to the kitchen to retrieve them. I didn't want him to even try it. I implied that Jim might get up and show up. Tom insisted on resketching it, so we snuck in and bought three candles; he paid us in the form of five cents on the table. Then we got out, and I was drenched in perspiration trying to get away, but Tom was determined to perform some sort of trick on Jim and would do nothing short of crawling to where Jim was on his hands and knees. It was so quiet and isolated that my wait appeared to last forever. As soon as Tom returned, we took a short cut along the route, hopped the garden fence, and emerged on the crest of the hill on the opposite side of the house. According to Tom, Jim moaned somewhat when he was hanged his hat from a nearby branch, but he did not awaken. Jim said later that the witches had enchanted him, put him in a stupor, ridden him across the state, returned him to the woods, and hung his hat from a tree to reveal their identities. And the next time he told it, Jim said they rode him all the way around the world, and weary him most to death, and his back was all over saddle-boils; and so, on and so forth, with each telling. Jim was so inflated with pride that he barely noticed the other kids making fun of him. Assailants would

people would travel long distances to listen to Jim recount the story, and he was more respected than any nitwit in the country. CHAPTER SIX OF HUCKLEBERRY FINN People from out of the ordinary would stare at him with wide eyes, as if he were a miracle. It's common for Niggers to discuss witches while sitting in the dark by the



cooking fire, but Jim would always interrupt and remark, "Hm! After being asked, "What you know 'bout witches," the snickering had to take a backseat. Jim always wore the five-centre piece around his neck on a thread, claiming that it was a charm the devil gave him with his own hands and that he could cure anyone with it and fetch witches whenever he wanted to by simply saying something to it. The local thugs would offer Jim anything in exchange for a look at the five-centre piece, but they wouldn't dare touch it for fear of bringing bad luck upon themselves. Jim's reputation as a servant was irreparably damaged by the fact that he had seen the devil and been ridden by witches. When Tom and I reached the top of the hill, we peered down into the village and saw a few glittering lights—perhaps belonging to sick people—and the stars above us.

was shining brightly; and the river, a mile wide and incredibly quiet and beautiful, passed by the town below. Several of the boys, including Jo Harper and Ben Rogers, were hiding out in the old Tanyard, which we located at the bottom of the hill. We lowered a skiff from its hitch and rowed two and a half miles down the river to the large scar on the hillside, where we landed. We went to the thickest area of the bushes, where Tom had everyone vow to secrecy before revealing the hole in the hill. We crept in on our hands and knees after lighting the candles. After walking for a couple hundred yards, the cave door suddenly appeared. Tom explored the maze of tunnels and eventually crawled under a wall through a hole that wasn't immediately apparent. We entered a little room, clammy and cold from the humidity and sweat, and decided to rest there. Tom declares, "Right, I've got an idea let's form a gang and call ourselves the Tom Sawyer's Gang. To become a member, one must "take an oath and sign one's name in one's own blood." Huck Finn Chapter Seven Everyone agreed to do it. Tom then read the oath from a piece of paper on which he had written it. And if anyone did anything to any boy in the band, the boy who was ordered to kill that person and his family had to do it, and he couldn't eat or sleep until he'd killed them all and hacked a cross into their breasts, the band's sign. No one outside the group was allowed to use the logo, and those who did were threatened with legal action and, in extreme cases, death. And if any band member betrayed the group's confidences, he'd better have his

he should have his throat slashed, his body burned, and his ashes thrown all around; his name should be crossed out in blood and forgotten by the gang for good; and a curse should be placed on his name. Everyone thought that was a lovely swear and wondered where Tom came up with it. He explained that while some of it was original, the bulk of it came from pirate and robber manuals, and that every respectable gang would have a copy. Some others thought it would be beneficial to eliminate the families of the boys who revealed the information. Since Tom thought it was a smart plan, he put pencil to paper. This leads Ben Rogers to say: "Here's Huck Finn, he hasn't got no family; what you going to do 'bout him?" "Well, hasn't he got a father?" so Tom Sawyer says. "Yes, he's got a father, but you can't never find him these days. He used to lay drunk with the hogs in the Tanyard, but he hasn't been seen in these parts for a year or more." They





discussed it and decided I couldn't participate because "every boy must have a family or somebody to kill," making the competition unfair to the other boys. As a result, no one moved because they had no ideas what to do. I was on the verge of tears when I suddenly had an idea: I could offer them Miss Watson so that they could kill her. The consensus was, "Oh, she'll do." Okay, that's OK. Huck, please enter. I was the last to sign, and they all pricked their fingers to get blood. Ben Rogers says, "Now, what is the Gang's line of business?" "Nothing but theft and murder," Tom remarked. Huck Finn, book 8 But who exactly are we planning to rob? Homes, livestock, or whatever" "Stuff! Tom Sawyer claims that burglary, and not robbery, applies to the theft of livestock and other valuables. "We aren't burglars. That ain't no sort of style. We are highwaymen. We stop stages and carriages on the road, with masks on, and kill the people and take their watches and money." "Must we always kill the people?" "Oh, certainly. It's best. Some authorities think different, but mostly it's considered best to kill them—except some that you bring to the cave here and keep them till they're ransomed." "Ransomed? What's that?" "I don't know. But that's what they do. I've seen it in books; and so of course that's what we've got to do." "But how can we do it if we don't know what it is?" "Why, blame it.

all, we've got to do it. Don't I tell you it's in the books? Do you want to go to doing different from what's in the books, and get things all muddled up?" "Oh, that's all very fine to say, Tom Sawyer, but how in the nation are these fellows going to be ransomed if we don't know how to do it to them? —that's the thing I want to get at. Now, what do you reckon it is?" "Well, I don't know. But perhaps if we keep them till, they're ransomed, it means that we keep them till they're dead. ""Now, that's something like. That'll answer. Why couldn't you have said that before? We'll keep them till they're ransomed to death; and a bothersome lot they'll be, too eating up everything, and always trying to get loose." "How you talk, Ben Rogers. How can they get loose when there's a guard over them, ready to shoot them down if they move a peg?" "A guard! Well, that IS good. So, somebody's got to set up all night and never get any sleep, just to watch them. I think that's foolishness. Why can't a body take a club and ransom them as soon as they get here?" "Because it isn't in the books so—that's why. Now, Ben Rogers, do you want to do things regular, or don't you? —that's the idea. Don't you reckon that the people that made the books knows what's the correct thing to do? Do you reckon you can learn 'am anything? Not HUCKLEBERRY FINN 9 by a good deal. No, sir, we'll just go on and ransom them in the regular way." "All right. I don't mind; but I say it's a fool way, anyhow. Say, do we kill the women, too?" "Well, Ben Rogers, if I were as ignorant as you, I wouldn't let on. Kill the women? No; nobody ever saw.

anything in the books like that. You fetch them to the cave, and you're always as polite as pie to them; and by and by they fall in love with you, and never want to go home anymore." "Well, if that's the way I'm agreed, but I don't take no stock in it. Mightly soon we'll have the cave so cluttered up with women, and fellows waiting to be ransomed, that there won't be no place for the robbers. But go ahead, I'm not got nothing to say." Little Tommy Barnes was asleep now, and when they waked him up he was scared, and cried, and said he wanted to go home to his ma and didn't want to be a robber anymore. So, they all made fun of him, and called him cry-baby, and that made him mad, and he said he would go straight and tell all the secrets. But Tom gives him five cents to keep quiet and said we would all go home and meet next week and rob somebody and kill some people. Ben Rogers said he couldn't get out much, only



Sundays, and so he wanted to begin next Sunday; but all the boys said it would be wicked to do it on Sunday, and that settled the thing. They agreed to get together and fix a day as soon as they could, and then we elected Tom Sawyer first captain and Jo Harper second captain of the Gang, and so started home. I clump up the shed and crept into my window just before day was breaking. My new clothes were all greased up and clayey, and I was dog-tired. HUCKLEBERRY FINN 10 Well I got a good going-over in the morning from old Miss Watson on account of my clothes; but the widow she didn't scold, but only cleaned off the grease and clay, and looked so sorry that I thought I would behave awhile if I could. Then Miss Watson, she took me in the closet and prayed, but nothing come of it. She told me to pray every day, and whatever I asked for I would get it. But it wasn't so. I tried it. Once I got a fish-line, but no hooks. It wasn't any good to me without hooks. I tried for the hooks three or four times, but somehow, I couldn't make it work. By and by, one day, I asked Miss Watson to try for me, but she said I was a fool. She never told me why, and I couldn't make it out no way. I set down one time back in the woods and had a long think about it. I say to myself, if a body can get anything they pray for, why don't Deacon Winn get back the money he lost on pork? Why can't the widow get back her silver snuffbox that was stole? Why can't Miss Watson fat up? No, says I to myself,

there is Ain 'nothing in it. I went and told the widow about it, and she said the thing a body could get by praying for it was "spiritual gifts." This was too many for me, but she told me what she meant I must help other people, and do everything I could for other people, and look out for them all the time, and never think about myself. This was including Miss Watson, as I took it. I went out in the woods and turned it over in my mind a long time, but I couldn't see no advantage about it—except for the other people; so at last I reckoned I wouldn't worry about it anymore, but just let it go. Sometimes the widow would take me one

### CHAPTER THREE

side and talk about Providence in a way to make a body's mouth water; but maybe next day Miss Watson would take hold and knock it all down again. I judged I could see that there was two Providences, and a poor chap would stand considerable show with the widow's Providence, but if Miss Watson's got him there wasn't no help for him anymore. I thought it all out, and reckoned I would belong to the widow's if he wanted me, though I couldn't make out how he was going to be any better off then than what he was before, seeing I was so ignorant, and so kind of low-down and ornery. Pap, he hadn't been seen for more than a year, and that was comfortable for me; I didn't want to see him no more. He used to always whale me when he was sober and could get his

hands on me; though I used to take to the woods most of the time when he was around. Well, about this time he was found in the river drowned, about twelve mile above town, so people said. They judged it was him, anyway; said this drowned man was just his size, and was ragged, and had uncommon long hair, which was all like pap; but they couldn't make nothing out of the face, because it had been in the water so long it wasn't much like a face at all. They said he was floating on his back in the water. They took him and buried him on the bank. But I wasn't comfortable long, because I happened to think of something. I knotweed mighty well that a drowned man doesn't float on his back, but on his face. So, I knotweed, then, that this wasn't pap, but a woman dressed up in a man's clothes. So, I was uncomfortable again. I judged the old man would turn up again by and by, though I wished he wouldn't. We played robber now and then



about a month, and then I resigned. All the boys did. We hadn't robbed nobody, hadn't killed any people, but only just pretended. We used to hop out of the woods and go charging down on hog-drivers and women in carts taking garden stuff to market, but we never hived any of them. Tom Sawyer called the hogs "ingots," and he called the turnips and stuff "Juley," and we would go to the cave and powwow over what we had done, and how many people we had killed and marked. But I couldn't see no profit in it. One time Tom sent a boy to run about town with a blazing stick, which he called a slogan (which was the HUCKLEBERRY FINN 12 sign for the Gang to get together), and then he said he had got secret news by his spies that next day a whole parcel of Spanish merchants and rich A-ribs was going to camp in Cave Hollow with two hundred elephants, and six hundred camels, and over a thousand "Sumter" mules, all loaded down with diamonds, and they didn't have only a guard of four hundred soldiers, and so we would lay in ambuscade, as he called it, and kill the lot and scoop the things. He said we must slick up our swords and guns and get ready. He never could go after even a turnip-cart, but he must have the swords and guns all scoured up for it, though they were only lath and broomsticks, and you might scour at them till you rotted, and then they weren't worth a mouthful of ashes more than what they were before. I didn't believe we could lick such a crowd of Spaniards and A-Rabs, but I wanted to see the camels and elephants, so I was.

on hand next day, Saturday, in the ambuscade; and when we got the word we rushed out of the woods and down the hill. But there warn 'no Spaniards and A-Rabs, and there weren't no camels nor no elephants. It wasn't anything but a Sunday-school picnic, and only a primer class at that. We busted it up and chased the children up the hollow; but we never got anything but some doughnuts and jam, though Ben Rogers got a rag doll, and Jo Harper got a hymnbook and a tract; and then the teacher charged in and made us drop everything and cut. I didn't see nondiamond, and I told Tom Sawyer so. He said there was loads of them there, anyway; and he said there was A-Rabs there, too, and elephants and things. I said, why couldn't we see them, then? He said if I wasn't so ignorant, but had read a book called Don Quixote, I would know without asking. He said it was all done by enchantment. He said there was hundreds of soldiers there, and elephants and treasure, and so on, but we had enemies which he called magicians; and they had turned the whole thing into an infant Sunday-school, just out of spite. I said, all right; then the thing for us to do was to go for the magicians. Tom Sawyer said I was a numskull. "Why," said he, "a magician could call up a lot of genies, and they would hash you up like nothing before you could say Jack Robinson. They are as tall as a tree and as big around as a church." HUCKLEBERRY FINN 13 "Well," I say, "spouse we

got some genies to help us—can't we lick the other crowd then?" "How you going to get them?" "I don't know. How do they get them?" "Why, they rub an old tin lamp or an iron ring, and then the genies come tearing in, with the thunder and lightning a-ripping around and the smoke a-rolling, and everything they're told to do they up and do it. They don't think nothing of pulling a shot-tower up by the roots and belting a Sunday-school superintendent over the head with it—or any other man." "Who makes them tear around so?" "Why, whoever rubs the lamp or the ring. They belong to whoever rubs the lamp or the ring, and they've got to do whatever he says. If he tells them to build a palace forty miles long out of diamonds, and fill it full of chewing-gum, or





whatever you want, and fetch an emperor's daughter from China for you to marry, they've got to do it—and they've got to do it before sun-up next morning, too. And more: they've got to waltz that palace around over the country wherever you want it, you understand." "Well," says I, "I think they are a pack of flat heads for not keeping the palace themselves 'stead of fooling them away like that. And what's more—if I was one of them, I would see a man in Jericho before I would drop my business and come to him for the rubbing of an old tin lamp." "How you talk, Huck Finn. Why, you'd have to come when he rubbed it, whether you wanted to or not." "What! and I as high as a tree and as big as a church? All right, then; I would come; but I lay I'd make that man climb the highest tree there was in the country." "Shucks, it ain't no use to talk to you, Huck Finn. You don't seem to know anything, somehow—perfect saphead." I thought all this over for two or three days, and then I reckoned I would see if there was anything in it. I got an old tin lamp and an iron ring and went out in the woods and rubbed and rubbed till I sweat like an Injun, calculating to build a palace and sell it; but it wasn't no use, none of the genies come. So, then I judged that all that HUCKLEBERRY FINN 14 stuff was only just one of Tom Sawyer's lies. I reckoned he believed in the A-Rabs and the elephants, but as for me I think different. It had all the marks of a Sunday-school. HUCKLEBERRY FINN 15 Well three or four months run along, and it was well into the winter now. I had been to school most all the time and could spell and read and write just a little and could say the multiplication table up to six times seven is thirty-five, and I don't reckon I could ever get any further than that if I was to live forever. I

"There; you see it says, 'for a consideration.' That means I have bought it of you and paid you for it. Here's a dollar for you. Now you sign it." So, I signed it, and left. Miss Watson's nigger, Jim, had a hairball as big as your fist, which had been took out of the fourth stomach of an ox, and he used to do magic with it. He said there was a spirit inside of it, and it knows everything. So, I went to him that night and told him pap was here again, for I found his tracks in the snow. What I wanted to know was, what he was going to do, and was he going to stay? Jim got out his hairball and said something over it, and then he held it up and dropped it on the floor. It felt solid, and only rolled about an inch. Jim tried it again, and then another time, and it acted just the same. Jim got down on his knees and put his ear against it and listened. But it warn't no use; he said it wouldn't talk. He said sometimes it wouldn't talk without money. I told him I had an old slick counterfeit quarter that wasn't no good because the brass showed through the silver a little, and it wouldn't pass not how, even if the brass didn't show, because it was so slick it felt greasy, and so that would tell on it every time. (I reckoned I wouldn't say nothing about the dollar I got from the judge.) I said it was bad.

money, but maybe the hairball would take it, because maybe it wouldn't know the difference. Jim smelt it and bit it and rubbed it and said he would manage so the hairball would think it was good. He said he would split open a raw Irish potato and stick the quarter in between and keep it there all night, and next morning you couldn't see no brass, and it wouldn't feel greasy no more, and so anybody in town would take it in a minute, let alone a hairball. Well, I know a potato would do that before, but I had forgot it. Jim put the quarter under the hairball and got down and listened again. This time he said the hairball was all right. He said it would tell my whole fortune if I wanted it to. I say, go on. So, the hairball talked to Jim, and Jim told it to me. He says: "You' ole Father Doan' know it what he's a-Gwynne to do. Sometimes he spec's he'll go 'way,



a den gain he spec's he'll stay. De best' way is to res' easy an let de ole man take his own way. Dey's two angels HUCKLEBERRY FINN 17 going to be. There are ways to keep off some kinds of bad luck, but this wasn't one of them kind; so, I never tried to do anything, but just poked along low-spirited and on the watch-out. I went down to the front garden and climb over the stile where you go through the high board fence. There was an inch of new snow on the ground, and I see somebody's tracks. They had come.

up from the quarry and stood around the stile a while, and then went on around the garden fence. It was funny they hadn't come in, after standing around so. I couldn't make it out. It was very curious, somehow. I was going to follow around, but I stooped down to look at the tracks first. I didn't notice anything at first, but next I did. There was a cross in the left boot-heel made with big nails, to keep off the devil. I was up in a second and shinning down the hill. I looked over my shoulder every now and then, but I didn't see nobody. I was at Judge Thatcher's as quick as I could get there. He said: "Why, my boy, you are all out of breath. Did you come for your interest?" "No, sir," I say; "is there some for me?" "Oh, yes, a half-yearly is in last night—over a hundred and fifty dollars. Quite a fortune for you. You had better let me invest it along with your six thousand, because if you take it you'll spend it." "No, sir," I says, "I don't want to spend it. I don't want it at all—nor the six thousand, nether. I want you to take it; I want to give it to you—the six thousand and all." He looked surprised. He couldn't seem to make it out. He says: "Why, what can you mean, my boy?" I say, "Don't you ask me no questions about it, please. You'll take it—won't you?" He says: "Well, I'm puzzled. Is something the matter?" "Please take it," says I, "and don't ask me nothing—then I won't have to tell no lies." He studied a while, and then he says: "Oho-o! I think I see. You want to SELL all your property to me— not give it. That's the correct idea." Then he wrote something on a paper and read it over and says: HUCKLEBERRY FINN 18 Erin' round' 'bout him. One uv'em is white an shiny, an toother one is black. De white one git him to go right a little while, den de black one sail in en bust it all up. A body can't tell it which one Gwynne to fetch him at de las'. But you is all right. You Gwynne to have considerable trouble in yo' life, en considerable joy. Sometimes you gwyne to git hurt, en sometimes you gwyne to git sick; but every time you'sgwyne to git well agin. Dey's two gals flyin' 'bout you in yo' life. One uv 'em's light en t'other one is dark. One is rich end t'other is po'. You'sgwyne to marry de po' one fust an de rich one by end by. You want to keep 'way fume de water as much as you kin, and don't run no risk, 'case it's down in de bills datyou'sgwyne to git hung." When I let my candle and went up to my room that night there sat pap—his own self! HUCKLEBERRY FINN 19 I had shut the door to.

Then I turned around, and there he was. I used to fear him all the time, he tanned me so much.

**Read Text: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.**

**2.3.1 Character**

**Huckleberry Finn**

**Pap Finn**

**Jim**

**Tom Sawyer**



**Aunt Polly**

## **2.4 Check Your Progress-**

**Question 1 : Theme of Racism and Slavery in the novel is aptly described by Mark Twain discuss .**

**Question 2 - Widow Douglas and Miss Watson: A Discussion of Their Character Sketches from "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn".**

**Or**

**The novel's main characters, Jim, Huck, Joe, and Tom**

**Question 3 - The central theme of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is racism or racial elements.**

**2.4.1 Literary Criticism: - American Transcendentalism is powerful event in American literature. Main Writers are Ralph Waldo Emerson, Bronson Alcott, Fredrick Henry Hedge, Nathaniel Hawthorne, Henry Thoreau and Jones Very. Emerson's Nature, Thoreau 's Walden are transcendental work. Others writers in American literature are Mark Twain, Henry James, John Smith, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Toni Morrison, Edgar Allan Poe, Henry Longfellow, Ernest Hemingway.**



## **Realism in American literature**

The term "realism" refers to works written between 1860 and 1900, and it incorporates both social realism and other forms of modern American literature. As expected, the aftermath of the American Civil War caused widespread disruption across the country. Nothing more, nothing less; that is what I mean when I say realism," William Dean Howells treatment of material". In general, realism is "the faithful representation of reality" or "verisimilitude." Many literary traditions employ the realist mode of writing. It's also shorthand for a certain type of content, typically depictions of middle-class existence. The development of realism was impacted by several factors, including a backlash against romanticism, an interest in scientific technique, the systematisation of the study of documented history, and the influence of rational philosophy. Where romanticists go beyond the present to find the ideal and where naturalists delve beneath the surface to discover the scientific laws that govern its actions, realists focus remarkably on the present, the concrete action, and the observable result, as stated by William Harmon and High Holman.

Naturalism and realism have close ties. According to Pizer, "whatever was being produced during the 1870s and 1880 can be designated as realism and that is similar as naturalism." Realist fiction in American literature "encompasses the time from the Civil War to the century," including works by authors such as William Dean Howells, Rebecca Harding Davis, Joseph Kirkland, E.W. Howe, Hamlin Garland, Henry James, Mark Twain, and others. Dean Howells supported authors of local colour and realism alike. Social life is valuable and is permeated with morality. Main objective is portrayal of human life, by art, to represent



the social value of civilized man. "The basic view of the realism was that there could be no moralizing in the novel. The morality of the realist was built upon what appears a paradox morality with an abhorrence of moralizing. Their ethical beliefs called, first, for a rejection of scheme of moral behaviour imposed, from without, upon the characters of fiction and their action. Howells always claimed for his works a deep moral purpose. What was it? It was based upon three propositions: that life, social life as lived in the world Howells knew, was valuable, and was permeated with morality; that its continued health depended upon the use of human reason to overcome the anarchic selfishness of human passions; that an objective portrayal of human life, by art, will illustrate the superior value of social civilized man of human reason over animal passion and primitive ignorance". "Realism sets itself at work to consider characters and events which are apparently the most ordinary and uninteresting. It would apprehend in all particulars the connection between the familiar and the extraordinary, and the seen and unseen of human nature. Beneath the deceptive cloak of outwardly uneventful days, it detects and endeavours to trace the outlines of the sprits that are hidden their; the measure, the changes in their growth, to watch the symptoms of moral decay or regeneration, to fathom their histories of passionate or intellectual problems. Realism reveals, where we thought nothing worth of notice, it shows everything to be life with significance". As the United States grew rapidly after Civil War, the increasing rates democracy and literacy, the rapid growth in industrialism and urbanization, due to immigration, a relative rise in middle class affluence provided a fertile

literary environment for this. Any Kaplan has called realism "strategy for imagining and managing the threats of social change." Among the Midwestern writers considered realists would be Joseph Kirkland, E.W. Howe, and Hamlin Garland; the Southern



writer John W. Deforests *Miss Ravena Lis* is often considered realist novel. Writers such as Barth, Barthelme, and Pynchon rejected the novels traditional function as a mirror reflecting society, a significant number of contemporary novelists were reluctant to abandon *Social Realism*, which they pursued in much more personal terms. Social realism is a type of art that realistically depicts subjects of social concern. It glorifies the roles of the. Martin Anderson developed social novel. The novel *Pelle, The Conqueror* is a classic of socialist realism. The novel *Ditti, Daughter of Man* had a working-class woman as its heroine. Realistic literature includes Fyodor Gladkov's *Cement* (1925), Nikolai Ostrovsky's *How the Steel Was Tempered*, and Mikhail Sholokho's *Quiet Flows the Don* (1934) and *Don Flows Home to the Sea* (1940). In novels such as *The Victim* (1947), *The Adventures of A Augie March* (1953), *Herzog* (1964). Realist tradition includes novels like *Middlemarch*, *War and Peace* and *Huckleberry Finn*. Henry James (1843-1916) is an analytical observer of the conduct of men and women in cultured society. Henry James was the foremost among modern American novelists writing the form of fiction to portray the complexities and ambiguities of life. According to James, "the only reason for the existence of the novel is that it does attempt to represent life". James called H.G. Wells, Arnold Bennett, and Compton Mackenzie writers of 'saturation' because they sought to give a 'slice' of life as against writers of 'selection', like Joseph Conrad and Edith Wharton who.

aimed at the 'extract' of life. In the words of James E. Miller, Jr., "one function of the novel since to have escaped wells entirely-its function as a work of art designed to evoke certain emotional responses." Fact is fidelity to reality, but truth, according to James,



suggests a world that gives the semblance of reality. In the nineteenth century the English Romantic Movement established the artist at the centre of work of art. It is no doubt that behind every work of art there is personality of the artist. The writer reflects reality. Modern American novels are the great creation of fact and reality. Conrad, Flaubert and Turgenev believed in the quality of objectivity in a work of art. Flaubert wrote "personality of the writers always reduces a work".<sup>6</sup> In the 20th century, the New Critics tried to investigate the truth behind works of fiction from within, rather than relying on evidence from the outside world. A realist aesthetic, which values unflinching, precise depictions of the psychological and material aspects of life, was embraced by Henry James, who in 1884 said that the "supreme virtue", "air of reality," "illusion of life," was its central tenet. The best works of American society include *Washington Square*, *The Turn of the Screw*, *The Wings of the Dove* (1902), *The Ambassador* (1903), and *The Portrait of a Lady*. Collins is widely recognised as the pioneer of the contemporary detective story. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Tom Sawyer* (1885) is often regarded as the best American novel. Best American novels include those written by F. Scott Fitzgerald (*The Great Gatsby*, 1925) and Henry James (*The Wings of the Dove*, 1909) and Theodore Dreiser (*Sister Carrie*, 1902). Many people use T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* (1922) as a dividing line between the modern and postmodern eras of writing.

The hallmarks of realistic literature are a focus on realism and a well-crafted plot. In works of realism, character development takes precedence above storyline and action. The discussion usually centres on thorny moral dilemmas. The characters are shown in all their nuanced, unfathomable complexity in relation to the environment, each other, social strata, and history. Education level matters For Kenneth Warren, the fundamental distinction





between realism and sentimentalism is that in the latter "the redemption of the social world lay within the individual," while in the former "the redemption of the individual lay within the social world."

Selective depiction of truth with an emphasis on verisimilitude, and even a well-made plot, are hallmarks of realistic fiction. Character development takes precedence over storyline and action in realistic fiction. Topics involving difficult moral decisions are common. The characters are shown in all their nuanced, unfathomable complexity in relation to the environment, each other, social strata, and the past. Status matters. The distinction between realistic and sentimental fiction, as Kenneth Warren puts it, is that in the former "the redemption of the individual lay within the social world," while in the latter "the redemption of the social world lay within the individual."

Many American authors have been impacted by Twain's naturalistic manner of writing. All contemporary American literature, according to Ernest Hemingway, can be traced back to Huckleberry Finn.

*Huckleberry Finn* (1885) is one of the great American novels to be characterized by local colour regionalism. Henry Adams (1838-1918) did a lot to expose corruption encourage social and economic reform. Adams eloquently articulated the plight and frustration of the modern American subject. He developed a theory that medieval society had been unified by the spiritual power of the feminine force of the Virgin.

**Mark Twain was a powerful American novelist like Thomas Hardy. William Dean Howells wrote, Mark Twain is more than just a funny guy. In his own unique way, he is**



a remarkable fellow. The London Mercury awarded the highest compliment when it wrote:

" Lincoln, Mark Twain, Whitman! We should be hard put to find such a three in the granite grain". Rudyard Kipling looked at Twain as a social critic. Stephen Leacock said," Mark Twain is, without a doubt, the most important American author to me.

has witnessed and the most authentically American..." "The prose of Huckleberry Finn established for written prose the virtues of American colloquial speech.... It has something to do with ease and freedom in the use of language," Lionel Trilling wrote in 1948 as an introduction to Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. It has a lot to do with the rhythm of the word groups and the intonations of the speaking voice, as well as the simplicity, directness, and fluency of the sentence structure.

Beginning with Emerson (1803-82) and Thoreau (1817-62), and featuring Walt Whitman (1819-92), Hawthorne (1804-64), and Melville (1861-91) among others, the American Renaissance refers to the literary output of the pre-Civil War era in the United States (1861-65). These authors, like F. O. Matthiessen's *The American Renaissance* and others, are essentially Romantics with a uniquely American flavor.

Many American books are parables, with seemingly realistic settings that are actually symbols for something more universal and amorphous than time or place.

- W.H. AUDEN

*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* (1885), by Mark Twain. Some of the most influential books ever written in the United States include those by Nathaniel Hawthorne (1850) and Herman Melville (1851) and Henry David Thoreau (1854) and Walt Whitman (1855) and Henry James (1881) and Ernest Hemingway (1940) and others.



Mark Twain has some deep ideas. Moral and ethical concerns were represented in his writings. The novelist uses Huck as a mouthpiece. Huck has an experience when he visits a village camp and sees that "some of the old women were knitting, and some of the folks was courting on the sly."

On the Jacksons' island, Huck still exhibits the typical white boy sense of superiority over Jim and Huck. Jim gets bitten by its mate, and Huck starts to see the error of his ways and start taking care of him. When Huck comes into Jim dozing, he immediately joins him on the floor. Huck develops in his capacity for empathy and emotional maturity. Huck

understands the Duke and Dauphin are con artists who stole money from the poor. For forty dollars, they betrayed him by selling his sole friend. Upon hearing this, Huck says, "Human beings can be awful cruel to one another." Mark Twain was unrelenting in his criticism of modern morality and religion. Huckleberry Finn displays the novelist's moral philosophy by presenting us with universally desirable traits like love, compassion, gratitude, and friendship.

According to Earnest Hemingway, "Huckleberry Finn," written by Mark Twain, is the progenitor of all American literature. Before it, there was emptiness. Since then, no one has been able to top that. Twain uses satire and humor to illustrate the faults of American culture that Huck and Jim meet during their rafting expedition down the Mississippi. His use of in serious writing is fresh and straightforward. Dialect and colloquial terms abound in the English language. Many other authors, like as Hemingway and William Faulkner, followed in its footsteps.

Fitzgerald, F. Scott. American literature is bolstered by The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. Racist slurs are the focus of Mark Twain's criticism. Mark Twain uses these types of racist insults throughout the book. According to Wallace, African American readers will be offended by Mark Twain's writing style. Slavery in that era is depicted. Racist, crude, trashy, inelegant, incorrect, and stupid are among words that have been used to describe this by its detractors. The novel perpetuates white privilege and black inferiority. The adventure and exploration motif is very American. Twain spoke passionately about the immorality and decay of society throughout the work. The novel is widely considered Mark Twain's finest work, both artistically and in terms of the topics it evokes. This book is all about the satire, the action, the characters, and the message. Mark Twain was called a "racist writer" by certain reviewers. When it comes to racial elements in literature, John H. Wallace calls Mark Twain's The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn "the most grotesque example



ever written." The book's language has been criticized. The word "nigger" appears two hundred times throughout the book. "The word nigger is like a red rag to a bull," Langston Hughes said of black people of all social statuses. The work is presented as an official affirmation of a term pronounced by the most prejudiced racial bigots to a generation willing to experiment with any language of shock value, according to Allan B. Ballard. At one time Huck feels guilty of assisting him in his quest for freedom. The critics strongest assertion is that he is not a conventional slave of 19th century because slave received much worst treatment than depicted in the novel. But Mark Twain was trying to represent the real situation of the time. During the times

of slavery, the whites were thought to be superior. The novel is a true story of American society reflecting slavery system.

Three main symbols in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are the Mississippi River, Jim, and the Widow Douglas. The Mississippi River symbolizes Huck and Jim's freedom when they escape their problems. The symbol that stands for racism and the treatment of enslaved Jim.

**Question -1 Theme of Racism and Slavery in the novel is aptly described by Mark Twain.**

**Ans-** Although Mark Twain wrote *Huckleberry Finn* two decades after the Emancipation Proclamation and the end of the Civil War in America and especially the South was still struggling with racism and the aftereffects of slavery. By the early 1880s, Reconstruction, the plan to put the United States back together after the war and integrate freed slaves into society, it had hit shaky ground, although it had not yet failed outright. As Twain worked on this novel, race relations, which seemed to be on a positive path in the years following the Civil War 1861-1865, once again it became strained. The imposition of Jim Crow laws, designed to limit the power of blacks in South in a variety of indirect ways, it brought the beginning of a new, insidious effort to oppress. The new racism of the South, less institutionalized and monolithic, it was also more difficult to combat. Slavery could be outlawed, but when white Southerners enacted racist laws and policies under a professed motive of self-defense against newly freed Black people, far fewer people, Northern or Southern, saw the act as immoral and rushed to combat it.

*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, also called *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, it is a novel by Mark Twain, published in the United Kingdom in 1884 and in the United States in 1885.

*Huckleberry Finn*'s adventures involved him and Jim traveling down the Mississippi and how they encounter racism and other



various forms of racial inequality and segregation this is shown in the novel.

Huckleberry Finn shows the most obvious element the quest for Freedom. Some critics say both Huck and Jim the novel protagonists are running away from some kind of slavery. At the end Jim is freed through the death bed repentance of Miss Watson but Huck's imagined free world lies still far off. Jim's flight is confined to personal freedom. Huck's quest for Freedom has a larger human significance.

Another element of novel is a satire against institutionalisms. The chief figures through which the satire operate are Jim, Huck and Tom. Jim is wedded to an extremely superstitious world and Tom is adventurism. First satirical thrust is the institution of slavery whose chief representative is Jim. Slavery is shown in all its disgusting forms. Slave were treated as chattels and sold in slave trader's market. Irony becomes a strong weapon in the hand of the satirist. Jim's common-sense wisdom, a sense of self-sacrifice contrasts with Pap's drunken beatings of his own son. Jack's caution when he takes Huck to the bank of river shows a slave's sympathetic attitude towards a fellow slave which Huck's remark," Tragically applicable to the fact that humans can be extremely harsh to one another.

The novel also features a monetary theme. The book makes a strong case for humanism.

## 2.5 Summary

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is widely considered to be one of Mark Twain's finest and most influential works. Huckleberry Finn's life is the subject of this novel. Huck and the fugitive slave embark on an exciting adventure down the Mississippi River after escaping from Huck's alcoholic and violent father.

At the conclusion of Tom Sawyer, Huck briefly describes how he and Tom earned \$6,000 each. Huck now resides with the Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson, thanks to Judge Thatcher's investment of his money, from which he receives a daily interest payment of \$1. The novel's cast of characters includes Huck, Jim, Miss Watson, and Widow Douglas, among others.

Anyone familiar with "Adventures on the Mississippi" will recognize the edgy adolescent with the floppy straw hat. Although Mark Twain's second novel about the young Huckleberry Finn, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, is the sequel to the popular children's book The Adventures of Tom Sawyer, it is much more than a simple adventure story. There are some bleak moments, as it tackles heavy subjects like slavery, deceit, betrayal, moral choices, and the pursuit of true friendship and freedom.

Huckleberry Finn's frequently naive but always perceptive



perspective confronts preconceived beliefs and accepted prejudices, making it both a cutting parody of American South romanticism and a moving portrayal of American society before the Civil War. His voyage with the escaped slave Jim down the Mississippi culminated in the ultimate realization of the American dream.

Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is widely considered to be one of the greatest works of American literature. *Huckleberry Finn*'s exploits are the subject of this novel. Huck's daring trek down the Mississippi River with the fugitive slave Jim helped him escape his drunken and violent father.

Despite its widespread popularity, critics have long been torn apart by the novel's treatment of race and slavery in *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

The novel is a picaresque work of American literature that combines elements of adventure fiction, social criticism, and humor.

Tom keeps the gang together, but all they do is plan "pretend" thefts that never happen. The group will probably break up soon.

Huck Finn is not happy with his new life of cleanliness, politeness, church, and school when the novel opens. Tom Sawyer, a friend of his, has started a new gang of criminals. After afterwards, Huck's father, Pap, reappears and starts harassing him for money. The town's new judge rules in favor of Huck's father, Pap, and grants him custody of his son. He stays in town for months, bothering his son while he tries to learn to read and enduring the Widow's efforts to help him. His father beats him whenever he gets home intoxicated. Huck managed to break away from Pap one day. He murders a swine. Huck meets Jim, one of Miss Watson's slaves, after he has been on the island for a few days. Jim has escaped from Miss Watson's care. Despite Huck's moral qualms about aiding a slave who has escaped, he and Jim decide to work together. A massive typhoon hit while they were still out on the island, causing the Mississippi to crash to the ground. Huck and Jim see a house and a log raft floating by the Island. They take the raft and ransack the house, where they discover a dead guy with gunshot wounds. Jim won't allow Huck look at the face of the deceased man. Huck was discovered by a woman one day. In addition, Huck finds out that there is a prize for Jim's capture. Away from the island, Huck and Jim go. Following a terrifying close call with the band of thieves aboard a sunken steamer. They were able to get away with the stolen goods. Huck and Jim get lost



in the fog and end up running into a gang of people who are on the lookout for runaway slaves. Huck tells the stranger his father has smallpox when he knows he's lying. The guys all chip in to give Huck some cash. The following evening, Huck and Jim are split up when a steamboat crashes. Huck finally approaches the residence of the generous Ganger fords. Due to the daughter of Ganger Ford's eloping with the son of a Shepherd, many families are wiped out in a bloody war.

. Then Jim returns with the fixed raft. They escaped up the river after Huck went to Jim's hiding location.

A couple of days later, Huck and Jim can save two men. These two guys are crooks, for sure. Failed in my attempt to remove two adult white residents Huck and Jim keep walking along the street. Peter Wilks, a wealthy man, has lately passed away, and his brothers from England are expected to arrive soon to claim their inheritance. Will's brothers, the Duke and Dauphin, sneak into town. Wilk's three nieces are happy to have the con artist over and soon get to work selling off the family's assets. Huck, initially skeptical, eventually learned to respect the Wilk sisters. He makes up his mind to foil the con. To avoid getting caught by the Duke and Dauphin, he hides the gold from Peter Wilks's grave. Huck then tells Mary Jane, the older sister of the Wilk brothers, the truth.

The arrival of Wilk's true brothers from England signals the beginning of Huck's scheme to expose the duke and the Dauphin. The Duke and Dauphin of Wilk narrowly escaped capture from the outraged townspeople. The duke and the Dauphin return to the raft after this, leaving Huck and Jim stranded. In the nick of time before Huck and Jim take off. The duke and Dauphin then commit the worst crime possible. They inform the farmer that Jim is a fugitive for whom a high reward has been offered and sell him to him. Huck learns the location of Jim's captivity. He's decided to set Jim free. Huck arrives at the home where Jim is being held, and the woman who answers the door calls him "Tom." Huck swiftly learns that Tom's aunt and uncle, Silas and Sally Phelps, are holding Jim hostage. Huck agrees with the Phelps' misidentification of him as the expected visitor, Tom. He corners Tom on his way from the Phelps home to the riverboat port, and Tom tries to pass himself off as Sid, his younger brother. Tom comes up with a crazy scheme to rescue Jim. Jim is finally liberated after much planning, but Tom is injured when his pursuer shoots him in the leg. Jim gives up his independence to take care of Tom and Huck is compelled to see a doctor. Jim is re-chained when everyone is taken back to the Phelps' home. When Tom returns, he tells everyone that Jim has been free all along. Two months prior, Jim's freedom would have been guaranteed by





the will of Miss Watson, who had passed away. Tom's plan to escape was really a game, and he had no intention of compensating Jim for his trouble. Then, Tom's aunt Polly appears and confirms that Huck and Tom are, in fact, Tom and Sid. Jim reveals to Huck that his father's body was the one they discovered on the floating house off Jackson's island. Then Aunt Sally steps in and offers to adopt Huck, but Huck has had enough of civilization and has instead announced his intention to travel west.

### **Characters in the novel**

1. **Huck Finn-** The protagonist of the book is Huck Finn. About 14 years old, he is the offspring of an alcoholic father.
2. **Tom Sawyer -**Tom Sawyer is Huck's pal and is roughly the same age as Huck.
3. **Jim -**Huck frees Jim, a slave owned by Miss Watson. His allegiance is with Huck.
4. **Widow Douglas-** Douglas adopts Huck and seeks to bring him up to society standards. She hopes that Huck's faith in God's love would inspire him to change.
5. **Huck receives his education from Widow Douglas's sister, Miss Watson.** She strives to reform Huck out of reverence for God's wrath.
6. **The duke and his friend, the Dauphin,** are con artists who rob people of their money. They hop aboard the raft with Huck and Jim. Huck and Jim are betrayed by scam artists named Duke and King, who canyon the raft.
7. **Huck knows Ben Rogers,** who is a member of Tom's gang and a buddy of Huck's.
8. **Huck also has a friend named Joe Harper.**
9. **There are two feuding families that Huck consults with:** the Ganger fords and the Shepherd sons.
10. **Mrs. Judith Loftus,** a new resident of St. Petersburg, is the source of Huck's discovery that an expedition to Jackson's island is in the works.
11. **Jim and Huck discover three thieves—named Bill, Packard, and Turner—in a houseboat.**
12. **Boggs, a local alcoholic, is gunned down in broad sight.**
- 13**Colonel Sherburn is the one responsible for Boggs' demise.**
14. **In Pikeville, a man named Peter Wilks passes away, leaving his three nieces his plantation.**
15. **Duke of the Dauphin almost gets away with adultery on Mary Jane, Susan, and Joanna, three of Wilks' girls.**
16. **The three Wilks' females that the Duke of the Dauphin almost manages to cheat on are Mary Jane, Susan, and Joanna.**
17. **Dr. Robinson's inquiry to identify the true heirs is conducted in collaboration with attorney Levi Bell.**
- 18.



19. The Reverend Hobson delivers the eulogy at Peter Wilks's funeral.
20. The Phelps are the royal family's new buyers of Jim. To top it all off, they are Tom Sawyer's real-life aunt and uncle.
21. Huck's dad's name is Pap. Abusing Huck, he kidnaps him.

#### **Reading the Novel Chapter Wise brief idea.**

**Chapter 1 and 2:** The novel's first chapter serves an essential function. The first chapter sets up a connection to Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer stories. Huck's money has been invested by Judge Thatcher at a rate of one dollar per day interest. The Widow Douglas and her sister, Miss Watson, live in Huck. Huck is the subject of their attempts at civilizing. Jim, Miss Watson's slave, awakens from his nap in the kitchen. Back to sleep he goes. Tom steals Jim's hat while he's sleeping and hangs it in a tree. Tom and Huck end up making a lot of friends and becoming a gang that becomes known as Tom Sawyer's crew.

**Chapter 3:** Huck gets a dressing down from Miss Watson. For him to pray, she says. His attempt at prayer. Pap Finn, his father, comes to mind; he was discovered dead in the river. A band of thieves and killers got together.

**Chapter 4:** Huck adjusts himself to the new environment. He goes to school. He plays hooky. The widow is satisfied with his progress. One day Huck sees the footprints of his father in the snow. He runs to the Judge Thatcher and signs away the money of one dollar. Then he goes to Jim to consult. Huck's attitude towards his father is clear. He does not want him. He hates and condemns.

**Chapter 5:** Huck's father who is drinking and loafing comes to know of Huck's treasure and decides to return home. Huck finds his father sitting inside. Pap is fifty. His hair was long and greasy. He criticizes Huck for being neat and going to school. Pap's wants money but Huck refused. He snatches the dollar and goes out for drink. Huck found the world is corrupt and you cannot reform it.

**Chapter 6:** Huck is now enrolled in classes. Pap abducts Huck when the widow catches him hanging around her house. His father often beats him. This chapter gives an idea about Pap. He is a drunkard, a cruel father and tells Huck's attitude towards the new modes of life. He feels happier now.

**Chapter 7 and 8:** When Pap leaves for drinking, Huck escaped from Pap's cabin. Next morning Huck wakes up Jackson's island. He enjoys the double loaf for breakfast. Suddenly he sees fresh campfire ashes. He is surprised to see Jim there. When asked why he ran away, he explains that miss Watson planned to sell him.

**Chapter 9 and 10:** Jim and Huck decide to pass some time on the island. They find a big cavern and use it as a house. Meanwhile the river water started rising. The lower part of the island was flooded. They had to use their canoe for rowing about. They catch



lumber raft and make repair and use for their journey. A two-story, wooden structure was discovered. They decide to go up a floor and end up finding some very valuable tools. After that, they discover a Deadman who has been shot in the back. They eventually returned to the island. Huck slays a rattlesnake in the middle of the day. When Jim goes to sleep, he throws himself upon the blanket. The snake Huck thinks bit Jim is shown to be its mate when he turns on the light. Huck nurses Jim many days. Chapter 10 is very important as it shows the growing relationship between Huck and Jim.

Chapter 11 and 12: The woman opens the door and finds Huck who gives out his name as Sarah Williams. Huck tells her an imaginary story as how he has come to the town to visit his uncle Abner. Then the woman talks about Huck's murder and Jim is the main suspect. After Jim escaped. There is a \$300 incentive for Jim and \$200 for Pap, as proclaimed by the town. As they are being pursued, Huck returns to Jackson's island to alert Jim. Huck and Jim are still floating downstream on the Mississippi. They're still on the road, having just spent their seventh night below St. Louis. After midnight, a severe storm hit the area. Mark Twain introduces the frontier in its fullest fury. Those who committed crimes or murders on the frontier often discarded their bodies in the woods or along rivers. Huck panics and hurries back to Jim, but Jim informs him that the raft has sunk.

Chapter 13: Then the raft wrecked Huck and Jim make plans to get the other side of the boat to hunt for the canoe used by those robbers. In the lightning flash they discover the raft. At landing pass Huck gets off and wakes the ferryman. The ferryman and his engineer go for the rescue of the survivors. And Huck goes back. and joins Jim on the raft and sleep. This chapter shows Huck has sympathizes even the scoundrels.

Chapter 14: Jim and Huck get up and they turned over the bags and bundles which the gang had stolen and find many things: boats, blankets, clothes, books and other. They read the story of King Solomon. They talk of Solomon's million wives and then shift to foreign languages.

Chapter 15,16: As they are nearing Cairo, they plan to sell the raft. They run into a heavy fog and miss Cairo. Huck tries to tie the raft to a towhead, but the raft is caught in Swift current. Huck wanders on the shore and discovers Jim asleep. He quietly lies down and pretend to wake up. When Jim gets up, he feels overjoyed to find Huck. This chapter illustrates the growing intimacy and understanding between Huck and Jim. Chapter 16 shows debate in Huck's mind. He feels Jim would be a free man. He faces a terrible conflict between his heart and conscience.

Chapter 17,18: Huck is welcomed to the house, as he is not a Shepherdson, a family against which the Ganger fords are always fighting. Huck gets a big room, a lot of food which shows frontier



hospitality. The family is quite large although some of the members have been shot dead. Chapter 18, when Huck becomes quite familiar, he talks about the feud and also about the Shepherdson's who live at some distance. Both the families use the same landing pass and go to the same church on Sunday with their guns full loaded. The feud was long back. They are wealthy and well mannered. But they are violent and brutal in their feud. One day in church, Sophia calls Huck and asks him to bring her Bible from the church. Huck goes to church and finds the Bible. He comes back and hands over the Bible to Sophia who is very happy to read then she asks Huck to read but Huck denies. Huck enquires that Sophia has run off to be married to Harney Shepherdson. Huck's servant brings him inside, where he meets Jim, who reports that the raft has been located. Several men on both sides, including Buck, die in a dispute sparked by Miss Sophia's escape with Harney Shepherdson. After ten years on the raft, Huck returns to shore to reunite with Jim.

Chapter 19 Huck and Jim take in the scenic river scenery as they travel. Huck eventually locates the canoe one morning and paddles it to the mainland. Two con men are waiting for him at that location. The old man says that he is the late Dauphin the younger and one says that he is the Duke of Bridgewater. Both of them addressed them in a royal manner and the duke agrees to be the next man to the king.

Chapter 20: Huck and Jim are interrogated by the king and duke after they seize control of the raft. Huck fabricates a tale in which Jim is shown to be his nigger. And they are going to his uncle 44 miles below Orleans. They travel during night because people believing Jim to be a runaway nigger. The duke argues that if anyone asks they can point to Jim. As he has been already captured nobody else will want him.

Chapter 21,22,23: They continue to float downstream, and the duke trains the king in the scenes which they are planning to present. The next time they learn that a circus is being presented in a river side town. They wander about the town; there they see an old drunkard Boggs shot by Colonel Sherburn who had earlier warned to Boggs to stop his abusive tongue by one o'clock. But Boggs crosses the deadline and is shot dead. People decide that Sherburn should be lynched.

The crowd excited and angry moves to Sherburn house. The people break into his house, tear down the fence and shout. The Colonel comes into the porch with a gun in his hand. He makes a devastating speech on mankind, southern men and on the crowd. After speech he prepares the gun. The crowd quietly disappeared. Huck sneaks the circus and watches the show. The show arranged by the imposters is a success, the spectators laughed and laughed. All the townsmen see the show. At the third performance, expect a



barrage, as the stage will be covered in rotting vegetables and eggs. However, the Duke and King quietly leave town with Huck in tow.

**Chapter 24,25,26:** Jim is handcuffed and wearing a card made of paper. Sick Arab, but less when he's not out of his mind, it says. During the day, they set sail and plot their next move in the next village. They worry that because one hamlet is close to another, they won't be able to provide the same level of performance. To meet the young man who is waiting for the steamboat, they disrobe and walk to the shore. The monarch invited him to take the boat out for a spin. This traveler relates the tragic story of Peter Wilks, whose brothers are due to arrive from England. The English Wilks brothers inherited Peter's riches. As English brothers Harney and William Wilks, the scam artists are now pretending to be Peter Wilks. After hearing the news of his brother's death, they approached the town sobbing and wailing. The family is convinced that the King and the Duke are indeed Wilk's brothers because to their great performances. They hug Peter Wilks's daughter as though she were a niece and sob over the casket. All of Peter Wilks' property, except for \$6,000 split between his daughters and Harvey and William, is left to them in his will. The royal couple gives their daughters their gold inheritance. The Reverend Hobson and Dr. Robinson, two of his closest allies, were absent at this time, and upon their return, Dr. Robinson denounced the monarch as a phony. But the nieces don't think their uncles are up to no good. Huck's bewilderment is resolved when he witnesses the daughters' confidence and generosity and realizes he must act. The gold hidden by the Duke and the King is found by Huck. He pockets \$6,000 and puts in on hold while he tracks out the proper owners.

**Chapter 27:** Huck steals the money and finding no other place to hide, hides it to the coffin. In the next morning the burial takes place and the money is buried along. The imposters give out false promises to the girls that they would take them to England. The girls feel very sad when the Black people are taken away by the buyers. Huck plans to reveal the fraud but the money is missing. Huck easily blamed to the sold-out slaves. The king and the duke quarrel. Huck feels glad that his trick has worked.

**Chapter 28:** Huck discovers Mary Jane sobbing at the abolition of the slaves. Huck meets Mary Jane and says he'll get the slaves back. Mary Jane decides to visit her pal for a few days. Mary Jane, as Huck tells the other sisters, has gone to see to a sick friend. The king sold everything. Suddenly a big crowd comes. They bring a pair of brothers to the diseased Peter Wilks.

**Chapter 29,30:** The newcomers announce themselves as Harvey and William and Harvey asserts that he can prove. They get into a hotel for the night. People keep insisting that King George and Duke Charles are brothers. However, the doctor persuades his colleagues that further research is necessary. The older man claims to be aware of a tattoo on Peter Wilks's chest; the king has



described it as a little blue arrow, but the older man claims it's a faint "P" and ". The attorney decides regarding how to examine his chest. A bag of gold was discovered next to the corpse when the casket was opened. The spectators go wild with excitement. Huck manages to get away undetected. The king and the duke also made it out alive, and he and Jim escaped on the raft. The two con men, Jim and Huck, are still a threat. Huck's secret was safe since the Duke and the King pointed fingers at each other for the theft of the bag of riches.

**Chapter 31:** For many days they continue to sail. The frauds start working the village again. They give a lecture on temperance, start a dancing school. In a village named Pikesville the king goes out to find out whether they can try Nonesuch there. Huck is upset with the con artists since they were able to turn Jim back into a slave despite all that we had done for them. Huck's guilt over kidnapping the elderly woman's slave prompts him to tell Miss Watson about Jim in a letter. But soon he realized that Jim is a great friend and decides to save Jim. Huck meets The Duke who promised to tell him about Jim. Huck goes in the wrong direction to find Jim. He gives the duke the slip and can formulate his own plans.

**Chapter 32 and 33:** Huck reaches the Phelps farm; he is attacked by a score of dogs. The dogs are called off by a nigger woman and Huck is taken inside. There he is introduced to other children of the house as Sid Sawyer. Huck comes to know the woman is Aunt Sally. When her husband finally shows up, Aunt Sally reveals Huck to be Tom Sawyer. Huck feigns a reason to go to the water and get his bags. The elderly Phelps is keen to accompany Huck. But he convinces him to stay at home by suggesting that he can handle the horse by himself. Tom Sawyer is located by Huck. Huck may be a ghost in Tom's eyes. Huck fills Jim in on what's going on. Tom promises to help you abduct him from his slavers. Huck and Sid Sawyer, Tom's brother, meet at the farm. Jim had told the citizens of the town that the performance by the King and Duke will be a hoax, and Huck and Tom find out about it. Huck and Tom secretly leave to warn the Duke and the King, but the riotous mob that tarred and feathered the con artists soon arrives.

**Chapter 34:** Tom and Huck make efforts to search for Jim. They discover that food is being taken to a place into a shack on the back of the farm. They discuss plans to free Jim. The cabin where Jim is being held is then investigated. The youngsters accompany the slave who delivers Jim his meal and assure him, in whispers, that he will soon be free. Tom and Huck are conspiring. Tom says that Jim needs a rope ladder. Tom wants Jim to write a Journal in the manner of a prisoner. They steal plates, shirts, spoons and knives for escape.





**Chapter 36,37,38:** As the family is asleep the boys go for the rescue operations. They continue to dig until five or six feet deep. They tried to dig a tunnel under the cabin. The next night, they construct a tunnel and can get to Jim. After hearing Tom's ideas, Jim decides to follow him. Tom and Huck are known to steal cutlery, candles and bed linens. Aunt Sally discovers a thievery in the home. Tom and Huck are constantly stealing and replacing sheets and spoons for this purpose. At long last, they manage to smuggle a single sheet into Jim's hut, along with some tin dishes. Next day Tom finds new direction for Jim's escape. And they need to provide Jim with rattlesnake and rats and proper atmosphere for Jim's escape.

**Chapter 39:** Tom and Huck proceed to catch rattlesnake, rats and spiders to be put in Jim's cabin. They manage to capture 15 rodents, but some of them escape and cause havoc for Aunt Sally. The Phelps home becomes a liberation zone for several critters. Tom and Huck snatched up enough rodents, insects, and reptiles to stock Jim's cabin. Jim notes that there is a lack of available space. The rescue mission is entering its final stages now. Huck walks to the river after breakfast and sees that the raft is in a favorable position. Huck finds out that the Phelps have gathered fifteen men to fight the gang when he returns home to grab some butter. When Huck hears the soldiers approaching, he quickly slips out the window to let Tom know. They need to get out of there right now. Jim and the boys escape the men who have come to the cottage by hiding in a nearby hole. They reach the raft, where they learn that Tom was shot in the calf. Tom orders them to leave, but Jim won't budge unless he sees a doctor first.

**Chapter 41,42:** The doctor is found. Huck tells him a story that his brother Tom is hurt while hunting. When the doctor gets the canoe, he feared that the canoe cannot take two persons. The doctor then goes alone and remains behind to sleep. Early morning, he goes to find doctor but meets Uncle Silas that they have been hunting for the runaway nigger. Aunt Sally, he said is worried. Men from the neighborhood congregate at the Phelps property to talk about the cabin and its contents. The following day, Tom and Jim bring a doctor to the Phelps property. Jim has Tom's hands tied while Tom lies on a mattress. The guys fight about whether to hang Jim, while the doctor describes how Jim assisted him with Tom. Tom gets up the next morning and starts telling his aunt Sally about how he and Huck planned the entire escape. Tom gets out of bed and insists that they release Jim, explaining that he knew Miss Watson would use her will to set Jim free. When Tom's aunt Polly shows up, he and Huck must come clean. Huck says Tom is doing fine now. Huck's aunt Sally wants to adopt him and "civilize" him, but he rejects this idea, saying " ...he cannot stand it. I have been there before." Some critics say Aunt Polly's arrival is a safe ending. But her visit appears to be natural.





The novel is praised for its power of telling the truth. In *Huckleberry Finn* the principal character to narrate his experiences. The narrator character chosen is a boy of fourteen who sees the things realistically.

“Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a body isn’t got no business doing wrong when he isn’t ignorant and knows better.”  
- Huck Finn

Mark Twain's *The Gilded Age* (1873) is an excellent book.

After the Grant administration in 1869, a period of materialistic excess and cynical political corruption set hold, which Twain and his Hartford neighbor Charles Dudley Warner chronicled in their book *The Gilded Age*. The term "gilded" refers to a golden coating, hence "*The Gilded Age*" describes the decadent lifestyles and cynical attitudes of America's elite during the time.

Mark Twain's *The Innocents Abroad*, published in 1869, is another excellent book.

A description of Mark Twain's travels with other Americans around Europe and the Middle East, drawn from his newspaper accounts of the time. The travelers visit at Paris, Milan, Venice, Florence, Rome, and Athens during their transatlantic voyage aboard the steamship *Quaker City*. In the end, they make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land and Egypt. Throughout the book, Twain pokes fun at the encounter between the pious pilgrims from the Americas and the Old World, with the latter's culture often being portrayed by Twain as not living up to its reputation.

Mark Twain also wrote a fantastic novel in 1862 called *Roughing It*.

Sam Clemens, at 25 years old, quit his employment as a riverboat pilot on the Mississippi River due to the onset of the Civil War.

the Civil War, set out by stagecoach with his older brother, Orion, for the Nevada Territory. *Roughing It's* a part autobiography, part travelogue, part tall tale, it is Twain's account of the people and places he experienced when he and the American West still were young.

*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* 1876 is a powerful work by Mark Twain.

From the Preface: “Most of the adventures recorded in this book really occurred; one or two were experiences of my own, the rest those of boys who were schoolmates of mine. Huck Finn is drawn from life; Tom Sawyer also, but not from an individual, he is a combination of the characteristics of three boys whom I knew, and therefore belongs to the composite order of architecture... Part of my plan has been to try to pleasantly remind adults of what they once were themselves, and of how they felt and thought and talked, and what queer enterprises they sometimes engaged in.”



**Life on the Mississippi 1883 is also a good work by Mark Twain. This was Mark Twain's seminal work on the river that gave birth to much of his most successful fiction. Entertaining, yet enlightening, Life on the Mississippi is a textbook on the history, life and lore of the Great River during the 19th century, but also a primer on the "science" of the piloting the Mississippi during the heyday of the great steamboats that once traveled the greatest inland waterway of America.**

**Question Discuss the title of the Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.**

**Ans**

**The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885) is an impressive book. The novel has a fitting and appropriate title. The novel's fundamental message is conveyed.**

**Huckleberry Finn tells his tale in the novel Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. He plays a pivotal role in the story. Mark Twain's classic novel, Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, is about a social outcast named Huckleberry who, together with an escaped slave named Jim, ends up on a raft on the Mississippi River. Along Huck and Jim's arduous voyage, they encounter a motley crew of individuals who range from dangerous to humorous. Despite being written primarily in the 1880s, the novel takes place during the era of slavery preceding the Civil War. Twain uses Huck's problems to show how the South was unable to recover from the Civil War.**

**Twain's literary and artistic maturity can be seen in his river books, particularly The Adventures of Tom Sawyer (1876) and The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (1885). To truly grasp Twain's love to the river, read Life on the Mississippi (1883), which reveals his gift for dialogue and accent, unique characters, and social satire wrapped in the immense spiritual presence of the Mississippi River. To the note, add the tale.**

**After his death, Twain's thoughts on man's duality and the eternal struggle between God and Satan for evil culminated in the posthumously released novel The Mysterious Stranger (1916). To conclude the title of the novel is very powerful. It is just and suitable. It tells the theme of Racism, slavery and freedom of Jim. The novel is a true account of Huck and Jim. So, the title is very appropriate.**

**2.6 Self assessment:**

**Question 2 - Widow Douglas and Miss Watson: A Discussion of Their Character Sketches from "The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn". Or**

**The novel's main characters, Jim, Huck, Joe, and Tom**

**Ans. Miss Watson and Widow Douglas are very important character in the novel. In The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Miss Watson is pivotal. One of Huckleberry Finn's mothers is a woman named Miss Watson. The Widow's sister is a severe, old, annoying woman who acts as Huck's primary guardian. She joins the effort to civilize**



Huck and takes a much stricter tack. She has Huck buy new clothes, quit smoking, and study the Bible against his will.

Widow Watson, the venerable old Miss Watson The older sister of Douglas is a disciplinarian. She does not tolerate Huck's rough behaviour as her sister does and constantly reprimands him for being careless.

Miss Watson aids her sister in attempting to refine Huck's manners. She corrects his spelling and verbally reprimands him for his rough behaviour. Not even Huck likes her that much. Neither does he have a good opinion of her. The lads are about to take an oath of allegiance when Tom recommends that they join his band of thieves. Everyone takes an oath promising loyalty to the gang and agreeing to nominate a close relative to be executed if necessary. Huck suggests that they call her Miss Watson. He looks genuinely thrilled by the idea, and says,

"....but all at once I thought of a way, and so I offered them Miss Watson - they could kill her".

Widow Huck's legal guardian is Douglas. She takes him in and tries to teach him manners. And Miss Watson is Douglas' sister. She tutors Huck.

To emphasise, Huck never tries as hard to win over Miss Watson as he does Widow Douglas. In addition to her efforts to educate and enlighten Huck, she also instructs him in the basics of the Christian faith. She explains "Providence" and "spiritual gifts" to Huck. She assures him that if they prayed, they could have anything their hearts desired. Huck abandons the concept of "praying" altogether because he experiences no tangible benefits from it. When Huck says he wants to go to "the bad place" because he doesn't understand Heaven, she is shocked. She scolds him for even considering it.

He's had it with her constant nagging, so he's been grumbling.,

"Miss Watson, she kept pecking at me, and it got tiresome and lonesome". Both are powerful character.

The religious hypocrisy of the civilised people is a target of Mark Twain's satire in the character of Miss Watson. A devout Christian, she yet defends her decision to sell Jim to a slave trader for \$800. She's the kind of bigot from before the Civil War who says things like "slaves are just cattle" to justify the brutal treatment they receive.

Mark Twain uses Miss Watson as a satirical vehicle to comment on the hypocrisy of the cultured in matters of religion. Although she claims to be a Christian, she nonetheless justifies her decision to sell Jim to a slave trader for \$800. She is a relic of the pre-Civil War era, when bigots like her used phrases like "slaves are just cattle" to excuse the inhumane treatment of African Americans.



She means well, but "a tolerable slim old maid, with goggles, glass" doesn't quite describe Widow Douglas's sister, Miss Watson. If Widow Douglas stands for the best of society, then Miss Watson represents its worst traits: its nagging, slave-owning aspects.

Some of the guidelines she has outlined for Huck are as follows:

"Huckleberry, why don't you attempt to behave? she'd scold, "Don't put your feet up there," "Don't scrunch up like that," and "Don't gap and stretch like that."

Miss Watson's conscience finally prickles her to the point of no return, and she writes Jim's release into her will. Huck is adopted by Widow Douglas, who has plans to educate and modernise him with the help of her sister, Miss Watson.

Huckleberry Finn's growth as a person is heavily influenced by Widow Douglas and Miss Watson in Mark Twain's famous novel.

According to *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, Huck was taken in by the Widow Douglas and raised as her own. The Widow Douglas is a very well-off and well-liked resident of St. Petersburg. Her late husband had served as a justice of the peace, and he had a stellar reputation for sentencing violent offenders like Joe from "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer." The Widow is quite charitable and had been taking care of Huck even before she officially adopted him. Both the Widow Douglas and Miss Watson want to transform Huck into a proper upper-class young man. They are also both religious, and both characters believe in the importance of etiquette and manners.

Widow Douglas has an important part to play as well. When compared to her sister, the Widow Douglas is much kinder to Huck. Huck is intimidated and chastised frequently by Miss Watson.

Huck resents the sisters' treatment of him. He has no desire to conform to their expectations or way of life.

Jim and Huck resolve to escape after learning that Miss Watson intends to sell Jim to a slave trader based in New Orleans. She is also harsh to him. Widow Douglas is more likeable than Miss Watson because she treats Huck with greater kindness.

All men are created equal, and the connection between Huck and Jim in *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* challenges 19th-century notions on oppression, racism, and religion.

Tom Sawyer, along with Huck and Jim, is a central figure in Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The youngster is a student. He is naughty, inventive, and unrealistic. Tom is admired by Huckleberry. Tom was raised in a loving family. Tom and Huck get along famously. Tom stands for society, while Huck actively seeks to leave it. However, whereas Tom is fantastic, romantic, and adventurous, Huck is mature and selfless throughout the tale. It's not only that the two lads are distinct types; Eliot also notes that they were born into separate worlds. Jim, too, plays a significant role in the story. He's an African-American. Miss Watson has him in her clutches. It's hard to get Jim to do anything. Jim plays the role of a fugitive slave. He believes in a lot



of superstitions. Jim is a kind and dependable man. Mentor to Huck, he is. He's been a great assistance to Huck.

The novel revolves around Huck Finn. The novel is named after him. This book's protagonist is he. He is a 14-year-old young man. Miss Watson and Widow Douglas took Huck in as their own son. Huck is compassionate and thoughtful. The young lad is very kind. Because of his father's physical and verbal abuse, he ran away. He visits Jackson's private island. There he meets Jim, one of Miss Watson's slaves, and the two of them escape together. They cast off together to make their way down the Mississippi. He is aware of the sinfulness of assisting a slave. This book shows evidence of his creativity, morals, and intelligence, Jim, and Tom are Huck's three main companions. According to him, Pap is not a bad parent. The news of Pap's death reaches Huck. Huck and Tom get along famously. Tom is the leader, but Huck follows orders. Huck admires Jim and the other slaves. He makes up his mind to aid Jim in his escape. With this, they become buddies. Comic relief in the narrative is provided by Huck. His tone and vocabulary are hilarious. To sum up, Huck is one of a kind.

**Question 3 - The central theme of The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is racism or racial elements.**

**Ans.** There is racial content in The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. To begin, racial distinctions have historically been employed as a boundary between human and nonhuman statuses. Black people were kept as slaves by the White majority for the entirety of the nineteenth century. A man named Jim is Ms. Watson's slave in Huckleberry Finn. The widow and her household are solely under his care. The vast majority, if not all, of Southerners supported slavery. People in the South who opposed slavery either stayed to themselves or were looked down upon by their neighbors. A judge ruled in 1857 that "Black people have no

how Black people in America were still struggling to overcome the poverty that slavery left them in. The play also brings to light institutions which created new forms of legal slavery like Parch man Farm, a prison farm which functioned like a slave plantation.

The two central characters in Mark Twain's novel "Adventures of Huckleberry Finn" are a poor white boy named Huckleberry Finn and a runaway slave named Jim.

Jim, fictional character, an unschooled but honourable runaway slave in Huckleberry Finn (1884) by Mark Twain. Some critics charge Twain with having created a two-dimensional racist caricature, while others find Jim a complex, compassionate character. The relationship between Jim and Huck forms the crux of the novel, with Jim acting as a surrogate for Huck's loathsome father.

## **2.7 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS :**

### **1JIM'S QUEST FOR FREEDOM or Jim Character.**

Jim is Miss Watson's slave who runs away because he has learnt that his owner has decided to sell him off to a slave-trader from Orleans. Petrified at the thought of being



separated from his family, he takes this bold step. Jim's main aim is to attain freedom - in the literal sense. In his efforts to get freedom, he risks his life and runs away to Jackson's island where he bumps into Huck and then continues his journey with the latter. Freedom is important to Jim not just for his own sake; he yearns for freedom not just from the shackles of slavery but also for the sake of his family. It is his longing to be reunited with his family members that he seeks freedom for. During his flight, he befriends Huck who remains loyal to him throughout their odyssey together.

He says that if someone were to come up and say "Polly bouffancy, he wouldn't take the insult and would "bust him over de head".

"data is, if he wasn't white. I wouldn't low no nigger to call me data".

### **Question-2 JIM IS THE HERO OF THE NOVEL discuss.**

**Ans.** Critical opinion argues that, in one sense, Jim is the hero of the novel. After all, it is Jim who brings Huck towards moral development. Without Jim, Huck wouldn't have had any reason to test his own abilities. He would never have known how much he can raise the bar for himself and exploring his capacity. Jim, therefore, helps Huck rise to heroic proportions. By being a support system to Huck, Jim gives him the emotional and moral support and is his guiding light.

Jim is also the hero of the novel because he shows all positive characteristics in a human being. In absolutely none of the other "white" and "civilized" characters in the novel do we discern such humanity, compassion and purity.

#### **Quotes:**

That is just the way with some people. They get down on a thing when they don't know nothing about it.

Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*:

Right is right, and wrong is wrong, and a body isn't got no business doing wrong when he isn't ignorant and knows better.

"Jim said that bees won't sting idiots, but I didn't believe that, because I tried them lots of times myself and they wouldn't sting me."

### **Question.3 The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a picaresque novel discuss.**

**Ans.-** Picaresque novel emerged in sixteenth century Spain. The most popular instance is *Gil Bilas* (1715). Picaresque novel comes from the Spanish word "Picaro" which means rogue. Picaresque fiction is realistic in manner, episodic in Structure. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is a picaresque novel. The adventure of Huck has picaresque element in the novel.

The picaresque novel comes from Spanish word from picaro, mean "rogue" or "rascal", it is a genre of prose fiction. It depicts the adventures of a roguish but "appealing hero",





usually of low social class, who lives by his wits in a corrupt society. Picaresque novels typically adopt a realistic style.

One example of a historical picaresque novel is the Spanish story of Don Quixote, by Miguel de Cervantes. A well-known modern picaresque novel is Kurt Vonnegut's World War II autobiographical story, *Slaughterhouse-Five*.

But most picaresque novels incorporate several defining characteristics: satire, comedy, sarcasm, acerbic social criticism, first-person narration with an autobiographical ease of telling, an outsider protagonist-seeker on an episodic and often pointless quest for renewal or justice.

### **Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a Picaresque Novel:**

The *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is an example of a picaresque novel in that it follows the adventures of a lower-class, rough-around-the-edges protagonist who exposes the hypocrisies of the society he lives in. The genre takes its name from the Spanish word *pizaro*, meaning rogue, and originated in Spain in the sixteenth century. Cervantes's episodic and satiric knight's tale *Don Quixote*, which Tom Sawyer references in *Huck Finn*, incorporates many elements of the Spanish picaresque. Huck is a naïve, innately moral character navigating a racist and hypocritical society, making him a model *pizaro*. Picaresque stories also typically have an episodic structure that follows the hero through a series of discrete events. The story of Huck and Jim's journey down the Mississippi River develops over the course of a loosely connected series of adventures, beginning with the pair's time on Jackson's Island. *Huck Finn* deviates from the genre in that Huck evolves over the course of the novel as he wrestles with his conscience and develops empathy for Jim, making him a more complex character than many traditional *pizaros*.

### **Adventures of Huckleberry Finn is a Romance:**

aspects of Romanticism are clearly present in Twain's novel *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, which seamlessly blends both Realism and Romanticism. These contrasting literary styles are found in the setting, characterization, and plot of the novel.

*Huckleberry's Love* tells of two crazily star-crossed lovers, Huck Finn, the river-rat son of a drowned deadbeat drunkard Petunia Pringle bookworm daughter of an eminent St. Louis judge. Filled with dialogue peppered with the colloquialism of Mark Twain and woven with the jewels of Shakespeare, the play follows Huck's odyssey into first love, from his meeting with his "Juliet" at the Sunday-school picnic, his pockets bulging and croaking with bullfrogs, to the balcony scene in a thunderstorm on the thatched roof of a chicken coop to the climactic struggle between the big Old' Muddy that beckons to his interminable wanderlust and the beautiful young woman on the bank who has given him her heart. Huck, Tom Sawyer, Aunt Polly, Jim, the widow Douglas and the rest are all right here where we left them—in the romantic wilds of our own hearts.





Samuel Clemens was a talented author who used several literary elements throughout his works. Clemens or Mark Twain's novel, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, was written as a critique of southern romanticism. Clemens despised romantic literature. He felt as though it instilled false hopes in its readers. Therefore, it seems rather ironic that Clemens would include elements of romantic literature within a work that criticized this form of literature. Throughout this popular novel, elements of romantic literature surface. It is unknown whether this were included to poke fun at romantic literature, or simply a mistake made by Clemens. Whatever the reason, the elements do appear within this novel.

The most prominent element of romantic literature in this novel is Tom Sawyer. The author included this character to show just how ridiculous romantic literature could be. Clemens uses Tom's character to show the false hopes that romantic literature can instill in its readers. Tom, Huck's closest friend, is a well-read somewhat educated young boy. Therefore, Huck looks up to Tom and follows his lead. Tom talks Huck into doing many ridiculous things to create an adventure. At the end of the novel, after Tom and Huck have played many cruel jokes on Tom's family and Jim, Tom is asked why he did all these ridiculous things. Tom answers Well, that is a question, I must say, and just like women! Why, I wanted the adventure of it; Because Tom had read so many of these romantic novels, he believed that everything in life should be an adventure. If he felt like something would not be an adventure, he would simply make the situation into an adventure. Tom has been really misled by these books he lives his life by. He believes these novels are an accurate account of what real life is. Tom's character is ignorant to the fact that these novels are nothing more than made up stories written for joy or romance. Gothic stories are full of horror and wonder, mystery.

Jane Eyre is remembered for the Gothic romance of it, the madwoman in the attic, the troubled older difficult hero, the thunder and lightning and nightmares and craziness. All of that is great, it's true. But what is the core of the story is the heroine's internal journey to self-respect. To conclude *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is romance novel. The novel also deals with hegemony. Hegemony includes physical violence. The novel also deals with resistance. The novel was written to criticize the practice of slavery in America especially the Mississippi Riverbanks. Jim deals with three phase i.e, the phase of Jim as a slave, second Jim as a runaway slave, and third Jim as a free man. Jim runs away from Mrs. Watson i.e., Jim's conscience about himself for capital gain, his freedom as human and his own happiness. Mark Twain uses humor and satire in the novel. The illusion of Freedom is found in this novel. Every human being should think, speak and act freely. Jim wanted freedom also. Racism is also prevalent in the *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Shelley Fishkin's says that Mark Twain's work was a call against racism. The novel is a story of a young thirteen year old named Huck Finn who goes on adventure experience along with Mississippi River. The setting of the novel takes place before civil war in America around 1830-40. Mark Twain satirizes slavery, civilization and role of women in American Society. IT is a story of Huck and a slave named Jim. The novel shows their Adventures to find freedom. Huck is looking for freedom from the grips of society. Jim is looking for freedom from physical



enslavement. In the end of the novel, they find freedom. Theme of childhood is similar as Charles Dickens which consisted of poverty and poor working condition. Moral note is also found in the novel. Through the characters of Huck and Jim Mark Twain present a contrast to the ridicule of slavery.

**Question-4 Comment on the ending of the novel The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn.**

**Ans. " You must stop where the Nigger Jim is stolen from the boy. This is the real end. The rest is just cheating." -Hemingway**

**" All American literature comes from one book by Twain called Huckleberry Finn.... It's the best book we've had. All American writing comes from that. There has been nothing as good since." - Hemingway**

The novel is praised, its ending is very good. Prof Trilling and T.S.Eliot and Philips Young considered the ending as "chilling decent". Huck's revolt is that he rejects Tom's romantic adventurous, and authorities and the civilizing world of the Widow coupled with the brutal cruelty of his father. He runs off to discover another ideal world whereas Jim's Quest is for freedom. He gains Huck's sympathy and love and become his helper. In the novel Huck's fortitude is remarkable. Aunt Polly puts a direct question to Tom why he had indulged in the nonsensical adventures When he knew that Jim was already free. But Huck remains critical of Tom's would. He rejects the world finally, in evasion episode Jim rises in moral stature. The novel structure is most complex, the structure has contrasts, paradoxes, and irony. To sum up the ending is valid both thematically and structurally.

## **2.9 Suggested Readings**

**1 Twain, Mark,1835-1910. The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. London; New York, : Penguin Books,1994.**

**2 Brown, Clarence A." Adventures of Huckleberry Finn: A Study in Structure and point of view".**

**3 Huckleberry Finn, American Literary Realism.**

**4 Novel: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn**

## **Chapter Three**

**ENGLISH****ENG-302**

<b>Subject: American Literature</b>	
<b>Course Code: 302</b>	<b>Author: Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Lesson No. : 03</b>	<b>Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>A Farewell to Arms 1929: Ernest Miller Hemingway</b>	

**Lesson Structure****3.0 Learning Objectives -****3.1 Introduction****About the Author - Ernest Miller Hemingway.****3.2 About The Novel: A Farewell to Arms****3.3 Content of The Text****3.3.1 Characters****Frederic Henry****Catherine Barkley****Rinaldi****The Priest****Miss Helen Furguson****Dr. Valentini****Mr. and Mrs. Meyers****Ettore Moretti****Count Greffi****The Barman****3.4 Check Your Progress-****3.4.1 Literary Criticism**



### **3.5 Summary**

### **3.6 Self –Assessment**

### **3.7 Test Your Progress with This Answer**

### **3.8 References /Suggested Reading**

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**Learning Objectives:** - 1. The learner can use it to conduct in-depth research on Ernest Miller Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* (1929).  
2. It will throw light on Socio historical view of American literature.  
3. *A Farewell to Arms*' literary texts, illustrations, and critical analyses are broken down and examined.

### **3.1 Introduction**

#### **About the Author**

" Courage is a grace under pressure." - Hemingway

" But man is not made for defeat... A man can be destroyed but not defeated." - *The Old Man and the Sea*, by Ernest Hemingway

Novelist, short story writer, and journalist Ernest Miller Hemingway was born on July 21, 1899 and died July 21, 1961 . He was widely referred to as "Papa Hemingway." One of the most influential artists of the twentieth century, Ernest Hemingway is revered as a literary giant. Sylvia Beach, the owner of Shakespeare and company added that he was known for many good qualities as literary lion of the twenties, the ambulance driver in the First World War, a big game hunter, a boxer, a deep fisherman a Noble Prize Winner, the boastful papa, a big, muscled man of action. "Sylvia Beach (from 1959 through 1988) Hemingway has been dubbed "the most outstanding author since the death of Shakespeare" by John O' Hara, and "the greatest living writer" by Arthur Koestler. On July 21, 1899, Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Chicago, Illinois, United States of America. During his school days Hemingway was a good all-rounder taking part in games, debates, music, drama and writing for school magazine.

Between the months of October 1917 and April 1918, Hemingway helped his uncle out at the *Kansas City Star*. He had a brief apprenticeship as a newspaper reporter. On



May 12, 1918, he applied for a voluntary ambulance, and he was enlisted an honorary Lieutenant. At 12:01 a.m. on July 8, 1918, he was struck by an Australian mortar fire and taken to the Red Cross Hospital in Milan, where he later died. Agnes Von Karnowski, an American girl who posed for him as Catherine Barkley in *A Farewell to Arms*, served him while he was in Milan. During war time, he saw human misery, suffering, agony, pain, violence and death. War had a great effect on him physical as well as mental. After the war he returned to Chicago and married Hadley Richardson on September 3, 1921. In Europe he met Ford Madox Ford, Ezra Pound and Gertrude Stein. Like Byron a hundred years ago and like Mark Twain, Jake Tondon, Stephen Crane Hemingway was a living legend. When compared to his role as an editor, Hemingway saw Ezra Pound as "more significant to him as a friend and companion." Carlos Baker (1963:8). He was greatly influenced by Pound. After the failure of his marriage Hemingway married Pauline. His first Publication was *Three stories and Ten Poem's* (1923), Two volumes of shorts stories, *In Our Time* (1925) and *Man Wwithout Woman* (1927) followed the first book. His first novel, *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), and his second, *A Farewell to Arms* (1929), both received critical acclaim. The Spanish Civil War began in July of 1936. Additionally, Hemingway sided with the Republic. The war was fought between the Fascist and the Republicans. Hemingway took part in this war. In Spain he married Martha Gelhorn but later divorced her and married Marry Walsh who Became his fourth wife. He participated in Ssecond World War (1939-1945). In 1940, he published *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a masterpiece about the Spanish Civil War. As far as American literature goes, this is Hemingway's magnum opus. War is also a central theme in *The Fifth Column* (1937). The novelist's own personality is most like those of Nick Adams, Frederic Henry, Jake Barnes, Robert Jordan, and Santiago. *To Have and Have Not* (1937) and *Across the River and Into the Trees* (1950) are two of Ernest Hemingway's other works. *The Old Man and the Sea*, his novella, earned the Nobel Prize for literature in 1954. Ernest Hemingway committed suicide by gunshot on July 21, 1961, at his final residence in Ketchum, Idaho. His posthumous works include 1964's *A Moveable Feast* and 1970's *The Island and the Stream*.

**Conflict and bloodshed in Hemingway's writings:**

The purpose of the novel , "*The Portrayal of War and Violence in Hemingway's Fiction*" is to analyse the author's portrayal of war and its attendant brutality in his three most famous works: *The Sun Also Rises*, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, and *A Farewell to Arms*. The literary world was profoundly affected by the war. Since 3600 B.C human race has been afflicted with nearly 15000 wars which brought death to 4 million people, a part from it, millions of people were wounded and many billions were died in famine and pestilence that follow in the wake of war, How many young poets, scientists, artists, inventors, novelists, dramatists, musicians, physicians and professor were lost to the world no exception to it. Hemingway served in both World Wars, from 1939 to 1945. He served in World War I (1914-18) and the Spanish Civil War (1936-1939). From the early stories and sketches, primarily from *In Our Time*, to *A Farewell to Arms*, and finally *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, the works between 1923 and 1940 attempt to interstate his shifting attitudes towards war.



There are two central motifs throughout all war fiction that explore the mental tolls of fighting. War's strange fusion of creative and destructive forces, especially on the realms of language and communication. It magnifies the ugliness of war and makes it easier to imagine. Harm to oneself, harm to one's allies, and the psychological toll of killing one's opponent are the three basic shapes that these atrocities take. For this reason, the label of "war novelist" fits Hemingway perfectly.

War and Violence are common theme of Hemingway's Novel. Hemingway could be described as the heroic artist whose talent is best expressed in delineation of war and Violence.

There are two basic motifs present in virtually all works of war fiction that explore the mental tolls of combat. The unique combination of invention and destruction, as well as the strain that conflict places on language and communication. It's like looking at the horrors of war under a microscope. There are three main ways in which these horrors manifest: direct physical harm, harm to one's allies, and the psychological cost of killing one's enemy. Thus, the label of "war novelist" appropriately fits Hemingway.

American literature is an important area of literature. Mark Twain (1835-1910), F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940), Ernest Hemingway (1899-1961), John Steinbeck (1902-1968), J.D. Salinger (1919-2010), Toni Morrison (1931-2019), Herman Melville (1819-1891), William Faulkner (1897-1962), Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007), Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), Vladimir Nabokov (1899-1977), Alice Walker, Saul Bellow (1915-2005) are some prominent writers in American literature.

American culture is shaped by the history of the United States. It is primarily of Western and European origin of Britain and German. It's influencing the culture of Asian American, African American, Latin American and Native American. The culture includes forms of speech, literature, food, religion, law, and technology. Since the United States was established in 1776, its culture is effected by region, race, ethnicity and cultural diversity. 28 States passes legislation making English the official language.

**The 1929 novel by Ernest Miller Hemingway, "A Farewell to Arms."**

**"The world breaks everyone, and many emerge stronger for having been broken."  
An End to Hostilities**

'Papa Hemingway' is a common nickname for the author Ernest Miller Hemingway (1899-1961). One of the most eloquent artists to come out of the twentieth century was Ernest Hemingway. He has been regarded as the greatest legend of American fiction. Sylvia B. Called him a literary lion of the twentieth century, the ambulance driver in the World War 1, a big game hunter, " a big muscled man of action". On July 21, 1899, in Oak Park, Chicago, Illinois, USA, the world was introduced to Ernest Hemingway. He graduated from Oak Park High school. He took part in World War 1.

**" There is no friend as loyal as a book." - Hemingway**



**" Genuine joy among the shrewd is the rarest thing I've ever encountered. The Garden of Eden, by Ernest Hemingway**

American author Ernest Hemingway lived from 1899 to 1961. In 1954, Hemingway's masterpiece *The Old Man and the Sea* won the Nobel Prize for literature. Santiago spent eighty-four days at sea in pursuit of a marlin. He was a novelist and short story author. He was up in the affluent Chicago suburb of Oak Park before becoming a junior reporter for the *Kansas City Star*. The fundamental premise of *A Farewell to Arms* is that in 1918, he joined the Red Cross and witnessed the horrors of World War I, on the Italian Front, where he was gravely wounded. Upon his return, he worked for the *Toronto Star* for a short time before relocating to Europe with the first of his four spouses. Hemingway had a total of four marriages. He wrote *"A Moveable Feast"* on his experiences and the people he met while trying to make a living on the road. The novel *"The Sun Also Rises"* and the collection of short stories *"Men Without Women"* were both released during this time. These works established him as one of the foremost authors of modern English literature.

He spent his time between Europe and North America drinking, fighting, bullfighting, and hunting big game. Both *"Death in the Afternoon"* and *"The Green Hills of Africa"* detail his adventures in bullfighting and jungle hunting, respectively. In the 1940 novel *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, bullfighting is depicted. *The Old Man and the Sea* and *A Farewell to Arms* are two of his most well-known works.

### **3.2 About the Novel : A Farewell to Arms**

Hemingway is a powerful American novelist. Discourse The character of Lieutenant Frederic Henry in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*.

Hemingway has presented realistic and convincing portrait of Frederic Henry. Henry is truly made to live. He is rootless, the manner he spends his life in drinking and making love. He was a student of architecture. But he joined the army.

American volunteer and future lieutenant Frederic Henry joins the Italian ambulance corps before the United States enters the war. There are several different names for him in Italian literature, including "Tennent" Lieutenant and "Federico" Frederic. Henry is a classic Hemingway hero. When he was wounded, he was admitted in Milan Hospital and met Catherine Barkley a nurse whom he fell in love and married her, but Catherine died at the time of childbirth. Henry was broken hearted.





**Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley are hero and heroine in the novel.**

**Important characters.**

A Farewell to Arms has many characters Frederic Henry, Catherine Barkley, Priest, Rinaldi, Helen Ferguson. Frederic Henry is an American ambulance driver serving as a lieutenant in the Italian army in World War I.

**Character sketch of Frederic Henry:**

Perhaps... you'll find yourself falling in love with me once more.

To which she responded, "HELL, I love you enough now." What are your plans? Destroy me?

" Yes. I want to ruin you."

" "Good," I greeted. "That's what I want, too."

A Farewell to Arms, by Ernest Hemingway is war novel.

In the novel, Frederic Henry plays a pivotal role. The protagonist of the book. Nurse Catherine Barkley was engaged to a British soldier who was killed in action at the Battle of the Somme.

When she meets Henry, she is ready to throw herself into a new relationship to escape the loss of the old one, enlisting Henry to pretend that they are deeply in love almost as soon as they meet.

"You don't have to pretend you love me. That's over for the evening. Is there anything you'd like to talk about?"

"But I do love you."

"Please let's not lie when we don't have to."

Something inside my skull shifted, like the weights on a doll's eyes, and smacked me in the back of the head. Both my shoes and my legs were warm and moist from the inside. I ducked and put my hand on my knee as soon as I felt the blow. There was no sign of my knee. Frederic loves Catherine.

You don't love Him, he probed.

"I am afraid of Him in the night sometimes."

"You should love Him."

"I don't love much."

Frederic Henry has decided to start seeing Priest.

Do you not love Him at all?" he probed.

"I am afraid of Him in the night sometimes."

"You should love Him."

"I don't love much."

The conversation between Frederic Henry and Catherine Barkley.

"You're my religion. You're all I've got."

The words "sacred," "glorious," "sacrifice," and "in vain" have always made me feel uncomfortable. For quite some time now, I had seen nothing sacred, and the things that were glorious had no glory, and the sacrifices were like the stockyards at Chicago if nothing was done with the meat except to bury it, and we had heard them, sometimes standing in the rain almost out of earshot, so that only the shouted words came through, and read them on proclamations that were slapped up by billposters over other proclamations.

In chapter 27 Frederic Henry says:



Everyone gets broken by the world, but many people find strength in their wounds. Those who refuse to surrender, however, end up dead. It kills decent people, nice people, bold people, and heroic people without discrimination. Henry experiences during labour and delivery.

Please, God, don't let her die. If it means saving her life, I'll do everything you want. You shouldn't let the baby perish despite stealing her. That's fine, but please don't kill her. God, I beg you, please don't let her die.

Chapter 41 An End to Hostilities Frederic, you abandoned me, Henry says. Henry is broken hearted and sad when Catherine left him. He says this is the price you have given me sleeping together. You left me. So, Frederic Henry is a true hero of Hemingway.

Catherine's companion and fellow nurse, Helen Ferguson, is a Scotswoman. Ferguson is deeply attached to Catherine. They are true friends. When she finds that Catherine is pregnant without Henry's having married her, she becomes furious. Ferguson scolds Henry in harsh term. Ferguson is quite moralist.

Rinaldi is an Italian surgeon and Fredrick's roommate. Rinaldi is one of the most likeable Characters in this novel. He is a talkative man. He is an Italian doctor. It is through Renaldi that Fredrick Henry comes to know Catherine. He is Henry's roommate. He is good looking. Renaldi has sense of humor. He gives comic touches to the narrative. When Henry is wounded, he goes to meet Henry in Hospital. Renaldi is depressed by continuing war. He is regularly visiting the brothel.

The Priest makes his home with the Gorizia police. He grew up in a rural community in the Abruzzo region. Henry benefits from his counsel. I think you'd enjoy Abruzzo," he replies. Good hunting can be had. You'd fit in well with the locals. We have room for you in our home. My dad's a big shot in the hunting world. Henry piques Priest's attention. He (the priest) claims to despise the conflict. He loves God. He says Henry that also to love God. He is a code hero. The priest is a man of commitment and discipline. He has a spiritual resource which gives him strength.

The American hospital in Milan is led by Miss Van Campen, the head nurse. As nurses, Gauge and Walker work at the American medical centre in Milan. American vocalist Simmons is currently in Italy for school.

The four ambulance drivers, Passini, Gordini, Manera, and Gavuzzi, all work for Henry.

Author Ernest Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms" follows Frederic Henry, a medic in the Italian army, through World War I. The novel first appeared in print in 1929. A fantastic work of war fiction. An intense love story.

Frederic Henry, a lieutenant in the Italian army, operates an ambulance. He is hit by a mortar cell and sent to a hospital in Milan, where he meets a nurse named Catherine Barkley and falls in love with her while recovering from his wounds. She had recently broken off her engagement, but she welcomed Henry's overtures anyhow. Henry is helped by their friendship to recover from the trauma of battle.



Henry is hurt and needs surgery in a Milan hospital. After his surgery, Catherine transfers to that facility to look after him. As they spend more time together, their love blossoms. Henry is being summoned back into service. Before he departs, Catherine tells him she's pregnant, and he and she are overjoyed.

As the Austrians and Germans push through their lines, the Italians have no choice but to retreat. Two female engineering sergeants and Henry are hanging around. The sergeants decide to dump them as the automobile becomes stuck. Henry murders one of the drivers with a bullet to the head. A rear-guard from the Italian side shoots a driver. Another deserts, opting to live as a prisoner of war rather than die. The work vividly depicts the carnage of battle. The risks and casualties associated with going to war are well-known.

A dishonest lieutenant, blaming Henry for the Italians' defeat, falsely accuses Henry of treason. Henry jumps off the bridge they reached and swims downstream with the current, avoiding capture and possible execution. And then he just hops a train to Milan. While in Stresa, he runs into Catherine and the two of them manage to slip away before Henry is apprehended. Henry is still responsible for deserting his fellow soldiers.

Catherine goes into labour shortly after the pair settles in Lausanne. The C-section that delivers the baby takes place some hours later. It was stillborn, sadly. Catherine's haemorrhaging death is deteriorating, and Henry has no idea what to do.

goodbye to her. Catherine Barkley died due to bleeding during the delivery. Henry could not save her. He goes back to his hotel. Many critics still wonder of Hemingway's suicide. He married four times but committed suicide. Hemingway's shot himself in 1961. Hemingway has given a height to American literature. Henry has rejected the world and society. He is truly in love with Catherine Barkley. The Criticism of Hemingway's portrayal of Henry is quite fair and just. Henry's conclusion is that the word kills the brave, the good and the gentle. Henry is disillusionment with the words glory, honor and courage. Henry's relationship with Catherine is idealizations of relationship. He is very sad at the death of Catherine. His portrayal is very good.

### **3.2.1 About the Novel and Title: - A Farewell to Arms is a novel that deserves some discussion.**

Ans . Hemingway is a powerful American novelist. He has written many novels and short stories. The word "arms" has double connotations in the text. The title Arms might be taken in two different ways. It refers to weapons and it also refers to the arms of the human being. Fredrick Henry is a hero of the novel. He has casual participation in war. He realized the grimness of war. He has grown utterly disillusioned with war and its futility. There is only one course of action once war has been declared. The battle must be won. Because there is nothing worse than losing a war. Writer's Quote:

Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms is a very standard love story. This is the tale of Frederick Henry and Catherine Barkley, a young couple in love. World War I don't destroy their love story.

Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms is an excellent work of war fiction. It's also a romance.



An End to Hostilities, Hemingway intentionally ripped off the title of a work by the English poet George Peele from the 1600s.

The novel "A Farewell to Arms" first attracts the eye because of its intriguing title. Most reviewers agree that "A Farewell to Arms" can be interpreted in two distinct ways.

A Farewell to Arms, the novel, the word "arm" can mean either a military weapon or a person's hand. Hemingway participated in war, but he was fed up with war. War made him disillusioned and tired. In the same way Frederick Henry also fed with war.

In the novel's title, "A Farewell to Arms," the word "arms" has two distinct connotations that are both appropriate to the novel's themes. The tale explores the conflicting emotions of love and battle.

The idea of war is first brought up by Hemingway. The battle between the Italians and the Austrians is raging on the Italian front. The protagonist, Frederick Henry, is a native American. The Italian army's ambulance service has promoted him to the rank of lieutenant.

He is not in any immediate danger, so he is not worried. When he thinks,

"Well, I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It didn't have anything to do with me. It seemed no more dangerous to me.

The theme of love also follows a pattern like the theme of war. In the beginning when Henry is introduced to Catherine by Rinaldi

at Milan that he realizes that he truly loves her. He says,

"God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. I had not wanted to fall in love with anyone. But God knows I had,"

Henry calls her a 'lovely girl', a 'grand girl', 'a fine simple girl'.

In desperation he prays to God asking him fervently to spare Catherine 'Oh, God, please don't let her die. Please, please, please, dear God don't let her die. However, Catherine dies in the end.

In deserting the Italian army, the protagonist bids farewell to "arms" as weapons. When Catherine dies, he bids farewell to the loving "arms" of his mistress.

As the title of the novel makes clear, A Farewell to Arms concerns itself primarily with war, namely the process by which Frederick Henry removes himself from it and leaves it behind.

Ernest Hemingway's A Farewell to Arms is a novel that recognize the brevity of life and take advantage of life's joys while it is not possible. Man cannot be happy always.

A Farewell to Arms is a novel by American writer Ernest Hemingway, it is set during the Italian campaign of World War I. The novel was published in 1929, it is a first-person account of an American Frederick Henry, He is serving as a lieutenant in the ambulance corps of the Italian Army in World War I, Henry is the hero of this novel.

#### **Brief Story of the novel**

In book, Lieutenant Frederick Henry opens the novel with a description of the small town in Italy where he is staying during World War I. He is an ambulance driver. After a cholera outbreak, his unit then moves to Gorizia, another Italian town. Frederick consorts with other officers. They discuss where Frederick should go on leave, as the



fighting is likely to stop for the winter. When he returns from his leave, he discusses his trip with Lt. Rinaldi. Lt. Rinaldi announces that nurses from England have been deployed to the front and that Rinaldi is fond of one nurse named Catherine Barkley. Rinaldi helps Henry with money to meet Catherine the next day. Frederick Henry and Catherine Barkley meet. Rinaldi sees their mutual attraction and declares Catherine prefers Frederic.

Frederic sees Catherine the next day and they agree not to discuss war, as Catherine was mourning her fiancé who had been killed. Catherine and Frederic begin to fall in love. As a new offensive begins, Frederic is wounded in mortar fire and is taken to the hospital. He was admitted to the Milan Hospital where he meets Catherine Barkley a nurse.

#### **Book II a brief idea.**

Rinaldi visits Frederic before he is transferred to a hospital in Milan. When Catherine arrives, Frederic realizes that he is in love with her. Frederic must have surgery to remove the shrapnel in his leg. Catherine and Frederic enjoy their time together while he is recovering. Frederic is diagnosed with jaundice and given additional leave time to heal during which he plans to travel with Catherine. Catherine reveals that she is pregnant. The administrator of the hospital discovers empty liquor bottles, assuming that Frederic himself is the cause of his illness and his leave is cancelled. As Frederic prepares to return to the front, he and Catherine agree to reunite as

soon as the war ends. *A Farewell to Arms* is Hemingway's autobiographical novel. This is clear that.

A photo of Ernest Hemingway in the hospital shows how the novel details are autobiographical. *A Farewell to Arms* is Hemingway's autobiographical novel. Hemingway has experienced all war and love.

#### **Book III a brief idea.**

In book three, Frederic returns to the war front amidst tales of the strong advantage the Austrians have over the Italians. This is realized at the battle of Caporetto. The Italians retreat and Frederic joins the retreat. Hoping to avoid an attack, Frederic and his crew try retreating on a back road and the ambulance becomes stuck in the mud. Frederic tries to get the soldiers traveling with him to help dislodge the tires. Frederic draws his gun to convince the soldiers, hitting one while the other soldier escapes. It is at this point that Frederic decides he must desert, and he escapes. Frederic first jumps in a river and then must walk before finding a train to Milan to find Catherine.

#### **Book IV a brief idea.**

After Frederic's trip, he goes to the hospital in Milan to find Catherine. At the hospital, he learns from another nurse that Catherine has left for a town named Stresa. Frederic reaches Stresa and finds Catherine on a tip from a bartender. The bartender, Emilio, later tells Frederic he will soon be arrested for deserting the Italian army. Frederic and Catherine decide to escape together to Switzerland.

Emilio gives Frederic and Catherine his rowboat and they row through the night through rough waters to reach Switzerland. They must convince Swiss guards they enjoy winter sports, and the guards accept this explanation.



**Book V a brief idea.**

After arriving in Switzerland, Frederic and Catherine rent a house in the village of Montreux. They enjoy their time together waiting for the baby to arrive. Catherine eventually agrees to marry one day for the baby's sake. Shortly before the baby arrives, Frederic and Catherine move closer to the hospital. Catherine endures a difficult labour that eventually necessitates a Caesarean section. The baby is stillborn. Shortly after, Frederic learns that Catherine is bleeding heavily. Frederic rushes to see her, and Catherine dies. The novel closes with Frederic walking home alone in the rain.

A Farewell to Arms gives a picture of disillusion and war. It is a masterpiece of Ernest Hemingway. It was published in 1929. The novel has the background of World War I. The structure of the book is beautifully written. The prose is hard and clean. The novel has the themes of love and war. The novel is divided into five books, and it has 41 chapters. A Farewell to Arms has two themes, themes of love and theme of war. Both themes are introduced in book 1, theme of love in Book II, theme of war in Book III, theme of love in Book IV, and Catherine's death in

**Book V.**

**Hemingway's Existentialism:** Catherine is one of the most likely of Hemingway's women characters. Throughout the novel she appears good to Henry, eager to please him. She is too simple because she is a war nurse. Henry says, "You're a lovely innocent girl. She simply responds, "I am a simple girl." Until now, "no one has ever understood it except you..." One of my strongest qualities is.

**Plain Jane.** As Henry puts it, "I don't think so at first." "I thought you were a crazy girl. "My sanity was slightly off. but not in a very convoluted way."

**Question:2 The Symbolism and Irony in Hemingway's "A Farewell to Arms"**

**Ans.-** Icon represents a concept. The cross is a sign of Christian action in the same way as red denotes danger and the color white denotes success.

A Farewell to Arms, For Whom the Bell Tolls, and The Old Man and the Sea are only a few of Hemingway's works where he employs symbolism. Symbolism was often employed by authors. Symbolism is a framework built from several symbols. Symbolism is prevalent in American literature, from the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville through the essays of Emerson and Thoreau and the novels of Henry James. French authors Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul Verlaine, and Stephen Mallarmé were dubbed the Symbolist Movement. Edgar Allan Poe, an American writer, frequently drew parallels between the human mind and the supernatural, mystical, or natural worlds. In A Farewell to Arms, Hemingway uses Catherine's fear of rain to symbolize the mountains and the Plain. The mountains represent safety and security, the rain represents death and devastation, and the plain represents a lack of both. Death is represented by rain. "I'm afraid of the rain because sometimes I see myself dead in it," she tells Henry. And there are times I swear I see you lying in it. The mountains represent tranquilly, serenity, love, respect, health, and prosperity.

**Verbal irony.** A twofold irony is clearly noticeable in A Farewell to Arms: verbal irony and irony of situation. Verbal irony is, "Cholera broke out along with the beginning of winter's persistent rain. However, it was contained, and only 7,000 service members succumbed to the disease. Irony is added with the word "only" in front of the number





7,000. Irony of situation is, it is ironical, indeed, that the Italian military police should shoot officers of their own army on a mere suspicion. There is irony in the fact that the Italians" were frightened and firing on anything they saw ". The second example of the irony of situation is Catherine's death in childbirth. This is indeed the height of irony. Well might one think of the Harridan President of the Immortals who has played a cruel joke upon Catherine and Henry. Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* was published in 1929. It tells the story of an American ambulance driver of the Italian Army during the World War I. It is a war time love story. Born in 1899, Hemingway is an American author. For many, Hemingway represents the "Lost Generation" of writers who were devastated by the carnage of World War I. Frederic Henry, like his fictional counterpart in *A Farewell to Arms*, served as an ambulance driver for Italy in Hemingway's time of need. The novel's title, "The Sun Also Rises," is allegedly drawn from a poem written by George Peele in the 16th century. This novel, which has received widespread acclaim, has remained a cornerstone of courses on American literature.

Both love and war are major themes in the book. The tale takes place during a time of war. Francis Macomber represents all that is manly. Hemingway also includes issues of masculinity and drinking alongside their symbolic significance. The train station is a metaphor for change in Hemingway's short story. *Man, and Sea: An Ancient Fable* Santiago exemplifies the quintessential masculine hero of the Hemingway Code. He is portrayed as a valiant and fearless hero. Water represents both life and death in *A Farewell to Arms*. Mountains put up a fight against the conflict.

In the first chapter of *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway paints a picture of the Italian countryside where the American ambulance driver and Italian army officer Frederic Henry serves during World War I. In Chapter 2, Henry's Coworkers in the Ambulance Rally Forward. In chapter three, Fredrick is faced with mending fences with his buddy the Priest. Rinaldi introduces Henry and Catherine to each other in chapter four. Fredrick gets closer to war and Catherine in chapter five. Catherine wonders aloud to Fredrick in chapter six if he was being sincere when he professed his love for her. In chapter seven, Frederic tells him to fake another injury serious enough to need emergency care. Chapter eight has Saint Anthony bestowing a medal of protection upon Fredrick, while chapter nine has Fredrick and the rest of the ambulance team making their way to the front lines. In chapters 10 and 11, Frederic engages in some barracks with Rinaldi. Fredrick had a deeper conversation about faith and love. Frederic declares, "I don't love." Yes, priest, I know you will. To which I reply, "Then you will be happy. "Chapter 12 reveals that Frederic, along with Catherine and Ferguson, would be sent to a brand-new American hospital in Milan for treatment. Love and battle are intertwined in *A Farewell to Arms*.

In Chapter 13 of Book 2, Frederic checks into the brand-new Milan Hospital. Frederic, armed with a newspaper and a drink from the porter, awaits Catherine's arrival. He arranged for a barber to come to his house, and he got a shave. Catherine's arrival was met with a warm embrace from everyone present. Frederic promises his undying love to her on his knees. In Chapter 14, Frederic undergoes a series of intermediate-level medical exams before being seen by an advanced surgical specialist.

After a round of evaluations, a medical panel advised Henry to hold off for six months. When asked by doctors, Henry claims to have killed several people.





Chapter 16 becomes apparent Before Fredrick's surgery; he and Catherine are resting together in his hospital bed. Catherine makes sure that everyone, including Miss Van Campen is asleep while a bat flits in and out of the room and Frederic hears soldiers. Catherine probes Frederic's sex history, and she is certain that he is not being truthful. Frederic had a successful operation. Catherine, who is on night watch, sneaks in to check on him, and he begins to feel better. A frustrated Ferguson confronts Frederic one day, saying, "You get her in trouble, and I will kill you." Ferguson is upset that Catherine is constantly exhausted. In Chapter 17, he finally listens to her advice, but only in the sense that he asks Catherine to work less evenings. In the first sentence of chapter eighteen, the narrator says, "We had a lovely time that summer." Frederic makes a speedy recovery. They go to a nearby eatery that doesn't stock wine to try out different wines. Catherine shakes her hair free over Frederic, and he describes her body and every curve. From the moment she arrived at the hospital, they began living together as husband and wife. Catherine says, "There isn't any me," in response to his proposal of marriage. I am going to proclaim, "I am you" and "You are my religion." That's how the summer turned out, chapter 19. The front-line reports are good, though harsh and far away. Mr. and Mrs. Meyers, an American couple, are among those Fredrick meets. Frederic also meets two other singers, Simmons and Saunders, and an Italian compatriot named Ettore who was recognized for his service in the war. Frederic talks about his scars and awards. Frederic says that Ettore is a true hero to everyone but himself. In their quiet conversation that night on the hospital balcony, Catherine confides in Frederic, "sometimes I see me dead in it... And sometimes I see you dead in it." It begins to rain, and Catherine tells him that she is terrified of the rain. She is comforted by Frederic, but it continues to pour outside.

Chapter 20 displays a repressive and

Frederic, Catherine, and another of Mr. and Mrs. Rogers' sickly patients go to the Meyers' poisoned horse rases. They don't see too many people, according to Frederic. Amidst deteriorating front-line reports and Frederic's encounter with a British major who says, "We are all cooked," the war's presence becomes once more palpable. The important thing is that you don't see it. Section Twenty-One Towards the season's close, we experienced our first chilly evening. The combat on the front lines was disastrous. One British major told Henry that the Italians had lost 150,000 troops at Bainsizza Plateau and San Gabriele and 40,000 men at Carso. Henry's leg had improved, so he was granted three weeks of leave. He will finish physical therapy in October and then return to the front. Informing Frederic that she is several months pregnant, Catherine begs him not to worry and then asks if he feels trapped, to which Frederic replies, "You always feel trapped biologically." Beginning with Chapter 22, the next day brought rain. When Frederic gets jaundice, Miss Van Campen accuses him of drinking himself sick in order to avoid going back to the front. It's getting dark in Milan, and Frederic has to get ready to go back to the fight. Before Frederic has to go on the train, he and Catherine are enjoying their final hours together. He needs to replace the pistol, so they make a pit stop at a store. Frederic tells the merchant that he is heading to the front, and the shopkeeper agrees that he won't need a sword in that situation. Then, the rain replaces the fog. It has been decided that Frederic and Catherine will stay in a gaudy hotel. "I've never felt like a whore before," Catherine confesses. Frederic wonders, "Do we have to argue now?" They have dinner and get along much better when she promptly declares that she is a good girl again. Catherine reassures Frederic Henry that



everything will be well with the newborn. She tells him, "We have several babies before the war is over," and she assures him that she will write him. In the first line of Book III, "wet dead leaves on the road from the rows of bare trees" near Gorizia serve as a reiteration of the novel's initial emblem of death, and in the last paragraph of Book III, "It's all over," adds Rinaldi. In Chapter 26, he observes that Frederic behaves "like a married man." After an Austrian triumph, Frederic is skeptical: "The Austrians will not stop." We become Christians via our experiences of failure. The following day, Frederic reports to the Bainsizza chapter 27 front. In that setting, he encounters Gino, a patriotic mechanic, with whom he discusses military strategy before withdrawing from the talk because he is "embarrassed by the words sacred, glorious, sacrifice, and the expression in vain." While on duty, Frederic experiences a change in the weather from rain to snow and hears chatter that German forces have joined the Austrians and will launch an offensive that will compel an Italian withdrawal. A medical officer assures him that all wounded will be evacuated in the case of a retreat, and that the ambulances will be stocked with medical supplies. Frederic, Bonello, Aymo, and Piani, the ambulance drivers, are called on the night of the retreat's start. For their last night in the villa, they stay there. They are a part of the rainy retreat in chapter 28. When Frederic and Piani stop, he discovers that Bonello has taken in two lost sergeants and Aymo has taken in two little refugee sisters. Frederic allows the sergeants and the two sisters, peasants who speak an unknown dialect, to ride on his horse despite their fear of the environment and the troops. But as he and Piani are in the ambulance, he has a momentary fantasy about Catherine. They pull up to a farmhouse and disembark. The company then feasts on the wine and food that was left behind, despite the anxious sergeants' preference to press on. Aymo's ambulance becomes mired in the muck in Chapter 29. As Frederic had said, they had witnessed Austrian planes flying overhead and dropping bombs on the main road and the fleeing column. Nobody can get the phantom ambulance out of the mire. Frederic pulls out his weapon and fires at the two sergeants who have abandoned them; one of them is wounded but manages to escape. The wounded sergeant is subsequently killed by Bonello. Henry's violent deed and the death of a sergeant are depicted in this chapter.

In Chapter 30, the survivors find a string of wrecked cars and a collapsed bridge. As they make their way downstream, Frederic spots a German staff car crossing a different bridge on the horizon. The Germans can now chase the fleeing army because they have destroyed one tiny bridge but not the main bridge on the road. Frederic says to himself, "The whole bloody thing is crazy." They are killed while travelling down the train line towards Udine, at which point they decide to take a side road into the city. As they approach another property, Frederic begins to reminisce about his own farm boy days as he explores the house and barn: "The hay smelled goods and lying in a barn in the hay took away all the years in between." You couldn't turn back," he continues. What happens if you didn't move forward? Piani tracks him down and conveys the news that Bonello has abandoned the fort. Piani discovered some wine and sausages, and Frederic and he ate them, but the wine was old and had "lost its quality and color." The two of them sneak past a German battalion through two armies without being spotted as they make their way to the main retreat line towards Udine after dusk. Frederic is detained and questioned by the police. Frederic seizes an opening to escape, and he jumps into the river and swims downstream. Frederic uses a switch to get away while submerged. At this point in Chapter 32, he is convinced that he has misplaced all three of the ambulances. The conflict is over for him now. When it comes to the Italian Army, he



owes them nothing. The river had washed away the resentment he felt towards the military cops who had treated him so harshly. I was not designed to think, he tells himself. I was fabricated for the feast. Good God, absolutely. Take Catherine out to eat, drink, and sleep. He hopes to start fresh with Catherine. Chapter 33 of Book IV You won't find Catherine in Milan. Simmons aids Henry. Simmons is friendly and approachable. Henry is making travel arrangements to see Catherine in Switzerland. Catherine, however, has relocated to a new city. Henry travelled to Stresa by train in Chapter 34. To put the conflict in his rearview mirror. He was at ease with himself. Henry is not involved in the conflict, and Catherine's whereabouts are unknown. Henry and Catherine/Ferguson are introduced. He stays the night at Catherine's place. Catherine's undying love for Henry is on full display in this chapter.

In chapter 31 and 32 He floats downstream while clinging to a massive log. He stripped down and wrung out his garments. He was travelling through rural areas and fields when he spotted a goods train on the track. He was able to board the moving vehicle. As he lies on the floor, he remembers Valentini. Henry was damp, cold, and famished. Henry recalled Catherine in his mind. In the final chapter of the book, the symbolic significance of hiding among the war's armaments while escaping is made explicit.

You were not enamored with the carpet of a flat automobile, canvas-clad gunmen, or the odor of vase lined metal. Even if you're beneath a tent and surrounded by friends, you realize that the person you loved was not even pretending to be there.

Chapter 33 of Book 4 is titled "A New Day Has Risen." In Milan, Frederic leaves the train. In Chapter 34, he makes Catherine's acquaintance. Frederic and Catherine stay in together during a stormy night. Count Griff, a former diplomat for Europe who is now ninety-four, and Henry have a meeting in chapter 35. Henry agrees to play billiards with the count. Count Griffin calls the conflict a waste of time and asks Frederic Henry what's most important to him. "Someone I love," Frederic replies. The barman stops by later that night as a storm rages outside.

Frederic and tells him he will be taken into custody in the morning. This is the 36th chapter. The barman gives his boat to Frederic and Catherine, and they quickly begin plans to escape. The barman helps them pack up their belongings. To get to Switzerland, he gives them directions. In response, Frederic says, "You won't think me if you get drowned." When Catherine asks Frederic what he said, he simply says, "He says good luck." The group left.

Their long, exhausting journey across the lake is detailed in Chapter 37. Catherine laughs and they have a fantastic time despite Frederic's constant rowing. A guard man tries to stop them, but they can sneak past him and make it to Switzerland before daybreak. Frederic asks, "Isn't the rain fine? " As they land and enjoy a pleasant brunch conversation. Such a downpour was unprecedented in Italy. It's a happy downpour. The Swiss police have taken them in for questioning. Their destination was Locarno. Since they had a passport and money, the cops interrogated them courteously. After being told they were free, Henry and Catherine left. They went to Montreux after deciding to do so.

The 38th chapter of Book 5. They went for a walk all through Montreux. Henry and Catherine relocated to a mountain cottage. After greeting Mr. Mrs. Gottingen plans to propose to her boyfriend while in town.



**The Final Chapter:** By the middle of January, though, Henry had a full beard. Inside the inn, Henry and Catherine were seated. The financial situation was discussed. Catherine enquired as to how the family was doing. Henry admitted that he had argued with his family despite his affection for them. She has stated that she will wait to have her hair trimmed till after the baby is born. In this chapter, we see Catherine's efforts to maintain Henry's approval.

**Chapter forty,** By the end of March, the snow has melted into sludge, and Catherine is due any day now. They're staying in a hotel room there. Baby clothing are shopped for by Catherine. Frederic likes to get drunk and work out.

**In Chapter 41,** Catherine's labor begins in the wee hours of the morning. And after she is comfortable in the hospital, labor will start. Frederic is allowed to change into a hospital gown and observe the birth in the delivery room. For the duration of her labor, which is taking far longer than expected. She has doubts that she will be able to conceive. The doctor takes a lunch break, and Frederic does the same. After noon, he made another trip to the maternity ward. Yet the delivery is still not progressing. Frederic is again sent out. As Frederic begins to panic that Catherine may die. He revisits Catherine and says, "I am not brave anymore, darling." Catherine admits that "I am all broken." She too is afraid that she will die., and when he sees Catherine again, she looks dead. Returning to consciousness, the surgery draws the attention of the hospital personnel, but Frederic is too nervous to observe and instead paces the halls. Catherine asks how the baby is doing, and he tells her it's "fine," then leaves the doctor still tending to the infant. She explains that the baby was stillborn when he asks her about it outside. Frederic is currently observing his surroundings from the nurse's station." Now Catherine would die," he thinks to himself. You did that. It's too late. You were completely in the dark. You were too busy to get an education. After another trip to the cafe, Henry arrives home to find Catherine hemorrhaging's paraphrase, "I know she was going to die and I prayed that she would not," he says. But seeing to her, he starts to cry. Frederic is sent from the room. But when she loses consciousness, he returns and stays with her until she dies. It was still raining. Finally, he leaves the hospital and walks to the hotel in the rain. For Henry everything has been destroyed. This chapter shows Catherine is taken to the hospital, a caesarean is conducted, Catherine's death in childbirth. Catherine is a brave woman. Henry's thought and

feelings, his pray to God, oh God, don't let her die. Her tragic end is almost the fate as in Hardy's novel.

### **3.3 Content of The Text**

#### **CHAPTER I**

In the late summer of that year, we lived in a house in a village that looked across the river and the plain to the mountains. In the bed of the river there were pebbles and



boulders, dry and white in the sun, and the water was clear and swiftly moving and blue in the channels. Troops went by the house and down the road and the dust they raised powdered the leaves of the trees. The trunks of the trees too were dusty, and the leaves fell early that year and we saw the troops marching along the road and the dust rising and leaves, stirred by the breeze, falling and the soldiers marching and afterwards the road bare and white except for the leaves.

The plain was rich with crops; there were many orchards of fruit trees and beyond the plain the mountains were brown and bare. There was fighting in the mountains and at night we could see the flashes from the artillery. In the dark it was like summer lightning, but the nights were cool and there was not the feeling of a storm coming.

Sometimes in the dark we heard the troops marching under the window and guns going past pulled by motor-tractors. There was much traffic at night and many mules on the roads with boxes of ammunition on each side of their packsaddles and grey motor-trucks that carried men, and other trucks with loads covered with canvas that moved slower in the traffic. There were big guns too that passed in the day drawn by tractors, the long barrels of

II

## A Farewell to Arms

the guns covered with green branches and green leafy branches and vines laid over the tractors. To the north we could look across a valley and see a forest of chestnut trees and behind it another mountain on this side of the river. There was fighting for that mountain too, but it.



was not successful, and in the fall when the rains came. the leaves all fell from the chestnut trees and the branches. were bare and the trunks black with rain. The vineyards were thin and bare branched too and all the country wet. and brown and dead with the autumn. There were mists. over the river and clouds on the mountain and the trucks splashed mud on the roads and the troops were muddy and wet in their capes; their rifles were wet and under them. capes the two-leather cartridge-boxes on the front of the belts, grey leather boxes heavy with the packs of clips of thin, long 6.5 mm. cartridges, bulged forward under the capes so that the men, passing on the road, marched as though they were six months gone with child.

There were small grey motorcars that passed going. very fast; usually there was an officer on the seat with the driver and more officers in the back seat. They splashed. more mud than the camions even and if one of the officers in the back was very small and sitting between two generals, he himself so small that you could not see his face but only the top of his cap and his narrow back, and if the car went especially fast it was probably the King. He lived in Udine and came out in this way nearly every. day to see how tilling were going, and things went very. badly.

At the start of the winter came the permanent rain and with the rain came the cholera. But it was checked and in the end only seven thousand died of it in the army.

12

## A Farewell to Arms

### CHAPTER 2

The next year there were many victories. The mountain





that was beyond the valley and the hillside were the chestnut forest grew was captured and there were. victories beyond the plain on the plateau to the south and we crossed the river in August and lived in a house in Gorizia that had a fountain and many thick shady trees in a walled garden and a wistaria vine purple on the side of the house. Now the fighting was in the next mountains. beyond and was not a mile away. The town was very nice. and our house was very fine. The river ran behind us and the town had been captured very handsomely but the mountains beyond it could not be taken and I was very. glad the Austrians seemed to want to come back to the town some time, if the war should end, because they did. not bombard it to destroy it but only a little in a military. way. People lived on in it and there were hospitals and cafes and artillery upside streets and two bawdyhouses, one for troops and one for officers, and with the end of the summer, the cool nights, the fighting in the mountains beyond the town, the shell-marked iron of the railway bridge, the smashed tunnel by the river where the fighting had been, the trees around the square and the long avenue. of trees that led to the square; these with there being girls in the town, the King passing in his motorcar, sometimes. now seeing his face and little, long-necked body and grey beard like a goat's chin-tuft; all these with the sudden interiors of houses that had lost a wall through shelling, with plaster and rubble in their gardens and sometimes in the street, and the whole thing going well on the Carso.

13

### A Farewell to Arms

made the fall very different from the last fall when we





had been in the country. The war was changed too.  
The forest of oak trees on the mountain beyond the town was gone. The forest had been green in the summer. when we had come into the town but now there were the stumps and the broken trunks and the ground torn up, and one day at the end of the fall when I was out where. the oak forest had been I saw a cloud coming over the mountain. It came very fast, and the sun went a dull yellow and then everything was grey, and the sky was. covered and the cloud came on down the mountain and suddenly we were in it, and it was snow. The snow slanted. across the wind, the bare ground was covered, the stumps of trees projected, there was snow on the guns and there were. paths in the snow going back to the latrines behind trenches. Later, below in the town, I watched the snow falling, looking out of the window of the bawdyhouse, the house for officers, where I sat with a friend and two glasses. drinking a bottle of Asti, and, looking out at the snow falling slowly and heavily, we knew it was all over for that. year. Up the river the mountains had not been taken; none. of the mountains beyond the river had been taken. That was all left for next year. My friend saw the priest from our mess going by in the street, walking carefully in the slush, and pounded on the window<sup>^</sup> to attract his attention. The priest looked up. He saw us and smiled. My friend motioned for him to come in. The priest shook his head. and went on. That night in the mess after the spaghetti course, which everyone ate very quickly and seriously, lifting the spaghetti on the fork until the loose strands hung clear then lowering it into the mouth, or else using a continuous lift and sucking into the mouth, helping our-



selves to wine from the grass-covered gallon flask; it

**H**

### **A FAREWELL TO ARMS**

swung in a metal cradle and you pulled the neck of the flask down with the forefinger and the wine, clear red, tannic and lovely, poured out into the glass held with the same hand: after this course, the captain commenced. picking on the priest.

The priest was young and blushed easily and wore a uniform like the rest of us but with a cross in dark red velvet above the left breast-pocket of his grey tunic. The captain spoke pidgin Italian for my doubtful benefit, in order that I might understand perfectly that nothing should be lost.

Trieste-day with girls,' the captain said looking at the priest and at me. The priest smiled and blushed and shook his head. This captain baited him often.

'Not true?' asked the captain. 'To-day I see priest with girls.'

'No,' said the priest. The other officers were amused at the baiting.

'Priest not with girls,' went on the captain. 'Priest never with girls,' he explained to me. He took my glass. and filled it, looking at my eyes all the time, but not losing sight of the priest.

'Priest every night five against one. 'Everyone at the table laughed. 'You understand? Priest every night five against one.' He made a gesture and laughed loudly. The priest accepted it as a joke.

'The Pope wants the Austrians to win the war,' the



major said. 'He loves Franz Joseph. That's where the money comes from. I am an atheist.'

'Did you ever read the Black Pig asked the lieutenant.

'I will get you a copy. It was that which shook my faith.'

'It is a filthy and vile book,' said the priest. 'You do not really like it.'

15

### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

It is very valuable said the lieutenant. 'It tells you about those priests. You will like it/ he said to me. I smiled at the priest and he smiled back across the candle-light. 'Don't you read it/ he said.

I will get it for 5 o'clock said the lieutenant.

'All thinking men are atheists/ the major said. 'I do not believe in the Freemasons however.'

I believe in the Freemasons/ the lieutenant said. 'It is a noble organization.' Someone came in and as the door opened I could see the snow falling.

'There will be no more offensive now that the snow has come/ I said,

'Certainly not/ said the major. 'You should go on leave.

You should go to Rome, Naples, Sicily -'

'He should visit Amalfi,' said the lieutenant. 'I will write you cards to my family in Amalfi. They will love you like a son.'

'He should go to Palermo.'

'He ought to go to Capri.'

'I would like you to see Abruzzi and visit my family at Caproate,' said the priest.

'Listen to him talk about the Abruzzi. There's more snow there than here. He doesn't want to see peasants.'



Let him go to centers of culture and civilization.'

'He should have fine girls. I will give you the addresses. of places in Naples. Beautiful young girls - accompanied. by their mothers. Ha! Ha! Ha!'

He looked at the priest and shouted, 'Every night priest. five against one!' They all laughed again.

'You must go on leave at once,' the major said.

'I would like to go with you and show you things,' the lieutenant said.

'When you come back bring a phonograph.'

i6

### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

'Bring good opera disks/

'Bring Caruso/

'Don't bring Caruso. He bellows.'

'Don't you wish you could bellow like him?'

'He bellows. I say he bellows!'

'I would like you to go to Abruzzi,' the priest said. The others were shouting. 'There is good hunting. You would like the people and though it is cold it is clear and dry. You could stay with my family. My father is a famous hunter.'

'Come on/ said the captain. 'We go whorehouse before it shuts.'

'Good night/ I said to the priest.

'Good night,' he said.

### CHAPTER 3

When I came back to the front we still lived in that town. There were many more guns in the country around and the spring had come. The fields were green and there were. small green shoots on the vines, the trees along the road



had small leaves and a breeze came from the sea. I saw.  
the town with the hill and the old castle above it in a cup  
in the hills with the mountains beyond, brown mountains  
with a little green on their slopes. In the town there were  
more guns, there were some new hospitals, you met British.  
men and sometimes women, on the street, and a few more  
houses had been hit by shellfire. It was warm and like  
the spring and I walked down the alleyway of trees,  
warmed from the sun on the wall, and found we still lived.  
n 17

#### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

in the same house and that it all looked the same as when  
I had left it. The door was open, there was a soldier.  
sitting on a bench outside in the sun, an ambulance was  
waiting by the side door and inside the door, as I went in,  
there was the smell of marble floors and hospital. It was.  
all as I had left it except that now it was spring. I looked.  
in the door of the big room and saw the major sitting at  
his desk, the window open and the sunlight coming into  
the room. He did not see me, and I did not know whether.  
to go in and report or go upstairs first and clean up. I  
decided to go on upstairs.

The room I shared with the lieutenant Rinaldi looked.  
out on the courtyard. The window was open, my bed.  
was made up with blankets and my things hung on the  
wall, the gasmask in an oblong tin can, the steel helmet.  
on the same peg. At the foot of the bed was my fiat trunk,  
and my winter boots, the leather shiny with oil, were on  
the trunk. My Austrian sniper's rifle with its blued  
octagon barrel and the lovely dark walnut, cheek-fitted,



Schutzer stock, hung over the two beds. The telescope that fitted it was, I remembered, locked in the trunk. The lieutenant, Rinaldi, lay asleep on the other bed. He woke when he heard me in the room and sat up.

‘Ciao!’ he said. ‘What kind of time did you have?’

‘Magnificent.’

We shook hands and he put his arm around my neck. and kissed me.

‘Ought,’ I said.

‘You’re dirty,’ he said. ‘You ought to wash. Where? did you go and what did you do? Tell me everything at once.’

‘I went everywhere. Milan, Florence, Rome, Naples, Villa San Giovanni, Messina, Taormina -’

i8

#### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

Won talk like a timetable. Did you have any beautiful? adventures? ^

Weds

where?’

^ Alilano, Firenze, Roma, Napoli -’

What’s enough. Tell me really what the best was.’

Tn Milano.’

‘That was because it was first. Where did you meet her?

In the Cova? Where did you go? How did you feel? Tell

me everything at once. Did you stay all night?’

Wes.’

‘That’s nothing. Here now we have beautiful girls.

New girls never been to the front before.’ ‘Wonderful.’

‘You don’t believe me? We will go now this afternoon.



and see. And in the town, we have beautiful English girls.

I am now in love with Miss Barkley. I will take you to call.

I will probably marry Miss Barkley.' 'I must get washed and report. Doesn't anybody work now?'

'Since you are gone, we have nothing but frostbites, chilblains, jaundice, gonorrhea, self-inflicted wounds, pneumonia and hard and soft chancres. Every week some one get wounded by rock fragments. There are a few. real wounded. Next week the war starts again. Perhaps it starts again. They say so. Do you think I would do right? to marry Miss Barkley - after the war of course?'

'Absolutely,' I said and poured the basin full of water.

'To-night you will tell me everything,' said Rinaldi.

'Now I must go back to sleep to be fresh and beautiful for Miss Barkley.'

I took off my tunic and shirt and washed in the cold. water in the basin. While I rubbed myself with a towel I

19

#### A FAREWELL TO ARMS

looked around the room and out the window and at Rinaldi.

lying with his eyes closed on the bed. He was good “

He was Amalfitan, good-looking, and my age. That which he loved most. attractive, the same age as myself, and originally from Amalfi. As a lover, He opened his eyes and looked at him.

Do you have any cash on you?

Loan me fifty lire." "Yes."

After washing my hands, I went to the wall where I had hung my tunic to dry them and pulled my wallet out. Without getting out of bed, Rinaldi took the note, folded it, and put it in the pocket of his pants. He beamed, "I must present myself to Miss Barkley as a man of adequate riches. Your friendship and financial support mean the world to me.

I told them to "go to hell."





In the mess hall that night, the priest and I were sitting next to one other, and I could tell he was hurt and disappointed that I hadn't visited the Abnazzi. He had informed his dad in writing that I would be visiting, so he could get ready for my arrival. I was just as upset as he was, and I couldn't figure out why I hadn't gone. It was something I'd wanted to do, so I tried to explain how events had led me there; in the end, he seemed to get that at this was where I'd hoped to go. After several glasses of wine and some coffee, I found myself explaining winefully to Strega why we never did the things we wanted to do.

The others were arguing, so we had a nice little chat. My original plan included visiting Abruzzi. Where it was clear and cold and the snow was dry and powdery and there were hare-tracks in the snow and the peasants pulled off their hats and addressed you Lord and there was good hunting, I had never been before. Continue reading the book here...

**Question. Women's roles in Hemingway's fiction: a discussion.**

**Or, you may talk about Catherine Barkley's character sketch from A Farewell to Arms.**

**Alternatively, the novel's central theme is the interplay between love and war.**

### **3.3.1 Characters**

**Frederic Henry**

**Catherine Barkley**

**Rinaldi**

**The Priest**

**Miss Helen Furguson**

**Dr. Valentini**

**Mr. and Mrs. Meyers**

**Ettore Moretti**

**Count Greffi**

**The Barman**

**Question: A FAREWELL TO ARMS :**

**A Love/War Story elaborate this .**

**Or**



**In A Farewell to Arms, there is a self-reflective passage or autobiographical element .**

**Or**

**Hemingway's Representation of Women in "A Farewell to Arms"**

**Ans.**

When it comes to American literature regarding World War I, *A Farewell to Arms* is unrivalled. The narrative is largely driven by the threat of war. According to Samuel Shaw, "as a war novel, that is its depiction of man in battle, *A Farewell to Arms* belongs with the supreme example of the genre." It is worth noting that Maxwell Perkins, Hemingway's editor, had his doubts about *A Farewell to Arms*' suitability as a war novel. However, Owen Wister read the novel as a romantic tale. "An improbable hero and heroine live in adolescent dream life," as Robert Lewis puts it, makes for a "wildly romantic" story. It marked Hemingway's arrival on the literary scene as a major personality. In a sense, *A Farewell to Arms* acted "as the great alibi for a generation." Since Hemingway referred to it as "his *Romeo and Juliet*" novel, it is fair to assume that the novel is romantic in tone.

After the triumph of *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926, Ernest Hemingway published *A Farewell to Arms* in 1929. There are autobiographical elements throughout *A Farewell to Arms*. Hemingway's time as a Red Cross ambulance driver in Italy in 1918 provided inspiration for his novel *A Farewell to Arms*. How Hemingway views women is revealed by his perspective on women. Since, according to Leslie Fielder, all of Hemingway's female characters are "bitches," it follows that Catherine, had she lived, would have become just that.

This is not a factually sound criticism, and hence is unfair. Hemingway has depicted some skanks in his fiction, but he has also depicted some really noble ladies. Similarly, there are unlovable people in his fiction. There are additional people who have very high ideals. There is a marked improvement in the characterization of female characters. Catherine Barkley, Helen Ferguson, Mrs. Walker, Miss Gauge, Miss Van Campen, and Mrs. Meyers are just a few of the strong female characters Hemingway created in this work. Each of these feminine portrayals is unique. In addition to these ladies, Hemingway's depiction of Catherine Barkley is a remarkable example of realistic and compelling fiction. This includes the male characters Frederick Henry, Rinaldi, and Priest. This character plays a nurse. Wartime makes for a gloomy world. During conflict, a woman's individuality has no place. Women serve as sexual objects. No happiness can be expected. When there is widespread stress, weariness, and exhaustion, women are often the only ones can provide a glimmer of optimism.

Both the World War and the love romance at the novel's centre spiral wildly out of control. How critics view Catherine varies. She is the genuine hero of the story, according to Thornton Wilder. Malcolm Cowley remarks that "She is only a woman at the beginning of the book in her madness. Carlos Baker formulations and definitions,



Catherine is a character pointed at the "super consciousness" of Eastern art, for she certainly in innocence incarnate in this imperfect and incomplete world. Hemingway's delineation of woman characters is obviously different from his cotemptation.

Frederic Henry an American Lieutenant is the hero of the novel. Young sees the Hemingway's protagonist as a sick man, wounded physically and psychologically. Leo Gorki has written a full-length essay on the subject for to him, Hemingway's novels are essentially portraits of the hero as the "individual man". Frederic Henry is a typical Hemingway hero who is sleepless, wounded and sensitive. But he is an uncommitted man. He joined war because it was glamorous, because he craved action and adventure. The question why he joined the Italian Army remains unanswered. His action is motiveless. Catherine has different activities about war activities. She has great intimacy with wounded soldiers. In wounded soldiers she sees the image of her dead fiancé. She is miserable and depressed at the death of her fiancé and worried for, she cannot marry while he was alive. She expresses her feeling about her betrothed before Henry.

I wanted to do something for him. You see I didn't care about the other thing, and he could have had it all. He could have had anything he wanted if I would have known. I would have married him or anything. I know all about it now. But then he wanted to go to war and I didn't know. (p. 18)

What makes Catherine loved Henry is that former boyfriend had died. She repents that she could not give herself to her boyfriend. Before marriage sex is shame. She surrenders to Henry before earlier repentance. When Henry kisses her, Hemingway describes her feeling I turned her so I could see her face when I kissed her, and I saw that her eyes were shut. I kissed both her shut eyes. I thought she was probably a little crazy. It was all right if she was. (p.26)

When Henry kisses her, she forgets herself. Too much love makes her mad. But Henry has different attitude about love. He considers not so foolish, she slides love a game, a physical requirement of sex. He is not falling in love, treats her prostitute not as a beloved. Frederic wants to take advantage of Catherine's craziness. But Catherine understands his attitude. This is a rotten game we play, isn't it? What game? I'm not, on purpose.

You're a nice boy, she said.

And you play it as well as you know how.

But it's a rotten game. (p. 27)

At the end of the chapter 7, Henry feels a sincere emotion towards her. He feels lonely and hollow, when he is unable to see her. He feels lonely and hollow. When Catherine does not come while he was waiting for her Miss Ferguson came and brought the news that Catherine asked her to tell him. She was sorry she could not see him that evening. When Catherine does not come, he feels lonely and hollow.

I went out the door and suddenly felt lonely and empty.



I had treated seeing Catherine very lightly. I have gotten somewhat drunk and had nearly forgotten to come but when I couldn't see her there, I was feeling lonely and hollow. (p. 34).

Whenever a person falls in love, he finds himself empty, hollow without his lover. Man in the company of women finds some relief, joy. There is something hidden which draws a person towards her Without women life is empty, hollow and meaningless. Hemingway knows every kind of feeling about women.

Henry without Catherine feels like that if she attends him what kind of happiness, he gets is known by one who has experienced it. Catherine also feels like Henry. She wanted to do something for her.

beloved. In chapter eighth, Catherine gave Henry Saint Anthony while.

she was not a Roman Catholic, but she still believes that Saint Anthony will protect Henry from danger.

War in this novel plays a great role. Every character, Frederick Henry, Catherine Barkley, Helen Ferguson, Rinaldi, Priest, Major almost have grown tired by war. The environment of war is full of anxiety, craziness and blankness. Though the soldiers hate this war, yet they cannot stop it. All find war like hell Henry does not like war. He describes war scene when he became wounded:

I ate the end of my piece of cheese and took a swallow of wine. Through the other noise I heard a cough, then came the chuh-chuh-chuh- chuh-then there is a flash, as a blast furnace door is swung open and a roar that started white and went red and on and on in a rushing wind. I tried to breath, but my breath would not come, and I felt rush myself bodily out of myself and out and out and all the time.... I went out swiftly, all of myself, and I knew I was dead and that it had all been a mistake to think you must die... I thought some- body was screaming. I tried to move but I could not move. I heard the bombs, all this in a moment, and then, head close to me someone saying, 'oh mama-Mia, mama Mia' (p.44)

was attended by Miss Walker and another nurse Miss Gage. All these women are friendly and cooperative, but Miss Van Campen did not like Henry because the hospital was a big responsibility for her. behaves with Henry as one does with member of the family. Miss Gage

The priest comes to visit Henry in the field-hospital, and the Abruzzi homeland acquires a religious association. "There in my country", says the priest, "it is understood that a man may love God. It is not a dirty joke." The priest gives the true definition of love. Henry has a different attitude about love. The priest says:

What you tell me about in the nights. That is not love. That is only passion and lust. When you love, you wish to do things for. serve. (p.57) You wish to sacrifice you wish to



Here the priest gives a philosophical idea about love. Love is when we sacrifice for that love is a unique a kind of love which gives spiritual satisfaction. Through Catherine's love Henry has yet to learn that love can mean something more than casual hunger of the senses. has deep feeling of love. Catherine

I want what you want, she said.

There is not any me anymore. Just what you want. (p.79)

All the female characters are linked to the main story they perform their role to the point. Miss Ferguson is also an important woman character, a friend of Catherine She is a Scottish nurse. The outstanding feature of her character seem to be her love and attachment to Catherine Barkley. In Hemingway's words, she is a fine girl. He knows nothing about her acceptance that she had a brother in Mesopotamia, and she was very good to Catherine Barkley. She apprehends that either the lovers will quarrel or one of them will be snatched away by death. She gives warning to Henry.

Watch out, you don't get her into trouble.

you get her in trouble, and I'll kill you (p. 80)

She is upset at the thought of Catherine's pregnancy. It shows her deep love and affection and devotion to Catherine. She also requests Henry not to do night duty for Catherine, as she is getting very tired. When Henry went to the front, she became greatly devoted to Catherine and she curses Henry calling him: "You dirty sneaking American Italian". She indigently utters, "You've gotten this girl into you've no cheerful sight to me." She calls him a snake with an Italian uniform. Her role in the novel is that of a true friend and companion of Catherine Barkley. It was because of her deep love for Catherine that she rebukes Henry and treats him rudely. When Henry came out from the hotel, he met Mrs. Meyers and her husband. She is a minor character. She was big-busted woman. in black stain by her behaviour, it looks that she was friendly to Henry She gave gift to Henry At night Henry meets Catherine They talk about love and marriage. Catherine does not believe in the ritual of marriage. She is not concerned about the marriage. She considers marriage a mere formality which can be easily dispersed with during the war time. Henry wanted to be really married but Catherine said that if we were, they would send her away and if we merely started on the formalities.

We're really married. I could not be any more married.

There is not anyone, I'm you don't make up a separate

me We are married privately. You see, darling, it.

have not any religion. (p.85)

Catherine does not believe in the ritual of marriage as she thinks that even without the formal ceremonies, she is married to Henry. When she becomes pregnant, she does not desire to be married. As a matter of fact, she hides the fact of her pregnancy from him lest the knowledge should disturb his peace of mind Here Hemingway wants to show



that the women have different qualities. They do not want to upset any person. Catherine does the same thing. This is clear through this conversation.

She seemed upset and taut.

What is the matter, Catherine?"

"Nothing. Nothing is, the matter.

Yes, there is.

I know there is, tell me darling.

you can tell me.

I don't want to I'm afraid."

I'm going to make you sad or worried.

"No, it won't

"You're sure? It does not worry me.

but I'm afraid to worry you."

I'm going to have a baby, darling.

It is almost three months along. You are not worried,  
are you?

Please, please don't. You must not worry (p. 101),

It shows that Catherine does not believe in rituals. She wants to see Henry happy. She does not to give him any trouble. Henry then goes to the front without thinking how she would be during his absence. This shows that the male characters in Hemingway's fiction are not responsible persons. Henry has different thinking. For Henry life was over and he made the direction of Milan where he hoped to meet Catherine Barkley, "I was not made to think, I was made to eat. My God. Yes Eat. and drink and sleep with Catherine. "Firstly, he considers love a game. But after meeting Catherine there came a transformation in him, He escaped to Switzerland He wanted to forget war because he had made a "separate peace." Catherine becomes pregnant. She is admitted to hospital for delivery. Her condition deteriorates. The nurse tells him that she has had haemorrhage and that is dangerous. He feels as if every- thing has gone inside of him. He senses Catherine's death coming but he will not accept it, "the dirty trick".

Don't let her die, oh, God, please don't let her die.

I'll do anything for you if you won't let her die, Please, please, please don't let her die. God please, make her not die. I will do anything you say if you don't let her die. You took the baby but don't let her die. Please, please, dear God, don't let her die. (P. 234)



Despite the best effort of the doctor and Henry's prayer, Catherine could not be saved. The writer describes Henry's condition when Catherine was admitted in the hospital and was about to die. He was here like a motherless hungry child who does not do anything except crying. But Catherine faced all this with courage she could say:

'Don't worry, darling, Catherine said.

I haven't the slightest fear. It's nothing but a sleazy ploy. (P. 235)

She is calm as she nears death. She is a brave person. Critics have attacked Hemingway's characterization of Catherine, arguing that she is a stereotypical conservative woman who has nothing in common with the independent women of today. F. Hatcheti, noting Catherine's lack of character, compares her to a "divine lollipop." When Saintly Cooperman thinks of her, he imagines "a leaf of lecture nibbled by a man on a mountain where the only sound he hears is the sound of his teeth." Her solid, concrete personality is made obvious by the various instances in which her uniqueness and ability to think for herself are displayed throughout the book. Catherine places a premium on integrity and honesty. She has a strong sense of self-identity, and she keeps it right up until the end. She is acutely attuned to the complexities of the human condition. People who share her beliefs are in the minority. To paraphrase what she says, "the brave dies a thousand deaths if they are intelligent, and death is the end of things." Her deep philosophical thought is on full display. Henry wanted to do something for Catherine as she lay dying, so he waited outside the room. To no avail, however. Here, Hemingway is seeking to give the reader a strong image of Henry's 'bleak' feelings rather than of Henry's love for Catherine.

She apparently suffered many haemorrhages. They were unable to

Cease that right now. Inside, he stayed with Catherine until she passed away.

She was completely oblivious to his presence, and she passed away quickly. He approached the doctor as he was walking down the corridor.

Do you need anything from me tonight?

I'd rather not, I have something to say, therefore I'll be here for a while. You won't believe what I'm about to tell you.

I specifically stated "no." Nothing needs to be said.

He bid me good night and went to bed.

Why can't I drive you to the hotel?

I'd rather not, please.

It was the decent thing to do, he reasoned, so why didn't I want to drive you to your hotel?

Sadly, I must decline the offer. (P. 236)





He walked along the corridor. I walked over to the chamber's entrance.

The nurse stated it was too late to let you in.

Yes, I can, I replied.

You're leaving. I spoke. That medical one as well. (P. 236)

In a short time, he had them out, the door locked, and his attention was on the light. It was terrible. Leaving felt like leaving a statue. He left the hospital and walked home in the pouring rain after a while.

Hemingway gives a genuine portrayal of female characters, especially Catherine. We know that death is inevitable. It is a reality. The writer knows it very well. This is the characteristic of Hemingway's ending. He called Catherine's death a biological trap. It killed her and he was left alone. Henry thinks:

Because of your actions, you perished. You have no idea what the discussion entailed. You were always too busy to study. You were dropped in and given instructions for the first time. They ambushed you and killed you, or they killed you for no reason, as they did with Rinaldi. But in the end, they did you in. Trust that to be true. If you stayed, they would surely kill you. (P. 232)

All humans eventually die. It was too late to save Catherine. It was raining when she passed away. The symbol of rain is very complex. Catherine was afraid of rain. She does not feel joy in the rain, Rain becomes a symbol of disaster and destruction. Catherine earlier said:

Catherine, during a summer night in a Milan hospital, reveals, "I'm afraid of the rain because sometimes I see me dead in it." And sometimes I picture you lying there, dead. Catherine's death in the hospital room was accompanied by the steady patter of rain. Henry returned to the hospital on foot as rain began to fall. (PP. 95, 236)

When Henry left the hospital, it was raining continuously. When?

Catherine was dying Henry says:

Oh, poor kitty. This was the consequence for sharing a bed (P. 245).

Henry's imagination is a movie with unending scenes of violence, mutilation, death, and mental uncertainty, and Catherine's death is just the culmination. It was too late to save Catherine. Catherine's death provides a fitting conclusion. When the heroine dies at the end of a story, the author should image the hero rather than understate the situation: "Do you not find that the very heavens are weeping in his behalf?" (Kenneth Bruker, *A Farewell to Arms*).

This remark is very important in the actual conclusion. "It was like saying goodbye to a statue." Lynn, for instance, asserts that "By killing Catherine in the novel the novelist perhaps reconciled himself to the loss of Agnes Von Karnowski who had refused to marry him, even though she had earlier, promised to do so. Hemingway had drawn the



character of Catherine from real Agnes Von Karnowski" According to Philip Young: "Death is a subject which by his own admission has obsessed Hemingway for a long time" Samuel Shaw points out: "The smell of death is expressed in most of his work." Hemingway's point is clear: man was not meant to lose. The worst possible outcome is to lose. A man may be annihilated, but never defeated. Even when confronted with death and failure, Hemingway's protagonists keep their honour.

The novel ends with the tragic death of its protagonist, Catherine. She bravely stares death in the face. At the conclusion of *A Farewell to Arms*, Henry, too, has come to terms with the fact that death is permanent and cannot be avoided. When Catherine Barkley died, he knew it was tragic and accepted it. During his time at the front, he developed a philosophical bent. "Man is trapped socially and biologically, life is an unfair game, and the only inescapable fact he has is death," as Holger Klein puts it, "seems to be spot on." -16

When I went camping once, I threw a log on the fire, and the whole thing was crawling with ants. As the fire started, the ants scurried out, headed in the direction of the middle, and then doubled back to make their way to the other end. When the fuel ran out, their bodies exploded in flames, flattened, and shot out in random directions. The majority, though, besieged the cool area near the finish and eventually jumped into the flames. At the time, I thought it was the end of the world and a great opportunity to be a messiah by removing the log from the fire and tossing it to the ground, where the ants could safely exit the fire. But all I did was dump some water from a cup upon the log. The cup of water on the flaming log merely served to steam the ants, I'm afraid. Here, Hemingway likens us to ants on a log of wood that's been set on fire. Most of the ants first moved towards the fire, then back away from it, and then collapsed into it. While the ant man's actions ultimately lead to his demise, unlike the ants', the ant man is aware of the consequences of his behaviour. Henry states that the world has ended. Despite his best intentions, he is unable to accept the role of the Messiah and save humanity from certain destruction. He prays for Catherine, but she passes away anyhow. Hemingway depicts Catherine, a nurse at the beginning of the novel, evolving into a loving wife who shares in her husband's happiness and suffering. This is most notably illustrated by Catherine Barkley in Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms*.

In a violent world, there is no room for woman and love, no wonder Hemingway's women appear so unreal. Harry Laving says, "Hemingway's heroines when they are not bitches, are fantasies. They are pin-up girl," One of the aspects of Hemingway's work which has not been given due attention is his deft management of identity-crises by his women characters. There is a false assumption that.

They are never portrayed as victims of maternal harassment, and their entire orientation is often premarital.



Hemingway's women characters are differently delineated in his novels. Their traits are also different. Some women characters are meek, womanly in their behaviour, while some are villain-like figures. Some heroines are like Bitches. In the delineation of woman, Hemingway was dictated by what happened when war ceased followed by disillusionment in true love. The unfavourable portrait of Mrs. Macomber who killed her husband for having obstructed in her affairs with a guide is simple, an illustration of the frustration which the novelist experienced in his times.

His American flings enjoy having sex. Hemingway's career began with the publication of *The Sun Also Rises* (1926). The novel paints a bleak picture of Europe in its aftermath. Philip Young has said that Hemingway's wasteland can be found in *The Sun Also Rises*. The hero has made it big time, but his once fertile land is now barren. Whereas Hemingway's Paris is the epicentre of the spiritual life in general and Jake's Sexual Adventures in particular, it has been argued that Hemingway treats his fictional characters as insignificant sideshows and that his stories are skewed towards male protagonists. Some male critics, operating under this premise, "manhandle," so to speak, his striking female characters and dismiss those who recreate the work with sensitivity to women's perspectives. Those who don't like *The Sun Also Rises* would say that Brett Ashley is a Circe who corrupted males into swains. Baker argues that the female protagonists in Hemingway's works are there "to show a symbolic or Ritualistic function in the service of the artist and the service of man."

life is alike impoverished "15 Brett Ashley, too has been a victim of war. She lost her partner in war like Catherine. Brett is larger than a woman character in *The Sun Also Rises*; she is rallying point in the plot. Most male characters hang round her. She is a kind of "touch- stone". Jackson Bergson has rightly observed "in response to her negative challenge, Jake, Mike and Cohn all came to measure their method against her as a kind of catalyst. And their manhood is not measured by cajones but based on the strength to bind themselves to an ideal worth living by " She helps reveal most characters in the novel. Also, she acts as the focal point of the plot in that the entire action in the novel springs, directly or indirectly, from her. Romero's failure to understand the true nature of Brett. This has a larger significance, for it implies, too, a failure to apprehend the realities of life.

To conclude it can be said that *A Farewell to Arms* is an autobiographical novel. It tells Ernest Hemingway's experience of war .

Hemingway's has shown the theme of love and war in *A Farewell to Arms*.

Hemingway's Female are best drawn in *A Farewell to Arms*.

### **3.4 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS- Question 1 : War and violence in A Farewell to Arms .**

**Or**



**Love and battle as a central theme in "A Farewell to Arms"**

**Or**

**A Farewell to Arms is a novel that deserves some war novel.**

**Or**

**Frustration and exhaustion permeate Hemingway's writing.**

### **3.4.1 Literary Criticism**

The Novels of Hemingway: *The Sun Also Rises* 1926, is about desperate people, it is a drama tragedy, about Alienation, Moral courage and physical strength, the wounded hero. *A Farewell to Arms* 1929 is a complex novel, it is a great war novel, A farewell to everything. *To Have and Have Not* 1937, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* 1940, *Across the River and into the Trees* 1950, Noble Prize winner novel *The Old Man and the Sea* 1952 A parable. Hemingway won Nobel prize for the *Old Man and the Sea* in 1954.

Hemingway has delineated Themes of Violence, Horror, and Death in his fiction. The Hemingway heroes are Nick Adams, Fredrick Henry and Santiago, Robert Jordan.

Hemingway's Prose Style is Colloquial, non-literary, lean and striped language. Simple diction and sentence structure, the dialogue and style and the content - A terse and spare, the characters and situations, The quality of his words, correctness, truth, physical sensation which makes Hemingway a literary craftsman.

Minor characters in "A farewell to Arms" are Rinaldi a talkative man, his sense of humour, comic touches, depressed by war, and The Priest gives advice to Henry, his affection to Henry, his interest in Henry and his symbolic significant in novel, Miss Helen Ferguson - Her deep friendship with Catherine and her rebuke to Henry is a moralist, Dr. Valentin is a skilful, talkative a good hearted person, a unique but perfectly convincing character, Mr. And Mrs. Meyers.

Actions that undermine the concept of right and evil are destructive to morality. This occurred during the First World War. The moral decay of today's society is a product not only of the lost generation but also of the pervasiveness of vices like alcoholism and dishonesty at the time. Hemingway's *The Sun Also Rises* is an excellent example of this type of his writing since it depicts the horrors of World War I, the disastrous effects of sex and alcoholism, and the agony of death, illness, and paralysis. Loneliness, dread, aimlessness, hopelessness, despair, discontent, sadness, anxiety, and depression are all results



of psychological damage. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Hemingway depicts the moral collapse of the time and its inhabitants.

Brett exclaimed, "Oh, Jake, we could have had such a damn good time together." The thought that my life is passing me by as I sleep makes me sick.

**-The Sun Also Rises**

Catherine is a good nurse. She is a beautiful and devoted to her profession. She says to Frederic:

"You're lying to me."

"Yes"

"It's all right. Keep right on lying to me. That's what I want you to do."

Ernest Hemingway loved the hunt. He Caught a Marlin at the coasts of Cuba, Ernest Hemingway considers life as a losing battle. The image of struggle between two figures alone in the great "beyond" certainly conjures an air of monumental conflict. Santiago ends these reflections by thinking, "Perhaps I should not have been a fisherman... But that was the thing I was born for" (P.50). To catch the fish Santiago says, "Fish... I love you and respect you very much. But I will kill you before this day ends." (P.54)

"Fish... I'll stay with you until I am dead." (P.52)

Marlin is treated as the main Character.

"You are killing me, fish, and the old man," Santiago yells. Still, you absolutely can. I don't think I've ever met anything greater, more lovely, more serene, or more noble than you, Brother. Kill me already. Whoever murders who is fine with me. (P.56) *A Tale of an Elder and the Sea*.

Literature is the foundation of life. It is the journey of the writer on pages. Literature provides a gateway to teach man about life. Life is a tough road. Literature gives us direction to lead a good life. But it depends on man what kind of road he selects. Literature is beneficial for society. Writer has power to change life. There are few authors in the same league as Hemingway. Good authors teach us valuable lessons. A play, poem, story and novel convey a moral lesson. Hemingway is known for morality and heroism. Good writing stands on its feet. Kindness, honesty, integrity, patience, loyal, generous, kind, mercy, these are moral values and literature is full of these values. William Shakespeare, Alexander Pope, Ernest Miller Hemingway have done good service. Their work has moral values. Their philosophy helps to man to live a good life. Hemingway's work has morality and heroism, war and Violence. *A Farewell to Arms* is a sexually explicit tale. This book is a masterpiece of writing and design. There is tragedy in *A Farewell to Arms*. The couple is portrayed as helpless bystanders. The novel was described as "a *Romeo and Juliet*" by the author.

**3.5 Summary: -**

**Q.1 War and violence in A Farewell to Arms .****Or****Love and battle as a central theme in "A Farewell to Arms"****Or****A Farewell to Arms is a novel that deserves war novel .****Or****Frustration and exhaustion permeate Hemingway's writing.**

Ans. Ernest Hemingway's Farewell to Arms is one of the best war novels ever written. The story takes place in Italy during the First World War. The book, is written by American writer Hemingway and published in 1929, it is about his experiences as a lieutenant (or "Tnente") in the Italian army's ambulance corps. The title is taken English poet George Peele's poem (16th century) , it provided the inspiration for the title. This book is set during the war. The novel centres on themes of violence and war.

In A Farewell to Arms, American ambulance driver Fredrick Henry falls in love with English woman Catherine Barkley during World War I. There's a war going on, and Fredrick Henry is a soldier fighting in it. In 1929, after the war had ended, A Farewell to Arms was published.

The success of this book established Hemingway as a major figure in 20th-century American literature. It was his first bestseller, and biographer Michael Reynolds calls it "the premier American war novel from that debacle of World War I."

A Farewell to Arms gives a picture of disillusion and tiredness of war. It is a Hemingway's masterwork, a literary classic. The tale is set against the backdrop of World War 1. The work is brilliantly written, especially in terms of structure. The writing is crisp and precise. Both love and war are key elements in the book. There are a total of 41 chapters spread among the novel's five books. There are two major themes in A Farewell to Arms, and they are love and battle. Book 1 introduces both topics; book 2 introduces love; book 3 introduces conflict; book 4 introduces love; book 5 introduces Catherine's death.

About Existentialism and Hemingway Among Hemingway's female characters, Catherine is one of the most plausible. Throughout the book, she presents herself favourably to Henry and shows a willingness to meet his needs. Because she is a battlefield nurse, she is far too naive. To which Henry replies, "You are a fine simple girl. "She simply responds, "I am a simple girl." Except for you, nobody else has ever gotten it. As the saying goes, "I'm a very simple girl. "Henry says, "At first, I don't think so." To paraphrase: "I thought you were a crazy girl. "I admit that I went a little bit off the rails. but not in a very convoluted way." Catherine is quite mild-mannered and compliant.

Symbolism was often employed by authors. Symbolism is a framework built from several symbols. Symbolism is prevalent in American literature, from the works of Nathaniel Hawthorne and Herman Melville to the essays of Emerson and Thoreau. French authors Charles Baudelaire, Arthur Rimbaud, Paul





Verlaine, and Stephen Mallarme were dubbed the Symbolist Movement. Edgar Allan Poe, an American author, frequently drew parallels between the human psyche and the supernatural, ethereal realms. In *A Farewell to Arms*, Hemingway uses Catherine's fear of rain to symbolise the mountains and the Plain. The mountains represent safety and refuge, whereas the plains represent insecurity, danger, and potential devastation. Death is represented by rain. Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is a very standard love story. Frederick Henry and Catherine Barkley's love tale. World War I don't destroy their love story.

The novel has a fitting and accurate title. It explains the novel's core ideas. Hemingway intentionally stole the title "*A Farewell to Arms*" from a poet from the 1600s, George Peele.

"*A Farewell to Arms*" is an intriguing title for a novel. Some people say largely in agreement that "*A Farewell to Arms*" might have two distinct yet corresponding interpretations.

The term "Arm" has double meant in the novel *A Farewell to Arms*: it can be either a weapon or the human hand. Catharine passed away in Henry's arms. This is the price you have given me, Henry says, and he leaves her because he was unable to save her.

The term "arms" in the novel's title, *A Farewell to Arms*, has two different connotations that both fit with the book's themes. Both the topic of war and the topic of love play significant roles in the story.

The idea of war is first brought up by Hemingway. The battle between the Italians and the Austrians is raging on the Italian front. The protagonist, Frederic Henry, is a native American. He's a lieutenant in the Italian army's medical corps.

Henry is calm since he knows he is not in imminent risk of dying. In his mind, he says,

"Well, I knew I would not be killed. Not in this war. It didn't have anything to do with me. It seemed no more dangerous to me myself that.

The theme of love also follows a pattern like the theme of war. In the beginning when Henry is introduced to Catherine by Rinaldi at Milan that he realizes that he truly loves her. He says,

"God knows I had not wanted to fall in love with her. I had not wanted to fall in love with anyone. But God knows I had,"

Henry calls her a 'lovely girl', a 'grand girl', 'a fine simple girl'.

In desperation he prays to God asking him fervently to spare Catherine 'Oh, God, please don't let her die. Please, please, please, dear God don't let her die. However, Catherine dies in the end.

In deserting the Italian army, the protagonist bids farewell to "arms" as weapons. When Catherine dies, he bids farewell to the loving "arms" of his mistress.





As the title of the novel makes clear, *A Farewell to Arms* is concerned itself primarily with war, namely the process by which Frederic Henry removes himself from it and leaves it behind.

Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is that one should recognize the brevity of life and take advantage of life's joys while it is still possible.

*A Farewell to Arms* is a novel by American writer Ernest Hemingway, it is set during the Italian campaign of World War I. First published in 1929, it is a first-person account of an American, Frederic Henry, serving as a lieutenant in the ambulance corps of the Italian Army.

Ernest Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* was published in 1929. It tells the story of an American expatriate who served as an ambulance driver of the Italian army during World War I. Hemingway's novel is a first-person account of a wartime love story. Born in 1899, Hemingway was an American author considered part of the "lost generation," a group of writers disillusioned by the brutality of the first world war. Hemingway, like his character in *A Farewell to Arms*, was a volunteer ambulance driver for Italy during the war. Critics believe Hemingway may have gotten the title from a 16th century George Peele poem with the same title. This highly acclaimed novel continues to be a staple in the study of American literature. Henry bids farewell to "arms" as weapons. His beloved dies, he bids farewell to the loving arms of his mistress.

### **3.7 SELF ASSESSMENT**

Question 1. Write a detail note on Hemingway's use of symbolism and irony in *A Farewell to Arms*.

Question 2 What qualities of Hemingway's as a novelist as a prose writer.?

Question 3 Hemingway's female characters or Catherine Barkley as Hemingway's Heroine.

### **3.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS**

**Question: 1 Hemingway's Hero: disillusionment or Lost Generation**

**Or**

**Frederic Henry is Hemingway's hero discuss.**

**Ans-A Farewell to Arms: -**

*A Farewell to Arms* is a classic work in American fiction. It is about World War I. Samuel Shaw writes: "As a war novel, that is its depiction of man in battle *A Farewell to Arms* belongs to the supreme example of Genre." Samuel Shaw (1973:53). However, Hemingway's editor, Maxwell Perkins had reservations about *A Farewell to Arms* as a war novel. It was considered more an autobiographical novel. Hemingway based *A Farewell to Arms* partly on his personal experience as a Red Cross ambulance driver in 1918. The horror of *A Farewell to Arms* comes full circle when it is shown how the officers in the army are shot down. Frederic Henry, finding no meaning in such senseless brutality, is completely disillusioned and runs away from the line. The same situation is faced Nick when he meets the killers.



"It's hell of a thing".

Henry muses, "I was always embarrassed by the words sacred, glory, and sacrifice and the expression in vain. Abstract words such as glory, honour, courage, or hallow were obscene beside the concrete names of villages, the numbers of roads, the names of rivers, the numbers of regiments and the dates".

Hemingway's protagonist joins the Great war with youthful zest and enthusiasm. But when he is wounded in the war, he is shattered. He is physically wounded and morally broken. The first World War shattered the dreams and faith of the

The modern youth of today. Some have said that this is a lost generation. It is true what Clinton S. Burhans, Jr. (1968) says: our war-weary, bewildered hero " finds himself isolated and a stranger" (322).

A Farewell to Arms ends with Frederic, Jack's follower, leaving the army. loses his wife and then retires unhappy and cynical and near nihilistic because of the incident. Wylder notes accurately that Frederic Henry often views himself " as a victim of circumstances of a hostile social structure, and of an indifferent universe" (1969:70). And this was the price you paid for sleeping together," Henry said to Catherine as she lay dying (P,245). Catherine's death is just the culmination of countless acts of brutality and dismemberment. Author Philip Young claims that Hemingway's preoccupation with mortality stems from the author's own confession.

### **Question: 2 A Portrait of Fredric Henry, One of Hemingway's Heroes.**

Ans- There are two distinct types of heroes in Hemingway's works: the autobiographical hero and the code hero. Granville Hicks created the historical distinction between what would become known as the "real Hemingway hero" and the "code Hero" to mock "the weariness, the refined scepticism, the despair" of his true self. Philip Young views the protagonist of Hemingway's novel as a sick man who has suffered both physical and mental injuries. Baker hopes to find in him a metaphor for the emotional strains of the modern world. His heroes aren't after fame or money. This is the conclusion that Young draws in his chapter titled "Hemingway hero." Since the spine blow is both truth and symbol, it is not surprising that he has suffered bodily wounds because of the war and other traumatic experiences he has endured. "Philip Young (1966:54). The other hero in Hemmingway is a minor character, generally a sports figure bull fighter, boxer, fisherman, etc. who according to young offers a "solution" to the hero's problems in that he displays a mastery over his emotion. The world in which Hemingway wrote and his heroes moved in a world which is torn by struggle and conflicts. There is a prevalent sense of disillusionment, frustration, fear and misery, a world which is dead completely.

The following idea the "Code hero" hypothesis put forth by young. Hemingway's ideal concept of integrity and heroism is encapsulated in the code name Hero. To paraphrase young "This code is very important because the code hero as he is..... called, presents a solution to the problems on Nick Adams, of the true 'Hemingway Hero', and for Hemingway it was about only solution " MC Caffery War and violence, being ineradicable part of human history and civilization, cannot be overlooked even in literature. Violence is the cardinal characteristic of Hemingway's novels. His work is marked by an extraordinary maniac- depressive quality, Visions of universal brotherhood in For When the Bell Tolls alternate with the blackest despair A



**Farewell to Arms.** The subject matter of his fiction tends to be shocking and depressing. It revolves around with the consequent human suffering along with a sense of devastating waste and futility. His work is after marked by savageness and the nature of his art is catastrophic. Hemingway could be described as the heroic artist whose talent is best expressed in the delineation of violence.

**In short Hemingway's heroes are disillusioned by war or by outer world  
A critic has rightly applied this lost generation.**

**Hemingway's first hero is Nick Adams.**

**The first hero of the code is Santiago. In For Whom the Bell Tolls, Robert Jordan, a bull fighter, is both the hero and the code hero. The protagonist of the second novel, "Across the River and into the Trees," is Colonel Richard Cantwell. In Death in the Afternoon, the protagonist is a man of action in the role of an artist who depicts bullfighting. The bullfighter is hospitable, funny, proud, and jaded.**

**Question: 3 Do some critical writing about how the plot of A Farewell to Arms**

**Or, Analyse the Novella's Organization!**

**A Farewell to Arms' Outline, if You Will.**

**Alternatively, A Farewell to Arms' Love and War Themes.**

**Ans- A Farewell to Arms demonstrates the parallel development of two ideas. There's an emphasis on the conflicting themes of love and war. However, in A Farewell to Arms, the synthesis of two themes is accomplished so deftly that the reader is left with the idea that only a single story has been told. Henry goes through six stages: apathy, engagement, injury, hospitalization, withdrawal, and abandonment. There are six distinct phases in Henry and Catherine's relationship: courtship, love, pregnancy, exile in villainous Switzerland, childbirth, and Catherine's death. Both ideas are first presented in the first book, with "love" taking front stage in the second. Henry has made a separate peace and farewell to weaponry, and the focus shifts from battle to love in book four. He's back to being a boy, he's found Catherine, and they're both overjoyed to be together. A profound insight about living is articulated by Henry. Love's bliss and Catherine's death in book V show that the world will resort to murder if people like them bring too much courage into it. Henry says goodbye to a statue when his prayers are in vain. It starts to rain, so he heads back to his hotel. The terrible conclusion has a profound effect on our emotions. After losing Catherine, Henry has no one left to turn to. Events in the novel occur in a reasonable order. The novel has a well-organized and reasonable framework. The first volume introduces the reader to the cast of characters. Henry and Catherine's budding romance in book two, the Caporetto retreat and Henry's choice to avoid war in book three, Henry and Catherine's trip to Switzerland in book four, and the tragic finale of Catherine's death in childbirth in book five. The theme of love requires war as a precondition. Only the first and third books focus on the battle itself, while the remaining three focus mostly on the romance between the two main characters. It's possible that we're misjudging the role that the war plays in the story's development, which may be indicative of Hemingway's abilities as a writer. The novel's main thrust is a process of relationship organization between**



the protagonists. The significance of Catherine's death as the story's climax is nearly entirely grounded in this connection. However, the battle is a precondition for the relationship to develop. That's what brought the couple together. Themes of love and war are intricately intertwined. I enjoyed reading this.

**Question:4 Discuss Hemingway's use of narration in A Farewell to Arms.**

**Ans-** Ordered and logical to an extreme, the novel's sequence of events is the exception in American fiction outside of Henry James, and the first thing to be noted about Hemingway's narrative method in *A Farewell to Arms*. The novel's structure is more akin to that of a play than that of the typical American novel. It is divided into five books, or acts, and each act is broken down into smaller pieces that may or may not be related to stage directions and dialogue. Henry and Catherine's budding romance is chronicled in Book 2, the retreat at Caporetto and Henry's decision to flee the chaos of war are presented in Book 3, Henry and Catherine row across the lake into Switzerland in Book 4, and the hope of sanctuary is presented in Book 5 through a reversal that reminds us again of the drama of the situation. The novel's two main themes—war and love—evolve in tandem. Vivid descriptions of the action at the front can be found in chapters 8 and 9. They must kill Henry's driver. Henry was seriously hurt. Hemingway also makes use of symbolism. The priest, who represents the man of God, is symbolized by the mountain. Then there's Rain, a metaphor for impending doom. Catherine is phobic of rain since it is associated with her visions of the dead. It was raining at the time of her death. In the work, Hemingway frequently uses the first-person singular and sarcasm. 'I' refers to the narrator in this case, as I am telling the story. The beginning of winter was marked by persistent rain, and cholera followed suit. Only seven thousand people were killed total. A writer's style is an element of the storytelling approach he takes. Most Hemingway's words are single syllables, demonstrating his style's simplicity, empathy, and economy. Hemingway pioneered a new approach to writing in American literature. Hemingway typically uses short, declarative sentences. The result is an impression of cleanliness and sharpness.

1 The early morning air is pungent due to the street being watered.

2 The frontline combat was disastrous, and San Gabriele could not be captured.

Colloquial, iconic, tight-lipped, and bare, the dialogue in Hemingway's novel never fails to wow. "Isn't there anyone we can go to?"

" "I'm sorry," she replied firmly. We can easily get here by foot. You've been absent for quite some time.

" We're now into day 3. But I'm here again now.

She gave me a glance. "And do you love me?"

"Yes".

"You did say you love me, didn't you?"

I do love you, yes.

As in, "And you call me Catherine?"

"Catherine".

(From page 27 of *Farewell to Arms*.)

**Hemingway's Novels****A Farewell to Arms (1926)****There Will Be No More War:****A Tale of Two Cities:****What Time Is It? (1953)****Through the Woods and Over the River (1950)****Movie: "The Old Man and the Sea" (1952)**

**Question: 5 Which of Hemingway's strengths as a novelist and a prose writer are explored in A Farewell to Arms?**

**Ans.** Hemingway's work in A Farewell to Arms reveals him to be a genuine storyteller. The romance is completely believable, from Henry and Catherine's at-first-casual courtship to their eventual passionate love for one another. We have been presented with a cast of characters including Henry and Catherine, Rinaldi and the Priest, Dr. Valentini and Ettore, and others. The author paints a realistic picture of the battle.

Images of military movements, attacks, shelling, casualties, and retreats at the front are spot on. Hemingway's skill as a storyteller is on full display in A Farewell to Arms. The story kept us on the edge of our seats until the very last page. There is a lot of exciting action, adventure, brutality, and suspense throughout the plot. There is some appeal to the love scenes. Hemingway's ability to depict both masculine and female characters is on full display. The people Hemingway writes about stand out in the mind. The best characters are Henry and Catherine. For Henry, imagining life without Catherine is impossible. "I am you," he cries out. Don't create a false me. The totality with which Catherine gives herself up to Henry. Catherine is a real, live female. Hemingway has done an excellent job highlighting secondary characters like Rinaldi, The Priest, and others. One of the things that sets Hemingway apart as a great novelist is his use of symbolism. As Carlos Baker has pointed out, in A Farewell to Arms, the mountains and Plains represent Home and not Home. In his works, Hemingway employs both verbal and situational irony. By telling us that only 7,000 soldiers died from cholera, the author provides a remarkable example of verbal irony at the end of the first chapter. The tragic end of Catherine is a perfect illustration of tragic irony. Her life was cut short during delivery. Most people agree that Hemingway writes from his own life. His works often use autobiographical elements. Henry's severe knee injuries in A Farewell to Arms is reminiscent of a hurt Hemingway received in World War 1. Hemingway had fallen in love with an English nurse named Agnes, and so does Henry with Catherine Barkley. When Henry loses Catherine, it reminds me of when Hemingway lost his wife. Themes of disappointment, hopelessness, and death permeate Hemingway's writing. War is shown in all its bloody glory in A Farewell to Arms. In his works, Hemingway depicts characters who are both heroes and code heroes. The protagonist in a Hemingway novel is almost always a damaged man. Hemingway's hero is not a coward, despite facing defeat and death. Henry is an alcoholic and sexual deviant who chooses to shut out the world in this story. Both his body and his mind have been broken. He mourns Catherine's passing deeply. A priest is a hero in disguise. He endeavors to alter Henry's perspective on God and Henry's approach to romantic love. Hemingway's use of the obtuse, convoluted, ornate, or excessive style in A Farewell to Arms has been widely criticized. Hemingway's skill as a prose writer is demonstrated here.

Violence in war is a central theme in A Farewell to Arms, along with Fredrick Henry and Catherine Barkley's budding romance, Henry's growing disgust and



disillusionment, a formal relationship, Henry's injury, Henry's love for Catherine, Catherine's fear of the rain, Henry's fear of death, and the Caporetto retreat. The significance of Catherine's death in Book V. To die is to stop living. Those who live heroically at the end of Hemingway's novels. Henry experiences the realities of combat, love, and death. The loss of Catherine brings home the sad truth. True death exists. The novel *A Farewell to Arms* is an impressive portrayal of love and battle. There are five books in the novel. In the first book, Henry and Catherine meet, and he is later wounded in war. Henry is transported to the hospital in the second book, where he meets Catherine Barkley, and they fall in love. In Book III, his injury has healed, and he has returned to the battlefield, only to find himself trapped in a retreat and forced to abandon his post. Henry finally reunites with the pregnant Catherine in the fourth book. They make it to neutral territory in volume V, but Catherine gives birth there and dies. The novel is a sad tale of a doomed romance.

Quotes:

"All thinking men are atheists." ...

"If people bring so much courage to this world the world must kill them to break them, so of course it kills them. ...

"The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places." ...

"I'm not brave any more darling.

And you'll always love me, won't you?"

"Yes."

"And the rain won't make any difference?"

"No."

When you love you wish to do things for. You wish to sacrifice for. You wish to serve."

Ernest Hemingway

- Read the Novel *A Farewell to Arms*:

Question: A Love/War Story an End to Hostilities Talk about these instances.

### **3.9 REFERENCES/ SUGGESTED READING**

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## Chapter Four

### ENGLISH

### ENG-302

<b>Subject: American Literature</b>	
<b>Course Code: 302</b>	<b>Author: Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Lesson No. : 04</b>	<b>Sh. Jarnail Singh</b>
<b>Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?: Edward Albee</b>	

### Lesson Structure

#### 4.0 Learning Objectives-

#### 4.1 Introduction

About the Dramatist - Edward Albee.

#### 4.2 About the Play - "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

#### 4.3 Main Body of the Text: Drama

##### 4.3.1 Characters

Martha

George

Nick

Honey

#### 4.4 Check Your Progress:

#### 4.5 Summary

#### 4.6 Self –Assessment

#### 4.7 Answer to Check Your Progress





## 4.8 References /Suggested Readings

DDE GJUS&T, HISAR

**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? Albee, Edward**

### 4.0 Learning Objectives: -

1. It will enable the student to get a close analysis of Edward Franklin Albee.
2. It will throw light on Socio historical view of American Drama.

3. Literary texts, illustration and critical analysis of Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is highlighted.

### 4.1 Introduction

#### About the Dramatist.

The arts are the only things that separate us from the other animals.

" The world is a zoo" - Edward Albee, The Zoo Story

Edward Albee is a living legend in American literature. He is powerful dramatist in English literature. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? Is powerful drama of Edward Albee's. Allusion versus Reality, The American Dream, Success, Balance of Power, Religion, Marriage are themes of this play. George, Martha, Nick, Honey are major characters in this play.

If Edward Albee had not existed, he would most certainly have been invented. - C.W.E Bingsby

Edward Albee is most polemical and the most talked about playwright in the post war era. As Bingsby says," America needed a new playwright..." Other playwrights Jack Gelber and Jack Richardson failed in presenting fashionable European influence in the realistic play. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is a absurd play of Albee's. The play is divided into three Acts.

The Play has three acts, Act1, Act, Act III. Albee's family was wealthy, he led a luxurious life. Albee went ahead to criticize through the medium of literature, the moral and spiritual injury inflicted upon people by an excess of material wealth and an imprudent of the " American Dream". His plays established the idea that men and women were themselves responsible for determining their own fate. Some playwrights of his time are Samuel Beckett, Jean Genet and



Eugene Ionesco. Critics categorized these Avant-garde writers and Absurdist's playwrights. Edward Albee employs both realistic and Absurdist's techniques to write his plays. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* has the themes - death, sterility, the corruption of the American Dream, truth and illusion.

When you get down to bone, you haven't got all the way yet.

There's something inside the bone ... the marrow.

Through the Play, Albee critically expresses the aspects that form the very foundation of the American society, its value system and institutions, held in high esteem by all Americans. The play focuses on subjects such as family, marriage, and success. The modern American family that might appear perfect on the surface has flaws hidden and as their Deep dark secrets.

If you have no wounds, how can you know if you're alive? - Edward Albee

Edward Franklin Albee was an American writer who lived from March 12, 1928, until his death on September 16, 2016. In addition to *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* (1962) and *A Delicate Balance* (1966) and *Three Tall Women* (1994), he has written *The Zoo Story* (1958) and *The Sandbox* (1959). Some of his critics have stated that his work is an American take on what Martin Esslin called the "Theatre of the Absurd." The Pulitzer Prize for Drama was awarded to three of his plays. His writings are frequently cited as insightful analyses of contemporary life. His earlier works are reminiscent of the European Theatre of the Absurd, which peaked with authors like Samuel Beckett, Eugène Ionesco, and Jean Genet.

Plays during his middle era probed such topics as marriage and sexuality from a psychiatric perspective. Albee's blend of theatricality and cutting dialogue is credited by American playwrights like Paula Vogel with reimagining American theatre in the early 1960s after World War II. *The Goat, or Who Is Sylvia?* (2002) is just one example of Albee's continuing exploration of new forms.

On March 12, 1928, in Virginia, United States, Edward Albee entered this world. At the age of two weeks, he was adopted by rich parents who gave him the name of his adopted grandfather, Edward Franklin Albee, a co-owner of a theatre. Albee's subsequent theatrical endeavors are unrelated to this reality. Albee spent a lot of time as a kid hanging out with famous actors and directors in the theatre world.

A three-act farce titled *Aliqueen*, written while Albee was only twelve, is considered his debut play. Albee's academic career was haphazard. At the age of fifteen, he was expelled from his preparatory school, Lawrenceville School. He attended Valley Forge Military Academy, was expelled, and ultimately completed his education at Choate. The Choate Literary Magazine featured his first published play. The beautiful Delphine was Albee's adored. They were in one other's lives for a very long time. Albee communicated with Muir and Florence Weis singer. In 2005, he lost his longtime companion, Jonathan Thomas. On September 16, 1916, he passed away. Jonathan Thomas, his longtime companion, passed away in 2005. The dramatist Terrence McNally dated Albee. Albee



enjoyed looking at paintings. He had numerous pricey works of art and sculpture. In 2016, at age 88, he passed away. Virginia Woolf: Who's Afraid of Her? In print since 1962. The protagonists, George and Martha, are middle-aged, and the setting is their living room. They are both inebriated and irritable after returning from a college party. "I have a fine sense of the ridiculous, but no sense of humor." Author: Edward Albee

#### 4.2. Introduction About the Play : -

" Martha: Truth or illusion, George; you don't know the difference.

George: No, but we must carry on as though we did. Martha: Amen."

" Dashed hopes and good intentions. Good, better, best, bested."

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? by Edward Albee.

Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is a Great American drama by Edward Albee . He wrote the play in 1962. The play consists of three acts. The premiere of this drama took place in October of 1962. Instantaneously, it became quite popular. Both primary characters in the play are alcoholics, making it a somber but serious drama. George, a history professor, is the protagonist. He married Martha, who is six years his senior. Martha is the President of the College's daughter. Nick's wife, honey, and their two kids round out the cast. Nick also teaches biology at the same university. immigration and reality are intertwined in the play's central theme. The play is a metaphor for a human-made universe in which love, life, passion, and the creative act are all possible. It looks at Martha and George, a middle-aged couple, and all the challenges they've faced throughout their marriage. Nick and Honey, a younger couple, are unwittingly invited to stay with them after a faculty party at the university, and they end up being drawn into their unhappy and tormented relationship.

The play has a three-act structure. The song "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" from Walt Disney's Three Little Pigs (1933) inspired this title, which is a play on words using Virginia Woolf's name instead of the Woolf's. Throughout the play, Martha and George sing this rendition of the song. The play's two major characters, Martha and George, are married. The play opens at two in the morning in George and Martha's residence. They had just gotten back from Martha's father's house party. Nick and Honey are welcome to join them as they get drunk while Martha waits for them. Since she has welcomed them into her home. Nick teaches biology at the college level. About thirty years old, he is a gorgeous, assured man. His wife has a very limited worldview. Everybody begins chugging drinks. A verbal argument breaks out between George and Martha. As usual, Martha pokes fun at George. She laughs at his misfortune. She reveals to Honey the existence of their made-up child. In private with George, Nick admits that he married Honey because he falsely believed that she became pregnant due to her wealth. It seems like Martha and George can't get along. Martha hopes she can start dating Nick. George is uninterested. Upstairs, Martha and Nick engage in sexual activity. George is angry and ashamed. He hurls a book towards the exit. Honey woke up to the ringing of the bell. She explains to George that she never had kids because she was terrified of giving birth. To torment Martha, George considers telling her he got a telegram regarding their son's death. Nick finally understood that their "son" was only in their heads. Honey and Nick have already left. Martha is a woman who has been completely broken. After George's attempt at consoling Martha, the play concludes.



The play has a confused and unimportant title. One can't help but be reminded of the classic children's song "Who's Afraid of the Big, Bad Wolf" when reading its title. After seeing the words "Who's is Afraid of Virginia Woolf" on the wall of a pub late at night, legend has it that Albee renamed his play from "The Exorcism" to "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf." The play's title is then revealed by Albee. Perhaps the title is a reference to the well-known contemporary author Mrs. Virginia Woolf. She is a role model for smart women everywhere. Author and critic of some renown.

Good characters are portrayed by Edward Albee in this play. Martha is rude and confrontational; thus we have no respect for her. As a wife, she shams her husband. George is just as rude and ignorant as we are, therefore, we have no sympathy for him. He wed Martha, the daughter of the university's president. Honey, Nick's wife, has no sympathy from us as she is given custody of Nick. Nick is a pompous jerk. The drama finishes with George murdering his made-up kid. The truth of life must be faced by him and Martha. The play has garnered a lot of attention. The play's comedic charm and crude humor make it stand out. Several reviewers have called Albee the next Eugene O'Neill. Many people thought the characters were interesting, the conversation was witty, and the acting was superb.

#### **4.3 Main Body of the Text- Drama**

**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf ? 1962 by Edward Albee's**

**ACT ONE**

**FUN AND GAMES**

**Characters:**

**Martha:** Martha is a 52-year-old woman who looks much younger than her age.

**George:** George, her 46-year-old, slender spouse.

**A tiny blonde girl named Honey**26.

**Nick:** Her spouse Nick, who is 30 and attractive, is Nick.

**1**

(Deep in the night. Slam into the entrance. Heard: MARTHA's infectious grin. The foyer door swings open, and the lights come on. MARTHA and GEORGE walk in.

**MARTHA**

Lord Jesus Christ, GEORGE, be quiet.

In the name of MARTHA, CHRIST, and GEORGE

Jesus Christ, it's already two o'clock in the afternoon, Martha.



**MARTHA**

**Aw, shucks!**

**GEORGE**

**Sorry to burst your bubble, but.**

**MARTHA**

**The nerve! Wow, you really are a cluck.**

**GEORGE**

**It's getting late, y'all. Late.**

**MARTHA**

**(Takes in her surroundings. (In a Bette Davis impression) What a shithole. Wow, where did you get that? To quote Joe Biden: "What a dump!"**

**GEORGE**

**Who am I to say what...**

**MARTHA**

**Excuse me! Who makes it? George, Martha, George, and Martha.**

**Where did You Get That, for the Love of God?**

**GEORGE (WEAILY)**

**Which form do we need?**

**MARTHA**

**Yes, I did what I said I would do. To quote Joe Biden: "What a dump!" Hunh? Which form are we talking about here?**

**GEORGE**

**I don't even have a guess as to what....**

**MARTHA**

**Dumbbell It's ripped straight from a Warner Brothers classic starring Bette Davis.**

**GEORGE**

**It's impossible for me to recall every single image that.**

**MARTHA**



No one is expecting you to recall every single Warner Brothers movie ever made... just one! Just one tiny epic! Bette Davis gets peritonitis towards the end of the film while wearing a large black fright wig and is married to Joseph Cotton or someone.

MARTHA....Someone.... GEORGE....Someone.... and she wants to go to Chicago all the time, cause she's three in love with that actor with the scar... However, she becomes ill and rests in front of her vanity.

GEORGE

Who plays who in this? Which scar?

MARTHA

For the life of me, I just can't recall his name. Can you tell me the title of the picture? I'm curious as to the identity of this artwork. She goes to her vanity, where she tries to apply lipstick despite suffering from peritonitis and ends up with it smeared all over her face before deciding to travel to Chicago nonetheless and GEORGE.

Chicago! We refer to it as "Chicago."

MARTHA

Hunh? So. so what is it?

GEORGE

Chicago is the name of the picture.

MARTHA

Oh, my goodness! Is there nothing you know? Little Miss Alice Faye starred in the 1930s musical Chicago. Is there nothing you know?

GEORGE

I know that happened long ago, but... MARTHA.

Can it! Stop saying that! This photograph. Bette Davis returns from a tiring trip to the supermarket.

GEORGE

What does she do there?

MARTHA

As a housewife, she does the shopping and then returns to the small cottage that Joseph Cotton has arranged for her to live in.



**GEORGE**

**Is a wedding in the works?**

**Yes, MARTHA said anxiously. Wedlock has occurred. Between you and me. Cluck! woman sets her groceries down, takes a look around, and exclaims, "What a dump!"**

**Oh. GEORGE (Pause).**

**MARTHA (Delay) She's not happy there.**

**Oh. GEORGE (Pause).**

**(Pause) Well, what's what's the painting called, MARTHA?**

**GEORGE**

**\Truthfully, Martha, I just don't know.**

**MARTHA**

**Think about it!**

**GEORGE**

**It's late, honey, and I'm exhausted.**

**MARTHA**

**I don't see why you're so exhausted; you didn't have any courses or anything today.**

**Five George**

**I've had a long day, and I'm exhausted. You wouldn't have to endure these weekly Saturday night orgies if your dad didn't set them up.**

**MARTHA**

**I'm sorry to hear that, George.**

**Grumbly, GEORGE**

**That seems to be the case, at any rate.**

**MARTHA**

**You did nothing; you rarely do anything; you rarely mix. You guys just hang out and chat.**

**GEORGE**





What is it that you need me to do? Should I try to mimic your behavior?  
Do you want me to behave as you do and go about shouting at strangers all night long?

MARTHA Not Me! (Braying) I Don't Bray!

GEORGE, you don't bray, so (softly) okay.

When I'm hurt, I don't bray (MARHTA).

\GEORGE

Okay, then. Don't bray, I told you.

Make me a drink, MARTHA (whining).

GEORGE

What?

I asked MARTHA (still very quietly) to prepare a beverage for me.

GEORGE (Walking over to the mobile bar) 6

No harm in sharing a nightcap, I don't think.

MARHTA

It's time for a nightcap! How ridiculous! Guests have arrived.

GEORGE (Incredulous): What do we have?

MARTHA

Guests. Guests.

GEORGE

Guests!

MARTHA

Yes. . guests. . people... We've got guests coming over.

GEORGE

When?

MARTHA

Now!

GEORGE

Is it too late to tell me who's coming over, Martha?



**MARTHA**

**A person's name is...**

**GEORGE**

**Who?**

**MARTHA**

**Who Are They, anyway?**

**GEORGE**

**How do you know their name?**

**MARTHA**

**George, I have no idea what their name is. He's in the math's department or something, and you met them tonight.**

**GEORGE**

**Just who are these... individuals?**

**MARTHA**

**So, George, you finally got to meet them tonight.**

**GEORGE**

**There was nobody here tonight that I can recall talking to.**

**MARTHA**

**You performed a great job. Please bring my beverage over here... He's about thirty, blond, and works in the math's department.**

**GEORGE... and handsome.**

**MARTHA**

**Yes... and attractive to boot.**

**GEORGE**

**It makes sense.**

**His wife, MARTHA, is a mousey small type who doesn't have hips or anything.**

**GEORGE, I guess so.**



**MARTHA**

**I take it you recall them now.**

**GEORGE**

**I'd say that's probably true, Martha. But why are they coming over here currently?**

**MARTHA**

**(With a nonchalant tone) Because Daddy told us to be kind to them.**

**GEORGE Oh, Lord (in defeat).**

**MARTHA**

**Please bring my drink over here. Our father emphasized the importance of treating strangers with kindness. As always, I appreciate it.**

**GEORGE**

**If so, why now? It's well past 2 a.m. now, and....**

**MARTHA**

**Because Daddy always told us to treat others kindly!**

**GEORGE**

**Yes. My guess is that your dad didn't intend for us to spend the night at their house. Perhaps we might invite them over for brunch one Sunday.**

**MARTHA**

**I guess that's that then. It's Sunday, after all. Initially on Sunday morning.**

**GEORGE**

**It's ludicrous, I mean.**

**MARTHA**

**What can I say?**

**GEORGE (Exited and resigned) 9**

**Okay, then. Where are they, exactly? Where are our visitors, if any?**

**MARTHA**



Soon they will arrive.

**GEORGE**

What did they do, anyway? Head back to bed for a few hours?

**MARTHA**

They're on the way!

**GEORGE**

I really wish you would just inform me about something sometime and quit surprising me all the time.

**MARTHA**

When I do surprise you, it's seldom often.

**GEORGE**

Yes, you do... truly do... you're constantly surprising me.

**MARTHA**

Aw, shucks!

**GEORGE**

Always.

**MARTHA**

Poor, unfortunate Georgie (Watching him pout) Oh no... why are you acting like that? Do you feel like sulking? Hunh? What gives? Are you pouting? Is it the case with you?

**GEORGE** In a low voice, "Never mind, Martha..."

Awwwwwww!

**GEORGE**

Don't even bother thinking about it...

**MARTHA**

Awwwwwww! (No response) Yo! (No response) Yo!

(George gives her a resentful glance) Hey, (She sings) Who's terrified of Virginia Woolf, Virginia Woolf, Virginia Woolf...

Laugh out loud! What gives? (No response) Didn't find that funny? Hunh? (With defiance) I heard what I believed was a scream. What was wrong with it, sweetie?



**GEORGE**

Yes, Martha, everything was fine.

**MARTHA**

When you heard it during the party, you burst into peals of laughter.

**GEORGE**

I cracked a grin. No, I didn't die of laughter. You know, I just cracked a smile. It turned quite fine, actually.

**MARTHA** (Staring down into her glass) You cracked your goddamn skull open with laughter.

**GEORGE**

It worked out fine.

**MARTHA** What a (terrible) scream it was!

**GENE** (Calmly) 11

Yes, it was hilarious.

**MARTHA**

After giving it some thought, I have to say, "You make me puke!"

**GEORGE**

What?

**MARTHA**

What the hell are you doing to me?

**GEORGE**

That wasn't a very pleasant thing to say (considers them) to Martha.

**MARTHA**

So, what was it?

**GEORGE**... that's quite kind of you to say.

**MARTHA**

Your ire appeals to me. What I appreciate most about you is probably your fiery temper. Oh, what a weakling you are! In other words, you lack the ability to even...A lot of courage, **GEORGE**? **MARTHA**, Phraseologist! Putting extra ice in my drink would



be great (Pause... then they both chuckle). You never provide my drink chilled. The question is why, huh?

(Taking her glass) GEORGE (always including ice) I never forget about you. The only thing you do is consume it. It's that thing you do, where you constantly nibble on ice cubes like a cocker spaniel. You'll finally be 12!

12 teeth.

MARTHA

My enormous teeth are just that.

GEORGE

A few of them... a few of them.

MARTHA

I've got more pearly whites than you have.

GEORGE

There are now two more.

MARTHA

Two extra is a sizable increase.

GEORGE

Okay, I'll buy that. Given your age, I suppose it is quite a feat.

MARTHA

You shave that off (Pause) You're not so youthful anymore, are you?

GEORGE

(In a chorus indicative of a young boy's pride) I am six years younger than you were and always will be.

MARTHA Well, you're getting bald, I guess.

GEORGE

Yeah, you are too. (Pause. a chuckle between them) Hello, honey.

MARTHA

Hello. Come up here and smooch your mother all over the face.

GEORGE



13 ... well, now. .

**MARTHA**

I long for a sloppy, wet kiss.

**George:** I don't have time to kiss you right now. What happened to them? Who are these guests you claimed to have invited?

**MARTHA**

They lingered behind to have a little chat with Dad, so they'll be here shortly. If you don't want to kiss me, why not?

**GEORGE** (a little too matter-of-factly) Well, sweetheart, if I kissed you I'd get all aroused... Just imagine what your dad would say if I lost it and dragged you here and had you sit on the living room rug in front of our small visitors.

**MARTHA**

Oh, you filthy swine!

Haughtily, **GEORGE** says, "Oink!" Onk!

**MARTHA**

Laugh out loud! Lover, pour me another glass of wine.

My God, you can swill it down, can't you, **GEORGE**?

I'm firsty, **MARTHA** (sounding like a young child) says.

**GEORGE**

14 Jesus!

**MARTHA** (doing the swan dive)

Don't worry about me, honey; I can drink you under any table you choose to name.

**GEORGE**

The award, Martha, was long ago. You aren't eligible for any current atrocity awards.

**MARTHA**

If you existed, I'd get a divorce from you right now.

**GEORGE**





Keep your balance, that's all I can say. You should realize that these people are your guests because...

MARTHA

I haven't been able to see you in years, if at all.

GEORGE...if you faint or vomit or whatever...

What I mean is that you, MARTHA, are a complete unknown.

GEORGE... and please don't remove any of your clothing. You know, there aren't many sicker sights than you with a few drinks in you and your skirt pulled up over your head.

There is no MARTHA.

15 (The doorbell rings) GEORGES... you heads, I Should say.

MARTHA

Rave on, rave on!

(Murderously) GEORGE

This is going to be so much fun, Martha...

MARTHA (Ideal) Go and see who's at the door.

GEORGE (Standing Still): Your response please.

MARTHA

Come on, open the door.

(He makes no attempt to budge.) I'll get you fixed.

A simulated spit from George... to you.

MARTHA

(At the door, shouting) Come on in! (Gritting her teeth to GEORGE) I said, get over there!

GEORGE

(He starts to head towards the door, smiling slightly.) All right, love... whatever love wants. All you must do is (pause) not start on the bit.

MARTHA

That part? That part? That's some weird terminology. Exactly what are you referring to?



**GEORGE**

**16**

**That part. Don't get the tattletale started just yet.**

**MARTHA**

**What the hell are you doing, acting like one of your students? To what end are you attempting this? Which part?**

**GEORGE**

**All I'm saying is, please don't bring up the kid part.**

**MARTHA**

**Just what are you taking me for?**

**GEORGE**

**A massive excess.**

**MARTHA: (Very irritated) Yeah? Okay, if I want to start picking on the kid, I will.**

**GEORGE**

**Don't bring the kid into this.**

**MARTHA He's mine just as much as he is yours (threateningly). If I feel like discussing him, I will.**

**GEORGE**

**No, Martha, I wouldn't go that route.**

**MARTHA**

**That's fantastic news. (Clap) Come on in. Quick, someone open the door over there!**

**GEORGE**

**I'm giving you some advice.**

**WALPURGISNACHT**

**Stage Two**

**NICK**

**Actually, no.**

**GEORGE**



Oh! Mine. No, no, she doesn't, but if I were her, she, or her, I would. However, I am not, and I do not. Nonetheless, (pause) I'd like to. At times, the environment here is somewhat bouncy.

In a word, yes.

COOLIE NICK

Yes, you witnessed one such instance.

GEORGE

NICK

I make an effort to refrain from....

GEORGE

Engage in it. Um? Is that not so?

NICK

In a word, yes.

GEORGE

My guess is no.

NICK

It's... kind of humiliating, really.

(Sardonic) GEORGE

Oh, you do, sweetie.

Yes. Really. Quiet.

NICK

Just between you and me, GEORGE Return of NICK.

NICK (After some hesitation) I guess she's fine. Is she okay? (No response) She... really shouldn't drink. She's quite weak (no response). (No one responds) Um... trim in the hips, I guess. (GEORGE gives a wan grin.) I apologize.

GEORGE In a low voice: "Where is my little yum yum?" Find Martha!

NICK In the kitchen, she is brewing coffee. She's... prone to illness a lot.

(Preoccupied) GEORGE Martha? Except for her stays at the nursing home, Martha has never been ill throughout her life.



**NICK** (He adds, hushed Ly) No, my wife... my wife gets sick easily. I hear Martha is the name of your wife.

**GEORGE** Oh, certainly... (with regret) I do know.

**NICK**, She doesn't actually spend much time in a retirement community, to state the obvious.

Your spouse? Walpurgisnacht

**NICK**

Here it is! I was completely empty-handed.

**A DISGUSTING GEORGE** Do you think I appreciate it that that... whatever that is... is constantly making fun of me, tearing me down, right in front of... (he waves his hand dismissively) **YOU?** Do you really think I'm interested?

**NICK** Well, no... I don't think you're very fond of it, so I don't blame you if you don't.

Oh, you're not making that up, honey.

**NICK** Not at all... I take a hostile stance. I seriously doubt that you do!

**G. GEORGE** Your compassion weakens me; your empathy brings me to tears (withering). Big, salty, illogical tears!

**NICK** (Contemptuously) I don't understand why you think other people should put up with it.

great 1?

**GEORGE**

**NICK**

No. Yours.

**GEORGE**

Oh! Mine. No, no, she doesn't, but if I were her, she, or her, I would. However, I am not, and I do not. Nonetheless, (pause) I'd like to. At times, the environment here is somewhat bouncy.



In a word, yes.

NICK (Coolly) You witnessed a prime example, so there you go.

NICK GEORGE

The best I can do is.... GEORGE

Engage in it. Um? Is that not so?

NICK

In a word, yes.

GEORGE

My guess is no.

NICK

It's... kind of humiliating, really.

(Sardonic) GEORGE

Oh, you do, sweetie.

Yes. Really. Quite. [11:21 am, 16/05/2023] Ankur Isolated GEORGE  
COMMENTS: Return of NICK.

NICK (After some hesitation) I guess she's fine. Is she okay? (No response) She... really shouldn't drink. She's quite weak (no response). (No one responds) Um... trim in the hips, I guess. (GEORGE gives a wan grin.) I apologize.

SUBDUED GEORGE Where is my sweetie pie? Find Martha!

NICK In the kitchen, she is brewing coffee. She's... prone to illness a lot.

Preoccupied GEORGE

Martha? Except for her stays at the nursing home, Martha has never been ill throughout her life.

NICK (He adds, hushed Ly) No, my wife... my wife gets sick fairly easily. I hear Martha is the name of your wife.

(With regret) GEORGE

I understand completely.

NICK As a matter of fact, she rarely if ever...



**NICK Walpurgis Night**

**A C T II**

**When there are no animals present, I don't see why you don't feed them.**

**GEORGE**

**Through his rage, he managed a laugh: "Why, you are arrogant, self-righteous little...."**

**NICK (a real danger)**

**Is it possible, Mister? (Silence)**

**I mean, come on!  
Scientist George.**

**GEORGE**

**NICK**

**I've never been violent towards a mature male.**

**GEORGE (Gazes thoughtfully) Oh. (Pause) You just struck a demographic of younger men, children, ladies, and birds. (Notices that NICK is not laughing) Of course you're right. Middle-aged men getting all red in the face and exhausted from swinging at one other and missing half the time is not the most attractive sight.**

**NICK**

**You two are so on point; you're actually rather brilliant. Impressive.**

**GEORGE**

**And you find that impressive things leave an impression on you. You're...**

**a kind of pragmatist idealism... readily impressed. NICK (Girling up tightly)**

**It's not that I always agree with things that I admire. Weihnacht des Walpurgis  
mire. I don't think of flagellation as a fun activity, yet....**

**GEORGE A skilled flagellator, though, is something to be admired.**

**NICK**

**Yes, indeed.**

**GEORGE**



**Your wife is a chronic vomiter, right? NICK**

**Not at all; what I did mention was that she is prone to illness. GEORGE**

**Oh. Oh, you mean by sick to...**

**NICK**

**Okay, so it's accurate.... Yes, she frequently retches. There's not much you can do to stop her once she gets going.... She can keep talking for hours. Not constantly, but fairly frequently.**

**GEORGE**

**You use her as a clock, bunch?**

**Almost there.**

**NICK**

**Drink?**

**GEORGE**

**Second Act Nick**

**children... In response to my inquiry, you stated....**

**NICK**

**Actually, she wasn't. A hysterical pregnancy was the result. Her star quickly rose, only to quickly fade.**

**GEORGE**

**And you tied the knot with her while she was awake.**

**NICK**

**After that, she collapsed. (They both chuckle, which surprises them both a little)**

**Bourbon, uh, has a point.**

**GEORGE**





Bourbon, uh, yes.

NICK

GEORGE (Still at the bar) During the Punic Wars, when I was sixteen and attending prep school, a group of us would travel into New York on the first day of vacations before dispersing to our respective homes, and that group of us would then go to a gin mill owned by the gangster father of one of us that evening. This was during the Great Experiment, or Prohibition, as it is more commonly known, and it was a bad time for the liquor lobby but a fine time for the crook. We were out one night, and when it was the boy's turn to order, he said, "I'll have Bergin... give me Walpurgisnacht." The boy was only fifteen at the time, but he had accidentally shot and killed his mother years before.

Please, I'd like some Bergin... Bergin and water. Well, we all laughed... he was blonde and had the face of a cherub, and we all laughed, and his cheeks went red and the color rose in his neck, and the assistant crook who had taken our order told people at the next table what the boy had said, and they laughed, and more people were told, and the laughter grew, and finally, no one was laughing more than us, and no one more than the boy who had shot his mother. As word spread through the gin mill, everyone ordered Bergin and laughed whenever they dared or could. And then, of course, the laughter grew less general, though it did not decrease, fully, for quite some time, for always at this table or that someone would order Bergin and a fresh region of hilarity would rise. That night, the management and the mobster father of one of us bought us champagne and let us drink for free. The next day, we were both miserable on his train to nowhere.

from New York, all of us suffering from the hangovers of mature adults, but nevertheless the greatest day of my... youth. (Offers NICK a beverage on the house.)

NICK (In a low voice) I appreciate it. The youngster who shot his mother... what happened to him?

Don't worry, I'm not going to spill the beans.

GEORGE

Okay, then.

NICK

GEORGE



The following summer, while driving with his dad in the passenger seat and him behind the wheel with his learner's permit, he swerved to avoid a porcupine on a country road and crashed into a tree.

A self-talking MARTHA enters.

Third Act

"The Exorcism"

Martha walks in, babbling to no one.

MARTHA

Excuse me.... Nobody seems to be around... (It's clear that she's unconcerned.) OK, so? Throw me over your shoulder like an old shoe; drop me like a goddamn... whatever-it-is... creeping vine. George? (She casts her eyes about) George? No sound, George Is it that you're hiding or what? The silence between "GEORGE!!" and "Oh, fa" Chri..... (She goes to the bar, mixes up a drink and performs the following routine to entertain herself) Deserted! Abandon-ed! I was abandoned like an old cat. HA! Martha, may I just fetch you a drink? I appreciate your thoughtfulness, George. Yes, I would do anything for you, Martha. George, could you please? I'd go to great lengths for you, you know. Martha, could you? Of course, it is, George. Excuse me, Martha, but I misread you. Even I, George, have been wrong about you. WHAT HAPPENED TO EVERYONE!!! The Hostess is a Hump!

(Collapses into hysterical laughter, then a chair; then, after a moment, she collects herself and says, softly) Fat chance. (Even more gently) Not a chance (In a baby voice) Daddy? Daddy? Martha has been terminated. She was abandoned at... (Looks at clock) ...something in the morning to indulge in her own vices. Is it true that you have crimson eyes, Daddy White-Mouse? Do you? Ok, let me check this out. Ohhhhhh! You do! You dol Daddy, your eyes are red because you cry so much, right? In a word, yes. You constantly weep. I'll give you five dollars if you come out from behind your hiding places, you jerk! To be honest, Daddy, I weep rather frequently myself. I constantly weep, yet I keep my tears locked away inside. I constantly shed tears. Even Georgie is a crier; she constantly weeps. ACT THREE We constantly cry together, and then we do what?

The Exorcism 186 we cry, and we take our tears, and we put 'em in the ice box, in the goddamn ice trays (Begins to laugh) till they're all frozen (Laughs even more) and then... we put them... in our... beverages. (There is more laughter, which is unique in and of itself. After a moment of reflection: (Dead, gone, forgotten) down the drain,



down the spout. The poker Nacht goes up the spout, not down it. My marriage to you has been a complete washout. (With tears in my eyes) I now have windscreen wipers for eyes. Yes, Martha, you will one day compose music. (She jiggles the ice in her glass) CLINK! CLINK! (Repeats, this time with laughter and multiple repetitions) CLINK!... CLINK! Clink, clink, clink! (NICK walks in as MARTHA is clinking; he watches her from the doorway of the hallway before entering.) NICK  
Oh my God, you're crazy now, too.  
MARTHA

Clink?

NICK

You're completely insane, I told her.

MARTHA (Gives it some thought) Maybe... maybe.

NICK I come down to find that you've all gone completely insane.

What occurs?

NICK

MARTHA

my wife has taken a bottle of spirits and gone into the clink, and The Exorcism of Emily Rose 187

She winked at me, twice! ...

MARTH (With Regret)

What a shame it is that she has never wunk at you....

NICK

Back on the tiles, she curls up on the floor and begins removing the label from the brandy bottle.

MARTHA

That's a surefire way to lose our deposit forever.

NICK

You're sitting there going Clinkl for God's sake, and I come back in here and she says, "shhhhhh!, nobody knows I'm here." Clink!



**MARTHA**

**CLINK!**

**NICK**

**You've all lost your minds.**

**MARTHA**

**Yes. True, but sad.**

**NICK**

**Your hubby has disappeared.**

**MARTHA**

**Puff, he's gone.**

**NICK**

**You lot are completely insane.**

**Assuming a brogue accent, MARTHA This is where we go to escape the absurdity of the actual world.**

**world is too much for our frail shoulders to bear. (Back to normal voice) Kick back, relax, and accept the fact that you are on par with everyone else.**

**NICK (Exhaustedly)**

**Possibly, yes.**

**MARTHA**

**(Raising her drink to her lips) Well, you are a failure in a few areas, that's for sure.**

**NICHOLAS (Cringing)**

**Excuse me, may I ask why...?**

**MARTHA You're a flop in some, I remarked (loudly) to him.**

**NICK I'm sorry to hear that you're dissatisfied (he said this too loudly).**



**MARTHA (Interrupting)**

**I didn't even mention being let down! Stupide**

**NICK**

**If we haven't been drinking for the past ten hours, you should give me a shot.**

**MARTHA (Continues to blare) I was criticizing your actual performance, not your potential.**

**(Tenderly) Oh, NICK.**

**MARTHA (She softened, too) You have good promise. Very nice. (She raises her eyebrows) That's great! Such promising growth is unprecedented in a**

### **189. The Exorcism**

**lengthy period. Oh, but honey, you really are a bust.**

**NICK (Snapping it out) Everyone is a failure in your eyes! Your husband is a failure, and so am I.**

**MARTHA (Shouting at him to leave) You're a failure. I am Mother Earth, and you are all useless slobs. (More or less in her own head) I hate myself. I waste my time with bad, meaningless things.**

**infidelity... (with a bitter laugh) potential infidelity. Hostess Hump? That made me giggle. A sloppy slew of drunken chumps who can't do anything. Martha makes goo-goo eyes, and the lunk-heads smile and roll their gorgeous, beautiful eyes back and smile some more; Martha licks her chops; the lunk-heads slap over to the bar to pick up some courage; they pick up some courage; they bounce back over to old Martha; and Martha makes goo-goo eyes some more.**

**who does a little dance for them, heating them up mentally, sending them slapping over to the bar again to pick up a little more courage, and their wives and sweethearts sticking their noses up in the air... right through the ceiling, sometimes... sending the lunk-heads back to the soda fountain again to fuel up some more, while Martha-poo sits there suffocating with her dress up over her head. patiently awaiting the knuckleheads; upon seeing this, they muster their courage; yet, that's all there is to it, baby! Potentially pleasant outcomes do arise, but oh my! Wow, wow, wow. But that's the way things work in a civilized society, you know. (Again, to herself) All the hot chubby guys. Little infants. (Now, to NICK; really) There is just one man who has ever... made me happy in my entire existence. Do you recognize that? Onel**

**Nick**

**That... thing... what do you name it?... um, a lawnmower, I guess? grassy area**



## **The Exorcism**

### **Read Text:**

#### **4.3.1 Main Body of the Text:**

##### **Characters**

**Martha**

**George**

**Nick**

**Honey**

##### **Absurd Play , Setting and Structure**

**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** which was published in 1962 was the first full-length play by Edward Albee (1928-2016). Albee is one of the most significant American playwrights of the 20th century.

The impact of Absurdism and the Theatre of the Absurd may be seen throughout Albee's work. Post-World War II writers battled with Postmodern sensibilities in the absurdist theatre movement. The concepts presented in "The Myth of Sisyphus" (1942) by French philosopher Albert Camus can be found in these books.

Camus compares human existence to the ancient Greek myth of Sisyphus, who enrages the gods and must spend eternity rolling a boulder up a hill that only endlessly rolls back down. Camus argued that life is meaningless; the absurd arises from the clash between that truth and humanity's innate refusal to accept it.

After World War II, a new type of theatre emerged that emphasized the absurd in both its dramatic content and its production tactics; this new style became known as the Theatre of the Absurd. Blending techniques of Expressionism and Surrealism with content philosophically Absurd theatre allied to Existentialism. Surrealism was an artistic movement by Andre Breton. It was the successor of Dadaism. There was a shift in the visual arts and literature during the time. Expressionism is a movement in the arts that emerged in the early 1900s. The company originated in Germany at the turn of the twentieth century. Benedetto Croce, an Italian critic, maintains that art is the study of artistic expression. It's philosophical and metaphysical content is the first feature of Absurdist Drama. The playwrights of the Absurd refuse to believe in any religious, philosophical and cultural constructs. They re-examine the basic questions about



human existence. The playwrights of the Absurd tries to expose all that is superficial and inauthentic like absurdity in the play.

In the play *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* George plays a pivotal role. Secondly, there is no conventional structure. Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* concludes right where it starts, with two homeless people who are unable to see, comprehend, or anticipate anything. The plot is muddled, and it's not clear why the characters do what they do. The authors of Absurd plays do not view language as a vital medium of human exchange. Only American playwright Edward Albee is mentioned by Esslin in his study of the absurdist theatre. Albee admitted he had never seen any theatre like this before. Albee is troubled with existentialist conundrums. Albee's ideas and style are reminiscent of the theatre of the absurd. Albee, like Sartre, believes that the first step towards understanding man's freedom and responsibility is to recognize the emptiness of the universe. Albee does his best to shatter the illusions he encounters. Albee is more grounded in realism. Albee criticizes the gulf in understanding that often exists between spouses. He argues against erroneous conceptions about parenting. Albee has brought new approaches to the theatre of the absurd in his works. When it comes to dialogue, Albee is without equal in American literature. Simply said, Albee is unparalleled as an originator and master of the absurdist genre.

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Edward Albee's Style. combines elements of Absurdism with those of American Subjective Realism, as developed by playwrights like Tennessee Williams and Arthur Miller, and represents a significant departure from traditional dramatic conventions. Albee's characters manage to be both grounded and fantastic. They tiptoe around the boundary between real and unreal to the point that the distinction becomes moot. George adds that this lack of significance between the two concepts causes a blurring of the boundaries between fiction and reality. There is an allusion to love, honor, and personal fulfilment in European drama. Success illusions have been a topic of study in the United States. The American way of life is dominated by the false promises of fame, fortune, and admiration. Albee's drama explores the tension between appearance and truth. According to him, "the most moral, religious, political, and social structure man can create is his own family."





has caused the illusion to crumble. The American dream represents the aspirations of every citizen. There is a conviction that one must concentrate on achieving happiness in the here and now.

Martha's heavy drinking stems from her ongoing frustration with her personal and professional life. She focused the other half of her attention on proving that George lacked character and was "no good at trustees' dinner and fund raising." The other half she spent wallowing in despair at her inability to give birth.

### **Question.1 Summary and Structure of the Action in Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans.** American playwright Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is an intense drama. The play has three distinct acts. Act I opens with George and Martha, a middle-aged married couple, returning home at 2 a.m. from a faculty party hosted by Martha's father, the president of the university where George teaches, intoxicated and arguing. Martha tells George that she and the young new professor and his wife are coming over for more drinks later, much to his dismay. Although George doesn't find the joke funny, Martha assures him that he laughed during the party when she sang "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (12). Before their visitors arrive, George cryptically urges Martha not to bring up the kid and the two exchange insults. Biology professor Nick and Honey feel uneasy listening to George and Martha argue and play games. Nick and Honey first try to avoid the party, but they can't resist the free cocktails. Honey and Martha are out touring the house when Martha suddenly leaves to use the loo. George provokes Nick and admits that Martha is angry at him for not being more successful, and Nick is angry at George because Martha is angry at her father for holding back George's career. George is livid when Honey returns and he finds out that Martha has already told her they have a son. Soon later, Martha returns, having changed into a sexier dress—a telltale indication that George knows means it's time for another round. Martha starts making sexual overtures to Nick. Honey, feeling tipsy, makes a beeline for the toilet.



Nick tells George in Act II that the only reasons he married Honey were because she was pregnant, and her family was wealthy. It came out that Honey had a frantic pregnancy.

George tells Nick about a friend he had as a teen whose mother was shot dead by accident and whose father was died in a car crash. Nick is advancing his career by sleeping with influential faculty spouses like Martha, according to George and Nick's inside joke. When Martha and Honey get home, she and George get into an argument about their absent son. Martha tells everyone about the time her father forbade George to publish the story she wrote. George offers playing "Hump the Hostess," but he and the others feel it's too early and switch to "Get the Guests." George explains the storyline of his second novel, which centers around Nick and Honey's wedding. Honey becomes upset and quickly leaves; Nick immediately after her. When he gets back, Martha immediately begins trying to seduce him, but George is having none of it. Martha and Nick resume their seduction in the kitchen. When Honey comes back, George tells her that he just got the news that their son has passed away from a knock at the door. George tells Honey, who is shocked by the news, not to inform Martha.

In the opening scene of Act III, we see Martha pouring another drink while conversing with herself. As Nick walks in, Martha says, "Your sexual performance in the kitchen was a letdown," meaning that they didn't finish the act. Nick is angry because Martha told him that George is the only man who has ever made her happy, which Nick finds hard to believe. Nick is now officially Martha's houseboy; she tells him to always answer the door when it rings. Nick fights George off at the door, but eventually caves in and lets him in with a huge bouquet of snapdragons. Nick objects to the label of "houseboy," but George maintains that he is one unless he has sexual relations with Martha. Despite Nick's begging, Martha tells George that he isn't a houseboy. There will be one more game, George says; it's called "Bringing Up Baby." The others are hesitant, but George is adamant. Honey returns, and she says she's determined she can't recall anything that happened that night. After recounting his story about the vehicle accident, George breaks the news to Martha that their son has died. Martha yells out in horror, imploring George he must not do this, but George explains that he had to because she



had broken the only rule there was not telling anyone else about him. Nick is shocked to learn that their son is.

imaginary. It's morning, so Nick and Honey pack up and head off. Concern for their fictitious son has Martha fretting. To paraphrase George's song, "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (242) Martha is frustrated, and she acknowledges it. Then the secret of the made-up son is exposed. Nick and Honey leave, and George is responsible for taking care of Martha.

The message of the play is that people need to stop being so idealistic. It has both comedic and tragic elements.

Virginia Woolf: Who's Afraid of Her? Is Albee's finest theatrical effort.

**Question: 2 Discuss reality and illusion in the play. Or**

**- Reality and illusion in the play, or**

**Q 3 . Title of the play. Or Theme of the play.**

**Ans. Good writers create new realities, while poor ones rehash the old ones.**

**- Edward Albee**

**Every monster was a man first.**

**It is right Albee has shown reality in his plays.**

Albee has stated that the play's title signifies "who's terrified of the great scary Woolf... who's afraid of living life without false illusions. "Albee's interest in the theme of reality versus illusion is expressed in several his plays. In Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? he cites Nietzsche's interpretation of dichotomy of ancient Greek drama. He described in The Birth of Tragedy. Albee says, "There was a time when people believed in deities. And then revolutions came—industrial, French, Freudian, Marxist. God and absolutes vanished. Individuals find this very difficult and uncomfortable. They have left, fantasy and the examination of the self. According to Lawrence Kingsley, Albee's characters create illusions to help them evade feelings of their own inadequacy—as "George and Martha have evaded the ugliness of their marriage by taking refuge in illusion." The play demonstrates "how his characters must rid themselves of falsehood and return to the world in which they must live." Martial conflict can be suggested as the theme of the play. The conflict between Martha and George constitutes the substance of the play. Martha is frustrated woman and finds pleasure in torturing George. George is tolerant kind of husband.

The Exorcism of illusion is considered as the theme of the play. The play suggests the ultimate destruction of illusion and acceptance of reality. Albee originally wanted to give his play the title ' the Exorcism'. The word means driving away something unwanted. In the play Albee breaks the illusion between Martha and George. At the end George kills their imaginary son and killing these illusions. After shattering this illusion, the husband and wife come closer to each other.



**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** Is essentially an entertaining play with lots of fun and enjoyment. The very title suggests a riddle. The riddle is solved in the end George and Martha come closer to each other. The structure of the play follows an ironic pattern. It leads to several humorous situations. Each character tries to outwit the others. The play is a comedy. It is blended with tragedy. The play has funny dialogues, humorous situations and funny Characters. The play is full of pathos.

**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** is play in three acts by Edward Albee, it was published and produced in 1962. The action takes place in the living room of a middle-aged couple, George and Martha, who have come home from a faculty party drunk and quarrelsome. When Nick, a young biology professor, and his mousy wife, Honey, stop by for a nightcap, they are enlisted as fellow fighters, and the battle begins. A long night of malicious games, insults, humiliations, betrayals, painful confrontations, and savage witticisms ensues in the play. The secrets of both couples are laid bare, and illusions are viciously exposed. When, in a climactic moment, George decides to "kill" the son they have invented to compensate for their childlessness, George and Martha finally face the truth and, in a quiet ending to a noisy play, stand together against the world. They are not happy couple. They have no good relationship.

The play **Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?** is set on the campus of a small, New England university. It opens with the main characters, George and Martha coming home from a party at her father's house. The two of them clearly care deeply for each other, but events have turned their marriage into a nasty battle between two disenchanted. They become cynical enemies. Even though the pair arrives home at two o'clock in the morning, they are expecting guests, the new math professor and his wife.

A young professor, Nick, works in the biology department. He and his wife, Honey, walk into a brutal social situation. In the first act, "Fun and Games," Martha and George try to fight and humiliate each other in new, inventive ways. As they fight for self-respect, George and Martha use Honey and Nick as pawns, transforming their guests into an audience to witness humiliation, into lovers for creating jealousy, and into a means for expressing their own sides of their mutual story. In the second act, "Walpurgisnacht," these games get even nastier. The evening turns into a nightmare. George and Martha even attack Honey and Nick, attempting to force them to reveal their dirty secrets and true selves. Finally, in the last act, "The Exorcism," everyone's secrets have been revealed and purged. Honey and Nick go home, leaving Martha and George to try to rebuild their shattered marriage.

**Why was Martha afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

Martha fears the amount of reality involved in her life. She is afraid of Virginia Woolf, who tried to expose reality and the sincerity of emotion. This exorcism occurs in front of Honey and Nick, who are not sure what to make of it. Most of their masks have come down as well, but they remain somewhat naïve.

#### **4.4 Check Your Progress: -**

**Question 1- Illusions and reality in Albee's play: Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**



**Question:2 Why did Nick marry honey?**

**Q 3 Why Martha dissatisfied in play: Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Question: 4 What is Absurd Drama with reference of Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Question:1 Why did Nick marry honey?**

**Ans.** Nick and Honey are also important character of this drama. Just like his hosts' relationship, Nick's relationship with Honey is based on illusion. He admits that he doesn't feel passion for Honey. Nick just married her because her father was rich, and he thought she was pregnant. They have no good relationship also.

**Question:2 “What a dump. “Martha’s frank discontentment sets the tone of Edward Albee’s renowned play.**

**or why Martha dissatisfied in play: Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans.-** The three-act evening opens with sparring between Martha and her history professor husband, George. At the beginning of Act I, titled “Fun and Games,” Martha and George have just arrived home from another of Martha’s father’s late night. He hosts as college president. George, Martha has extended an invitation to a new, young biology professor, Nick, and his wife, Honey, to come back to their home for drinks. After Nick and Honey arrive, George and Martha begin exposing the dysfunction of their over twenty-year marriage, and violently and brutally. As the night progresses and the liquor flows, Martha makes a fatal mistake, she confesses to Honey that she and George have a son. When George learns of Martha’s indiscretion, he immediately goes on the offensive. At the end of the act, Martha humiliates George in front of their guests by calling him: “A great...big...fat...FLOP!”. Honey then becomes ill and is ushered to the bathroom by Martha. Albee shows how marriage not successful, if husband and wife had no mutual understanding.

Act II, entitled “Walpurgisnacht” meaning “...a Witches’ Sabbath... nightmarish wildness,” begins with Nick and George alone onstage exchanging stories of their pasts while Martha tends to Honey offstage. Upon Martha’s return, the two couples begin playing a series of “games” starting with “Humiliate the Host” in which Martha exposes the autobiographical inspiration behind a story George tells Nick in her absence involving a young boy who unintentionally shoots his mother and later kills his father in a car accident. The truth Martha implies is that George is the young boy in the story. In retaliation, George conducts two additional games. Seeking to reassert his power in “Get the Guests,” he trivializes Nick and Honey’s marriage through a “puffed up” mouse analogy. Honey, although slow to catch on, realizes that Nick has shared the



sordid circumstances of her “hysterical pregnancy” and their subsequent marriage. As a result, Honey experiences another bout of sickness. Martha seeks to even the score at the end of the act by pursuing a sexual encounter with Nick, cueing the next game of the evening: “Hump the Hostess.”

At the onset of Act III, “The Exorcism,” Martha announces Nick’s inability to sexually perform because he has had too much to drink. Soon after, while cradling a bouquet of snapdragons for Martha, George arrives at the front door imploring: “Flores; Flores para lose Muertos, Flores.” They soon return to their aggressive behavior after ganging up on Nick. George warns Martha: “I want you on your feet and slugging, sweetheart, because I’m going to knock you around, and I want you up for it.” After this declaration, he initiates the final game, “Bringing up Baby” which culminates with his revelation of their son’s death. Aghast, Martha claims that George does not have the right to “...decide these things” without her approval.

However, George has been pushed to his limit and, as such, chooses to end the evening of games by destroying the illusion of a son that he and Martha created so many years ago when they were unable to conceive. After the truth has been revealed about George and Martha’s fictitious son, Nick and Honey exit, leaving George to care for Martha who ultimately admits that she is afraid of Virginia Woolf, of living life free of illusion.

Act One

Fun and Games

Act Two

Walpurgisnacht

Act Three

The Exorcism

The Players

Martha - A large boisterous woman, 52 looking somewhat younger. Ample, but not fleshy.

George- Her Husband, 46. Thin, hair going grey.

Honey- 26, a petite blonde girl, rather plain.

Nick- 30, her husband. Blond, well put together, good looking.

Martha The Scene

The living room of a house on the campus of a small New England College

Act One- Fun and Games

George

How would I know what....

Aw, come on! What's it from? You know....

George

... Martha...

Martha

What's It from, For Christ's Sake?

George (Wearily)

What's What from?

Martha

I just told you; I just did it." What a dump!" Hunh? What's that from?

George



**I haven't the faintest idea What...**

**Martha**

**Dumbbell It's from some goddamn Bette picture... some goddamn Warner Brothers epic...**

**George**

**I can't remember all the pictures that.....**

Brief History of Drama - Modern American drama begins with Eugene O'Neill. Arthur Miller records his feeling about *Death of a Salesman*: "I always said that New England territory was no damned good". Willy's troubles was not his false ideals and lack of knowledge but the sales-resistant. *Death of a Salesman* is a unique American drama after Eugene O'Neill. Miller deals with the "little man" in American society. Thornton Wilder dramatizes the ideals of small-town America and Edward Albee satirizes the middle class. Albee's *Virginia Wolf* makes a statement about man's aspirations to exist in an harmonious union both with his fellows and with a fruitful cosmic order. The tragic pattern in Aeschylus and the tragic pattern in O'Neill relate very differently to the total meaning of the play. The silent point is that the conventional significance provides a point of departure for the modern playwright. T.S. Eliot uses Greek ritual and Christian philosophy in *The Cocktail Party*. O'Neill, Miller, Williams and Wilder deal with values that look back to the puritan theology. O'Neill rejected the conventional formula, he had to forge his own form. So, his dramatic career is a series of experimental efforts to find a satisfactory vehicle for "life". The autobiographical bias of his plays, which has been extensively documented by biographers and critics, is not so much an instance of narcissistic preoccupation as it is evidence of dissatisfaction with a dramatic tradition. O'Neill wanted to write about contemporary life. The life he knew best was his own. His experimental method consisted in the form of "realism" in *Desire under the Elms* and *Beyond the Horizon*. *The Hairy Ape* and *Emperor John's* are an adaptation of Greek and Renaissance stage conventions like chorus or the mask and the aside. Drama, O'Neill





said had to deal with life: "fate, God, our biological past creating our present, Mystery, certainly", this was the only subject worth writing about. *Mourning Becomes Electra* reflects Puritan Ego.

### **Question 3- Illusions and reality in Albee's play: Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans-** Edward Albee has shown the subject of reality and illusion more than once in his literary life. *Tiny Alice*, he claims, is a straightforward story, that dealt, in terms of reality and illusion, with symbol and actuality. The title of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* which means who is afraid of the big bad wolf, .....in terms, denotes living a life without illusions. *The American Dream* is an examination of the American scene, an attack on the substitution of artificial for real values in society. For Albee the world makes no sense because the moral, religious, political, and social structures man has erected to "illusion" himself have collapsed. In his drama, illusion is still present, and the action often dramatized the process of collapse, so that the audience can arrive at a recognition of the reality behind illusion. Most of the characters of Albee's plays are believed to be alienated in a world of its own, for instance, the four characters in *Virginia Woolf?* live as a group in a world of illusion. Albee introduces us to a savage type of game playing, which is of four ruthless games: Humiliate the Host, Get the Guest, Humiliate the Hostess, and Bringing up Baby. The first game is about Martha humiliating George to the point that he tries to kill her. In the second game, George tries to destroy the marriage of Honey and Nick. In the third game, Martha and Nick try to seek revenge upon George. During the final game, George performs the exorcism of their fictional son. The implications of these events are felt. George and Martha



would rather indulge in games and humiliate each other than confront their alienated situation. During these games both couples come in brutal contact with the confusion of fantasy and reality that has kept them in a state of alienation. As an absurdist Albee has made it impossible to distinguish reality from fantasy. He presents both concepts in an entwined way that they cannot be separated. Each character in the play is caught up in a world of illusion which keeps him or her alienated. The illusion of the son has been an essential element to George and Martha's avoidance of reality. The reality they try to escape from by creating a fantasy child is actually the reality of man's predicament in society. The death of the phantom child confronts the characters with the realities of their lives. Only George and Martha are left on the stage at the end of the play. They stand stripped of all illusions, there are no games left to play. Exhaustion overwhelms them and they lay in each other's arms finding comfort. Existential philosophy denotes that men cannot live through illusion. Man must learn to accept his loneliness, insignificance, and harsh realities before he can truly exist. George deals with those harsh realities at the end of the play when he decides to end the fantasy child even though it has been a comfort for them to have an imaginary child living with them. He has given up all his comforting illusions for the doubtful unknowns of reality. He has ultimately become enlightened and has accepted the responsibility for constructing a new life for Martha and himself. George, more than Martha, sees the danger this blurring causes, and his perspective allows him to make the decision to end the game. In the final scene George and Martha have been left alone. She asked him if he had to end the game, then he affirms that:

Martha: Did you.....did you..... must?

Martha: it was.....? Yes had to?

Martha: I don't Know.

George: {pause}: yes

George: {pause}: yes

George: it was .....time.

Martha: was



it? George: yes (Act 3, p. 139) Then George comforts Martha by assuring that things will be alright. George: {long silence}: it will be better Martha: {long silence}: I don't ..... know. (Act 3, p. 139) He interrupts her suggestion of the possibility of creating another imaginary child, by saying "no" before she can even finish her sentence; Martha: I don't suppose, maybe we could ..... George: no Martha. The play ends with George quietly singing "Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf.....", which concludes Albee's ultimate message that we must live without illusions. Illusion is not good for a happy life. George: {puts his hand gently on her shoulder, she puts her head back and sings to her very softly}: Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf

Virginia Woolf, Martha: I

....am....George..... George: Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf..... Martha: I ....am....George.....I....am..... (Act 3, p. 140)

Reality and fantasy in the play: Confusion appears in the play when it becomes difficult to separate between truth and illusion, reality and fantasy. Illusions are examined as unique "perceptual experiences in which information arising from real external stimuli leads to an incorrect perception, or false impression, of the object or event from which the stimulation comes," where "truth describes" things as they are. That's because, as the saying goes, "true illusions are.....all of physical origin." Who Is Afraid of Virginia Woolf? Albee lays truth traps for the unwary reader, which may or may not turn out to be illusions depending on the reader's perspective. A few examples: Is it possible that George had a hand in killing his parents? Is he the young Bergin? Honey and Nick say they don't want kids, but why don't they? The play's sardonic tone serves as a constant reminder that what appears to be factual at first glance may be allegorical or even an outright falsehood. George and Martha's hilarious comments make us question whether this is a true situation. How, for instance, can one be sure that George and Martha's son has died, or whether this is merely the product of George's vengeful imagination? The truth of Honey's hysterical pregnancy, Nick's ulterior motivation for marrying Honey, Martha's infidelity and her empty hatred—or are they illusions—are all brought to light by George. These are only a few of the more substantial questions that Albee leaves his readers with. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf's opening scene? Martha and George get into an argument because Martha made a joke earlier in the evening and George didn't find it funny. She renamed British author Virginia Woolf (1882–1914) as "Big Bad Woolf?" in Disney's The Three Little Pigs cartoon. The link to the famous author is significant because it implies that Woolf committed suicide; her own self-destruction serves as commentary on that of George and Martha. Just as Martha and George have built a perfect but unreal son, Woolf crafted beautiful and intricate novels that were ultimately illusory as a fiction writer. Albee introduces the play's central conflict in Act I: reality versus delusion. George said to Martha, "HIM UP.... Not IT" when she apologized for bringing it up. Martha says their boy has green eyes while George says his son has blue eyes when they talk about him. The spectators become aware that something is not normal. From that point forward, the audience has demonstrated their ability to distinguish between fantasy and reality. This doubt is intentionally cultivated by Albee. He keeps the audience member's attention constantly. In the middle of Act Three, George says, "..... but I didn't tell you about the second



novel," even though everyone in the play has heard about his first novel. Albee's exploration of truth and illusion continues in Act Three, as he unveils another game with words; George begins to tell a story about his trip to the Mediterranean, but Martha insists he has never been there. Ghostly Infant The made-up offspring is the grandest delusion of all. A hint is dropped early in the play when George says to Martha, "Just don't start in on the bit about the kid, that's all." Both Martha and George bring up their son after their "euphemism" talk with Honey; George, however, makes Martha narrate the narrative of their son in order to play the last game, Bringing up Baby. When George asks Martha if it was a difficult birth, she begins by saying, "it was an easy birth... once it had been.... Accepted, relaxed into" (Act 3, p. 127).

a kid or a kiddo She responds with a simple, "A child!" (Act 3, page 128), as though she were talking about something other than a human being. Already, we have reason to doubt the story's veracity.

Honey orders the couple to halt their activity. She thinks a telegram has arrived with the sad news that her kid has passed away. Slowly and methodically, George readies Martha for the news. George: "Martha ... (Long pause) ... our son is ... dead. (Silent) (A tiny chuckle) on a Coventry Road, with his learner's permit in his pocket, he swerved, to avoid a porcupine, and drove straight in a.... (Act 3, p. 129), The circumstances he describes are precisely those of the boy in the "Bergin" story, which turns this into evidence that the story George has told Nick is pure invention. Martha (Rigid fury):- "You ... CANT... DO... THAT!" George: ".....large tree". Martha: "YOU CANNOT DO THAT! (Act 3, p. 134). At this point Nick thinks that the son is dead and therefore, did not exist. Martha: "YOU CAN'T KILL HIM! YOU CAN'T HAVE HIM DIE," (Act 3, p. 135). Little by little Nick begins to put the pieces of the puzzle together. George then announces that he has eaten the telegrams which carry the news, of the son's death and Nick senses something wrong. Nick at first attributes her reaction to her shock over the news. But, when Martha challenges George's right to the act of murder, he replies "YOU KNOW THE RULES, MARTHA! FOR CHRIST'S SAKE, YOU KNOW THE RULES!" (Act 3, p. 137). Nick:- "What are you two talking about?" (Act 3, p. 137). George: (to Martha):- "lean kill him, Martha, if I want to. (Act 3, p. 137). Martha: - "You have no right... you have no right at all ...

(Act 3, p. 138). George: "I have the right Martha. We never spoke of it; that's all. I could kill him anytime I wanted to ". (Act 3, p. 138). Nick finally comprehends what the reader has already suspected that George and Martha's son is imaginary, yet: another of George and Martha's games, complete with its own set of rules. Nick then asks George: "You couldn't have... any?" which George corrects, "we couldn't," (Act 3, p. 138), and Martha echoes "Not only couldn't but didn't, for the child was only an illusion, created with words, and destroyed by them" (Act 3, p. 139). For once George shares with Martha the responsibility of their failure to have children. Being an absurdist, Albee has left the readers with question marks printed on their faces: what has caused Martha and George to "create the child? They have taken out of God's hands the human miracle of birth, and have thus incurred the wrath of God, George recognized this finally: "I'm not God. I don't have the power over life and death, do I?" (Act 3, p. 136). This leads us to another point that if George's lines are considered, it may be seen that his assertion of his ability to kill the child is not just



an assertion of his right to, but his ability to as well: "I can kill him, Martha, if I want to" (Act 3, p. 137). "And I have killed him!" (Act 3, p. 137). "I have the right, Martha. We never spoke of it: that's all I could kill him anytime I wanted to." (Act 3, p. 137). "It will be better." (Act 3, p. 139). Once the "Exorcism" of the child is done, everything changes. The last moments of the play are in vivid contrast to the first. The sharp cruel language is changed by short phrases and monosyllables. The sharp-tongued George of the earlier scenes is now gentle and tender. At one point Martha says, "I don't suppose, maybe, we could ..." (Act 3, p. 140). What is she suggesting? Going back to the illusion? Or beginning a new one? "The song in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" becomes a lullaby that George sings to soothe Martha, who answers, "I ... am... George... I... am." (Act 3, p. 141). Albee has referred to the song as being "Who is afraid to live without illusions?" Martha's fear reveals her as frail and vulnerable, fearing life without fantasy that has helped her live. This song has

become a haunting rhythm to her realization that her future is uncertain and full of nameless threats. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? it holds certain possibilities and views such as: the play could possibly be taken as hopeful, and that the exorcism leads to more honest communication and clarity in George and Martha's lives. Now that they have got rid of a destructive fantasy, they can progress to release themselves from their other defenses-liquor, cruelty and closer together. While if the play is bleak, leaving George and Martha totally defenseless against the horrors of the world. Another possibility is that the play is simply descriptive, suggesting that this is not a crucial evening for George and Martha, but part of a cycle they are doomed to repeat forever. The difference between them lies in the skill with which George and Martha have learnt to mask their sterility and the way they purposely allow reality to mingle with illusion. George and Martha talk about their son, they always have something different to say. George says "how bad a mother Martha is bringing home strange men". Another time, Martha accuses George of being "a bad parent". They are always trying to get back at each other, yet they still do not know what is real. The beginning is only a small indication to the cruelty that George and Martha will unleash in the play. They are alienated not only from each other, but from their own true selves. The play proceeds as George and Martha invite another couple, Nick and Honey, over for a night of drinking. Nick represents the wave of science; he is in control of himself but helpless in the association with humanity. The reader also finds that Honey continually finds ways by which she escapes reality. She avoids confronting her husband's infidelity by pretending not to hear or see what is going on. Early in Act Two, George and Nick are alone. Each reveals much of his past history. A reference to Nick's choice of drink.

**Question: 4 What is Absurd Drama with reference of Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans.** Absurd Drama is a kind of theatre that emerged in Europe and America after World War II. This type of theatre was referred to by Martin who wrote *The Theatre of Absurd* (1961). Camus maintains that the modern world is absurd; it makes no sense. The major absurd dramatists are Samuel Beckett, Arthur Rimbaud, Eugene Ionesco, Jean Genet, and Harold Pinter. Their plays convey humanity's sense of both alienation and loss of bearings in an illogical, unjust and ridiculous world. The theme of these plays is the sense of metaphysical anguish at the absurdity of the human condition. Absurdist plays suggest the idea of absurdity in their content and their form. Beckett's



Waiting for Godot and Ionesco's *The Bald Soprano* are examples of the theatre of the Absurd. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is an absurd Drama. This is a powerful drama written by Edward Albee. The Theatre of the Absurd is a term applied to many of the works of a group of dramatists who were in the 1950s: Adamov, Beckett, Genet, Ionesco and Pinter and Edward Albee, Arrabal, Gunter Grass, Pinget, and N.F. Simpson. In the absurdist view, there is no ultimate meaning of life everything is an absurd illusion. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* with its strange party games and rituals, plot and character is an example of absurdism. The ritualistic element, the title is given 'Exorcism'. The absurdist themes are a meaningless world and the isolation of the individual. With the destruction of the imaginary child George and Martha's last illusion is destroyed. They are trapped alone in an absurd and uncaring universe.

**Question: 6 Theatre of Absurd Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Discuss. Or Plot of the play.**

**Ans.** *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a powerful drama because of the powerful theme. The technique used by Edward Albee, is the ironic speech acts, simple negation, the reversal of illocutionary force in the play. Edward Albee is a genius in his career. His plays always focus on the family life of Americans. Edward Albee's experimentation in allegory, grotesque parody, brilliant wit, literary illusion, irony applied first time in his dramatic work. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* according to Gilbert DeBusschere, "immediately became the subject of the most impassioned controversies, the object of Criticism and accusation which recall the storms over the first plays of Ibsen and closer to Beckett and Pinter ". The drama historian Ruby Cohn called " the most adroit dialogue ever heard on the American stage". William Flanagan recalled, " was, to be sure, adrift and like most of the rest of us, he had arrived in town with an unsown wild oat or two. But the beginning he was, in his outwardly impassive way determined to write.... He adored the theatre from the beginning and there cannot have been anything of even mild importance that we didn't see together". The theatre of the absurd as "absorption in art of certain existentialist and post existentialist philosophical concepts having to do, in the main, with Man's attempt to make sense for himself out of his senseless position in the world which makes no sense- the moral, religious, political, and social structures man has erected to ' illusion ' himself have collapsed". Edward Albee's play *Who's is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Synthesis both naturalistic and absurdist theatrical element .

**THE PLAY PLOT:** Late one Saturday night, a husband and wife return to their home in a New England college town. George, 46, is an Associate professor of history; Martha, 52, is the daughter of the college president. They have been drinking heavily at a faculty party given by Martha's father, and as the two stumble around the living room and bicker, they seem like many other such couples after a long and alcoholic party. But this is a night in which tensions within their marriage will erupt and the patterns of their lives may be altered forever. To George's surprise, Martha announces that she has invited another couple to join them for a drink- at 2 A.M.! Naturally combative, George and Martha use the invitation as another excuse to battle. The guests arrive Nick, 30, a new faculty member in the biology department, and his wife, Honey 26. He's good-looking and athletic; she is very sweet. They quickly find themselves to be the audience for George and Martha's scolding war of words. As the evening progresses and the





liquor flows, tensions that have been partially hidden emerge in the form of psychological games. Martha is disgusted with George's lack of ambition and failure to advance in the history department, particularly with his advantages as the son-in-law of the university president. She treats George with open contempt, and George tries to strike back by using his superior verbal skills. He has taken an immediate dislike to Nick, not only because Martha is obviously physically attracted to the younger man, but also because Nick is a biologist. As a historian, George sees biology as a science determined to eliminate man's individuality. Nick tries to stay detached from the turmoil between his hosts, but he soon gets caught up in it and reveals himself as ambitious and shallow. Honey seems too drunk and too mindless to comprehend much of what is going on. A turning point occurs when George discovers that Martha has mentioned a forbidden topic to Honey while the two women were out of the room. The taboo topic: George and Martha's son. The bitterness between the couple accelerates, and they persist in their battle of verbal abuse. As Act I end, Martha has figuratively twisted a knife in George's back by harping on his supposed failure as a man and as a teacher. The fight dissolves into a shouting match and Honey is made physically ill by a combination of the quarrelling and too much alcohol. As Act II of the play opens, George and Nick talk alone. George tells the story of a young boy who killed his mother and caused his father to die, a story that may or may not be autobiographical. Nick reveals that he married Honey when she thought she was pregnant, but that the pregnancy turned out to be a false alarm. George's attempts to warn Nick about being "dragged down by the quicksand" of the college fall on deaf ears. Nick has his eye set on the top, and one of his techniques for advancement will be to sleep with a few important faculty wives. Martha and Honey return, and the sexual attraction between Martha and Nick increases. They dance erotically with each other as Martha goads her husband by telling their guests of George's attempts to write a novel, whose plot concerns a boy responsible for his parents' deaths. Infuriated, George physically attacks Martha, stopping only when Nick intervenes. George seeks his revenge, not on Martha, but on the guests. He tells a "fable" that mirrors Nick and Honey's early lives and her hysterical pregnancy. Humiliated, Honey flees the room. Enraged and out for blood, George and Martha declare "total war" on each other. The first victory is Martha's, as she openly makes sexual advances to Nick but fails to make George lose his temper. Yet after she has led the younger man to the kitchen, where George can hear their carousing, George makes a decision that will be his final act of revenge, one that will change his and Martha's lives forever: he decides to tell her that their son is dead. Act III finds Martha alone. Nick has proven himself impotent in their sexual encounter, and when he arrives again on the scene, she expresses contempt for him. She also reveals to him that George is the only man who has ever satisfied her. George appears at the front door, bearing flowers and announcing that there is one more game to play- "Bringing Up Baby." First, he induces Martha to talk about their son in the most loving and idealized terms; then, he announces the death of their son. Martha's furious reaction that George "cannot decide these things" leads Nick to understand at last George and Martha's secret. Their son is a creation of their imagination, a fantasy child that they have carefully harboured as a means of helping them survive the pain of their failed lives. Nick and Honey leave, and George and Martha are alone, with just each other as shields against the world. Only the future will tell whether they have been.





strengthened or made even more vulnerable by the traumatic experiences of the evening.

**Expressionism** - Expressionism as an art form was a movement that began in Germany before World War I. It is a revolt against Realism. It is less concerned with objective fact than with the external world. It appears to a troubled sick or abnormal mind of a character. Expressionism is a dramatic technique which enables a Dramatist to depict inner reality. The emphasis shifts from the external to the inner reality. There is a deeper and deeper probing of the subconscious action is increasingly internalized and what goes with in the soul becomes more important than the external action. The emperor Jones was the first play of O'Neill used Expressionism technique in his works.

### **Question: 7 Character of George in the play Who's is Afraid of the Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans - :** George is an Associate professor of history at a college in the New England town of New Carthage. At 46, he should probably be further along in his career, but through a lack of ambition, coupled with a bad relationship with the college president his father-in-law, he has become "bogged down" in the history department. He's been married to Martha, six years older than he, for 23 years, and their marriage has degenerated into an ongoing battle of words and psychological games to get the upper hand. George is intelligent and witty and has a keen ability to use words. In fact, he might be an excellent dinner companion if his basic energy had not been dissipated by Martha's constant belittling of him. He fights back by using his wits, but she knows where to wound him at his most vulnerable points- his failures, his physical weakness, his passivity. Virtually nothing is told us of George's, the other characters 'early life. George relates a story that he claims to be autobiographical, about a trip to a gin mill (saloon) during the Prohibition era, when he was a teenager. But there are clues to suggest that a boy in the story whom George refers to as a "friend" may be George himself. This boy had murdered his mother and caused the death of his father. Whether the story is literal or metaphoric is never made clear in the play, nor is it known if George is talking about himself or someone else. Whatever interpretation is accepted, however, it's evident that George suffers from a great deal of conflict about his parents and seems to harbour guilt and resentment about them. Through most of the play Martha gets the better of George, beating him down psychologically. She is skilful at dishing out punishment, and George accepts it. He turns the tables by abusing their guests in ways like Martha's treatment of him, by chiding them for their weaknesses and revealing their hidden secrets. In the end, however, George proves himself stronger than Martha. His decision to kill their imaginary child- a fantasy he and Martha have shared privately can be viewed as an act of heroism or as an act of revenge. Whichever approach you favour, George is in control by the end of the play. To some readers, George's name suggests George Washington an ironic comment on the corruption of American ideals, to others, it suggests St. George, the dragon slayer who conquered evil much as George conquers the "devil" that possesses him and his wife in the form of the child fantasy. Martha is the daughter of the college president, and one of the great conflicts of her life is that while she reveres her father, he seems to have no great love for her. Intelligent, well-read, and perceptive, Martha hides her intellectual gifts beneath a brassy, aggressive, and vulgar exterior. She tries to dominate and control her husband for two reasons: she resents his inability to fill her.



father's role, both professionally and psychologically; and George seems to enjoy the role of victim to her torturer. Martha battles almost continuously with George as an act of attempted communication. Faced with lives filled with self-loathing, they punish each other at the same time they wish to connect. Both drinks heavily, and Martha seduces a few younger men. A self-styled "earth mother," Martha admits that these encounters are unsatisfying; the only man who has given her true satisfaction is George. But it's one of the tragic ironies of the play that their mutual need can never be expressed to each other. Only when George successfully ends their fantasy of having a child does Martha admit a vulnerability and a fear of the future that she has not revealed before, but what lies ahead for her, and George remains ambiguous. Like George, Martha's name is perhaps meant to evoke Martha Washington, the wife of George Washington. Together they can be seen as offering a wry commentary on the "perfect American couple."

**NICK** One of George and Martha's guests, Nick is young (30), attractive, and physically fit. A biology professor, new to the faculty, Nick seems the ideal man, but he eventually reveals himself to have a hollow centre. He is amoral, shallow, coldly ambitious. His plans to get ahead at the college include sleeping with "pertinent" faculty wives. His willingness to be seduced by Martha, despite the presence of his wife and George, is evidence of his cynicism and lack of morals. But underneath the macho exterior is a weak and crass human being. He is impotent in his sexual encounter with Martha, and he admits to having married Honey because he thought she was pregnant and because her father was wealthy. Nick's profession as a biologist is contrasted to George's as a historian. Biology in the play is viewed as the science whose practitioners are determined to toy with human genetics to create a race of perfect human beings. Nick therefore suggests the results of these experiments, the "wave of the future"-attractive on the outside, empty within. Nick is the one character who comes to understand that George and Martha's son is an imaginary creation, and his half-hearted attempt to help "I'd like to..." suggests to some that the evening spent with George and Martha has changed him. But Albee gives no further clues as to what the future holds for Nick and Honey. Nick's name may suggest an old-fashioned term for the devil "Old Nick". Whether he's meant to represent a literal evil that invades George and Martha's household, or perhaps the evil of the future, is open to debate. Some readers believe his name refers to Nikita Khrushchev, the premier of the Soviet Union at the time the play was written. Thus, Nick's confrontations with George may suggest East vs. West, the energetic threat of Communism in contrast to decaying American ideals.

**HONEY** Nick's wife, Honey, 26, is, on the surface, sweet, gentle, eager to make a good impression, and prudish. She is also unable to handle her liquor, so her contributions to the conversation are minor at best. Her mindlessness turns out to reveal an inability to cope with reality. Honey shows herself on one level to be the eternal child. She defers to her husband, is easily offended, gives in to frequent bouts of vomiting. Yet, in the play she also reveals complex emotions. The daughter of a moderately famous preacher who left her a sizable amount of money, Honey was apparently pregnant when she married Nick, but the pregnancy turned out to be a false alarm. Since then, she has skilfully concealed from Nick her efforts to prevent a pregnancy. Her use of secret birth control devices reveals a deep-seated fear of having a child- and a fear of growing up. Martha's beautiful descriptions of her own "son" bring out Honey's maternal instincts, but whether these desires are fleeting or permanent cannot be determined within the context of the play. Honey's name suggests the cloying.



sweetness that is her exterior- and the sense that a little of her goes a long way. Some readers feel that “Honey” is not her real name, but merely the affectionate and condescending tag Nick has given her.

#### **4.5 Summary: -**

#### **Q 8. Play Plot - construction in Who's is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Or Craftsman of Albee in his play, who's is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?**

**Ans.** Northrop Frye points out that "as structure, the central principal of ironic myth is best approached as a parody of romance: the application of romantic mythical forms to a more realistic content which fits them in unexpected ways. The game motif and what it reveals is the realistic content in the play."

**Question-** Summarize the play's plot in a few sentences. "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

**Ans-** COMPOSITION IN THREE ACTS EXPOSITION OF ACT I, PART A Tensions are exposed among the characters as the cast is introduced. Increased Activity- Tensions rise as Martha keeps embarrassing George, George keeps treating Nick condescendingly, and Martha keeps flirting with Nick. As Martha verbally attacks George, he loses his cool, and the ensuing chaos causes Honey to throw up, the tension finally breaks. ACT II. While George and Nick chat about their families and careers, the tension between George and Martha continues to rise. Martha adds insult to injury by discussing George's unfinished manuscript. He then attacks her in retaliation and "gets the guests" by revealing their deepest, darkest secrets. CLIMAX George comes up with a plot to "kill" their make-believe son after being provoked by Martha's sex with Nick. In Act III, George renters and begs Martha to talk about their son after she exhibits unhappiness in Nick's sexual performance and his role shifts from masculine sex icon to houseboy. ACTION IN FALLING In a devastating blow to Martha, George reveals that their make-believe son has died. CONCLUSION. Without their made-up son, Martha and George are forced to face an uncertain future together.

The new American Dream was first described by Edward Albee. Albee's work is characterised by a consistent spirit of theatrical experimentation, pushing the envelope of American drama in the process. He only writes realistic plays. Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? combines fantasy with realism. Martha's animosity towards her spouse stems from her disgust with herself and her circumstances. George is upset by her sarcastic tone towards him. From that point on, their argument and mutual dislike intensify. Illusion is central to Albee's art. His protagonists are realistic people, but they always manage to triumph in the end. The human condition is shown to be ludicrous by Albee. They'll learn the hard way that illusions can be harmful.

The only male characters in Albee's Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? are George and Nick. They are both Associate Professors at the university in New Carthage, New Hampshire. George is bald and overweight; his age is 46. Nick, a young man of 30 years, has good looks and a charming personality. His body is that of an athlete. Martha noticed him initially due to his attractiveness. Her true goal is to woo him with her beauty. George and Nick's respective fields are a stark contrast to one another. Nick is a biologist, whereas George teaches history. George is a historian; therefore he is always thinking about the past. Nick is an extremely intelligent scientist. Another difference is how each person approaches life. George and Nick's moral compass couldn't be more different. In the twenty-first century, where George currently resides, cultural and



spiritual traditions are being lost with great sadness. Nick is a major contributor to today's immoral society. George understood that he had made a mistake when he wed Martha. He was booked by Martha herself. He tries to comprehend Martha, and he tells her about his imaginative kid. In the end, he plays the role of a supportive spouse. Even though Martha not only embarrassed him in front of the company but also made a pass at adultery with Nick. On the other hand, Nick wed Honey only for the inheritance money from her father. Nick is a total chancer. While his wife is lying semiconscious on the cold bathroom tiles, he has an affair with Martha in the kitchen. Nick may be a national icon in the United States, but he's just a Holloman at heart. He poked fun at George's advanced age and career setback. Honey matures further after she breaks down in tears over her pregnancy anxiety. George is a symbol of the American ideal gone wrong, but he is neither a horrible man nor a failure in and of himself; rather, he is a failure in a culture in which he does not participate. The disparity in outlook and value system between the two protagonists is made clear.

#### **4.6 Self-Assessment: -Writing Style**

**Question -9 To what extent do you think the play Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf is realistic or absurd?**

**Ans-**Playwright Edward Albee achieved a unique blend of realism and absurdism in his most famous work, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* as well as in earlier works like *The Zoo Story*. Let's start with some speaking of reality. Plays written by realist playwrights strive for authenticity by using realistic language and surroundings and focusing on problems that regular people confront. The dialogue is natural, the setting is a typical living room, and the plot revolves around an arguing couple, thus *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is a good choice.

However, in Albee's drama, appearances are deceiving. What seems like a plausible scenario at first suddenly becomes completely out of control. The existentialist ideas of Albert Camus, author of many novels including *The Stranger* and *The Plague*, inspired the creation of the Theatre of the Absurd in Europe after World War II. According to absurdist, our lives have no deeper significance. So, since nothing really matters and nobody cares, everything we do is just a ridiculous fiction we concoct to feel less alone. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* has its characters gradually shed their protective masks through scathing insults and public humiliation. At the play's climax, the fictitious child is destroyed, along with George and Martha's last remaining illusion. They're stuck in this crazy, cruel world together.

**Question 10 - In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, why do George and Martha keep referring to "Virginia Woolf" when they should be referring to "the big bad wolf"?**

**Ans :** Instead of "*Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf*," George and Martha keep singing "*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*" which refers to the story of the Three Little Pigs. Two primary factors contribute to this result. The first justification is symbolic, adding depth to the character. Clever word play like substituting "*Virginia Woolf*" for the "*big bad wolf*" is the sort of thing that George, Martha, Nick, and Honey, all of whom have advanced degrees, would find amusing. Albee employs it as a means of providing a



subtle character analysis of the play's various individuals. British author Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) is widely regarded as a modernist master. She was a major figure in the English literary, artistic, dance, and intellectual collective known as the Bloomsbury Group. John Maynard Keynes (1883-1946), E.M. Forster (1879-1970), and Virginia Woolf were among the most prominent members of the group. The name of the band comes from the section of London where many of its members resided. The four protagonists in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* would appreciate their high-society lifestyle and impact among academics. Furthermore, referencing Virginia Woolf's feminism in the context of the emerging feminist movement in the United States through the song "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" is intriguing. Both Martha and Honey are unhappy with their gender roles. The second, more pragmatic, explanation is that Albee could have purchased limited rights to the play, but the high expense of doing so would have prevented smaller, regional performances from happening. There is no need to secure permission from the copyright holders to have the characters sing "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?"

#### **4.7 Answer to Check Your Progress:**

**Question- 11 In *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, Honey's name is used in what way? call to mind a kind from the '60s?**

**Ans:** Honey, unlike the play's other characters, isn't given a proper name. Instead of giving her a specific name, Albee uses a general term of endearment. It would have been just as appropriate to call her "Sweetie," "Lovey," "Sugar," or "Dear." This represents the fact that she is more of a prototypical "a wife" than a fully realised individual. She represents the thin, blonde, 1960s American lady who was typically depicted in a jumper set and pearls or working in the kitchen. Nick's low opinion of her is evident because any similar woman could take her place. He admits he never loved her or even liked her. He claims he wed her because he was convinced, she was expecting and because it felt like "the right thing to do." And Nick is marrying her because of her wealthy family.

**2 Character sketch of Nick - Nick's name in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* gives some insight into his personality.**

True, Nick is immoral in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*. He stays and witnesses Martha and George's awful quarrel. On multiple occasions, he even takes part. He spends most of the play disinterested in and uncaring about his wife. He wed her because he felt pressure from their families to do so, she appeared to be expecting, and she came from a wealthy family. Even though he seems to be sexually impotent, he allows Martha to seduce him right under George's nose. This may be part of his revealed strategy to sleep his way to the top of the university. Nick's name may be a reference to Nikita Khrushchev, the Soviet leader throughout some of the play's time, and therefore a reminder of the play's Cold War setting. Nick, like Khrushchev, is a cold-hearted political schemer, and the devil's old alias, "Old Nick," may be a commentary on Khrushchev's moral fibre. Furthermore, the young professor is shown as strong and dangerous at first, only to be exposed as helpless and vulnerable later.

Nick is in his thirtieth year. Quite gorgeous, indeed. Because of his athleticism, he is robust and healthy. He thinks mostly of financial gain. Nick is a shallow and cruel





person despite his good looks and scientific approach. Martha is unsatisfied by his efforts. Even Honey, his wife, isn't happy with him. George defeats him easily. Nick's reaction to Martha's account of their encounter: "Hump the hostess?... That's a laugh." A group of inebriated "key figures" When compared to George, Martha knows that Nick is far less desirable in the bedroom. Nick's true character flaws are laid bare. Nick serves as George's antithesis.

Nick's young, lovely, and whimpering wife is known as "Honey."

What a beautiful scene, Honey.

Yes, extremely handsome, Nick agreed.

Honey was created to be an antagonist to both Honey's husband and Martha. Albee uses Honey as a scapegoat in the play alongside Martha and Nick. Honey is physically delicate. She lives up to the expectations set by her moniker. She has "slim-hipped," "monkey nipples," and "angel its," according to George. She's a frail, anxious teenager with a weak constitution. She's an utter moron. Honey, in contrast to Martha, can have children despite her small frame. However, she is really worried about giving birth. Since she was a teenager, she has had numerous abortions.

married. Honey's drinking and unreasonable dread of being pregnant have turned her into a neurotic child. Mentally, Honey is still a young child. Her words and deeds are mostly out of her control. Honey is like Martha in that regard. Honey shares Martha's lack of ambition. She thinks highly of her spouse because he married her solely for financial reasons. If all American women are like Martha, then they are brash, crude, and aggressive. It's the opposite of honey. She is symbolic of the stereotypically attractive, helpless, and subservient female. However, she controls her husband by lying to him about her pregnancies and using other forms of female coquetry. Nick, a young man of beauty and brains, is essentially her slave. While Martha's assertiveness falls short of winning over her husband, Honey has proven adept at taming a much larger, more powerful man. Honey, like Martha and Nick, is the target of Albee's satire.

**Personal Evaluation: #1 Highlight Albee's skilled writing in *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*? Or the skillful plotting of *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* by Edward Albee.**

Do you believe that most relationships involve some form of game-playing? Is it so, or why not? Do videogames always cause harm?

What makes a story tragic, you ask in question three? Is it possible to classify this play as a tragic drama?

The most important thing Honey takes away from her time with George and Martha is...

**Question-12 *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*'s Use of Symbolism, Imagery, and Allegory.**

**Ans.** Edward Albee is an extremely effective playwright. His use of symbolism, metaphor, and allegory is effective. An allegory is a piece of literature, drama, or art in



which all the characters or events stand in for larger concepts like good and evil. A symbol is a representational sign, object, or image.

Albee used the symbol of infants throughout this drama.

Many scenes in this drama include infants. At the rate he writes, Albee manages to sneak one in every other page. George and Martha constantly refer to one other as "baby" throughout the play. Martha also refers to Nick in this manner on a few occasions. The first time a man and a woman lock lip is a momentous occasion.

She tells Nick to "Take it easy, boy" when he touches her breast. Put the infant to bed. Nick and Honey are treated like children by both George and Martha. George remarks, "You must be our little guests," and Martha says, "Hey, kids...sit down" to the young couple when they first enter the house. A later George reference to them as "tots" is much more obviously a reference to infants.

Honey is "Peaceful...so peaceful...sucking her thumb...rolled up like a foetus," as George puts it while describing her on the bathroom floor. It's also worth noting that Martha uses baby speak with George on occasion, mainly when she's pleading with him to get her a drink.

When we realise that both couples have created fictional offspring, we can now understand why there has been so much focus on infant imagery. Nick wed Honey despite her extremely uncomfortable pregnancy. She bloated up like she was expecting a baby, but it was all in her head. Not to mention George and Martha's made-up son, whose "death" serves as the play's dramatic finale.

It appears that both couples have accepted the reality that they do not have any children. Honey rarely shows any emotion, but her plea, "I want a kid. I'm trying to conceive a child. Then, when George supposedly "kills" his and Martha's son, it's as if a nuke went off. Martha is heartbroken beyond repair. The insistence of both sets of parents on having kids could mean a lot of different things. A child could be the missing piece in their relationship puzzle.

Martha: Neither my husband nor I have blue eyes, and neither does our son. Like me, he has green eyes.

George said, "Martha, he has blue eyes."

Perhaps they think having a kid would show the world what a great family looks like. Perhaps they feel their lives would be more fulfilling with a child. All these possibilities are possible.

**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf's sexually charged setting:**

Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf was written in 1962, a moment of social turmoil brought on by the Vietnam Protest Movement, Afro-American protest writing, and materialism. You could say that right now is a great time to revolt against the status quo in general. Albee harshly critiques the idealised American way of life in his writing, declaring that the seemingly happy family of the prosperous father, the perfect mother, and the perfect children is a fabrication. Albee was disillusioned by the rapidly changing industrial, social, and political milieu of America, and the play's wrath expresses his revolt against a culture whose identity dramatically evolved during his childhood.

Albee's goal was to shake up high society, therefore he set the drama in a social protest environment, specifically a small New England college. The college community is shown





realistically in the TV show "Martha, George, Nick, and Honey." The Puritans who settled in New England in the 17th century are firmly identified with the region because it was one of the earliest British colonies in the United States. Their lifestyle was severe, opposing all types of pleasures, notably drink and sex, and they advocated for more "purity" in worship and teaching as well as individual and communal piety. Their anti-sex attitude was based on strict regulations, with marriage being required for sexual freedom. *Who is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* displays extreme exhaustion in both the alcoholic and sexual realms.

#### **Question 14 - Theatre of the Absurd: A Discussion The Play Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf is really ridiculous.**

Ans. Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* is an example of the absurdist theatre genre. is a masterpiece of absurdist literature that explores the contemporary world. Sharp words are spoken as the strained connection between George and Martha is revealed.

Martha and George are the main characters. Martha's father is the President of a tiny New England college where George teaches. After years of marriage, Martha and George are miserable people who torture themselves and anybody who visits their chaotic home with word games and drink.

Nick, a new biology professor, and his young wife, Honey, are invited out by Martha for drinks one night after a faculty party.

When people get drunk together, secrets are revealed, and feelings get hurt. At the end of each terrifying scene, George and Martha say, "who is afraid of Virginia Woolf" "chanted to the tune of "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf," from Disney's *THREE LITTLE PIGS*. *WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?* has three acts. "Fun and Games" lays the foundation for what is to come through a series of verbal, physical and emotional expository revelations. "The writing of the first act is often hailed as some of the greatest in all of the American theatre." The second act, "Walpurgisnacht," takes its theme from the night that witches meet, and Satan appears. In "The Exorcism," the evicting of demons and other spiritual entities from a person or area through elaborate ritual, take place.

Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* would not be strictly classified as belonging to the movement known as "The Theatre of the Absurd," there are, however, a great many elements of this play which are closely aligned with, or which grew out of the dramas which are classified as being a part of "The theatre of Absurd".

Albee ' is the product of his culture ". He reflects every strength and weakness of the culture. He wrote *The Zoo Story* 1958 and *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* 1962. Albee has exploded the Illusion of American civilization. He has captured in modern terms and dynamic power of man. He is the pioneers of the absurd Drama, Human relationships, illusion, and reality, Alienation which are basis of his stories. Albee says, " what happens in my play is, an accurate mirror of reality..." "When I write a play I am interested in changing the way people look at themselves and at their lives..."

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* 1962 is a play about marital conflict but its major theme is the need to get rid of fantasies and to face realities.



**Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? (1962), a play by Edward Albee is his first major success. It examines the marriage of George, a middle-aged history lecturer, and the older Martha, the wealthy college president's daughter. They spend the night in a sexually fraught drinking bout with a young biologist, Nick, and his 'slim-hipped' wife Honey who are drawn into the marital crisis. George and Martha, childless, have compensated for that lack by creating a fantasy child, the intangible measure of their destructive love, now aged 21. The three acts— 'Fun and Games', 'Walpurgisnacht', and 'The Exorcism'—represent a movement from caustic with through the demonic power of contradictory illusions to a potential purging of self-deception, and the play powerfully interweaves political, psychological, and metaphysical meanings. The names George and Martha evoke the idealism of the American Revolution, and their marriage symbolizes the collapse of American liberalism. Nick's brilliance as a biologist foreshadows a totalitarianism in which 'we will not have much music, much painting, but we will have a civilization of men, smooth, blond, and right at the middleweight limit', while Honey's sexless effort conceals a hunger for violence, and George fosters a liberal humanism which seems imprisoned in the past. The older couple's childless is mirrored in the phantom pregnancy which prompted the younger couple's marriage, and both represent the sterility of an exhausted culture. George's decision to 'sacrifice' their son marks the play's climax: the Walpurgisnacht spirits are exorcised, and May-day dawns with the young couple's departure and Martha's defeat. George's historical awareness and ritual skill have compelled Martha to acknowledge the relationship and renounce a fiction, but his earlier question remains both urgent and profound: 'Truth and illusion, who knows the difference, eh, toots?'... ...**

**Albee was one of the first American playwrights who introduced the American audience to the theater of the absurd, which was spearheaded in Europe by Eugene Ionesco and Samuel Beckett. His literary works showed his ingenious ability to "Americanize" the theater of absurdity, which was made famous by European playwrights, according to the Freudian psychoanalytic theory, earlier traumatic experiences highly influence the psychological development of personality. Freud also affirms that the earlier years of childhood development play a crucial role in the formation of personality. He states that all normal infants go through specific stages, The Play Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf? is concerned with George and Martha, in Act1 Fun and Games, Martha's father is the president of the college, and her husband might have become head of the Department of History and her father's heir, but he has failed to live up to her expectations. After attending the party given by Martha's father the couple returned home at 2 AM. quite**



drunk. Martha is frustrated in private and public life. Martha and George quarreled, in the end of the Play. George is frustrated with Martha. Albee writes, He himself described the Play as: "... double mystery play and also a morality play about truth and illusion."

" Theatre may be said to be derived from ritual, but that is only to say that it becomes theatre once the two have separated " —Bertolt Brecht, "

"I said I was impressed, Martha. ...

"Dashed hopes and good intentions. ...

"George, who is out somewhere there in the dark, who is good to me - whom I revile, who can keep learning the games we play as quickly as I can change them. ...

"Martha: Oh, I like your anger.

Martha: Truth or illusion, George; you don't know the difference.

George: No, but we must act as if it were true.

M. H.: Amen.

A. Albee; E. Woolf, Virginia. Are You Scared of Her?

I did tell you, Martha, that you impressed me. I'm feeling quite envious right now. Is that the intention, or what?

George, who is wonderful to me but whom I despise because he can learn the games we play as rapidly as I can alter them, is out there in the shadows. And even if someone could, I have no interest in happiness. And yes, I do wish to be happy. George and Martha: Sad, sad, sad. Whom I will not forgive for having come to rest; for having seen me and having said: "Yes, this will do". Who has made the hideous, the hurting, the insulting mistake of loving... me, and must be punished for it. George and Martha... Sad, sad, sad.

Martha: Oh, I like your anger. I think that's what I like about you most. Your anger.

Edward Albee, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

Martha: ... I cry all the time; but deep inside, so no one can see me. I cry all the time. And Georgie cries all the time, too. We both cry all the time, and then what we do, we cry, and we take our tears, and we put 'em in the ice box, in the goddamn ice trays until they're all frozen and then... we put them... in our... drinks.

Edward Albee, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

HONEY: (Apologetically, holding up her brandy bottle) I peel labels.

GEORGE: We all peel labels, sweetie; and when you get through the skin, all three layers, through the muscle, slosh aside the organs (An aside to NICK) them which is still slosh able--(Back to HONEY) and get down to bone...you know what you do then?

HONEY: (Terribly interested) No!

GEORGE: When you get down to bone, you haven't got all the way, yet. There's something inside the bone...the marrow...and that's what you gotta get at. (A strange smile at MARTHA)

Edward Albee, Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?

George who is out somewhere there in the dark... George who is good to me, and whom I revile; who understands me, and whom I push off; who can make me laugh, and I choke it back in my throat; who can hold me, at night, so that it's warm, and whom I will bite so there's blood; who keeps learning the games we play as quickly as I can change the rules; who can make me happy and I do not wish to be happy, and yes I do wish to be happy. George and Martha: sad, sad, sad... whom I will not forgive for



having come to rest; for having seen me and having said: yes; this will do; who has made the hideous, the hurting, the insulting mistake of loving me and must be punished for it. George and Martha: sad, sad, sad... who tolerates, which is intolerable, who is kind, whi...

You...you've been here quite a long time, haven't you?"

What? Oh...yes. Ever since I married What's-her-name. Uh, Martha. Even before that. Forever. Dashed hopes, and good intentions. Good, better, best, bested. How do you like that for a declension, young man?

Edward Albee, *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*

Martha: Truth and illusion, George; you don't know the difference.

George: No, but we must carry on as though we did.

Martha: Amen."

George: Who's afraid of Virginia Woolf, Virginia Woolf, Virginia Woolf, ...

Martha: I... am... George...I...am..."

: George (Long silence) : It will be better.

Martha (Long silence): I don't...know.

George: It will be...maybe. [...]

Martha: "Only...us?"

George: Martha, be careful...I'm going to tear you to shreds.

Martha: You're just not a manly person. You lack the intestinal fortitude to carry it off.

George: All-out war?

Total," Martha: Oh, I appreciate your rage. That's probably my favorite thing about you. The rage you feel.

What I mean by someone with informed taste is that they share the same preferences as others who have. Writer Edward Albee

*Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf*, in conclusion, is a ridiculous play. There are absurd moments in the play.

**Question 15 - Write a short note to the character of Martha.**

**Ans-** Martha- Albee critics apply to Martha, Virage, harridan, termagant wife. She represents a querulous, assertive but vulgar. She is considered responsible for the emotional castration of the male. Martha is quite a complex character. When the play opened it suggests her a middle-aged virago like figure. She is fifty-two years old but strong, George is six years younger. Despite her childlessness, Martha is a sexually active and vibrant lady. The hostess in "Hump" asserts that after her encounter with Nick, she has found sexual satisfaction and contentment with only one man: George. The President of the University's daughter. When she was still little, she lost her mother. Her dad ended up with another woman. This is the reason of Martha's frustration. Despite all this she has admiration for her father. She proudly calls him "quite a guy". She wants George to be her father a successful college executive, good raising more funds, winning friends and admirers. Martha is highly assertive and



domineering sort of wife. She gives commands to her husband. She begins to humiliate George in front of guests. She is highly aggressive and querulous kind of wife. Martha is highly unsuccessful, frustrated and discontented person. In all walk of life, she has suffered frustration and failure. She married George with the hope that he would rise in his career. Martha has failed as a woman because she could not give birth to a child. So, she is frustrated. As Anita Stenz has rightly pointed out, “.. The author is addressing the effects on a potentially powerful human being when they are discouraged from pursuing their own goals by their families, schools, and the larger culture. Martha is a victim because she wasted her potential by living vicariously and allowing her intelligence and imagination to go to waste.

because of her own inability to assert herself assertively and because of her low self-esteem. She directs a constant, ruthless stream of invective at her husband out of pure instinct, hoping to save herself in the process. Martha, who is rather dependent on George, has been torturing him for twenty or so years since he refuses to change to meet her dream. Martha is full of vulgarity, abusiveness and sexual exhibitionism. She not only utters abusive and insulting language for her husband, but she also tries to humiliate him by her attempt to seduce Nick, a young lecturer in Biology. She takes Nick to the kitchen and tries to gratify herself sexually totally ignoring the feeling of her husband. Even this experience turns out to be a failure and she admits that George is the only man who has ever given her satisfaction and happiness. Second thought is the illusion of fantasy child. She believes that she has a college going son, who is quite handsome, energetic and ideal in every way. She sincerely believes in illusion. But when fantasy crosses all limits and Martha begins to lose herself in distortions and insult her husband, George decides to kill this fantasy and bring Martha down to the Earth. Albee has portrayed Martha with sympathetic detail. Her lonely and frustration past as a child, her dreams, illusions, failure, frustration have been vividly portrayed. Martha had become a kind of emotional cripple like Jerry in *The Zoo Story*.

#### **Question 16- Write a short note to the character of George.**

Ans George, a middle-aged New England academic, is an associate professor of history at New Carthage College. His wife, Martha, is eight years older than he is, making him forty-six. Martha states that the story is autobiographical, and she has learned that he killed both of his parents in an accident. George is the type of person who is content to sit at home and read or write all day. He has been an associate professor at the History department for about 23 years. Martha claims that George has been professionally unsuccessful. She mocks him by saying that he works in the history department but isn't a historian. According to J.K. Galbraith, George is one of those associate professors who have not been promoted to full professor since the university that appointed them realized they were a bad hire. In contrast to the "insecure," "protesting," and "dull" academic failures Professor Galbraith typically encounters, George does not strike him as "vulnerable and rejected." George claims that he was the de facto chief of his division for four years while everyone else was off fighting the War. However, Albee's essential point appears to have been lost on Galbraith, as it has on many other critics. The ultimate worth and appeal and the possibility for happiness of every human being, after all, does not necessarily rely in his social or academic status or in his pay envelope ----- or in the view of a dissatisfied spouse, as Anit Stenz so astutely observes.



George is a man in revolt against the system which demands absolute conformity to the success myth and expects every person to be a go ahead. George is critical of the way in President of the college, Martha's father embezzles college funds. One fault in George is his failure to carry his inner revolt knowing that Martha is an aggressive and vulgar woman. George shows a remarkable quality for endurance. To save his marriage from being a flop he has been living in a hell without any grumbling. He tries to Humor her whims and illusions so much so that he shares the illusion of the fantasy kid. George is a man of intelligence and understanding. He knows the reasons underlying his wife's failings and frustration. In the third act Martha herself recognizes that if any man has

ever made her happy and gives her satisfaction it is her husband, George. George knows that Nick is the man who will do anything to rise in his career. He fools Honey into believing that when she was in bathroom and Nick and Martha were in the kitchen, the postman brought a telegram. Unwittingly, Honey later supports him when he tells Martha about the death of the imaginary kid in an automobile accident.

Despite his miserable married life George has not lost his sense of humor. He is gifted with wit and humor. His handling of Nick is witty, ironical and sarcastic. George's irony is in fact so subtle that Nick who prides in his own intelligence fails to see through his host's design. George is also highly inventive and imaginative. Towards the end of act II he shows deep anguish over Martha. He breaks a bottle of liquor and he warns her .

You've changed strategies, Martha. That's much too much to take in. Having a sleazy understanding in front of others is fine by me.

In short Albee has treated George as both a character and a dramatic function. Infect George is a new kind of Hero who deliberately plays what the society would describe as anti - hero.

**4.9 References/ Suggested Readings :**1 Albee, Edward. *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* New York: Atheneum, 1969.

2 Bigsby, C.W. E. Albee. Chip's Book Inc. 1969.

3 Bloom, Harold ed. *Edward Albee: Modern Critical Views*. New Haven, Conn: Chelsea House, 1987

4 *Who's is Afraid of Virginia Woolf?* Text





## **Chapter Five**

### **Preparation for Examination:**

**GJUS&T Hisar -Haryana (India) is situated at Hisar 166 KM from Delhi, on Delhi-Rohtak-Hisar-Sirsa-Fazilka NH10. GJUS &T Hisar is conducting UG, PG, PhD, B.Ed. MBA, PGDCA,BBA and MA English, MCOM, MSC Math. The Directorate of Distance Education of the university was established in 1997. The university has been accredited by 'A' Grade by NAAC UGC. The program's goal is to support academic inquiry into new subfields of higher education.**

**Tips for Preparing for Examination- GJUS&T Hisar preparation tips help the students to score good marks in the examination. GJU is the prestigious University of India**





which offers PG Commerce, Science, Math, MA English. These preparations tips and guidelines will help the students for securing good marks in examination and better understanding of the American literature.

- 1. Time Management - Time Balancing** is needed when you are within the examination hall and preparing for the exam. While preparing the timetable is very important, try to complete all topics and syllabus. Make timetable and planning to complete the syllabus and paper. Write neat and clean language. Your language should be concise, clear and simple. Your planning, what topics you read, what language you use, what quotes you write, how you manage all this, it is very important.
- 2. Analyses of syllabus and exam pattern,** Students should have complete knowledge about syllabus and exam pattern.
- 3. Prepare Smartly-** Smart preparation is very necessary in securing good marks. Hard work is the key to success. Discipline, mindset is also very important in study.
- 4. Stay Fit and Healthy-** This is apt saying" Healthy mind lives in healthy body ". The students should include nutritious food daily in diet, keep yoga, exercise to keep mind calm and fresh. After doing work take some rest, take some light food and then start. Be positive and calm.
- 5. Revision-** Revision is must to get good marks. Make understanding and revision of the syllabus, writer, works, books, quotes, critics views. Revision will assist you to memorize topics. Be prepared and go to exam timely do best.

Thanks