Master of Arts (1ST YEAR)

MA-103

ENGLISH

Directorate of Distance Education Guru Jambheshwar University of Science & Technology

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Subject M.A	
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Unit :01 (1798-1914)Sem-1	
Wordsworth	

Lesson Structure

1.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

1.9 Answers to Your Progress

1.10 Suggested Readings

1.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

1.2 Introduction- William Wordsworth was one of the founders of English Romanticism and one of its most central figures and important intellects. He is remembered as a poet of spiritual and epistemological speculation, a poet concerned with the human relationship to nature, and a fierce advocate of using the vocabulary and speech patterns of common people in poetry. Wordsworth is best known for ***Lyrical Ballads***, co-written with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and ***The Prelude***, a Romantic epic poem chronicling the "growth of a poet's mind."Wordsworth's deep love for the "beauteous forms" of the natural world was established early. For Wordsworth, poetry, which should be written in "the real language of men," is nevertheless "the spontaneous overflow of feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility."

Wordsworth continued to write poetry with energy and passion over the next several years, During these years he composed "The Solitary Reaper," "Resolution and Independence," and "Ode: Intimations of Immortality," Wordsworth is considered to be the pioneer of the very famous Romanticism era. He, along with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge pioneered this style and made it so much popular. Romanticism is not writing about romance or love. This was the style in which poets broke the traditional norms. They broke free from the chains classicism put on them.

1.3 Main Body of the Text

1.3.1 About the age

The Romantic period

Although literary Romanticism occurred from about 1790 through 1850, not all writers of this period worked in this style. Certain characteristics make a piece of literature part of the Romantic Movement. You won't find every characteristic present in every piece of Romantic literature; however, you will usually find that writing from this period has several key characteristics.

1. Glorification of Nature

Nature, in all its unbound glory, plays a huge role in Romantic literature. Nature, sometimes seen as the opposite of the rational, is a powerful symbol in work from this era. Romantic poets and writers give personal, deep descriptions of nature and its wild and powerful qualities.

2. Awareness and Acceptance of Emotions

A focus on emotion is a key characteristic of nearly all writing from the Romantic period there are feelings described in all forms, including romantic and filial love, fear, sorrow, loneliness, and more. This focus on emotion offered a counterpoint to the rational, and it also made Romantic poetry and prose extremely readable and relatable.

3. Celebration of Artistic Creativity and Imagination

In contrast to the previous generations' focus on reason, writers of the Romantic Movement explored the importance of imagination and the creative impulse. Romantic poets and prose writers celebrated the power of imagination and the creative process, as well as the artistic viewpoint. They believed that artists and writers looked at the world differently, and they celebrated that vision in their work.

4. Emphasis on Aesthetic Beauty

Romantic literature also explores the theme of aesthetic beauty, not just of nature but of people as well. This was especially true with descriptions of female beauty. Writers praised women of the Romantic era for their natural loveliness, rather than anything artificial or constrained.

5. Themes of Solitude

Writers of the Romantic era believed that creative inspiration came from solitary exploration. They celebrated the feeling of being alone, whether that meant loneliness or a much-needed quiet spaceto think and create.

6. Focus on Exoticism and History

Romantic-era literature often has a distinct focus on exotic locations and events or items from history. Poems and prose touch on antiques and the gifts of ancient cultures around the world, andfar-away locations provide the setting for some literary works of this era.

The writers of the Romantic era did not turn away from the darker side of emotion and the mysteries of the supernatural. They explored the contrast between life and death. The use of Personification is a very common device in romantic poetry. The writer's used personification in their poem.

7. Focus on the Self and Autobiography

Many works of Romantic-era literature are deeply personal, and they often explore the self of the writer. There is the autobiographical influence in poems and prose of the period. One characteristic of this movement was the importance placed on feelings and creativity, and the source of much of this emotional and artistic work was the background and real-life surroundings of the writer. This self-focus preceded confessional poetry of the mid-1900s, but you can see its profound influence on that movement.

1.3.2 About the author

Wordsworth was born as the second of five children in the Lake District. After the death of his mother in 1778, his father sent him to *Hawkshead* Grammar School. In 1783 his father died. Although many aspects of his boyhood were positive, he remembered times of loneliness and anxiety. It took him many years, and much writing, to recover from the death of his parents.

Wordsworth went to *St John's College*, Coverage in 1787. Three years later, in 1790, he visited French Revaluation and supported the Republican movement.

In November 1791, Wordsworth returned to France and took a walking tour of Europe that included the Alps and Italy. He fell in love with a French woman, Annette Vallon, who in 1792 gave birth to their child, Caroline. Because he was poor and there were tensions between Britain and France, he returned alone to England the next year. But he supported Annette Vallon and his daughter as best he could in later life. The war between France and Britain prevented him from seeing Annette and Caroline again for

several years. Wordsworth would likely have been depressed during the 1790s. In 1802, Wordsworth and his sister, Dorothy, visited Annette and Caroline in France.

In 1793 Wordsworth published the poetry collections *An Evening Walk* and *Descriptive Sketches*. In 1795 he met Samuel Taylor Coleridge in Somerset. The two poets quickly developed a close friendship. In 1797, Wordsworth and his sister, *Dorothy*, moved to Somerset, just a few miles away from Coleridge's home in *Nether Stowey*. Together, Wordsworth and Coleridge produced *Lyrical Ballads* (1798), an important work in the English Romantic movement. The Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* is considered a central work of Romantic literary theory. In it, Wordsworth discusses what he sees as the elements of a new type of poetry, one based on the "real language of men" and which avoids the poetic diction of much eighteenth-century poetry. Here, Wordsworth also gives his famous definition of poetry as "the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings from emotions recollected in tranquility." A fourth and final edition of *Lyrical Ballads* was published in 1805. He wrote a poem about daffodils and the Lake District.

Wordsworth, Dorothy, and Coleridge then traveled to Germany in the autumn of 1798. The main effect on Wordsworth was that he became homesick. But he began to work on the important autobiographical piece *The Prelude*. He also wrote several famous poems, including "the Lucy poems." He and his sister moved back to England, now to *Dove Cottage* in Grasmere in the Lake District, and this time with the poet Robert Southey nearby. Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Southey came to be known as the "Lake Poets". Through this period, many of his poems speak of death, endurance, separation, and grief.

In 1802 he married a childhood friend, Mary Hutchinson. Dorothy continued to live with the couple.

In 1807, his *Poems in Two Volumes* were published, including "Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood"

1.3.3 About the poems

William Wordsworth is the strong voice in literature who declared a new movement in creative art, especially in poetry. With the publication **of 'Lyrical Ballads'**, jointly published by Wordsworth and Coleridge, the people of the world stepped into a new stage of English literature as well as world literature. In the Preface to Lyrical Ballads,

Wordsworth explained different aspects of this new sort of literary movement. He explained both the thematic and linguistic ideasof romanticism.

Indeed, romanticism started as a revolt of the individual against the established traditional values. But it was more interesting that this movement itself turned into an established outlook because of its ever-appealing declaration of individual freedom. Earlier poetry and literature were intended for and about rich people and Wordsworth freed poetry from such limitation. Instead of kings, queens, dukes, historical and mythological figures, Wordsworth declared to accept the "incidents and situations from common life." as the theme of poetry and a "selection of language used by men." language of poetry. With Wordsworth, Coleridge is also regarded highly as the co-fighter and Blake as the pioneer of the Romantic Movement. All of them are credited for starting the movement and are considered as the first generation of romantic poets. However, Shelley, Keats, and Byron are counted as the second generation of romantic poets for their continuing the movement. Though, in the hand of Byron, romanticism got a new shape.

Wordsworth's literary theories explained in The Preface to Lyrical Ballads are reflected in most of his writings especially in the poetry collection in *Lyrical Ballads*. 'The Prelude', Tintern Abbey', 'Ode: Intimations of Immortality, etc can be mentioned as some of his examples of romantic poetry.

1.4 Main Body of the Text

1.4.1 Prescribed poems in the syllabus

- To the Cuckoo
- The Solitary Reaper
- Daffodils
- Tintern Abbey
- Ode On Intimation of Immortality
- Ode to Duty
- Nutting
- Strange Fits of Passion

- The Table Turned

1.4.2 Further Body of the Text

1. The Solitary Reaper

Introduction- "The Solitary Reaper" by William Wordsworth is written as a recollection of an overwhelming emotional experience. It is about the song sung by a Solitary Reaper. 'The Solitary Reaper' was singing and doing her work without minding anyone. But, the poet was observing her, mesmerized by the song. He compares her song to that of Nightingale and the Cuckoo-bird, yet he states that her song is the best. Despite the poet's inability to decipher the song's meaning, he understands that it is a song of melancholy. The poet listened motionlessly until he left the place, but the song never left him. Even after a long time, he has come away from that place, he says, he could still listen. The song continued to echo in his heart long after it is heard no more. The beautiful experience left a deep impact and gave him a long-lasting pleasure.

Stanza One

Behold her, single in
the field, Yon solitary
Highland Lass!
Reaping and singing
by herself;Stop here,
or gently pass!
Alone she cuts and binds
the grain,And sings a
melancholy strain;
O listen! for the Vale
profoundIs
overflowing with
sound.

In the First stanza of "The Solitary Reaper," Wordsworth describes how the Reaper was singing all alone. During one of his journeys in the countryside of Scotland, he saw a

Highland girl working in the field all alone. She had no one to help her out in the field. So she was singing to herself. She was singing without knowing that someone was listening to her song. The poet doesn't want to disturb her solitude so requests the passerby's go without disturbing her. She was immersed in her work of cutting and binding while singing a melancholy song. For the poet, he is so struck by the sad beauty of her song that the whole valley seems to overflow with its sound.

Stanza Two

No Nightingale did ever
chaunt More welcome notes
to weary bandsOf travellers
in some shady haunt,
Among Arabian sands:
A voice so thrilling ne'er
was heard In spring-time
from the Cuckoo-bird,
Breaking the silence of the
seas Among the farthest
Hebrides.

In the second stanza of "The Solitary Reaper," the poet compares the young woman's song with 'Nightingale' and 'Cuckoo' – the most celebrated birds by the writers and poets for the sweetness of voice. But, here he complains that neither 'Nightingale' nor the 'Cuckoo' sang a song that is as sweet as hers. He says that no nightingale has sung the song so soothing like that for the weary travelers. For, the song of the girl has stopped him from going about his business. He is utterly enchanted that he says that her voice is so thrilling and penetrable like that of the Cuckoo Bird, which sings to break the silence in the 'Hebrides' Islands. He symbolically puts forth that her voice is so melodious and more than that of the two birds, known for their voice.

Stanza Three

Will no one tell me what
she sings?–Perhaps the

plaintive numbers flow For
old, unhappy, far-off
things, And battles long
ago:
Or is it some more
humble lay,Familiar
matter of to-day?
Some natural sorrow,
loss, or pain,That has
been, and may be again?

In the third stanza of "The Solitary Reaper," the poet depicts his plight over not understanding the theme or language of the poem. The poet couldn't understand the local Scottish dialect in which the reaper was singing. So tries to imagine what the song might be about. Given that it is
……a '***plaintive number'*** and a '***melancholy strain'*** (as given in line 6) he speculates that her song might be about some past sorrow, pain or loss ***'of old, unhappy things***' or battles fought long ago. Or perhaps, he says, it is a humbler, simpler song about some present sorrow, pain, or loss, a ***'matter of today***.' He further wonders if that is about something that has happened in the past or something that has reoccurred now.

Stanza Four

Whate'er the theme, the
Maiden sang As if her song
could have no ending; I saw
her singing at her work,
And o'er the sickle
bending;– I listened,
motionless and still;
And, as I mounted up
the hill, The music in
my heart I bore,
Long after it was heard no more.

In the fourth stanza, the poet decides not to probe further into the theme. He concludes that whatever may be the theme of her, it is not going to end. Not only her song but also her suffering sounds like a never-ending one. He stays there motionless and listened to her song quite some

times. Even when he left and mounted up the hill he could still hear her voice coming amongst the produce, she was cutting and binding. Though the poet left that place, the song remained in his heart, long after he heard that song.

Literary/ Poetic Devices Used

'The Solitary Reaper by William Wordsworth uses straightforward language and meter as well as natural theme and imagery. Once again Wordsworth reflected his belief in the importance of the natural world. The poem highlights his definition of poetry to be a spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings from the poet and the readers part.

2. Reference of the poem 'Daffodils'

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales
and hills,When all at once I
saw a crowd,
A host, of golden
daffodils; Beside the
lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars
that shine And twinkle on
the milky way, They
stretched in never-ending
lineAlong the margin of a
bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a
glance, Tossing their heads in
sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced;
but theyOutdid the sparkling
waves in glee:
A poet could not

but be gay,In such
a jocund
company:
I gazed—and gazed—but little
thought What wealth the show to
me had brought:

For oft, when on my
couch I lie In vacant or
in pensive mood, They
flash upon that inward
eye Which is the bliss
of solitude;
And then my heart with
pleasure fills,And dances
with the daffodils

Critical Appreciation of the poem 'Daffodils'

'Daffodils' is a famous poem written by William Wordsworth. In this poem, the poet-William Wordsworth describes one of his real experiences in a beautiful place known for its natural beauty. Once in that place, he was aimlessly walking alone like a cloud and suddenly discovered a bunch of golden daffodils which, mesmerized him and kept him gazing at its wonder. The poet tells that how this simple look was so wonderful for him and what this glance later meant to him. The poet describes this godly beauty of daffodils in many extraordinary remarks and comments. He sees the endless view of the golden (gold-colored) daffodils as a never-ending line.

After describing the daffodil's beauty, he proceeded on to tell about the beauty of its background and the nice setting it made on the daffodils. At last, after his long gaze, he suddenly asks himself that what does all those meant to him and how it will benefit him and then left the place. But later, he realized how the picture benefitted him and how it made him relaxed when alone.

This poem is wonderful as it lets people love nature and understand its real beauty, more nicely. It also lets us understand how wonderful God's creations are and in what

amount we deny them. In the last part of the poem, the readers learn the importance of nature and also know about the feelings of the poet.

3. Reference of the Poem

The world is too much with us

‘The world is too much with us; late and soon

Getting and spending, we lay waste our
powers;—Little we see in Nature that is
ours;
We have given our hearts away, a
sordid boon!This Sea that bares her
bosom to the moon;

The winds that will be howling at all
hours, And are up-gathered now like
sleeping flowers;For this, for
everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I’d rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me
less forlorn;Have sight of Proteus rising
from the sea;
Or hear old Triton blow his
wreathèd horn.he world is too
much with us

Reference of the poem –

Angrily, the speaker accuses the modern age of having lost its connection to nature and to everything meaningful. “The world is too much with us” falls in line with several sonnets written by Wordsworth in the early 1800s that criticize or admonish what Wordsworth saw as the decadent material cynicism of the time. This relatively simple poem angrily states that human beings are too preoccupied with the material (“The

world...getting and spending") and have lost touch with the spiritual and with nature. In the sestet, the speaker dramatically proposes an impossible personal solution to his problem—he wishes he could have been raised as a pagan, so he could still see ancient gods in the actions of nature and thereby gain spiritual solace. His thunderous "Great God!" indicates the extremity of his wish—in Christian England; one did not often wish to be a pagan.

On the whole, this sonnet offers an angry summation of the familiar Wordsworthian theme of communion with nature and states precisely how far the early nineteenth century was from living out the Wordsworthian ideal. The sonnet is important for its rhetorical force (it shows Wordsworth's increasing confidence with language as an implement of dramatic power, sweeping the wind and the sea up like flowers in a bouquet), and for being representative of other poems in the Wordsworth canon—notably "London, **1802**," in which the speaker dreams of bringing back the dead poet John Milton to save his decadent era.

"Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
Little we see in Nature that is ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!"

He says that even when the sea "bares her bosom to the moon" and the winds howl, humanity is still out of tune, and looks on uncaringly at the spectacle of the storm. The speaker wishes that he was a pagan raised according to a different vision of the world, so that, "standing on this pleasant lea," he might see images of ancient gods rising from the waves, a sight that would cheer him greatly. He imagines "Proteus rising from the sea," and Triton "blowing his wreathed horn."

Form of the Poem

This poem is one of the many excellent sonnets Wordsworth wrote in the early 1800s. Sonnets are fourteen-line poetic inventions written in iambic pentameter. There are several varieties of sonnets; "The world is too much with us" takes the form of a Petrarchan sonnet, modeled after the work of Petrarch, an Italian poet of the early Renaissance. A Petrarchan sonnet is divided into two parts, an octave (the first eight lines of the poem) and a sestet (the final six lines). The rhyme scheme of a Petrarchan sonnet is somewhat variable; in this case, the octave follows a rhyme scheme of ABBAABBA, and the sestet

follows a rhyme scheme of CDCDCD. In most Petrarchan sonnets, the octave proposes a question or an idea that the sestet answers, comments upon, or criticizes.

4. Nutting by William Wordsworth

Reference of the poem

Stanza-1

—It seems a day
(I speak of one from many singled
out) One of those heavenly days
that cannot die;When, in the
eagerness of boyish hope,
I left our cottage-threshold, sallying forth
With a huge wallet o'er my shoulders slung,
A nutting-crook in hand; and turned
my steps Tow'rd some far-distant
wood, a Figure quaint,Tricked out in
proud disguise of cast-off weeds
Which for that service had been
husbanded,

A reader will immediately notice that the first line of 'Nutting' is indented in. This gives the verse the feeling of emerging out of nothing. The words sneak up on the reader and suddenly one is involved with the story.

The speaker's syntax at the beginning of this piece is also interesting. The words are written as if the narrator is truly speaking aloud to some, unknown at this point, a listener. He makes sure to note that the "day" he is thinking of is only one of many that stick out to him. It was a day of a particular breed in that it was "heavenly." He remembers it so fondly that it "cannot die."

Throughout the following lines, he describes his actions as a child. This is a fact which should not be forgotten as one becomes more immersed in the story. The speaker expresses from the start that he was filled with "boyish hope" during this period. He was young and naive as he set out from his family's "cottage-threshold." His movements are described as being "sallying." He moved forward unafraid of what he was going to face.

On his person, he is carrying a “huge wallet” or bag and a “Nutting-crook” this is an implement used to harvest hazelnuts. The reminiscing speaker recalls how he chose to wander far from home to a “distant wood.” As he walks along the imagines his appearance as being “quaint” and interesting. His boy is covered in what he considers to be a “disguise of cast-off weeds.” These were plants that he took for that particular “service.”

Stanza-2

By exhortation of my frugal
Dame— Motley accoutrement,
of power to smile
At thorns, and brakes, and brambles,—and,
in truth,More ragged than need was! O’er
pathless rocks, Through beds of matted
fern, and tangled thickets, Forcing my
way, I came to one dear nook Unvisited,
where not a broken bough
Drooped with its withered leaves, ungracious sign
Of devastation; but the hazels rose
Tall and erect, with tempting
clusters hung, A virgin scene!—A
little while I stood,

The weeds he has drooped over and around his body came from his “frugal Dame,” or mother. It is at this point in the story the fairy-tale elements come into play. He refers to his mother as a “Dame” to reference fantastical tales of knights. These items are a “Motley” or random and not necessarily pretty, bunch. They make up the random accumulation of items or “accouterment” of his assembled costume. These elements please the speaker greatly.

He has added “thorns” and “brambles” to his clothes, making them even more ragged than they needed to be. He took pleasure from the construction of these items. They only become more ragged as he moves over “pathless rocks” and through beds of “matted fern.” He is climbing and crawling his way through the unmarked woods.

Finally, he comes upon “one dear nook” or clearing in the forest which has never, at least by him, been visited before. This place is almost pristine. There are no broken branches or “withered leaves.” It has known no “devastation.” To add to the joy of the moment

there are “hazelnuts” to be found in the area. It is a “virgin scene, “ untouched, until now, by humans. He stands for a moment in appreciation.

Stanza-3

Breathing with such suppression of

the heartAs joy delights in; and,

with wise restraint Voluptuous,

fearless of a rival, eyed

The banquet;—or beneath the trees I sate

Among the flowers, and with the flowers

I played;A temper known to those, who,

after long

And weary expectation, have

been blestWith sudden

happiness beyond all hope.

The young boy is delighted to have found such a place and has to “suppress” his heart to keep the
joy in. It is now time for him to set about harvesting his nuts and sating his hunger.

After indulging in the great number of nuts growing around the clearing he spends time playing in
“Among the flowers.” This is truly a joyous moment as he celebrates the purity of exiting within
nature and without the presence of any other. He is alone and thrilled to be so close to the naturalelements he loves.

Due to the effort, it took him to stumble upon this place he feels as if his weariness has been rewarded. He is happy beyond all hope.

Stanza-4

Perhaps it was a bower beneath

whose leavesThe violets of five

seasons re-appear

And fade, unseen by any

human eye; Where fairy water-

breaks do murmur onFor ever;

and I saw the sparkling foam,

And—with my cheek on one of those

green stonesThat, fleeced with moss,

under the shady trees, Lay round me,

scattered like a flock of sheep—

At the approximate halfway point of the poem, the narrative takes a somewhat more fantastical turn. In an attempt to remember exactly what happened at this point the speaker poses several possibilities. It is as if he is trying to remember the events of the day as he is telling them.

The boy relaxes onto the ground, exhausted by his exertions, and places his head upon a "green stone." He has found his way into a hiding place "beneath" the leaves of the "bower" or among the "violets." Through this action he is immersing himself deeper into the landscape, almost becoming a part of it. The flowers situated near his head are so secreted that they aren't seen by a human eye before their fading away. This has a beauty inherent to it the speaker cannot resist.

The stone he is resting on is covered with "moss" and many others like it are "scattered" around. They appear peaceful and harmless, like "a flock of sheep."

Lines 38-49

I heard the murmur, and the

murmuring sound, In that sweet mood

when pleasure loves to pay Tribute to

ease; and, of its joy secure,

The heart luxuriates with

indifferent things, Wasting its

kindliness on stocks and stones,

And on the vacant air. Then up I

rose,

And dragged to earth both branch and bough,

with crashAnd merciless ravage: and the shady

nook

Of hazels, and the green and mossy

bower, Deformed and sullied,

patiently gave up Their quiet being:

and, unless I now Confound my

present feelings with the past;

He luxuriates for a while longer within the woods and listens to the movements of the forest. Eventually, a change comes over the speaker. He is suddenly not content to live within this pristine landscape. He is forced into action by an unseen hand. The ease he had previously felt fades away.

The boy rises from his prone position and begins tearing down everything around him. He drags the branches to the earth and commits a "merciless ravage" upon the place. Through his actions, the "bower" becomes misshapen and out-of-order. It no longer appears as it did previously— it has been touched, now violently, by a human hand. The actions come one after another, building until destruction is brought down upon the scene.

A reader should take note of the repetition of a sound in this section. There are several instances, such as between "branch and bough" and "stocks and stone" that add emphasis to the actions. Thelines come quickly, just as the boy's rage did.

The elements of the scene have given up their "quiet being" and acted as play things in the violent outburst of a child. It is his nature, as a young boy, to turn rapidly to discontent. He plays this emotion out on everything he was just relishing.

Stanza-5

Ere from the mutilated bower I

turned Exulting, rich beyond the

wealth of kings,I felt a sense of

pain when I beheld

The silent trees, and saw the intruding

sky.— Then, dearest Maiden, move

along these shadesIn gentleness of

heart; with gentle hand

Touch—for there is a spirit in the woods.

The boy has indulged in the power of his own hands and turns from the mutilated bower he so recently loved. He feels full of his strength but also pained at what he has done. The boy has, in quick succession, felt joy beyond measure and uncontrollable anger. His emotions and his abilityto act on them, give him wealth.

In the final lines, he feels an amount of regret for what he has done and the fact that he must leave this place. He looks out at the silent trees and the now intruding sky. It intrudes because he pulled down so many of the branches. Previously, it was kept at bay by the bower.

The speaker finally addresses his listener in the fifty-fourth line. She is a Maiden, as might be expected in this narrative. He describes his actions to her while asking that she act similarly underthe same circumstances.

'Nutting' by William Wordsworth is a fifty-six-line poem that is contained within one stanza of text. The poem is written in blank verse, meaning that there is not a pattern of rhyme or meter to structure the lines. 'Nutting' was written in 1798 while Wordsworth was in Germany with his sister. It was originally intended to be included as part of his longer autobiographical piece, The Prelude, but as later cut.

For readers familiar with the work of Wordsworth it will be easy to spot the reverie common to Wordsworth's descriptions of the Lake District in England. It was here that Wordsworth spent the majority of his life and a location that features prominently throughout his work.

Also notable within the text are the fairy-tale elements which involve a quest, disguises, and treasure. These elements are all part of the larger parable, or lesson set out within the narrative. One is meant to learn something by the time they conclude this piece but also have enjoyed themselves along the way.

5. To The Cuckoo

O blithe New-comer! I
have heard,I hear thee
and rejoice.
O Cuckoo! shall I call
thee Bird,Or but a
wandering Voice?

While I am lying on the grass
Thy twofold shout I hear;

From hill to hill it
seems to pass,At once
far off, and near.

Though babbling only
to the ValeOf sunshine
and of flowers,
Thou bringest unto
me a taleOf
visionary hours.

Thrice welcome, darling of
the Spring!Even yet thou art
to me
No bird, but an
invisible thing,A
voice, a mystery;

The same whom in my
school-boy daysI listened to;
that Cry
Which made me look a
thousand waysIn bush, and
tree, and sky.

To seek thee did I often
rove Through woods
and on the green;And
thou wert still a hope, a
love;Still longed for,
never seen.

And I can listen to
thee yet;Can lie
upon the plain
And listen, till I
do begetThat
golden time
again.

O blessèd Bird! the
earth we paceAgain
appears to be
An unsubstantial,
faery place;That is
fit home for Thee!

To The Cuckoo: Analysis

Consisting of 8 quatrains, this poem is directly addressed to the cuckoo bird. The poet's tone throughout the poem is reverential and nostalgic. To the cuckoo begins in a very conventional manner, with the poet welcoming the bird, calling him a blithe newcomer hence projecting an image of a carefree, merry bird who is disconnected from the restraints of the human materialistic

life and who revels in his freedom. The poet is happy on seeing the bird but calls the bird a

"wandering voice" as he has only heard his voice but has never seen the cuckoo in person.

The poet then begins narrating how he came across the cuckoo's song while he was lying on the grass. He recognizes the bird by his distinguishable twofold cry, which echoes across hills and valleys, submerging the poet in his voice. In the third stanza, the poet confesses how the bird's songs about flowers and valleys transport him to his childhood days and act as a catalyst in bringing back memories of his past. Then the poet moves on to clearly state that in actuality, he has never seen the bird but has only heard his voice. The cuckoo remains a mystery to the poet. Continuing with the nostalgic tones, the poet narrates how in his school days, he used to desperately search for the cuckoo in every possible haunt, be it bushes or trees or the sky. The cuckoo's melody enthralled the poet and awakened within him a desire to find the source of this enchantment.

6. Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, On Revisiting theBanks of the Wye during a Tour.

Five years have past; five summers, with
the lengthOf five long winters! and again I
hear
These waters, rolling from their mountain-
springsWith a soft inland murmur.—Once
again
Do I behold these steep and

lofty cliffs,That on a wild
secluded scene impress
Thoughts of more deep seclusion; and
connectThe landscape with the quiet
of the sky.
The day is come when I again
repose Here, under this dark
sycamore, and view
These plots of cottage-ground, these
orchard-tufts,Which at this season, with
their unripe fruits,
Are clad in one green hue, and lose
themselves'Mid groves and copses.
Once again I see
These hedge-rows, hardly hedge-rows,
little linesOf sportive wood run wild:
these pastoral farms, Green to the very
door; and wreaths of smoke Sent up, in
silence, from among the trees!
With some uncertain notice, as
might seem Of vagrant dwellers in
the houseless woods,Or of some
Hermit's cave, where by his fire
The Hermit sits alone.

These
beauteous forms,Through a long absence,
have not been to me
As is a landscape to a blind
man's eye: But oft, in lonely
rooms, and 'mid the dinOf towns
and cities, I have owed to them,
In hours of weariness, sensations

sweet, Felt in the blood, and felt
along the heart;And passing
even into my purer mind With
tranquil restoration:—feelings
too
Of unremembered pleasure: such,
perhaps,As have no slight or
trivial influence
On that best portion of a good
man's life, His little, nameless,
unremembered, acts Of
kindness and of love. Nor less, I
trust, To them I may have owed
another gift,
Of aspect more sublime; that
blessed mood,In which the burthen
of the mystery,
In which the heavy and the
weary weightOf all this
unintelligible world,
Is lightened:—that serene and
blessed mood,In which the
affections gently lead us on,—
Until, the breath of this corporeal
frame
And even the motion of our
human bloodAlmost suspended,
we are laid asleep
In body, and become a living soul:
While with an eye made quiet by
the powerOf harmony, and the
deep power of joy, We see into the
life of things.

I

f thisBe but a vain belief, yet,
oh! how oft— In darkness and
amid the many shapes Of
joyless daylight; when the
fretful stir Unprofitable, and the
fever of the world,
Have hung upon the beatings of
my heart—How oft, in spirit, have
I turned to thee,
O sylvan Wye! thou wanderer thro'
the woods,How often has my
spirit turned to thee!

And now, with gleams of half-extinguished
thought,With many recognitions dim and
faint,
And somewhat of a sad
perplexity, The picture of the
mind revives again:
While here I stand, not only with the sense
Of present pleasure, but with pleasing
thoughtsThat in this moment there is
life and food
For future years. And so I dare to hope,
Though changed, no doubt, from what I was
when firstI came among these hills; when like
a roe
I bounded o'er the mountains, by
the sides Of the deep rivers, and
the lonely streams, Wherever
nature led: more like a man
Flying from something that he dreads, than one

Who sought the thing he loved. For
nature then(The coarser pleasures of
my boyish days
And their glad animal movements all
gone by)To me was all in all.—I
cannot paint
What then I was. The sounding
cataract Haunted me like a
passion: the tall rock,
The mountain, and the deep and
gloomy wood, Their colours and their
forms, were then to me An appetite; a
feeling and a love,
That had no need of a
remoter charm,By thought
supplied, nor any interest
Unborrowed from the eye.—That
time is past,And all its aching joys
are now no more,
And all its dizzy raptures. Not for
this Faint I, nor mourn nor
murmur; other gifts
Have followed; for such loss, I would
believe,Abundant recompense. For I
have learned
To look on nature, not as in the hour
Of thoughtless youth; but hearing
oftentimesThe still sad music of
humanity,
Nor harsh nor grating, though of
ample powerTo chasten and
subdue.—And I have felt
A presence that disturbs me
with the joyOf elevated

thoughts; a sense sublime
Of something far more deeply
interfused, Whose dwelling is the
light of setting suns,And the round
ocean and the living air, And the
blue sky, and in the mind of man:
A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all
thought, And rolls through all things.
Therefore am I still
A lover of the meadows and the
woods And mountains; and of
all that we behold
From this green earth; of all the
mighty worldOf eye, and ear,—both
what they half create, And what
perceive; well pleased to recogniseIn
nature and the language of the sense
The anchor of my purest thoughts,
the nurse, The guide, the guardian of
my heart, and soulOf all my moral
being.

Nor
perchance, If I were not thus
taught, should I the more Suffer
my genial spirits to decay:
For thou art with me here upon
the banksOf this fair river; thou
my dearest Friend,
My dear, dear Friend; and in thy
voice I catchThe language of my
former heart, and read My former

pleasures in the shooting lights
Of thy wild eyes. Oh! yet a
little whileMay I behold in
thee what I was once,
My dear, dear Sister! and this
prayer I make,Knowing that Nature
never did betray
The heart that loved her; 'tis her
privilege, Through all the years of
this our life, to leadFrom joy to
joy: for she can so inform
The mind that is within us, so
impress With quietness and
beauty, and so feed
With lofty thoughts, that neither evil
tongues, Rash judgments, nor the
sneers of selfish men,Nor greetings
where no kindness is, nor all The
dreary intercourse of daily life,
Shall e'er prevail against us, or disturb
Our cheerful faith, that all which
we beholdIs full of blessings.
Therefore let the moon Shine on
thee in thy solitary walk;
And let the misty mountain-winds
be free To blow against thee: and,
in after years, When these wild
ecstasies shall be maturedInto a
sober pleasure; when thy mind
Shall be a mansion for all
lovely forms,Thy memory be
as a dwelling-place
For all sweet sounds and harmonies;

oh! then,If solitude, or fear, or pain,
or grief,
Should be thy portion, with what healing
thoughtsOf tender joy wilt thou
remember me,
And these my exhortations! Nor,
perchance—If I should be where I no
more can hear
Thy voice, nor catch from thy wild eyes
these gleamsOf past existence—wilt thou
then forget
That on the banks of this
delightful streamWe stood
together; and that I, so long
A worshipper of Nature,
hither cameUnwearied in
that service: rather say
With warmer love—oh! with far
deeper zealOf holier love. Nor wilt
thou then forget, That after many
wanderings, many years
Of absence, these steep woods and
lofty cliffs,And this green pastoral
landscape were to me

More dear, both for themselves and thy sake!

WRITE A CRITICAL APPRECIATION ON TINTERN ABBEY

Lines Written (or Composed) a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour, July 13, 1798, by Wordsworth

Critical Appreciation of Poem

The full title of this poem is Lines Composed a Few Miles above Tintern Abbey, on Revisiting the Banks of the Wye during a Tour. July 13, 1798. It opens with the speaker's declaration that five years have passed since he last visited this location, encountered its tranquil, rustic scenery, and heard the murmuring waters of the river. He recites the objects he sees again, and describes their effect upon him: the "steep and lofty cliffs" impress upon him "thoughts of more deep seclusion"; he leans against the dark sycamore tree and looks at the cottage-grounds and the orchard trees, whose fruit is still unripe. He sees the "wreaths of smoke" rising from cottage chimneys between the trees, and imagines that they might rise from "vagrant dwellers in the houseless woods," or from the cave of a hermit in the deep forest.

The speaker then describes how his memory of these "beauteous forms" has worked upon him in his absence from them: when he was alone, or in crowded towns and cities, they provided him with "sensations sweet, / Felt in the blood, and felt along with the heart." The memory of the woods and cottages offered "tranquil restoration" to his mind, and even affected him when he was not aware of the memory, influencing his deeds of kindness and love. He further credits the memory of the scene with offering him access to that mental and spiritual state in which the burden of the world is lightened, in which he becomes a "living soul" with a view into "the life of things." The speaker then says that his belief that the memory of the woods has affected him so strongly may be "vain"—but if it is, he has still turned to the memory often in times of "fretful stir."

Even in the present moment, the memory of his past experiences in these surroundings floats over his present view of them, and he feels bittersweet joy in reviving them. He thinks happily, too, that his present experience will provide many happy memories for future years. The speaker acknowledges that he is different now from how he was in those long-ago times, when, as a boy, he "bounded o'er the mountains" and through the streams. In those days, he says, nature made up his whole world: waterfalls, mountains, and woods gave shape to his passions, his appetites, and

his love. That time is now past, he says, but he does not mourn it, for though he cannot resume his old relationship with nature, he has been amply compensated by a new set of more mature gifts; for instance, he can now

"Look on nature, not as in the hour

Of thoughtless youth; but hearing often

The still, sad music of humanity"

And he can now sense the presence of something far more subtle, powerful, and fundamental in the light of the setting suns, the ocean, the air itself, and even in the mind of man; this energy seems to him

"A motion and a spirit

that impels All thinking

thoughts….

And rolls through all things"

For that reason, he says, he still loves nature, still loves mountains and pastures and woods, for
they anchor his purest thoughts and guard the heart and soul of his "moral being."

The speaker says that even if he did not feel this way or understand these things, he would still be in good spirits on this day, for he is in the company of his "dear, dear (d) Sister," who is also his "dear, dear Friend," and in whose voice and manner he observes his former self, and beholds "what I was once." He offers a prayer to nature that he might continue to do so for a little while, knowing,as he says, that

"Nature never

did betray The

heart that loved

her,"

But leads rather “from joy to joy.”

Nature’s power over the mind that seeks her out is such that it renders that mind impervious to “evil tongues,” “rash judgments,” and “the sneers of selfish men,” instilling instead a “cheerful faith” that the world is full of blessings. The speaker then encourages the moon to shine upon his sister, and the wind to blow against her, and he says to her that in later years when she is sad or fearful, the memory of this experience will help to heal her. And if he is dead, she can remember the love with which he worshipped nature. In that case, too, she will remember what the woods meant to the speaker, how, after so many years of absence, they became dearer to him—both for themselves and for the fact that she is in them.

Critical Summary:

In the poem, Tintern Abbey the poet has expressed his tender feeling towards nature. He has specially recollected his poetic idea of Tintern Abbey where he had gone first time in 1793. This is his second visit to this place. Wordsworth has expressed his intense faith in nature.

There is Wordsworth’s realization of God in nature. He got sensuous delight in it and it is all in all to him. Tintern Abbey impressed him most when he had first visited this place. He has again come to the same place where there are lofty cliffs, the plots of cottage ground, orchards groves, and copses. He is glad to see again hedgerows, sportive wood, pastoral farms, and green doors. This lonely place, the banks of the river, and rolling waters from their mountain springs present a beautiful panoramic light. The solitary place remands the poet of vagrant dwellers and hermits’ cave.

The poem is in five sections.

The first section establishes the setting for the meditation. But it emphasizes the passage of time: five years have passed, five summers, five long winters. But when the poet is back to this place of natural beauty and serenity, it is still essentially the same. The poem opens with a slow, dragging rhythm and the repetition of the word ‘five’ all designed to emphasize the weight of time which has separated the poet from this scene. The following lines develop a clear, visual picture of the scent. The view presented is a

blend of wildness and order. He can see the entirely natural cliffs

and waterfalls; he can see the hedges around the fields of the people, and he can see wreaths of smoke probably coming from some hermits making a fire in their cave hermitages. These images evoke not only a pure nature as one might expect, but they also evoke a life of the common peoplein harmony with nature.

The second section begins with meditation. The poet now realizes that these 'beauteous' forms have always been with him, deep-seated in his mind, wherever he went. This vision has been "Felt in the blood, and felt along the heart" that is. It has affected his whole being. They were not absent from his mind like form the mind of a man born blind. In hours of weariness, frustration, and anxiety, these things of nature used to make him feel sweet sensations in his very blood, and he used to feel it at the level of the impulse (heart) rather than in his waking consciousness and through reasoning. From this point onward Wordsworth begins to consider the sublime of nature, and his mystical awareness becomes clear. Wordsworth's idea was that human beings are naturally uncorrupted.

The poet studies nature with open eyes and an imaginative mind. He has been the lover of nature from the core of his heart, and with a purer mind. He feels a sensation of love for nature in his blood. He feels high pleasure and the deep power of joy in natural objects. The beatings of his heart are full of the fire of nature's love. He concentrates attention on Sylvan Wye – a majestic and worth seeing the river. He is reminded of the pictures of the past visit and ponders over his future years. On his first visit to this place, he bounded over the mountains by the sides of the deep rivers and the lovely streams. In the past, the soundings haunted him like a passion. The tall rock, the mountain, and the deep and gloomy wood were then to him like an appetite. But that time is gone now. In nature, he finds the sad music of humanity.

The third section contains a kind of doubt; the poet is probably reflecting the reader's possible doubts so that he can go on to justify how he is right and what he means. He doubts, for just a moment, whether this thought about the influence of nature is vain, but he can't go on. He exclaims: "yet, oh! How often, amid the joyless daylight, fretful and unprofitable fever of the world have I turned to thee (nature)" for inspiration and peace of mind. He thanks the 'Sylvan Wye' for the everlasting influence it has imprinted on his mind; his spirit has very often turned to this river

for inspiration when he was losing the peace of mind or the path and meaning of life. The river here becomes the symbol of spirituality.

Though the poet has become serious and perplexed in the fourth section the nature gives him courage and spirit enough to stand there with a sense of delight and pleasure. This is so typical of Wordsworth that it seems he can't write poetry without recounting his personal experiences, especially those of his childhood. Here he also begins from the earliest of his days. It was first the coarse pleasures in his 'boyish days', which have all gone by now. That time is past and all its aching joys are now no more and all its dizzy raptures But the poet does not mourn for them; he doesn't even grumble about their loss. He has gained something in return:

"other gifts have followed; for such loss. For I have learned to look on nature, not as in the hour of thoughtless youth; but hearing oftentimes The still, sad music of humanity".

This is a philosophic statement about maturing, about the development of personality, and the poetic or philosophic mind as well. So now the poet can feel the joy of elevated thought, a sense sublime, and far more deeply interfused. He feels a sense of sublime and the working of supreme power in the light of the setting sun, in round oceans, and the blue sky. He is of opinion that a motion and a spirit impel all thinking things. Therefore Wordsworth claims that he is a lover of the meadows and of all which we see from this green earth. Nature is a nurse, a guide, and the guardian of his heart and soul. The poet comes to one important conclusion: for all the formative influences, he is now consciously in love with nature. He has become a thoughtful lover of the meadows, the woods, and the mountains. Though his ears and eyes seem to create the other half of all these sensations, nature is the actual source of these sublime thoughts.

The fifth and last section continues with the same meditation from where the poet addresses his younger sister Dorothy, whom he blesses and gives advice about what he has learned. He says that he can hear the voice of his youth when he hears her speak, the language of his former heart; he can also "read my former pleasure in the soothing lights of thy wild eyes. He is excited to look at his youthful image in her. He says that nature has never betrayed his heart and that is why they had been living from joy to joy. Nature can impress the mind with quietness and beauty, and feed

it lofty thoughts, that no evil tongues of the human society can corrupt their hearts with any amountof contact with it.

The poet then begins to address the moon in his reverie and to ask nature to bestow his sister with their blessings. Let the moon shine on her solitary walk, and let the mountain winds blow their breeze on her. When the present youthful ecstasies are over, as they did with him, let her mind become the palace of the lovely forms and thought about nature, so that she can enjoy and understand life and overcome the vexations of living in a harsh human society. The conclusion to the poem takes us almost cyclically, back to a physical view of the 'steep woods', 'lofty cliffs' and 'green pastoral landscape' in which the meditation of the poem is happening.

The poet has expressed his honest and natural feelings to Nature's Superiority. The language is so simple and lucid that one is not tired of reading it again and again. The sweetness of style touches the heart of a reader. This is the beauty of Wordsworth's language.

Analysis of the poem

The poem Tintern Abbey testifies to Wordsworth's love for Nature. From the time of his boyhood, Wordsworth had established a strong bond with Nature, and with the passing time, the relationship witnessed transformations, maturing his poetic abilities. As a lad, he was enamored by 'glad animal movements' while frolicking in the lap of Nature but with the coming of youth, he fell in love with the lovely color and sounds of the natural scenery of the heavenly Lake district in England. The liaison seemed to pause there for some time. However, more was to come, and with his growing older when he equated Nature with God Himself. In other words, both his heart and soul begin to draw sustenance from this tool of God from this point. By particularising Nature with the definite article 'the', Wordsworth implies the exclusivity of his guardian angel in the sense that it is her who protects him from the harsh cruelties of other people and strengthens the moral fabric of his character as well. The poet solemnly utters that, unlike human beings, Nature never betrays the heart who loves her. Again it is the sublime face of Nature that has taught him how to go closer to human beings. The sad melody of humanity is heard clearly by the poet at this juncture. Being physically present by the side of a beautiful river from where he can see the distant snow-capped

mountain tops, his spirit spreads wings and soars into impossible heights, having never been

experienced by him before. Going into a trance, the poet feels transported to another world whereeverything in the universe seems to get connected.

The language of the poem is not very simple because of the deep and enigmatic musing that Wordsworth is engaging in this poem. The poet's love for Nature as well as his fondness for his sister have both been conveyed in the poem. We are simply won over by the indisputable sentiments articulated in the poem. The negative phrases such as "has not been to me as is a landscape to a blind man's eye", "not unborrowed from the eyes" etc. have added vigor and a sense of conviction to the poet's uttering. The vivid imageries like those of water falling with an "inland murmur" and smoke rising from a vagrant dweller's hut capture the soft sound made by the river and the smoke that was unexpected in the woods.

The use of diverse figures of speech like alliteration (Still sad music of humanity), metaphor (Half- extinguished thoughts), simile (The sounding cataract haunted me like a passion), and imagery (Green to the very door) have made what the poem is, an unforgettable lyrical verse capable of setting the indeterminate perturbations of the human heart to rest.

Conclusion: Wordsworth, through the poem, "Tintern Abbey", has shown a way to establish a better world and a better life, and has taught how a close relationship with Nature could be created to give birth to a peaceful and harmonious life in the world. He advises everyone to learn from the past. This is perceptible in the words of Geoffrey H. Hartman (1964) who claims that "Wordsworth's poetry looks back to look forward the better. Thus, the poem, "Tintern Abbey", is a typical eco-critical work that strives to promote a relationship between Nature and human beings. It also indirectly advises every reader to look back and see how human beings have behaved towards Nature in the past, and what the consequences of their anthropocentric attitude towards Nature are. It also insists on the need to take proper measures to establish harmony with Nature.

7. Ode: Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of Early Childhood

The child is father of
the man;And I could
wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural
piety. (Wordsworth, "My
Heart Leaps Up")

There was a time when meadow, grove,
and stream,The earth, and every
common sight,
To me did seem
Apparelled in
celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
Turn
wheresoe'er I
may,By
night or day.
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

The Rainbow comes
and goes,And lovely
is the Rose,
The Moon doth with
delight Look round her when the
heavens are bare,
Waters on a
starry nightAre
beautiful and
fair;
The sunshine is a

glorious birth;But yet I
know, where'er I go,
That there hath past away a glory from the earth.

Now, while the birds thus sing a
joyous song,And while the
young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound,
To me alone there came a thought
of grief:A timely utterance gave
that thought relief,
And I again am strong:
The cataracts blow their trumpets from
the steep;No more shall grief of mine
the season wrong;
I hear the Echoes through the mountains throng,
The Winds come to me from the fields
of sleep,And all the earth is
gay;
Land and sea
Give themselves up
to jollity, And
with the heart of
May
Doth every Beast keep
holiday;—Thou Child
of Joy,
Shout round me, let me hear thy shouts, thou happy Shepherd-boy.

Ye blessèd creatures, I have
heard the callYe to each other
make; I see
The heavens laugh with you in
your jubilee;My heart is at your

festival,
My head hath its coronal,
The fulness of your bliss, I feel—I feel it all.
Oh evil day! if I were
sullen While Earth
herself is adorning,
This sweet May-
morning, And the
Children are culling
On every side,
In a thousand valleys far and wide,
Fresh flowers; while the sun
shines warm, And the Babe leaps up on his
Mother's arm:—
I hear, I hear, with joy I hear!
—But there's a Tree, of
many, one, A single field which I have
looked upon,
Both of them speak of something that
is gone; The Pansy at
my feet
Doth the same
tale repeat: Whither is fled the
visionary gleam?
Where is it now, the glory and the dream?

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The Soul that rises with us, our life's Star,
Hath had elsewhere
its setting, And
cometh from afar:
Not in entire
forgetfulness, And
not in utter

nakedness,
But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is
our home:Heaven lies about us in
our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
Upon the growing Boy,
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
Must travel, still is
Nature's Priest,And by
the vision splendid
Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it
die away,And fade into the
light of common day.

Earth fills her lap with pleasures of
her own;Yearnings she hath in her
own natural kind,
And, even with something of a
Mother's mind,And no unworthy aim,
The homely Nurse doth all she can
To make her Foster-child, her Inmate Man,
Forget the glories he
hath known,And that imperial palace
whence he came.

Behold the Child among his new-born blisses,
A six years' Darling of a pigmy size!
See, where 'mid work of his own
hand he lies,Fretted by sallies of his
mother's kisses,

With light upon him from his father's
eyes! See, at his feet, some little plan
or chart, Some fragment from his
dream of human life,Shaped by
himself with newly-learn{e}d art
A wedding or a
festival, A
mourning or a
funeral;
And this hath now his
heart, And unto this he
frames his song:
Then will he fit
his tongueTo dialogues of
business, love, or strife;
But it will not
be long Ere this
be thrown
aside,
And with new joy
and prideThe little Actor cons
another part;
Filling from time to time his
"humorous stage"With all the
Persons, down to palsied Age, That
Life brings with her in her equipage;
As if his whole
vocationWere
endless
imitation.

Thou, whose exterior semblance doth belie
Thy Soul's
immensity; Thou best

Philosopher, who yet dost keep
Thy heritage, thou Eye among
the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read'st the
eternal deep,Haunted for ever by the
eternal mind,—

Mighty Prophet! Seer
blest! On whom
those truths do rest,

Which we are toiling all our lives
to find, In darkness lost, the
darkness of the grave;Thou, over
whom thy Immortality
Broods like the Day, a Master o'er
a Slave,A Presence which is not
to be put by; Thou little Child, yet
glorious in the might
Of heaven-born freedom on thy
being's height, Why with such earnest
pains dost thou provoke The years to
bring the inevitable yoke,
Thus blindly with thy blessedness at strife?
Full soon thy Soul shall have her
earthly freight, And custom lie upon
thee with a weight,
Heavy as frost, and deep almost as life!

O joy! that in our
embers Is
something that
doth live,That
Nature yet
remembers

What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me
doth breedPerpetual benediction: not
indeed
For that which is most worthy to
be blest;Delight and liberty, the
simple creed
Of Childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his
breast:—Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and
praise But for those
obstinate questioningsOf
sense and outward things,
Fallings from us,
vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a
CreatureMoving about in worlds
not realised,
High instincts before which our
mortal Nature Did tremble like a
guilty thing surprised:
But for those first
affections, Those
shadowy
recollections,
Which, be they what
they may Are yet the fountain-
light of all our day, Are yet a
master-light of all our seeing;
Uphold us, cherish, and have power
to make Our noisy years seem moments in the
being

Of the eternal Silence: truths
that wake, To perish
never;
Which neither listlessness, nor mad
endeavour, Nor Man nor
Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity
with joy, Can utterly
abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm
weather Though
inland far we be,
Our Souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us
hither, Can in a
moment travel thither,
And see the Children sport upon the
shore, And hear the mighty waters
rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye Birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young
Lambs boundAs to the
tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your
hearts to-dayFeel the
gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,
Though nothing can bring back
the hourOf splendour in the grass, of
glory in the flower;

We will grieve not,
rather find Strength in
what remains behind;In
the primal sympathy
Which having been must
ever be; In the soothing
thoughts that springOut of
human suffering;
In the faith that looks
through death,In years that bring the
philosophic mind.
And O, ye Fountains, Meadows, Hills, and
Groves,Forebode not any severing of our
loves!
Yet in my heart of hearts I feel
your might;I only have
relinquished one delight
To live beneath your more habitual sway.
I love the Brooks which down their
channels fret,Even more than when I
tripped lightly as they; The innocent
brightness of a new-born Day
Is lovely yet;
The Clouds that gather round the
setting sunDo take a sober
colouring from an eye
That hath kept watch o'er man's
mortality; Another race hath been, and
other palms are won.Thanks to the
human heart by which we live, Thanks
to its tenderness, its joys, and fears,
To me the meanest flower that blows
can giveThoughts that do often lie
too deep for tears.

Analysis of the Poem- Ode on Intimations of Immortality

It is one of the greatest poems of William Wordsworth. It is claimed as "Wordsworth's single but supreme triumph in the highest kind of lyrical architecture". In its theme as well as technique, in its mood as well as moral, this one is a classic of Wordsworthian poetry and remains an outstandingpoem of a great age of poetry.

The poem certainly owes much to the Platonic philosophy for its doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul. It bears a close analogy to Plato's teaching about the immortality of the soul. Wordsworth traces here the course of the soul from heaven to earth and the hearing of heavenly visions on earthly existence.

Wordsworth's chief argument in the poem, however, is not the doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul. The idea of pre-existence is, of course, emphasized in the title. Yet, it is only a secondary element in the poem. Wordsworth's primary thought in the poem is about childhood and its higher endowments. The entire speculation about the previous existence of the soul is based on the poet's faith in the blessed experience of childhood. The central theme of the poem is notedin the poet's idealization of childhood.

Of course, there are many to disagree with the poet's idealization of childhood. It has been asserted that Wordsworth has an over-idealized childhood. In what sense is a child a great philosopher? Is it not too much to call him a mighty prophet! Seer blest'? In what sense does he read the 'eternal deep'? These are the deep questions, which have been praised by many, including Coleridge, andremain engrossingly controversial.

The greatness of the Ode, however, does not rest solely on Wordsworth's philosophization of the blessedness of childhood. The permanent value of the Ode lies, too, in the poet's spiritual conviction, imaginative excellence, emotional intensity, and poetic sense. The poem is a piece of spiritual autobiography. Wordsworth has succeeded wonderfully here in convincing others of his spiritual conviction. He has presented his emotional realization with unequaled power and succeeded in bringing the individual feeling to the universal experience.

The chief glamour of the Ode is, however, felt in its treatment of Nature and Man. In this respect,

the Ode is a characteristic work of Wordsworth. Wordsworth's deeper insight into external Nature;

his love for the simple and innocent aspect of human life and his vision about the relation betweenMan and Nature, as one in a permanent tie, are all present here.

The poem is an ode. It is an irregular and complex ode. The stanzas of the poem vary in the number as well as the meter of the lines. There is also the utmost variety in the length of different lines andthe order of rhymes.

The poem is a happy instance of Wordsworth's technique. The poet has achieved admirably here a sustaining effect of his music. He has also varied his meter by the changes of his thoughts and feelings.

The diction of the poem is also highly admirable. It illustrates an ideal style of dignified simplicity. At the same time, it attains the rare poetic grandeur, which is never lost in pomposity or artificiality. His diction is evocative yet simple, and his verification, subtle yet sonorous, as heard in such linesas the following ones

1.5 Check Your Progress

- **Critical appreciation of the poem 'Nutting'**
- **Critical appreciation of poem Daffodils**
- **Bring out the philosophical concept of the poem Intimation of immortality.**
- **Tintern Abbey depicts the poet's maturity of ideas. Discuss.**

1.6 Summary

William Wordsworth was one of the founders of English Romanticism and one of its most central figures and important intellects. He is remembered as a poet of spiritual and epistemological speculation, a poet concerned with the human relationship to nature, and a fierce advocate of using the vocabulary and speech patterns of common people in poetry. Wordsworth is best known for ***Lyrical Ballads***, co-written with Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and ***The Prelude***, a Romantic epic poem chronicling the "growth of a poet's mind."Wordsworth's deep love for the "beauteous forms" of the natural world was established early. For Wordsworth, poetry, which should be

written in "the real language of men," is nevertheless "the spontaneous overflow of feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility."

Wordsworth continued to write poetry with energy and passion over the next several years, During these years he composed “The Solitary Reaper,” “Resolution and Independence,” and “Ode: Intimations of Immortality,” Wordsworth is considered to be the pioneer of the very famous Romanticism era. He, along with his friend Samuel Taylor Coleridge pioneered this style and made it so much popular. Romanticism is not writing about romance or love. This was the style in which poets broke the traditional norms. They broke free from the chains classicism put on them.

1.7 Keywords

- Pantheism
- Optimism
- Technique
- Verification
- Simplification
- Philosophy
- Idealism

1.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- **Discuss Wordsworth as a Romantic poet.**
- **Relation between man and nature in Wordsworth’s poetry**
- **Ode: Intimations of Immortality Summary**

1.9 Answers to Your Progress

William Wordsworth as a Romantic Poet

William Wordsworth was at once the oldest, the greatest, and the most long-lived among the romantic poets. He made himself the leader of the Romantic movement, first, because he issued in

his Pre-face to the Lyrical Ballads what may be called the manifesto of the movement, in which he demanded a change both in the subject and the form of poetry that was truly

revolutionary; and secondly, because the theme of his great poem The Prelude is the apotheosis of the Self which lies at the root of Romanticism. The basic traits of romanticism such as the love of nature, the belief in humanity, mysticism, revolutionary spirit, etc were early developed in his poetry. As a young man, he had high hopes for humanity and he had been nurtured in the Lake District which helped him to think well on a man. He also read Rousseau's view on the innocence of man. Thus, the teaching of Rousseau and his own experience convinced him that man was naturally good. He greatly supported the dawn of a new era for humanity. But later he changed his mind when the French Revolutionists started to commit all kinds of atrocities.

The whole of his early life had been a dedication to poetry, and from his childhood, he had stored his mind with the experience in nature which later he was recalled it is verse. His best-known works are The Prelude, The Lyrical Ballads, Tintern Abbey, and several sonnets. The work which made him popular was the *Lyrical Ballads*. He wrote it in collaboration with his intimate friend S.T. Coleridge. In Lyrical Ballads, he attempted to make verse out of the incidents of simple rustic life. He took incidents and situations from common life and threw over them a coloring of the imagination by which ordinary things would be made to assume an unusual aspect. In it, he used a language that was a selection from ordinary speech. Thus, the poems of the Lyrical Ballads showed originality both in subject matter and in language and were a departure from all previous practice. S.T. Coleridge contributed in *Lyrical Ballads* only The Ancient Mariner and four other poems in blank verse. In his poems, Coleridge endeavored to employ to give credibilityto the miraculous

The Prelude, an autobiographical poem is the spiritual record of his mind, honestly recording itsown intimate experiences, and endowed with a rare capacity for making the record intelligible. Itis an idealized version of his spiritual growth in which he escapes into the higher reality of his imagination. It emphasized particularly his surrender of the charm of logic to the claims of the emotion which became a cardinal principle of all the later Romantic poets. No poem in English offers a parallel. It was composed in blank verse and had an epical scale.

Wordsworth also wrote some of the finest sonnets in which he wanted to awaken England from lethargy, condemn Napoleon, and record many of his moods Wordsworth also wrote some famous sonnets. He wrote the sonnets to arouse England to a sense of her responsibility in international affairs, and to express a memorable moment in his own experience. His other works included Immortality ode, Ode to Duty, and 'Laodamia'. In the Immortality Ode, he recorded a mystical intuition of life before birth which can be recovered in a few fortunate moments in the presence of nature.

Thus, Wordsworth stands apart as the pioneer of Romantic movement by his great contribution to English literature.

Discuss Wordsworth as a great nature poet.

The greatest contribution of Wordsworth to the poetry of nature is his unqualified pantheism. Wordsworth, as a poet of nature, stands supreme. He is a worshiper of nature and he has a completephilosophy of nature. In his eyes,

"Nature is a teacher whose wisdom we can learn if we will and without which any human life is
vain and incomplete."

In his poems, nature occupies a separate or independent status. In 'The Solitary Reaper, a lovely girl was harvesting in the field and she was singing a melancholic song, in a natural environment. The poet sets this poem in a natural background. In another poem 'To the cuckoo', the poet is telling about the song of a cuckoo bird. This poem is often concerned with the theme of nature.

Wordsworth is a poet of nature, that's why he prefers his poem in a natural place. Nature has played an important role in the solitary reaper. "The Solitary Reaper" by William Wordsworth is written as a recollection of an overwhelming emotional experience. It is about the song sung by a Solitary Reaper. 'The Solitary Reaper' was singing and doing her work without minding anyone. But, the poet was observing her, mesmerized by the song. He compares her song to that of Nightingale and the Cuckoo-bird, yet he states that her song is the best. Despite the poet's inability

to decipher the song's meaning, he understands that it is a song of melancholy. The poet

listened motionlessly until he left the place, but the song never left him. Even after a long time, he has come away from that place, he says, he could still listen. The song continued to echo in his heart long after it is heard no more. The beautiful experience left a deep impact and gave him a long- lasting pleasure. Consisting of 8 quatrains, this poem is directly addressed to the cuckoo bird. The poet's tone throughout the poem is reverential and nostalgic. To the cuckoo begins in a very conventional manner, with the poet welcoming the bird, calling him a blithe newcomer hence projecting an image of a carefree, merry bird who is disconnected from the restraints of the human materialistic life and who revels in his freedom. The poet is happy on seeing the bird but calls the bird a "wandering voice" as he has only heard his voice but has never seen the cuckoo in person.

The poet then begins narrating how he came across the cuckoo's song while he was lying on the grass. He recognizes the bird by his distinguishable twofold cry, which echoes across hills and valleys, submerging the poet in his voice. In the third stanza, the poet confesses how the bird's songs about flowers and valleys transport him to his childhood days and act as a catalyst in bringing back memories of his past. Then the poet moves on to clearly state that in actuality, he has never seen the bird but has only heard his voice. The cuckoo remains a mystery to the poet. Continuing with the nostalgic tones, the poet narrates how in his school days, he used to desperately search for the cuckoo in every possible haunt, be it bushes or trees or the sky. The cuckoo's melody enthralled the poet and awakened within him a desire to find the source of this enchantment. William Wordsworth discovers in nature an uncommon power that can transform this earth into a homeland for faries and other supernatural agents. It is proved in his other poem 'To the Cuckoo'.The title itself is about a bird and it is a part of nature.

Wordsworth, through the poem, "Tintern Abbey", has shown a way to establish a better world and a better life, and has taught how a close relationship with Nature could be created to give birth to a peaceful and harmonious life in the world. He advises everyone to learn from the past. This is perceptible in the words of Geoffrey H. Hartman (1964) who claims that "Wordsworth's poetry looks back to look forward the better. Thus, the poem, "Tintern Abbey", is a typical eco-critical work that strives to promote a relationship between Nature and human beings. It also indirectly advises every reader to look back and see how human beings have behaved towards Nature in the

past, and what the consequences of their anthropocentric attitude towards Nature are. It also insistson the need to take proper measures to establish harmony with Nature.

In short, Wordsworth is recollecting his memory of childhood; he is brought up in natural surroundings. From his very childhood, he has been looking for this same bird and he tried to findit out.

3. Relation between man and nature in Wordsworth's poetry

Nature has a dominant role in Wordsworth's poetry. So, he is called the poet of nature. he finds out as well as established in his poems a cordial, passionate, impressive, emotional, intellectual, spiritual, and inseparable relationship between nature and human life .According to him, all created things are parts of a unified whole. The love of nature leads Wordsworth to the love of man which is noticeable in many of his poems. In Tintern Abbey, through his personal experience, Wordsworth expresses his philosophy of nature and some relationships between man and nature.

Wordsworth believes in the pantheistic view- God is all, and all is god. He feels the existence of a sublime divine spirit pervading in all objects of nature-in the setting sun, the round ocean, the living air, the blue sky, the mind of man, etc. in Tintern Abbey, he says-

'A motion and a spirit, that impels
All thinking things, all objects of all
thought, And rolls through all things.
Therefore am I stillA lover of the
meadows and the woods
And mountains; and of all that we
behold From this green earth; of all
the mighty worldOf eye and ear,—
both what they half create, And what
perceive; well pleased to recognizeIn
nature and the language of the sense

According to Wordsworth, nature plays the role of giving joy to the human heart, of purifying the human mind, and of a healing influence on the sorrow-stricken heart.

Wordsworth takes pleasure in contract with nature and purifies his mind' in lonely rooms, and mid in din of towns and cities with the memory of nature. Moreover, nature has not become a landscape to a blind man's eye, to

him. It indicates that the eyes of the city people are blind because they cannot get anything fromnature.

Wordsworth believes in the pantheistic view-God is all, and all is God. he feels the existence of a sublime spirit pervading all objects of nature. Nature plays the role of giving joy to the human heart, of purifying the human mind, and of a healing influence on sorrow-stricken hearts. Wordsworth mentions the moral influence of nature on a human being; there is spiritual intercoursebetween man and nature. He regards nature as-

The anchor of my purest thoughts,
the nurse, The guide, the guardian of
my heart, and soulOf all my moral
being.'

Wordsworth advises his sister, Dorothy, to put herself under the influence of nature and assure herthat

"Nature never

did betray The

heart that loved

her."

Wordsworth shows three stages of the human soul about nature. In the first stage, Wordsworth's love for nature was only of physical passion and animal pleasure. In the second stage, he loved only the sensuous and outward beauty but the philosophy of nature. But in the third stage, he can now understand the hidden meaning of nature and can hear 'still sad music of humanity.'

That is, nature not only attract a man with her beauty but also makes him conscious of the fact that there is something wrong in mankind which is responsible for all suffering. in ode intimations of immortality, he says our soul come from Heaven or God; after traveling through nature and beingmature they go back to God again.

Wordsworth regards childhood as the best time of human life which is very much close to nature as well as to God. when the child grows up, he gradually departs from as well as God. But, Wordsworth is not worried about it. but he is optimistic that the immortal memories of his childhood would convert him to nature. he suggests to us that the suffering humanity can solve hisproblems by returning to nature.

Wordsworth connects human life with nature in the poem Wandered lonely as aCloud' or Daffodils. After describing the daffodil's beauty, he proceeded on to tell about the beauty of its background and the nice setting is made on the daffodils. At last, after his long gaze, he suddenlyasks himself that what does all those meant to him and how they will benefit him and then left the place. But later, he realized how the picture benefitted him and how it made him relaxed when alone.

This poem is wonderful as it lets people love nature and understand its real beauty, more nicely.It also lets us understand how wonderful God's creations are and in what amount we deny them.In the last part of the poem, the readers learn the importance of nature and also know about the feelings of the poet.

So Wordsworth is the great worshipper of nature. He considers nature as a teacher, preacher, guide, and a great healer of humanity. In this respect, he is quite different from his contemporary poets of the romantic period.

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 103	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Unit:02 (1798-1914)Sem-1	
John Keats	

Lesson Structure

2.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

2.2 Introduction - John Keats was an English poet who is widely regarded as one of the greatest poets of his generation. Romanticism was an artistic and literary movement that originated in Europe towards the end of the 18th century and peaked in the first half of the 19th century. It was characterized by its emphasis on emotion and individualism as well as the glorification of all the past and nature. Keats referred to a "pure romantic" poet, was part of the Second Generation of Romantics. Among other things, Keats is regarded as a Romantic poet for his fondness of sensation, the rich aesthetic of his language, and his love for nature. The 1770s and 1780 as well are referred to as the Romantic era in the cultural history of the western world.

2.3 Main Body of the Text

John Keats, along with Shelley and Byron, is regarded the most prominent among the second generation of Romantic poets, following the likes of Wordsworth and Coleridge, who belonged to the first generation. For them, imagination was the supreme faculty of mind as opposed to the traditional view of the superiority of reason. Nature was often presented by them as a work of art born from the divine imagination, displaying the rationalistic view of the universe as a machine. An early imitator of Spenser, Leigh Hunt, and Milton, John Keats showed tremendous growth in a short period and developed his craft to match the best in the business. His distinct choice of subjects and style made him stand out among other major poets of his time. He was thus a poet of legends and myth, of romance and chivalric tale.

2.3.1 About the age-

Although literary Romanticism occurred from about 1790 through 1850, not all writers of this period worked in this style. Certain characteristics make a piece of literature part

of the Romantic Movement. Every characteristic is present in every piece of Romantic literature; however, the writing from this period has several of the key characteristics

- Nature, in all its unbound glory, plays a huge role in Romantic literature. Nature, sometimes seen as the opposite of the rational, is a powerful symbol in work from this era. Romantic poets and writers give personal, deep descriptions of nature and its wild and powerful qualities. A focus on emotion is a key characteristic of nearly all writing from the Romantic period. There are feelings described in all forms, including romantic and filial love, fear, sorrow, loneliness, and more. This focus on emotion offered a counterpoint to the rational, and it also made Romantic poetry and prose extremely readable and relatable.

- In contrast to the previous generations' focus on reason, writers of the Romantic Movement explored the importance of imagination and the creative impulse. Romantic poets and prose writers celebrated the power of imagination and the creative process, as well as the artistic viewpoint. They believed that artists and writers looked at the world differently, and they celebrated that vision in their work.

- Romantic literature also explores the theme of aesthetic beauty, not just of nature but of people as well. This was especially true with descriptions of female beauty. Writers praised women of the Romantic era for their natural loveliness, rather than anything artificial or constrained.

- Writers of the Romantic era believed that creative inspiration came from solitary exploration. They celebrated the feeling of being alone, whether that meant loneliness or amuch-needed quiet space to think and create.

- Romantic-era literature often has a distinct focus on exotic locations and events or items from history. Poems and prose touch on antiques and the gifts of ancient cultures around the world, and far-away locations provide the setting for some literary works of this era.
- The writers of the Romantic era did not turn away from the darker side of emotion and the mysteries of the supernatural. They explored the contrast between life and death. The use of Personification is a very common device in

romantic poetry. The writers used personification in their poems.

- Many works of Romantic-era literature are deeply personal, and they often explore the self of the writer. There is an autobiographical influence in poems and prose of the period. One characteristic of this movement was the importance placed on feelings and creativity, and the source of much of this emotional and artistic work was the background and real-life surroundings of the writer. This self-focus preceded confessional poetry of the mid-1900s, but you can see its profound influence on that movement.

2.3.2 About the author

John Keats (1795-1821) is known as one of the most accomplished Romantic poets for his wide variety of poetry ranging from sonnets, Spenserian romance to Miltonic epic. He is often referred to as the 'Escapist' or 'Purest Romantic' for his style and subject matter. The poet is also acknowledged for perfecting the 'Ode' poetry through his five great ode poems. It includes-

- **Ode to a Nightingale** (1819)
- **Ode on Grecian Urn**
- **Ode on Melancholy**
- **Ode to Psyche**
- **To Autumn**

A well-known English poet and critic **Swinburne** remarked that The Ode to a Nightingale is one of the final masterpieces of human work in all time and for all ages'. Apart from his Odes, Keats wrote poems on beauty, love, chivalry, and adventure, with colorful images and melodic diction.

2.3.3 Chief Characteristic of Keats Poems-

- One of the most important ingredients of romantic poetry is a passionate love for beauty. Every poet in one way or the other is a lover of beauty. John Milton was a good lover of beauty as well as religion. William Wordsworth finds beauty only in nature. However,

  John Keats is different from them. He does not only like beauty but also quests for it. He also takes interest in Greeks art to pursue beauty which is also called

John Keats' Hellenism. Keats is of the view that everything which touches the senses is beautiful. Besides the poet of nature, John Keats is also called the poet of beauty and sensuousness. Art, birds' songs, forests, clouds, skies, seasons, in fact, every element either natural or unnatural, is beautiful in his eyes. He finds it even in truth, the song of the nightingale, and also in a Grecian urn.

- John Keats in his earlier poems found beauty only in natural objects such as clouds, skies, forests, etc. In later poems, his approach is something extraordinary. The recent poetry of John Keats seems mature. He talks about universal beauty. For instance, the autumn season is beautiful for him. Similarly, the song of the nightingale is joyful. Greek art also gives him pleasure. He also mentions beauty in immortality. When other poets criticize the autumn season, John Keats seeks beauty in it. Everything is joyful for him though it depends on his mood. It is because he appreciates beauty and finds beauty in everything even in melancholy. Thus, his attitude is entirely different in his later poems.
- Another important thing about John Keats is that he always talks about sensuous beauty. His poetry touches the senses of readers. Song of nightingale can listen; Grecian urn can be seen; autumn season can be felt; flowers can be smelled. Readers do not only read thepoetry of John Keats but also feel it.

2.4 Further Body of the Text (Prescribed poems in the syllabus)

- **On first looking into Chapman's homer**
- **When I have the fear that I may cease to be**
- **Ode to a nightingale**
- **Ode to the Grecian urn**
- **Ode On melancholy**
- **To autumn**

2.4.2 Original Text

1. On First Looking into Chapman's Homer

Much have I travell'd in the realms
of gold, And many goodly states
and kingdoms seen;Round many
western islands have I been Which
bards in fealty to Apollo hold.
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told
That deep-brow'd Homer ruled as his
demesne;Yet did I never breathe its
pure serene
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:
Then felt I like some watcher of
the skiesWhen a new planet
swims into his ken; Or like stout
Cortez when with eagle eyesHe
star'd at the Pacific—and all his
men
Look'd at each other with a wild
surmise—Silent, upon a peak in
Darien.

Analysis of the Poem

The sonnet, *'*On First Looking Into Chapman's Homer*'* is written by Keats when he was still a student at school. George Chapman (1554 – 1634) was an English poet and dramatist of the Elizabethan age, who translated Homer's works in 1596. Keats read

Chapman's translation of Homer for the first time on a night in 1815 when he and his friend, Cowden Clarke spent the whole night reading it. The next morning the friend found this sonnet at the breakfast table at 10 O'clock,

expressing Keats's feelings on first looking at Chapman's Homer. The poet says that he

experienced new sensations on reading Homer in Chapman's translation.

2. When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be

When I have fears that I may cease to be

Before my pen has gleaned my
teeming brain,Before high-pilèd books,
in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain;
When I behold, upon the night's starred face,
Huge cloudy symbols of a high
romance,And think that I may
never live to trace
Their shadows with the magic hand
of chance;And when I feel, fair creature
of an hour,
That I shall never look upon
thee more,Never have relish in
the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on the shore
Of the wide world, I stand alone and think

Explanation of the poem

John Keats, the poet of 'When I Have Fears that I May Cease to Be', was obsessed with death. In a certain way, his obsession with death is not completely surprising at all.

Keats' brother was always very ill growing up, leaving Keats to nurse him throughout

frequent
and horrible bouts of tuberculosis, and he eventually died from the disease. Keats died young by the age of 24, he had more or less stopped writing his poetry due to ill-health. Keats' fears about death are therefore not quite as strange as one would assume, given his background.

Summary

This poem was written in 1818, only a few short years before Keats' death. It is primarily a poem about Keats' fear of mortality, however in true Keatsian fashion, death is also the solution for more of what ails Keats. It would be prudent to remember that Keats' poems have all, in some way, featured death; death of nature, death of love, death of memory, but death all in all. Few poems donot reference the ending of things.

'When I Have Fears That I May Cease to Be' is effusive with imagery, sensual in its description of the fears that Keats possesses, and short. Keats runs the gamut from worrying about dying before he is famous, worrying about the death of his beloved, and then deciding that death itself is not such a terrible situation.

Analysis of *When I have Fears that I may Cease to Be*

Lines 1-4

When I have fears that I may cease to
be Before my pen has gleaned my
teeming brain,Before high-pilèd
books, in charactery,
Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain;

Keats' first worry is this: what if I should die before I have written to the best of my ability? It is not merely death, therefore, that worries Keats, but death in infamy – ironic, as he is now one of the most renowned names of English poetry. Keats was so sure that he would die without creating a ripple in the world of English poetry that his tombstone was made out to the one 'whose name was writ in water', thus showing the transience of Keats' fame. He also feared that he would not be able to achieve his full capacity in terms of writing. He feared the limitations of his life.

The use of fertility words – ‘gleaned, ‘garners’, ‘full ripen’d grain’ – subtly reinforces the idea of the artist’s creation and his mind as a fertile landscape. Keats views his imagination as a field of grain, wherein he is both the man harvesting, and the product is harvested.

Lines 5-8

When I behold, upon the night’s
starred face,Huge cloudy symbols
of a high romance, And think that I
may never live to trace
Their shadows with the magic hand of chance;

The second quatrain shows Keats viewing the beauty of the natural world. This natural world, full of miracles, is what Keats decides he can transform into poetry; the material that he works with is Keats’ medium, the medium of nature – ‘when I behold, upon the night’s starred face, / huge cloudy symbols of a high romance, / and think that I may never live to trace / their shadows with the magic hand of chance;’ shows the nature of Keats’ fleeting beauty, and contrasts the immortality of nature with the transience of Keats’ verse.

As an artist, he fears the lack – he is terrified that he will die before doing justice to the beauty of nature, however, paradoxically; he is also terrified of not achieving the artistry that he has dreamed of, of not doing justice to the beauty of nature, even should the opportunity to write about them present itself. The further reference to ‘high romance’ could also show Keats’ terrors about not finding the right person to fall in love with. Keats feared being lonely, as well, and the woman that he met and fell in love with – Fanny Brawne – was never consummated in a formal marriage, as her mother wouldn’t give him consent to marry. He died betrothed to Fanny, in Italy, though it was clear from their discovered correspondence that neither Fanny nor Keats believed they would meet each other again in Keats’ final year alive. From a letter from Franny Brawne to Frances Keats, “All I do is to persuade myself, I shall never see him again.”

Lines 9-14

And when I feel, fair creature of
an hour,That I shall never look
upon thee more, Never have
relish in the faery power
Of unreflecting love—then on
the shore Of the wide world I
stand alone, and thinkTill love
and fame to nothingness do sink.

In the final stanza of *'When I have Fears that I may Cease to Be',* he turns to the idea of love. The use of the phrase 'fair creature of an hour' shows that even his love is not immortal; the crux of this poem is the short nature of love, of creativity, of everything that had given Keats a glimmering view on life. The opening of the quatrain with the word 'and' shows that it is an additional fear of Keats', to not only have never achieved artistic mastery but also to never see his potential lover again (which, as history shows, turns out to be true; he never did see Fanny Brawne alive again). Thus we get to the dual terrors that haunted Keats' life – the opportunities provided by life, and his inability to live up to them. Keats is terrified of failure, more than death, almost; to have achieved love, and then to lose it, seems to Keats to be the biggest terror.

The final two lines give *'When I have Fears that I may Cease to Be'* an overarching feeling of misery and despair – Keats finds himself standing alone, trying to understand these fears, and not managing. Thus, no matter if he attains these fears, or if he doesn't, Keats will still be anxious andworried and life will still be scared.

3. Ode to a Nightingale

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
My sense, as though of hemlock I
had drunk,Or emptied some dull opiate to
the drains
One minute past, and Lethe-wards
had sunk:'Tis not through envy of thy
happy lot,

But being too happy in thine
happiness,— That thou, light-
winged Dryad of the trees
In some melodious plot
Of beechen green, and shadows
numberless,Singest of summer
in full-throated ease.

O, for a draught of vintage! that hath
been Cool'd a long age in the
deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
Full of the true, the blushful
Hippocrene, With beaded
bubbles winking at the brim,
And purple-stained mouth;
That I might drink, and leave the world
unseen, And with thee fade away
into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
What thou among the leaves hast
never known,The weariness, the fever, and
the fret
Here, where men sit and hear each
other groan;Where palsy shakes a few, sad,
last gray hairs,

Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin,
and dies;Where but to think is to be
full of sorrow
And leaden-eyed despairs,
Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
Not charioted by Bacchus and
his pards,But on the viewless wings
of Poesy,
Though the dull brain perplexes
and retards:Already with thee! tender is
the night,
And haply the Queen-Moon is on
her throne,Cluster'd around by
all her starry Fays;
But here there is no light,
Save what from heaven is with the breezes
blown Through verdurous glooms and
winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the
boughs,But, in embalmed darkness, guess
each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable
month endowsThe grass, the thicket,
and the fruit-tree wild;

White hawthorn, and the pastoral
eglantine;Fast fading violets
cover'd up in leaves;
And mid-May's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
I have been half in love with
easeful Death,Call'd him soft names in
many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it
rich to die,To cease upon the
midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy
soul abroadIn such an ecstasy!
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears
in vain—To thy high requiem
become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread
thee down;The voice I hear this
passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor
and clown:Perhaps the self-same
song that found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick
for home,She stood in tears amid the

alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charm'd magic casements, opening on
the foamOf perilous seas, in faery
lands forlorn.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is fam'd to do,
deceiving elf.Adieu! adieu! thy
plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still
stream, Up the hill-side; and
now 'tis buried deep
In the next
valley-glades: Was it a
vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—Do I wake or sleep?

Analysis of the poem

The six odes are among the most famous of John Keats's poems, they include **'Ode to a Nightingale'.** While it is unclear in what order they were written, Keats wrote them in batches, and scholars argue that when one reads them in sequence, one can see them form a thematic whole. The poem itself is very unhappy; Keats is stunned at the happiness of the bird and despairs at the difference between it and its happiness and his own unhappy life. At the start of *'Ode to a Nightingale'*, the heavy sense of melancholy draws allusions to Ode to Melancholy, and Keats –

despite the death imagery – does not want to die. The conflicted nature of human life – a mixture of pain/joy, emotion/numbness, the actual/the ideal, etc – dominates the poem, so much so that, even at the end, it is unclear whether or not it happened – 'do I wake or

dream?'

It can also be assumed that the heavy imagery of death and sickness could hark back to his experiences taking care of his elder brother, who died of tuberculosis underneath John Keats' care. The unhappiness, however, that Keats feels in the poem is not necessarily miserable – Keats writes that he has been 'half in love with easeful Death', and describes the joy of listening to the nightingale's song in a sort of euphoria. It can therefore be considered that Keats would rather forget his unhappiness than die: the references to hemlock, and Lethe, solidify this argument, as both would blur the memory enough to allow Keats to forget.

There are heavy allusions to mythology: Lethe, the river of forgetting that flows through the underworld; Hippocrene, the fountain of the Muses made by Pegasus' hooves which brings inspiration; dryads, the spirit protectors of the forest; Bacchus, god of wine and debauchery; Ruth and the corn-field is a reference to the book in the Bible; hemlock, the poison that killed Socrates;Flora, the Roman goddess of nature.

Nature and imagination are shown to be a brief reprieve from human suffering, hence the song of the nightingale, and its impressions. There is also a form of reality to idealism: Keats says that he would like to drink from 'a draught of fine vintage' (a very fine wine) and transport himself to the ideal world that the nightingale belongs to. He states that he will not be taken there by Bacchus and his pards (Bacchanalia, revelry, and chaos) but by poetry and art. Keats then goes on to describe his ideal world, referring to the 'Queen Moon' and all her 'starry-eyed Fay' – however, Keats cannot transport himself into this world, and the end of the nightingale's song brings about the end of his fantasy. 'Country green', 'Provencal song' and 'sunburned mirth' all point to a highly fantastical reality, especially considering the status of the world at the time, and the mythological references help to maintain a surreal, dreamlike state throughout the entire poem andto charge Keats' fantasies with identifiable ideas and figures.

Keats uses the senses heavily in all his poetry, relying on synaesthetic description to draw the reader into *'Ode to a Nightingale'*. It works especially well here because Keats' fantasy world is

dark and sensuous, and he 'cannot see what flowers are at my feet; he is 'in embalmed

darkness'. The darkness may have helped his imagination to flourish and furnish his ideal creation, as well as lending a supernatural air to *'Ode to a Nightingale'*.

The drowsiness comes from the longing to flee the world and join the nightingale – to become like the nightingale, beautiful and immortal and organic – and after rejecting joining the nightingale through Bacchanalian activity, he decides that he will attempt to join the bird through poetry. Thus, the rapture of poetic inspiration matches the rapture of the nightingale's music and thereby links nature to poetry to art (nature as art and beauty, a Romantic ideal). He calls the bird 'immortal', thereby also stating that nature will survive man.

The bird's song translates inspiration into something that the outside world can understand; like art, the nightingale's singing is changeable and renewable, and it is music that is 'organic', not made with a machine. It is art, but art that cannot be viewed and has no physical form. As night shifts into the day – shifting from the supernatural back into fact – the bird goes from being a bird to a symbol of art, happiness, freedom, and joy, back to being a bird. It is contrasted, in the third stanza, by the reality of the world around him – sickness, ill-health, and conflict.

The first half of *'Ode to a Nightingale'* represents the way man was – the pleasurable moments of life that overwhelm and leave a gap behind when they're over; the second half is maturity, understanding truth, which leads to pleasure but also leads to pain.

In the end, Keats realizes that merging with the 'embalmed darkness' means dying, giving himself up completely to death, and becoming one of the worlds that he admires, however it would mean that he can no longer hear the nightingale and would be farther away from beauty. Neither life nordeath is acceptable to Keats. He belongs nowhere.

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4. Ode On a Grecian Urn

Thou still unravish'd bride of quietness,
Thou foster-child of silence and
slow time,Sylvan historian, who canst
thus express

A flowery tale more sweetly than
our rhyme:What leaf-fring'd legend
haunts about thy shape
Of deities or mortals, or of both,
In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?
What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?
What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?
What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes,
play on;Not to the sensual ear, but, more
endear'd,
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst
not leaveThy song, nor ever can
those trees be bare;
Bold Lover, never, never canst
thou kiss,Though winning near the goal
yet, do not grieve;
She cannot fade, though thou hast not
thy bliss,For ever wilt thou love,
and she be fair!

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot
shed Your leaves, nor ever bid the
Spring adieu;
And, happy melodist, unwearied,
For ever piping songs for

ever new; More happy love! more
happy, happy love!
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,
For ever panting, and for
ever young;All breathing human
passion far above,
That leaves a heart high-sorrowful and
cloy'd, A burning forehead, and a
parching tongue.

Who are these coming to the sacrifice?
To what green altar, O
mysterious priest,Lead'st thou that
heifer lowing at the skies,
And all her silken flanks with garlands drest?
What little town by river or sea shore,
Or mountain-built with peaceful citadel,
Is emptied of this folk, this pious morn?
And, little town, thy streets for
evermoreWill silent be;
and not a soul to tell
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

O Attic shape! Fair attitude! with brede
Of marble men and maidens
overwrought,With forest branches and
the trodden weed;
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out
of thoughtAs doth eternity: Cold Pastoral!

When old age shall this generation

waste, Thou shalt remain, in

midst of other woe

Than ours, a friend to man, to whom

thou say'st,"Beauty is truth, truth

beauty,—that is all

Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know."

5. Ode On a Grecian Urn

Summary

Ode On a Grecian Urn" is a poem by John Keats in which the speaker admires an ancient Grecianurn and meditates on the nature of truth and beauty.

In the first stanza, the speaker describes the scenes depicted on the urn: a party, a group of musicians, and a ritual slaughter.

In the second through fourth stanzas, the speaker describes the scenes in detail. He lingers on thescene of the party, where several amorous men pursue women.

In the final stanza, the speaker states that if the urn could speak for itself, it would declare, "Beautyis truth, and truth beauty."

“Ode on a Grecian Urn” addresses many of the same concerns that occupied Keats in “Ode to a Nightingale,” except that in this poem he turns his attention from the natural poetry of the bird to the human artistry of the urn. Unable to escape his sense of life’s transience through the immortal song of the bird, Keats looks to the timeless truth embodied in the urn. Keats once again encounters the paradox that is central to all of his art: To achieve immortality is to rid oneself of change, but it is change, not stasis, that produces the contrasts necessary for all that is good.

In the first stanza, the poet contemplates first the urn as a whole, which he characterizes as a “historian,” and then turns his attention to the detailed scene engraved onto the side of the urn. The urn first is described as an “unravish’d bride of quietness,” calling attention to the fact that it is only when the poet begins to think about the urn that it begins to tell its story. The urn cannot speak, in other words, until it is spoken to. That is

a significant point, for it leads to the conclusion that the immortal urn exists in any meaningful way only when it comes into contact with, and is activated by, the inquiring intelligence of a mortal observer. Immortality, the poet again seems to be saying, depends in some fundamental way upon its opposite.

He then begins asking the urn questions about the people portrayed on the side of the urn. He wonders who they are, “deities or mortals, or of both,” and speculates about the location of the engraved scene, “In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?” The setting is ancient Greece, a time when mortals and gods often interacted. From the very beginning, therefore, the poet is concerned with the issue of immortality, both as it is represented by the immortal urn and by the godlike characterswhose “legend” is engraved on the side.

Stanza 2 shifts from questions to observations. The first observation stems from the experience of the first stanza. Having tried to experience imaginatively the scene before him, the poet concludes that the imagination, when engaged by art, produces an experience that is superior to reality. The sounds of the pipes are sweet, to be sure, but the sounds supplied by the imagination “Are sweeter,” because the imagination can alter and improve upon the experience. Not bound by the material world, the imagination is capable of conjuring up sights, sounds, and emotions far beyond one’s physical human capabilities. It would seem, therefore, that Keats is suggesting that the world of the imagination, which is the world of art, is preferable to the world of actuality. In the ideal world of art, where life need not conform to the limitations of flesh and blood, everything is as it should be; there the leaves never fall from the trees, no one ever dies, youth never fades, and lovers are forever young and forever in love. Keats comes to that realization through the scene before him: Although the lover, poised to kill his beloved, will never actually complete the act, nevertheless it is not a loss, since his beloved “cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,/ For ever wilt thou love, and...

6. Ode on Melancholy

No, no, go not to Lethe, neither twist

Wolf's-bane, tight-rooted, for its

poisonous wine;Nor suffer thy pale forehead

to be kiss'd

By nightshade, ruby grape of
Proserpine; Make not your
rosary of yew-berries,
Nor let the beetle, nor the death-moth be
Your mournful Psyche, nor the
downy owlA partner in your sorrow's
mysteries;
For shade to shade will come too drowsily,
And drown the wakeful anguish of the soul.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall
Sudden from heaven like a
weeping cloud,That fosters the droop-
headed flowers all,
And hides the green hill in an
April shroud;Then glut thy sorrow on a
morning rose,
Or on the rainbow of the salt
sand-wave,Or on the
wealth of globed peonies;
Or if thy mistress some rich anger
shows, Emprison her soft hand,
and let her rave,
And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

She dwells with Beauty—Beauty that
must die;And Joy, whose hand is
ever at his lips
Bidding adieu; and aching Pleasure
nigh, Turning to poison while the

bee-mouth sips:
Ay, in the very temple of Delight
Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,
Though seen of none save him whose
strenuous tongueCan burst Joy's grape against his
palate fine;
His soul shalt taste the sadness of her might,
And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

"Ode on Melancholy" is a three-stanza poem addressed to people who are susceptible to fits of melancholy, and it offers a prescription for coping with "the blues." John Keats says that the melancholy mood is full of beauty and potential spiritual instruction. Therefore, instead of seeking escape through intoxication or even suicide, the melancholy individual should savor the mood because it has divine properties. Lethe, referred to in the opening line, was one of the rivers of

Hades in Greek and Roman mythology; drinking from it was supposed to cause forgetfulness. Proserpine was the goddess of Hades. Psyche was a nymph who represented the human soul. Wolfsbane, nightshade, and yew are all plants that have poisonous properties, and yew trees are commonly planted around cemeteries.

In the second stanza, the words "glut thy sorrow" encapsulate the poet's prescription. Do not be afraid of melancholy: enjoy it. Look at all the beauty of nature, including the beauty in a beautiful woman's eyes, and reflect upon the sad truth that none of it can last. Similar thoughts are expressed in Keats's "Ode on a Grecian Urn" and "Ode to a Nightingale." The fragility and perishability of beauty evoke melancholy but make the beautiful object more precious.

Pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow, delight and melancholy are opposite sides of the same coin: It is impossible to have one without the other. Anyone who is particularly sensitive to beauty and pleasure is bound to be painfully susceptible to melancholy. Only the aesthetically sensitive person can appreciate the beauty of melancholy; melancholy adds dignity and spiritual significance to beauty. Vulgar, insensitive people will be

afraid of it as of some threatening aberration.

7. To Autumn

Season of mists and mellow
fruitfulness,Close bosom-friend of
the maturing sun; Conspiring with
him how to load and bless
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-
eves run;To bend with apples the moss'd
cottage-trees,
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;
To swell the gourd, and plump the
hazel shellsWith a sweet kernel; to set
budding more,
And still more, later flowers for the
bees, Until they think warm days
will never cease,
For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.
Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy
store? Sometimes whoever seeks
abroad may find
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,
Thy hair soft-lifted by the
winnowing wind;Or on a half-reap'd
furrow sound asleep,
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while
thy hookSpares the next swath and all
its twined flowers:
And sometimes like a gleaner thou
dost keepSteady thy laden head
across a brook;

Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

Where are the songs of spring? Ay, Where
are they?Think not of them, thou hast thy
music too,—
While barred clouds bloom the soft-
dying day,And touch the stubble-
plains with rosy hue; Then in a
wailful choir the small gnats mourn
Among the river sallows, borne
aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from
hilly bourn;Hedge-crickets sing; and
now with treble soft
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft;

In this poem, Keats describes the season of autumn. The ode is an address to the season. It is the season of the mist and in this season fruits are ripened on the collaboration with the Sun. Autumn loads the vines with grapes. There are apple trees near the moss growth cottage. The season fills

the apples with juice. The hazel shells also grow plumb. These are mellowed. The Sun and the autumn help the flowers of the summer to continue. The bees are humming on these flowers.

"To Autumn" describes, in its three stanzas, three different aspects of the season: its fruitfulness, its labor, and its ultimate decline. Through the stanzas, there is a progression from early autumn to mid-autumn and then to the heralding of winter. Parallel to this, the poem depicts the day turning from morning to afternoon and into dusk. These progressions are joined with a shift from the tactile sense to that of sight and then of sound, creating a

three-part symmetry that is not present in Keats'sother odes.

As the poem progresses, Autumn is represented metaphorically as one who conspires, who ripens fruit, who harvests, who makes music. The first stanza of the poem represents autumn as involved with the promotion of natural processes, growth, and ultimate maturation, two forces in opposition in nature, but together creating the impression that the season will not end. In this stanza, the fruits are still ripening and the buds still opening in the warm weather. Stuart Sperry says that Keats emphasizes the tactile sense here, suggested by the imagery of growth and gentle motion: swelling, bending, and plumping.

In the second stanza, autumn is personified as a harvester, to be seen by the viewer in various guises performing laboring tasks essential to the provision of food for the coming year. There is a lack of definitive action, all motion being gentle. Autumn is not depicted as actual harvesting but as seated, resting, or watching. In lines 14–15 the personification of Autumn is as an exhausted laborer. Near the end of the stanza, the steadiness of the gleaner in lines 19–20 again emphasizes motionlessness within the poem. The progression through the day is revealed in actions that are all suggestive of the drowsiness of the afternoon: the harvested grain is being winnowed; the harvester is asleep or returning home, the last drops issue from the cider press.

The last stanza contrasts autumn’s sounds with those of spring. The sounds that are presented are not only those of Autumn but essentially the gentle sounds of the evening. Gnats wail and lambs bleat in the dusk. As night approaches within the final moments of the song, death is slowly approaching alongside the end of the year. The full-grown lambs, like the grapes, gourds, and hazelnuts, will be harvested for the winter. The twittering swallows gather for departure, leaving the fields bare. The whistling red-breast and the chirping cricket are the common sounds of winter.

The references to Spring, the growing lambs, and the migrating swallows remind the reader that the seasons are a cycle, widening the scope of this stanza from a single season to life in general.

Of all of Keats's poems, "To Autumn", with its catalogue of concrete images, most closely describes a paradise as realized on earth while also focusing on archetypal symbols connected with the season. Within the poem, autumn represents growth, maturation, and finally an approaching death.

2.5 Check Your Progress

1. Keats as a poet of nature

Sensuousness is the key to Keats' attitude towards nature. He looked with child-like delight at the objects of nature and his whole being was thrilled by what he saw and heard. The earth lay before him tilled, spread out with beauties and wonders, and all his senses reached to them with delight and rapture. Everything in nature for him was full of wonder and mystery-the rising sun, the moving clouds, the growing buds, and the swimming fishes. Sensuous Delight in Nature Keats' attitude towards nature developed as he grew up. In the early poems, it was a temper of merely sensuous delight, an unanalyzed pleasure in the beauty of nature.

"He had a way", says Stopford Brooke, "of fluttering butterfly-fashion, from one object to another, touching for a moment the momentary charm of each thing. He would let things flight in and out of the brain not caring to ask anyone to stay and keep him company, but pleased with them and his game of life."

His attitude was one of unthinking pleasure and enjoyment without thought. In the poem, I stood tip-toe upon a little hill, the poet flits from one object to another, and sucks delight from each the

sweet buds which with a modest pride Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside Their scantily- leaved and finely tapering stems. Here are sweet peas, on tip-toe for a flight With wings of gentle flush o'er delicate white, And taper finger catching at all things To bind them all with tiny rings; Where swarms of minnow show the little heads Staying their wavy bodies against the stream. This is a description of a summer's day. Each object of nature brings delight to the poet and he paints a beautiful picture. Nature is to him is a store of delight but there is no spiritual union between his

soul and the soul of nature. The poet is enraptured by the beauties of Nature which have gratifiedand thrilled his senses.

Keats' Love of Nature for Her own sake: The Physical Beauty of Nature Keats loved nature for her own sake, and not for the sake of any idea that the human mind can read into her with its workings and aspirations. He had no theory to illustrate or a moral to preach. His poetry is full of an enchantment that arises out of his deep enjoyment of beauty that he finds in nature and life. "He had grown up neither like Wordsworth under

the spell of lakes and mountains nor in the glow of millennial dreams like Shelley", but born and bred in London and Middlesex he was "gifted as if by some mysterious birthright, with an insight into all the beauties, and sympathy with all the life of the woods and fields." Where Wordsworth spiritualities and Shelley intellectualizes Nature, Keats expresses her through the senses. He is stirred to depths by the colour and scent and music in nature. He feels and loves every mood of the Earth; and "so passionately did he love her with a love tar more concrete and personal than Wordsworth or even Shelley that no other consideration impinges upon his work." Wordsworth interpreted nature by the operations of his strenuous soul; Shelley saw in nature a visible symbol of the mysterious universe: "Keats seeks to know Nature perfectly and to enjoy her fully, with no ulterior thought than to give her complete expression. With him, no considerations of theology humanity or metaphysics mingle with nature." Keats: Nature is a Great Consoler This temper of spontaneous joy changes with the coming of pain and sorrow in the poet's life. He has seen his brother die and his love doomed to disappointment. The temper of the poet becomes grave and imaginative, and his note towards nature is mixed with sorrow, which seeks to lose itself in joy. Now there is a deep spiritual union between the soul of the poet and the soul of nature. Nature does not merely gratify his senses, she now goes deep into his soul. In the joy of nature, Keats forgets his sorrow. This is the spirit that informs the Ole to a Nightingale. The poet has felt the burden of sorrow in his personal life and the whole world is full of sorrow. But then there is the nightingale also in the world, and the Nightingale is the very symbol of joy. The imagination of the poet is set aglow by the song of the bird, and he forgets his sorrow and joins the Nightingale in spirit. This is the moment when nature, with her moon and stars and flowers, enters into his soul, and his soul is merged in nature. Keats and the Nightingale are one; it is his soul that sings in the bird, and he sings. Keats' Absorption in the Beauty and Life of Nature In the Ode to a Nightingale, there is sorrow. But Keats, an untiring with "The worshipper of beauty, would not allow his personal feelings to write.

He enters fully into the life of nature and does not impute his feelings to her. He is completely absorbed in the momentary joy and joy and element of things in nature. He enters into the very soul of the autumn season

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?

Sometimes whoever seeks abroad

may find Thee sitting careless on a granary floor, Thy hair was soft-lifted by the winnowing wind.

The poet is wholly in the time and with the things of which he wrote. He lives wholly in the present and does not look back into the past or forward into the future. In the Ode to Autumn, he asks,

Where are the songs of spring?

Ay, where are they? He answers, 'Why talk of spring? We are in autumn." Think not of them, Thou has thy music too. "This joy in the present, this absorption in the beauty of the hour, this making of it a divine possession and losing in its loveliness the pain of life is one of the chief marks of his genius." Keats' Personification of Objects of Nature Like the ancient Greeks, Keats often presents the objects of nature as living beings with a life of their own. As Leigh Hunt said of him, "he never beheld the oak tree without seeing the Dryad." The moon is Cynthia, the sun Apollo. Keats' Detailed Observation of Nature Keats' observation of Nature is characterized by minuteness vividness. Keats' eye observes every little detail and presents a mature it WIu touch. He has the knack of and capturing the most essential data compelling our attention. His descriptions of nature are thus marred by fine pictorial quality. Keats' Mystic Experiences in Objects of Nature sensuous appeal gives him a fleeting vision of deeper feelings. He then in his world imagination passes fromthe world of time to the world of eternity.

These mystic experiences are indicated in his Ode On Nightingale. As Keats hears the song of the nightingale, the barriers of time and space seem to vanish away. He has imaginatively passed through death, flown on the wings of imagination to the nightingale's immortality. The Nightingale will be singing on while he will become immortal. The sound of the bird is the voice of eternity; sounding in ancient days in the ears of emperors and clowns, of Ruth in tears: The ode is an

exquisite example of the imaginative adventure of Keats. Nature takes him away from 'the weariness, the fever and the fret' of the present world to the eternity of beauty represented by the song of the Nightingale. Here is the highest nature poetry of Keats, where the inspired imaginationof the poet gives him a fleeting glimpse of eternal beauty.

Keats' Attitude to Nature in Comparison with Wordsworth and Shelley and All romantic poets except Keats see in nature a deep meaning- ethical, moral, intellectual, or spiritual. For Wordsworth, Nature is a mother, a nurse, an educating influence. He regards it as a living spirit. He sees in it the presence of God. Shelley, too, finds in Nature intellectual beauty. beauty. But while Shelley intellectualizes Nature and Wordsworth spiritualizes it, "Keats is content to express her through the senses; the colour, the touch, the scent, the pulsing music. Originally, the ode was a Greek form of verse It meant a poetic composition written to be sung_to the music of the lyre. So it came to be known as basically lyrical. But when ode-form came into the hands of the English writers the idea of a musical ceased to be accompaniment considered essential. It came to mean a type of lyric poem only. Thus in the context of English poetry, ode can be defined as a lyrical poem that expresses exalted or enthusiastic emotion in of a respected theme that is dignified, and it does so in a metrical form which is as á rule complex or irregular.

2. Characteristics of An Ode

It is an address to an abstract object which means written to and not that written about.

- Ode is natural and its writer remains spontaneous. So it carries with it a degree of emotional lyrical zeal. The ode must be highly serious To be able to do real justice to its dignified theme, its language and style should also be dignified and elevated. V
- The ode must exhibit a very clear logic in the development of the thought of its writer, whereby the ode can be long enough to explain the entire process of thought development. In this way, an ode also becomes a study in the psychology of the human mind.
- The ode can adopt any of the meters regular or irregular but the metrical pattern must be complex and elaborate. John Keats tried his pen at various forms of writing, but none of them yielded him as great success as the ode form. After every reading of his poetry, his odes alone fascinate our attention to the highest degree.

Therefore, Keats is always remembered chiefly as a writer of odes. Not only this, but Keats also holds a leading rank among the ode-writers of English literature. In our study here, we will analyzewhat qualities of his odes make them so remarkable in themselves.

- The first and foremost quality of his odes is their unity of impression. The major odes of Keats-Ode to a Nightingale, Ode on a Grecian Urn, and Ode On Melancholy have a common subject and theme. They have a common mood to depict and last but not the least in all these odes the development of mood is more or less similar and the mood develops, in the shape of a drama, ie. first 'the mood takes birth, it develops, reaches a climax and finally the anti-climax takes place. Thus when we read Keats' odes, we feel that we are reading an abridged drama, and in this lay the secret of their success. In so short a form of writing, Keats has been able to give an impression of the kind, that plays of Shakespeare produce. But it shall be an over-simplification of facts if this statement of ours is taken to mean that Keats has reached the Shakespearean heights of literary perfection. No doubt it was Keats' most cherished desire to be remembered with Shakespeare in the rank of men of letters, but unfortunately, Keats could not perform this feat. Might be, if he had not died young, he could have had been able to probe better into his poetic wealth. the dramatic development of Keats' mood concerning his odes.
- The very opening stanza of Ode to a Nightingale shows Keats in a mood for escape. He wants to trespass into the zone of forgetfulness, "Lethe-wards". He longs for an intoxicant, either "a draught of vintage" or "a beaker full of the warm south", to the nep the him "fade away into the forest dim, the forest nat Is the Nightingale's abode. He wants to cross over to In the world same way of the in immortal Bird " that "wast nat born for death." In the same way in Ode on a Grecian Urn Keats says Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard Are sweeter than "unheard melodies", Keats means the sound of the pipes Coming from the world of art ie, the Urn. In Ode to a nightingale, we have the viewless wings of Poesy" as an equivalent of the "unheard melodies of the Ode on Grecian Urn. In both the poems, the fascinating element for Keats is the world of imagination. The world of the Grecian Un has its joys, the "pipes and timbrels", the "wild ecstasy and nen or gods in a "mad pursuit" after the maidens. The world of the Nightingale has the sweet fragrance of The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild; White hawthorn, and the pastoral

  eglantine; Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves; And mid-May's eldest child, The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine. The other binding factor between the

Nightingale and the Urn is their permanence. No hungry generations can tread down the existence of the Nightingale. The same way the Urn has remained unravished from the movement of the clock which is driving all earthly objects to their end. Both the poems speak eloquently of Man's susceptibility to death in the world "where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies." There is a common concern for Man's pains and griefs. Escape into the world of imagination takes the two poems to a point of climax, but in the right tradition of a drama-development, the anti-climax takes place and this anti-climax involves Keats' coming back into the world of Whereas reality. in Ode to a Nightingale, it is the word 'Forlorn !' that puts the clock back towards anti-climax, in Ode on a Grecian Urn it is the realization of the Urn's death-like silence that brings Keats back into the world of Man. Ode to Autumn can be read in the same light. It depicts the theme of ripeness, decay, and death in describing the natural cycle of the season: Autumn, Spring, and Winter. Ode on Melancholy also presents a study in contrast in its third and last stanza which contains the theme of the poem that joy and beauty are a source of human misery by their very nature because their days are so numbered. This again reminds us of the Ode to a Nightingale where Keats shows a deeper concern for the transitoriness of human value.

- Thus, we have seen that there is a unifying force behind the great odes of Keats and that unifying force is their common theme and object, a common mood, and above all a systematic and drama-like development of the mood.
- Every ode has the same perfection of language. Keats loads every rift with ore. He makes use of a beautiful vocabulary but beauty is not divorced from thought. Every word is as full of meaning as it is beautiful. The language is concise, exact, and concentrated. There is not a word that we can afford to dispense with, without doing damage to the very structure of the poem. The right word has been used at the right place, and every word has been chiseled to the full. By these distinct features, the odes of Keats carry weight with them.

3. The chief characteristic of Keats's Poetry

A PURE POET -The poetry of Keats is an unending pursuit of beauty. He pursued truth indeed, but the truth for him was a beauty. He never intellectualized his poetry. He was gifted with extraordinary sensibility and had an ardent passion for the beauty of the visible world. He, therefore, cried, "O for a life of sensation rather than of thought. His

entire being was thrilled by the beauty of the world; nothing gave him greater delight than the excitement of his sense, produced by 'a thing of beauty. All his poetry is full of the sensuous appeal of beautiful things. To Wordsworth, nature is a living being with the power to influence the human mind, and carry a spiritual message. Shelley, though not a moralist, was an idealist-"The poet of the sky and the sea and the cloud- the gold of dawn and the gloom of earthquake and eclipse." The world that he depicts and makes symbolic of human passions is rarely the world that we know, but it is a world that he has intensely imagined. His grand description of the effects of the west wind is great poetry. But, the beauty and grandeur of the west wind go beyond our experience. When we turn to Keats' Ode to Autumn, we are brought into imaginative contact with the beauty that we know. Autumn is represented by Keats by its familiar qualities: "mist and mellow fruitfulness". Realism and truth inform every detail of the poem. Keats neither attributes moral life to nature nor attempts to pass beyond her familiar manifestations. He, the pure poet that he is, sees and presents nature as she is, and his presentation has that magic quality with which his imagination has supremely endowed him.

Spontaneity and Concentration of Thought and Feeling Keats was a pure poet, in the sense that, in his poetry, he was a poet and nothing else- not a teacher, not a preacher, not a conscious carrier of any humanitarian or spiritual message. His ambition was to become a poet, pure and simple and his ambition was fulfilled. Poetry came naturally to him, as leaves come to a tree; it was the spontaneous utterance of his powerful feelings.

The poetry of Keats was based on his experience of life, and therefore it is marked by spontaneity and intensity. What he experienced and felt upon his pulse, he expressed. He listened to the song of a nightingale, and the music of the song transported him to the world of imagination. He attained the realization of eternity and truth in the beauty of the song, and he wrote the famous line, "thou wast not born for death, immortal bird". Much has been written about the logical fallacy of the line, but what did the poet in Keats care about? What he felt, he wrote. Keats genuinely felt the thought that a beautiful thing also pleases, and so he wrote, "A thing of beauty is a joy forever",

And because he felt the truth of what he wrote, it carries an instant conviction, and is in itself a joy for ever. The power of Keats' poetry is due to the intense concentration of thought and feeling. Submission to the Truth of Life and Experience Keats possessed what Bradley calls "the Shakespeare on strain", and submitted to the truth of life. He

knew that the cold wind and the hot sun were as essential as the fresh blown rose. The poetry of Shakespeare reveals the beauty of life; the truth is beauty, it says. It accepts the world of men and women and accepts them as they are. This is also true of Keats. He accepted life as it is, joy and sorrow, happiness and melancholy-both exist side by side; if there is discord in life, it has its music too. A pure poet always submits to life, so that life is glorified through him.

"Keats submitted himself", says Middleton Murry, "steadily, persistently, unflinchingly to

life" and had, "the capacity to see and to feel what life is."

A pure poet feels and expresses his joy in beauty, but when he feels this joy, he realises also a new aspect of beauty, which is truth. In this identity of Beauty and Truth lies the secret harmony of theuniverse. Keats realizes this harmony when he emphatically says

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty, - that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

Beauty transcends individuals, time, and space. For Keats, Beauty IS Truth. He arrived at this truth through 'negative capability' and through the realization of the necessity of pain and sorrow.A pure poet like Keats loves foul and fair, joy and sorrow.

Keats' aestheticism was not only sensuous, it had an intellectual element. He was constantly endeavoring to reach the truth through beauty; he had a conviction that "for his progress towards knowledge truth,- thought, and philosophy were indispensable." But he also felt that "a poet will never be able to rest in thoughts and do not also reasonings, which satisfy the imagination and givea truth which is also But beauty".

He was more than Wordsworth or Coleridge Shelley, a poet, pure and simple. Negative Capability Keats had an impulse to interest himself in anything he saw or heard. He accepted it and identified himself with it. "If a sparrow comes before my window," says Keats, "I take part in its existence and pick about the gravel." "A poet", he says, "has no identity.

For Keats, the necessary quality of poetry is a submission to things as they are, without any effort to intellectualize them into something else. Keats and the nightingale are merged into- it is his soul that sings in the bird. He was wholly in the place and in the time and with the things of which he wrote. He could be absorbed wholly in the loveliness of the hour and the joy of the moment. He is fully thrilled by the beauty of

autumn. He does not complain Where are the songs of spring? Ay, where are they? Think not of them, thou hast thy music too. This joy in the present, this absorption in the beauty of the hour is one of the chief marks of his genius as a pure poet.

No Moral Teaching or Didacticism Keats often says that the poet must not live for himself, but must feel for others, and must do good but he must do so by being a poet not by being a teacher or a moralist. He must have a purpose of doing good by his poetry, but he must not obtrude it in his poetry- that is, he must not show that he has a palpable design upon us.

Keats says: "We hate poetry that has a palpable design upon us. Poetry should be the great and unobtrusive-a thing which enters into one's soul and does not startle it'. Hence there is no didacticism in Keats as there is in Wordsworth. There is no moralizing in The Eve of St. Agnes as there is none in King Lear; in both, the poets leave their works to speak for themselves." Keats' Poetical Achievement Keats' influence has been very strong from Tennyson to the present time. His emphasis on craftsmanship has had an excellent following. Many a poet has been led through the example of Keats to perfect verse that might otherwise have been carelessly written. Keats also turned his attention to the richness of verse, unlike the simplicity of Wordsworth. Again, he taught a new use of the classics. Instead of finding in the classics, models for restraint, he found a highly coloured romanticism. Restraint of form, he did emphasize, but for his materials, he chose the legends of Endymion and Lamia rather than the tales of Greeks and Romans of inspiring deeds. Keats' greatest achievement, however, is in his presentation of pure beauty. Beauty itself was his interest, not beauty to point a moral or to carry a message

2.6 Summary

John Keats, along with Shelley and Byron, is regarded the most prominent among the second generation of Romantic poets, following the likes of Wordsworth and Coleridge, who belonged to the first generation. For them, imagination was the supreme faculty of mind as opposed to the

traditional view of the superiority of reason. Nature was often presented by them as a work of art born from the divine imagination, displaying the rationalistic view of the universe as a machine. An early imitator of Spenser, Leigh Hunt, and Milton, John Keats showed tremendous growth in a short period and developed his craft to match the

best in the business. His distinct choice of subjects and style made him stand out among other major poets of his time. He was thus a poet of legends and myth, of romance and chivalric tale.

2.7 Keywords

- Sensuousness
- Escapist
- Romantic
- Ethics
- Poetry
- Ode
- Realistic

2.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- **Discuss Keats as a romantic poet.**
- **Discuss Keats as an escapist.**
- **Discuss Keats as a thinker.**
- **Sensuousness quality in Keats poetry.**

2.9 Answers to Your Progress

KEATS AS A ROMANTIC POET

Romantic poetry aims at the complete expression of the individual as compared to classical poetry, which aims at the expression comment of socIal any ways the most romantic of all romantic poets. Other romantic poets have some of their poetry. But the poetry of Keats is not a vehicle of any message. It is poetry for its own sake. It is, therefore, the purest poetry. Poetry of Escape All romantic poetry is more or less escapist. Romantic p0euy presents not the world of reality, but the world of dreams. The romantic poet seeks an escape from the hard realities of life in a world of romance and

beauty. Keats is the most romantic of all the poets in the sense that he is the most escapist of them all. He wants "to fade far away, dissolve and quite forget... the weariness, the fever and the fret" of real life. He sees how men "sit and hear each other groan," how "youth grows pale, and spectre thin, and dies". But this does not give rise to a desire to overthrow the tyrants, as it does in Shelley, nor does he think of a better world. Love of the Past Like all romantic poets, Keats seeks an escape from the past. His imagination is caught by the ancient Greeks as well as the glory and splendor of the Middle Ages. Most of his poetry is inspired by the past. He rarely devotes himself to the pressing problems of the present.

Endymion, Hyperion, and Lania are all classical in theme, though romantic in style. The Eve of St Agnes, Isabella, and La Belle Dame Sans Merci is medieval in origin. Keats thus finds an escape into the past from the oppressive realities of the present. Romantic Themes The themes of Keats' poetry are romantic. Most of his poetry is devoted to the quest of Beauty, Love, Chivalry, Adventure, Pathos-these are some of the themes of his poems that are romantic in tone. Love of Nature Like all romantics, Keats loves nature and its varied charms. He has a vivid sense of colour, and he transfigures everything into the beauty that he touches with "the magic hand of chance." Cult of Beauty In nothing else is Keats as romantic as in his frank pursuit of beauty. Beauty is Deity. Beauty for him is synonymous with Truth. A thing of beauty is for him a joy forever. Beauty is his religion. It is in this pursuit of beauty that he completely forgets himself and the world around him. Supernatural Element One of the most striking notes of romantic poetry is that of supernaturalism. Just as the romantic poet looks backward from the present to the distant past, so he looks beyond the seen to the unseen. His imagination is lured by the remote, shadowy and mysterious Among the romantic poets, Coleridge felt the spell of the supernatural the most, and his Ancient Mariner and Christabel are two of his important poems which dealt with the supernatural. Keats dealt with the supernatural in his La Belle Dame Sans Merci, and in that little poem, he has condensed a whole world of supernatural mystery. In Addition to Strangeness to

Beauty, the romantic quality in literature has been defined by Pater as "the addition of strangeness to beauty". All poetry, if it is genuine poetry, reflects, represents, and deals with beauty, but romantic poetry goes a step ahead and imparts strangeness to beauty. When Wordsworth reads the message of eternity in the simplest flower, he reveals something strange and wonderful; this revelation of the strange and the mysterious

imparts the essential romantic quality to the poetry of Wordsworth. Keats sees beauty in the ordinary things of nature. The earth to him is a place where beauty renews itself every day; the sky is full of huge cloudy symbols of a high romance.

Keats loved beauty în the flower, in the stream and the cloud, but he loved it in each thing as a part of the Universal beauty which is one, an infinite-"the mighty abstract idea of Beauty". The song of the nightingale is sweet and he is enraptured by the song and there comes the touch of romance. Keats, while hearing the sweet song, passes from the world of time to the world. The romantic image of the poet reveals in a flash a beyond this world- the world of eternity where the nightingale sings forever and ever. The song of the nightingale becomes a symbol of the uníversal spirit of Beauty. Pursuit of the unknown, the invisible, and the infinite inspires the creation of all the romantic poetry of the world. It is born out of the craving for the unknown; it is born out of the desire, not for limited happiness, but the boundless joy and loveliness. The nightingale is, for Keats, the symbol of unlimited joy and infinite happiness. Keats' Poetic Style Last but not least, both in terms of diction and meters, Keats' poetic style is romantic. Though it has a classical finish, it possesses that romantic touch of suggestiveness by which "more is meant than meets the ear." His poetry is full of such unique suggestive expressions

Keats has employed various kinds of meters and stanza forms in his poetic works. He is one of the great sonneteers in the English language and his Odes, with their musical flow in long stanzas, stand as unique specimens of romantic poetry Keats as a True Romantic. Keats was a true romantic-not a romantic in the hackneyed sense of dealing with the unrealities of life, He loved not merely beauty but truth as well, and not merely the world of imagination but that of reality, and he saw beauty in truth and truth in beauty. He never escaped from the realities of life in pursuit of the beautiful visions of his imagination; in fact, the visions of his imagination are based on reality. He persistently endeavored to reconcile the world of imagination with the world of reality, 'Therefore, Middleton Murry calls Keats "a true romantic.

KEATS AS AN ESCAPIST

"A thing of beauty is a joy forever"- this was the life-long creed of Keats. There was never a more ardent lover of But did his love and beauty than Keats. pursuit of beauty makes him ignore the realities of life? In one of his early poems **'Sleep and Poetry'**, he says that he will first plunge into, "the realm of Flora and Pan" (meaning the world of

beauty free from pain and ugliness), and then he puts the question, Can I ever bid these joys, farewell ?'. Then comes the answer, "Yes I must bid these joys farewell' Yes I must pass them for a nobler life Where I must find the agonies,the strife Of human hearts.

These are not the words of an escapist. But did Keats follow this ideal of life, which he chalked out early in his poetic career?

Keats was born at a time when the whole of Europe was shaken by the ideas of revolution, and he grew up in this atmosphere, but in his poetry these ideas never found expression. All the poets of Keats's time were influenced by the ideas and ideals of the French Revolution. "The ideas that awake the youthful passion of Wordsworth, of that, stirred the wrath of Scott, that worked like yeast on Byron and brought forth new matter, that Shelley reclothed and made into a prophecy of the future-the excitement, the turmoil, the life and death struggle which gathered round the Revolution-were ignored and unrepresented by Keats. In Keats, the ideas of the Revolution have appeared. He has, despite a few passages and till quite the end of his career, no vital interest in the present, none in man as a whole, none in the political movement of human thought, none in the future mankind, none in liberty, equality or fraternity, no interest but beauty. Keats was not a revolutionary. Indeed, his poetry does not express the revolt.

Wordsworth has a spiritual vision and he expresses it in simple style; Shelley has an idealistic vision and he expresses it in musical verse; Keats had the artist's vision of beauty, and he expresses t in picturesque style. Keats pursued beauty everywhere in nature, in art, in the deeds of chivalry, and the great tales of ancient Greece; and to Keats, beauty and truth were identical. This was the most profound and innermost experience of Keats' soul, and he expressed it most emphatically Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty', that is all, all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know. If he aimed to pursue Beauty, which was also Truth, he cannot be called an escapist, for in pursuing Beauty, he pursued Truth. Gradual Development

The poetry of Keats shows a process of gradual development. His earlier experiments in verse are products of youthful imagination, immature and overcharged with imagery. The youthful poet has abnormal sensibility but lacks experience of life. Endymion opens with the famous line-'A thing of beauty is a joy forever; it is full of glorious promises, but it is lost in shadows and uncertainties because it is not based upon experiences of real life. In the Lamia tale, that follows- Isabella, and The Eve of St. Agnes, the poet has not come

to real grips with life: his imagination plays with the Keats' romance of love. In the Odes, poetry assumes a deeper tone. There, he faces the sorrows and sufferings of life. He would wish for a life of joy and happiness, like that of the Nightingale Fade far away, and What quite forget thou amongst the leaves hast never The weariness, known, the fever, and the fret, There, where men sit and hear each other Where palsy shakes groan; a few, sad last Where grey hairs, youth grows pale and Where but to specter-thin and dies, think if to be full of And leaden-eyed despairs. sorrows 17 Sorrows and Sufferings, Inevitable Thus he longed to escape from the realities of life. But it was a passing mood that seized him when he was contrasting the lot of man with that of the Nightingale. Sorrows and sufferings were inevitable in life, and he fully realized that escape from the possible realities of life was neither nor desirable. In Hyperion, he wrote None can usurp the But height. Are those to whom the miseries of the world misery, and will not let them rest In a sonnet, he wrote: How fevered that man who cannot look upon his mortal days with temperate blood. Keats was trying to attain serenity of mood amid all the sufferings which he was undergoing in his own life and which he saw all around him in life. This mood of serenity is expressed in the Ode to Autumn.

Keats remained untouched by the ideas of the Revolution which filled the atmosphere of Europe at the time; at least from his poetry, we do not find any indication of his interest in the Revolution. Though the contemporary facts of history have not left any impression on his poetry, he deeply realized and expressed in his poetry, the fundamental truths of life. Keats was a pure poet, and would not allow any extraneous things like politics or morality to disturb the pure waters of poetry. And poetry is the expression of the poet's own experience of life. Keats, as he developed mentally and spiritually-and development was very rapid-was searching for truth in his soul.

He faced life with all uncertainties and contradictions, its sorrows and joys. The rose is beautiful indeed, but we cannot think of the rose without its thorn. It is therefore impossible to escape from inevitable pain in life. Melancholy, he says: dwells with beauty. Beauty that must die Melancholy

arises from the transience of joy and joy is ancient nature. Therefore, Keats accepts life as a whole- with its joy and beauty as well as its pain and despair. It is this alternation of joy and pain, light and shadow, that gives life its harmony, his is the truth of life and truth is beauty. This acceptance of life- this triumph over despair attained through deep spiritual

experience is expressed most forcibly in his Ode on a Grecian urn. The Ode On a Grecian Urn is not a dream of unutterable beauty nor is the urn itself the song of an impossible bliss beyond mortality. It has a precious message to mankind, not as a thing of beauty which gives exquisite delight to the senses, but as a symbol and prophecy of comprehension of human life which mankind can attain". Keats was not an escapist as he is sometimes supposed to be.

KEATS AS A THINKER

The poetic career of John Keats may be described as a struggle to harmonize the life of sensation with the life of thought.' His letters reveal the nature and the evolution of this conflict and poetry lends full support to whatever he says in the letters. The influence of Wordsworthian evolution, as recorded in the Tinter Abbey is acknowledged and the scheme is repeated poetically in ‘Sleep and Poetry. secondly, beauty has become blended with sorrow in the picture of Thea But Oh! how unlike marble was that face, How beautiful, if sorrow had not made Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self. In the last book of the fragmentary epic, Keats laid so much emphasis on the 'negative capability of the poet: 'A poet is the most unpoetical thing in the world because he has no identity, he is continually fitting some other body... it enjoys height and shade; it Times in gusto, be it foul or fair, high or low, rich or poor, mean or elevated..capable of being in uncertainties, mysteries, doubts, without any irritable reaching after fact and reason. But this instinctive, sensuous and intuitional perception of the feelings, joys and sorrows of theirs must be balanced and steadied by an intellectual self-awareness: Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain; O folly! for to bear all naked truths, And to envisage circumstance all calm, This is the top of sovereignty. For Keats, therefore, senses were creative as they set Imagination into play, and what the Imagination grasped as beauty was also the truth. Thus the Ideal was only a sublimation of the real. He sums up the whole matter in one of his letters: "Adam's dream will do here and seems to be a conviction that Imagination and its empyreal reflection is the same as human life and its spiritual reflection. The Prototype must be hereafter." Shelley soared above the earth in

search of the light that never fades but Keats, contemplated the dark earth against the polar light of heaven, the two being the opposite sides of the same coin. Like

Wordsworth's lark, he is the Type of the wise who soar but never roam True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home.

KEATS' SENSUOUSNESS

What is "Sensuousness"? Sensuousness is that quality in poetry that is derived from or affects the sense of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste. By the term "sensuous poetry" it meant poetry that is devoted, not to an idea or a philosophical thought, but mainly to the task of giving delight to the senses. Sensuous poetry would have an appeal to our eyes by presenting beautiful and colorful word pictures, to our ears by its metrical music and musical sounds, to our nose by arousing our sense of smell, and so on. All poetry proceeds originally from sense impressions, and all poets are more or less sensuous. Impressions of the senses are the starting point of the poetic process for it is what the poet sees and hears that excites his emotion and imagination, and his emotional and imaginative reaction to his sense-impressions generates poetry. Wordsworth's imagination was stirred by what he saw and heard in nature- what he calls "the language of the eye and the ear", and then he passed beyond his sense impressions and constructed his poetic view of life and nature. Milton was not less sensitive to the beauty of flowers than Keats; the description of flowers in Lycidas and the Garden of Eden in Paradise Lost bear witness to Milton's sensuousness. Keats said, "O for a life of sensations rather than of thoughts". Sensuousness means to appeal to our senses-eye, ear, nose, taste and smell, and sense of hot and cold. Other poets give only eye-picture. They are capable of giving other pictures. Picture of the Eye Keats is a painter in words. With the help of a mere few words, he presents a solid, concrete picture 1 (1) "Her hair was long, her foot was light And her eyes were wild"

"I saw their starved lips in the gloom with horrid warning gaped wide."

These pictures are statuesque (like a stone statue). They remain firmly fixed in our

memory.The music of the Nightingale produces pangs of pain in the poet's heart)

Forlorn ! the very word is like a bell To toll me back from thee to my sole self. The voice I hearthis passing night was heard In ancient days, by the emperor and clown.

The opening lines of La Belle Dame Sans Merci describe extreme cold The sedge is withered from the lake. Sense of Taste In Ode to a Nightingale, Keats describes many

wines. The idea of their taste is intoxicating: O for a beaker full of the warm South, Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene. In La Belle Dame Sans Merci - (i) She found me roots of relish sweet Of honey wild and manna dew. Pictures of Smell The poet can't see the flowers in the darkness. There is mingled perfume of many flowers Fast fading violets covered up in leaves And mid-May's eldest child, The coming musk-rose, full of dewy, wine The murmurous haunts of flies on summer eves. Techni- colour Pictures Keats paints colored pictures. The multi-colored wines and flowers are painted with a colorist's delight: Full of true, the blushful Hippocrene, With beaded bubbles winking at the brim, And purple-stained mouth, The red wine makes the mouth purple.

Ode to Autumn: A Remarkable Example of Keats' Sensuousness In the Ode to Autumn, the season of autumn is described in sensuous terms, in which all the senses are called forth:

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness, Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun

. Autumn, to Keats, is the season of apples and moss'd cottage trees, of fruits which are ripe to the core, and of later flowers for bees. Until they think warm days will never cease, For summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells. Autumn again is represented as a thresher, 'sitting careless on a granary floor, and her "hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind" or as a reaper Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep, Drows'd with the fume of poppies. There is nothing in the poem about autumn being the prelude to dreary winter or the symbol of old age; autumn to Keats is all ripe fruits and ripe grains. Autumn also has music that appeals to the ear: The redbreast whistles from a garden- croft And gathering swallows twitter in the skies Keats' Epithets Rich in Sensuous Quality Keats is pre-eminently a poet of sensations, whose very thought is clothed in sensuous images. The epithets he uses are rich in sensuous quality-"watery clearness", "delicious face", "melodious plot", "azure lidded sleep", "sunburnt mirth", "embalmed darkness", "anguish moist". Not only were the sense perceptions of Keats quick and alert, but he had the rare gift of communicating these perceptions by concrete and sensuous imagery. How vivid and enchanting is the description of wine bubbles in the line: Must With beaded bubbles winking at the brim. Keats' Sensuousness in Different Colours in his Matured Poetrý This delight in pure sensation was, however, but a passing phase with Keats. As his mind matured, his sympathies broadened, and he felt at one with the human heart in travail. Sensuousness is still there, weaving its fairy tissues as before but the

colouring is different. In his maturer poems, it is gradually manifested with the stirrings of an awakening intellect and is found charged with pain, charged with the very religion of pain, His yearning passión for the beautiful is transformed into an intellectual and a spiritual passion. He sees things, not only in their beauty but also in their truth. And it is partly because of his perception of truth in sensuous beauty that Keats has become the "inheritor of unfulfilled renown". That "sensuousness is a paramount bias" in Keats' poetry is largely true; even as it is true that "he is more a poet of sensuousness than of contemplation." Yet, like all generalized statements, these remarks are only partly true. "Keats' mind is mainly sensuous by direct action but it also works by reflex action, passing from sensuousness into sentiment Certainly, some of his works are merely, extremely sensuous, but this is the work in which the poet was trying his material and his powers, and rising towards mastery of his real faculty and his final function. In his maturer performances in the Odes, for example, and in Hyperion sensuousness is penetrated by sentiment, voluptuousness by vitality, and aestheticism is tempered by intellectualism. In Keats' palace of poetry. the nucleus is sensuousness, but the superstructure has chambers of more abiding things and more permanent colours". Sensuousness and Principle of Beauty Keats was a worshipper of beauty and pursued beauty everywhere and it was his senses that first revealed to him the beauty of things. The beauty of the universe -from the stars of the sky to the flowers of the woods- first struck his senses and then from the beauty perceptible to the senses his imagination seized the principle of beauty in all things. He could make poetry only out of what he felt upon his pulses. Thus, it was his sense impressions that kindled his imagination that made him realize the great principle that "Beauty is Truth and Truth Beauty". Conclusion The imagination of Keats came to be elevated by his sense perceptions and sense impressions. His poetry is not a mere record of sense impressions. It is a spontaneous overflow of his imagination kindled by the senses. He hears the song of the nightingale and is filled with deep joy which at once kindles his imagination. He has been hearing the actual song of a nightingale, but when his imagination is excited, he hears the eternal voice of the nightingale singing from the beginning of time. te sees the beauty of the Grecian Urn and the figures carved upon it. This imagination is stirred, and he hears in his imagination the music to the Piper Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on; Not to the sensual. ear, but, more endear'd, Pipe to the spirit, ditties of no tone.

2.10 Suggested Readings

Bate, Walter Jackson. *Negative Capability: The Intuitive Approach in Keats*. New York: ContraMundum Press, 2012

Horace E. Scudder, ed., *The Complete Poetical Works and Letters of John Keats* (Boston:Riverside Press, 1899)

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 103	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Unit :03 (1798-1914)	
Charles Dickens -The Great Expectation	

Lesson Structure

3.9 Answers to Your Progress

3.10 Suggested Readings

3.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

3.2 Introduction

Charles Dickens is the most famous Victorian novelist. With a focus on strong characterization, Dickens became extraordinarily popular in his day and remains one of the most popular and read authors of the world. His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers* (1836–37) written when he was twenty- five, was an overnight success, and all his subsequent works sold extremely well. The comedy of his first novel has a satirical edge and this pervades his writing Dickens worked diligently and prolifically to produce the entertaining writing that the public wanted, but also to offer commentary on social problems and the plight of the poor and oppressed. His most important works include

- Oliver Twist (1837–39
- Nicholas Nickleby (1838–39)
- A Christmas Carol (1843)
- Dombey and Son (1846–1848),
- David Copperfield (1849–50)
- Bleak House (1852–53)
- Little Dorrit (1855–1857)
- A Tale of Two Cities (1859)
- Great Expectations (1860–61).

There is a gradual trend in his fiction towards darker themes which mirrors a tendency in much of the writing of the 19th century.

3.3 Main Body of the Text

Great Expectations is a book by Charles Dickens completed in 1861. The novel was an immediatesuccess upon its publication in the 1860s.

George Bernard Shaw notably hailed it as Dickens's "most compactly perfect book."

Great Expectations works on several levels: as a critique of Victorian society and as an exploration of memory and writing. However, it is perhaps, more importantly, a search for true identity. During the novel, Pip comes to realize that his "great expectations"—social standing and wealth—are less important than loyalty and compassion. Great Expectations was also noted for its blend of humor, mystery, and tragedy. In the original ending of the work, Pip and Estella were not reunited, but Dickens was persuaded to write a happier conclusion.

3.3.1 About the age

Victorian period

The Victorian era was the period of Queen Victoria's reign, from 20 June 1837 until her death on 22 January 1901. The era followed the Georgian period and preceded the Edwardian period. The central feature of Victorian-era politics is the search for reform and improvement, including both the individual personality and society.

Three powerful forces were at work.

- First was the rapid rise of the middle class, in large part displacing the complete controllong exercised by the aristocracy,
- Second, the spiritual reform closely linked to Christianity, It imposed fresh moralisticvalues on society,
- The third effect came from the liberalism of philosophical utilitarian's led by intellectuals

Social reforms focused on ending slavery, removing the slavery-like burdens on women and children, and reforming the police to prevent crime, rather than emphasizing the very harsh punishment of criminals. Even more important were political reforms, especially the lifting of disabilities on nonconformists and Roman Catholics, and above all, the reform of Parliament and

elections to introduce democracy and replace the old system whereby senior aristocrats controlleddozens of seats in parliament.

The Industrial Revolution incentivized people to think more scientifically and to become more educated and informed to solve novel problems. As a result, cognitive abilities were pushed to their genetic limits, making people more intelligent and innovative than their predecessors. Formaleducation thus became vital.

Historians have characterized the mid-Victorian era (1850–1870) as Britain's "Golden Years". It was not till the two to three decades following the Second World War that substantial economic growth was seen again.

The very rapid growth in population in the 19th century in the cities included the new industrial and manufacturing cities, as well as service centers such as Edinburgh and London.

Victorian literature

It refers to English literature during the reign of Queen Victoria (1837-1901). The 19th century is widely considered to be the Golden Age of English Literature, especially for British novels. It was in the Victorian era that the novel became the leading literary genre in English. English writing from this era reflects the major transformations in most aspects of English life, from scientific, economic, and technological advances to changes in class structures and the role of religion in society. Famous novelists from this period include Charles Dickens, William Thackeray, the three Brontë sisters, George Eliot, and Thomas Hardy.

While the Romantic period was a time of abstract expression and inward focus, essayists, poets, and novelists during the Victorian era began to reflect on realities of the day, including the dangers of factory work, the plight of the lower class, and the treatment of women and children. Prominent examples include poet Elizabeth Barrett Browning, and novelists Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy. Barrett's works on child labour cemented her success in a male-dominated world where women writers often had to use masculine pseudonyms. Dickens employed humour and an approachable tone while addressing social problems such as wealth disparity. Hardy used his novels to question religion and social structures.

Poetry and theatre were also present during the Victorian era. Robert Browning and Alfred Tennyson were Victorian England's most famous poets. About the theatre, it was not until the last decades of the 19th century that any significant works were produced.

Notable playwrights of the time include Gilbert and Sullivan, George Bernard Shaw, and Oscar Wilde.

Characteristics of Victorian Literature

1. It is largely characterized by the struggle of working people and the triumph of right overwrong.
2. The novel replaced the poem as the most fashionable vehicle for the transmission ofliterature.
3. The novel as a genre rose to entertain the rising middle class and to depict contemporarylife in a changing society.
4. The novels have stress on realism and an attempt to describe the daily struggles of ordinarymen that the middle-class reader could associate with
5. On the Origin of Species is published on 24 November 1859 and this becomes thefoundation of evolutionary biology.

3.3.2 About the author

Charles John Huffam Dickens was an **English writer and social critic.** He created some of the world's best-known fictional characters and is regarded by many as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. His works enjoyed unprecedented popularity during his lifetime and, by the 20th century; critics and scholars had recognized him as a literary genius. His novels and short stories are widely read. He created some of the world's best-known fictional characters and is regarded by many as the greatest novelist of the Victorian era. Charles Dickens was the representative novelist of the Victorian age. He is the greatest novelist that England has yet produced. He is the writer of some great novels such as Pickwick Papers, Oliver Twist, Great Expectations, David Copperfield, and Bleak House in which his comic view of life, social criticism, power of storytelling, and use of humor has been vividly exemplified.

His first novel was Pickwick Papers, the supreme comic novel in the English language. His comedy is never superimposed because it is an effortless expression of a comic view of life. Dickens seems to see things differently amusingly and exaggeratedly, and in his early work with much exuberance, he plunges from one adventure to another, without

any thought of plot or design.

As a novelist, Dickens is a social Chronicler. He is found to have introduced social novels in a much broader sense. In his such novels as David Copperfield, Oliver Twist, Hard Times, he gave the contemporary social picture and attacked the various vices of the victorian age. Dickens enjoyed life but hated the social system into which he had been born. There are many indications that he was halfway towards being a revolutionary, and in many of the later novels, he was to attack the corruptions of his time. In Oliver Twist, (which followed in 1837-8), pathos is beginning to intrude on humour, and Dickens, appalled by the cruelty of his time, feels that he must convey a message through fiction to his hardhearted generation. Yet some modern social historians assert that he disguised the depths to which the lower classes had been brutalized. His invention is still abundant, as he tells the story of the virtuous pauper boy who has to submit to perils and temptations. Burnaby Rudge, with its picture of the Gordon Riots, is Dickens's first attempt in the historical novel, and here plot, which had counted for nothing in Pickwick Papers,becomes increasingly important.

In David Copperfield, he brought the first phase of his novel-writing to an end in a work with a strong autobiographical element, and with such firm characterization as Micawber and Uriah Heep. Bleak House is the most conscious and deeply planned novel in Dickens's whole work, and clearly, his art has moved far from the spontaneous gaiety of Pickwick Papers. It was followed by Hard Times, a novel dedicated to Carlyle. While in all his work Dickens is attacking the social conditions of his time, here he gives this theme a special emphasis with A Tale of Two Cities he returned to the historical novel and, inspired by Carlyle, laid his theme in the French Revolution. None of his works shows more clearly how wide and unexpected were the resources of his genius. He completed two other novels Great Expectations and Our Mutual Friend before his death, and he left unfinished the manuscript of The Mystery of Edwin Drood.

Like all great artists he viewed the world as if it was an entirely fresh experience seen for the first time, and he had an extraordinary range of language, from comic invention to great eloquence. He invented character and situation with a range that had been unequaled since Shakespeare. So deeply did he affect his audiences that the view of life behind his novels has entered into the English tradition. Reason and

theory he distrusted, but compassion and cheerfulness of heart he elevated into the supreme virtues.

3.4 Further Body of the Text

The novel was an immediate success upon its publication in the 1860s. George Bernard Shaw notably hailed it as Dickens's "most compactly perfect book." *Great Expectations* inspired numerous adaptations, including an acclaimed 1946 film directed by David Lean. Great Expectations works on several levels: as a critique of Victorian society and as an exploration of memory and writing. However, it is perhaps, more importantly, a search for true identity. During the novel, Pip comes to realize that his "great expectations"—social standing and wealth—are less important than loyalty and compassion. Great Expectations was also noted for its blend of humour, mystery, and tragedy. In the original ending of the work, Pip and Estella were not reunited, but Dickens was persuaded to write a happier conclusion.

3.4.1 Character list

- **Pip**

Pip is the protagonist of *Great Expectations*. As a boy, he seems unsure of his self-worth and place in the world. His parents are dead, and he has no idea what they looked like. Pip is raised by his bad-tempered sister, Mrs. Joe, and her husband, a blacksmith named Joe Gargery. However, Mrs. Joe often beats Pip and tells him she wishes he was never born. As a result, Pip has a sense of inferiority. Fortunately, Joe befriends Pip and tries to protect him as much as possible. Because of this, Pip forms a strong bond with the simple, kind Joe and looks forward to being his apprentice. However, Miss Havisham triggers Pip's sense of inferiority. Under her influence, Pip comes to view being a blacksmith's apprentice as common. To attain validation as a person, Pip believes he must rise to the upper class and win over Estella, an opportunity granted to him by a mysterious benefactor.

- **Estella**

Estella is the adopted daughter of the recluse, Miss Havisham, and—as readers discover at the end of the story—the biological daughter of Molly and Magwitch. She is groomed by Miss Havisham to become an instrument of the recluse's vengeance. Under Miss Havisham's influence, Estella suppresses her natural desire for love and

to express love. As a result, her own heart has grown cold.

- **Miss Havisham**

Miss Havisham comes from a wealthy family that gained a fortune through a brewery. As a young woman, Miss Havisham develops into a proud and headstrong person. She becomes engaged to a man even though relatives warn her against it. When the man jilts Miss Havisham on her wedding day, he deeply wounds her. Miss Havisham becomes a recluse for whom timestopped on her wedding day.

- **Magwitch**

Abel Magwitch is an escaped convict who tells young Pip to get food and a file for him. At first, Magwitch appears to be a terrifying, hardened criminal who for some reason hates another convict named Compeyson. An early indication that more lies beneath Magwitch come when he takes responsibility for stealing food even though Pip stole it. Later Pip learns about Magwitch's hard life growing up in poverty without parents and then his life as a transported convict in Australia.

- **Joe Gargery**

Joe Gargery is a blacksmith who befriends his wife's young brother, Pip. Joe is a simple, kind man who accepts his life and wants nothing more. Joe values hard work, honesty, and friendship. He has respect and integrity. Joe changes only by acting awkwardly toward Pip after the young man becomes a gentleman.

3.4.2 Original Text

Pip, a young orphan living with his sister and her husband in the marshes of Kent, sits in a cemetery one evening looking at his parents' tombstones. Suddenly, an escaped convict springs up from behind a tombstone grabs Pip and orders him to bring him food and a file for his leg irons. Pip obeys, but the fearsome convict is soon captured anyway. The convict protects Pip by claiming tohave stolen the items himself.

One day Pip is taken by his Uncle Pumblechook to play at Satis House, the home of the wealthy dowager Miss Havisham, who is extremely eccentric: she wears an old wedding dress everywhere she goes and keeps all the clocks in her house stopped at the same time.

During his visit, he meets a beautiful young girl named Estella, who treats him coldly and contemptuously. Nevertheless, he falls in love with her and dreams of becoming a wealthy gentleman so that he might be worthy of her. He even hopes that Miss Havisham intends to make him a gentleman and marry him to Estella, but his hopes are dashed when, after months of regular visits to Satis House, Miss Havisham decides to help him become a common laborer in his family's business.

With Miss Havisham's guidance, Pip is apprenticed to his brother-in-law, Joe, who is the village blacksmith. Pip works in the forge unhappily, struggling to better his education with the help of the plain, kind Biddy and encountering Joe's malicious day laborer, Orlick. One night, after an altercation with Orlick, Pip's sister, known as Mrs. Joe, is viciously attacked and becomes a mute invalid. From her signals, Pip suspects that Orlick was responsible for the attack.

One day a lawyer named Jaggers appears with strange news: a secret benefactor has given Pip a large fortune, and Pip must come to London immediately to begin his education as a gentleman. Pip happily assumes that his previous hopes have come true—that Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor and that the old woman intends for him to marry Estella.

In London, Pip befriends a young gentleman named Herbert Pocket and Jaggers's law clerk, Wemmick. He expresses disdain for his former friends and loved ones, especially Joe, but he continues to pine after Estella. He furthers his education by studying with the tutor Matthew Pocket, Herbert's father. Herbert himself helps Pip learn how to act like a gentleman. When Pip turns twenty-one and begins to receive an income from his fortune, he will secretly help Herbert buy his way into the business he has chosen for himself. But for now, Herbert and Pip lead a fairly

undisciplined life in London, enjoying themselves and running up debts. Orlick reappears in Pip's life, employed as Miss Havisham's porter, but is promptly fired by Jaggers after Pip reveals Orlick's unsavory past. Mrs. Joe dies, and Pip goes home for the funeral, feeling tremendous grief and remorse. Several years go by, until one night a familiar figure barges into Pip's room—the convict, Magwitch, who stuns Pip by announcing that he, not Miss Havisham, is the source of Pip's fortune. He tells Pip that he was so moved by Pip's boyhood kindness that he dedicated his life to making Pip a gentleman,

and he made a fortune in Australia for that very purpose.

Pip is appalled, but he feels morally bound to help Magwitch escape London, as the convict is pursued both by the police and by Compeyson, his former partner in crime. A complicated mystery begins to fall into place when Pip discovers that Compeyson was the man who abandoned Miss Havisham at the altar and that Estella is Magwitch's daughter. Miss Havisham has raised her to break men's hearts, as revenge for the pain her own broken heart caused her. Pip was merely a boy for the young Estella to practice on; Miss Havisham delighted in Estella's ability to toy with his affections.

As the weeks pass, Pip sees the good in Magwitch and begins to care for him deeply. Before Magwitch's escape attempt, Estella marries an upper-class lout named Bentley Drummle. Pip makes a visit to Satis House, where Miss Havisham begs his forgiveness for the way she has treated him in the past, and he forgives her. Later that day, when she bends over the fireplace, her clothing catches fire and she goes up in flames. She survives but becomes an invalid. In her final days, she will continue to repent for her misdeeds and to plead for Pip's forgiveness.

The time comes for Pip and his friends to spirit Magwitch away from London. Just before the escape attempt, Pip is called to a shadowy meeting in the marshes, where he encounters the vengeful, evil Orlick. Orlick is on the verge of killing Pip when Herbert arrives with a group of friends and saves Pip's life. Pip and Herbert hurry back to effect Magwitch's escape. They try to sneak Magwitch down the river on a rowboat, but they are discovered by the police, who Compeyson tipped off. Magwitch and Compeyson fight in the river, and Compeyson is drowned. Magwitch is sentenced to death, and Pip loses his fortune. Magwitch feels that his sentence is God's forgiveness and dies at peace. Pip falls ill; Joe comes to London to care for him, and they are reconciled. Joe gives him the news from home: Orlick, after robbing Pumblechook, is now in jail; Miss Havisham has died and left most of her fortune to the Pockets; Biddy has taught Joe how to read and write. After Joe leaves, Pip decides to rush home after him and marry Biddy, but whenhe arrives there he discovers that she and Joe have already married.

Pip decides to go abroad with Herbert to work in the mercantile trade. Returning many years later, he encounters Estella in the ruined garden at Satis House. Drummle, her

husband, treated her badly, but he is now dead. Pip finds that Estella's coldness and cruelty have been replaced by a sad kindness, and the two leave the garden hand in hand, Pip believing that they will never part again. The major conflict of *Great Expectations* revolves around Pip's ambitious desire to reinvent himself and rise to a higher social class. His desire for social progress stems from a desire to be worthy of Estella's love: "She's more beautiful than anybody ever was, and I admire her dreadfully, and I want to be a gentleman on her account." The plot gets underway when Pip is invited to go to Satis House, and first encounters Estella and Miss Havisham. The inciting action, however, has actually been earlier when Pip had a seemingly random encounter with an escaped convict; neither he nor the reader will know for a long time that this encounter will actually determine the course of his life. The rising action progresses as Pip becomes increasingly dissatisfied with the prospect of living a simple life as a country blacksmith. As he explains, "I never shall or can be comfortable … unless I can lead a very different sort of life from the life I lead now."

Pip receives news that he is going to be financially supported by an anonymous benefactor and moves to London, where he becomes more refined and sophisticated while also becoming extravagant and self-absorbed. After some years, Pip is astonished to discover that his benefactor is actually Magwitch the convict. This discovery intensifies the conflict around Pip's desire to be perceived as a gentleman and be loved by Estella, since he is now tainted by an association with a criminal. The rising conflict forces Pip to declare his love to Estella, since he is planning to leave England in order to cover up his secret. He tells her that

"You are part of my existence, part of myself,"

But she explains that she plans to marry another man. This conversation resolves part of the conflict, making it clear to Pip that Estella is incapable of loving him.

The conflict surrounding Pip's shame at his social background and desire to be a gentleman continues as he struggles to protect Magwitch and get him to safety. Along the way, Pip realizes that Magwitch is Estella's father. This discovery transforms Pip's understanding of social position and criminality. Up to this point, Pip has considered Estella and the criminal underworld Magwitch represents as oppositional to one another, but now Pip understands that Estella and Magwitch have always been interconnected. At the novel's climax, Pip confides to a dying Magwitch that his lost child "is living now.

She is a lady and very beautiful. And I love her!" By showing kindness to a criminal and describing Estella as a both a lady and the daughter of a convict, Pip shows that he no longer thinks about social position in a black or white way. The conflict resolves with Pip letting go of his social aspirations in order to focus on reconciling with the characters who have been loyal to him all along, paying off his debts, and earning an honest living.

2.4.3 Analysis of major text

Great Expectation s is the story of Pip, an orphan boy adopted by a blacksmith's family, who has good luck and great expectations, and then loses both his luck and his expectations. Through this rise and fall, however, Pip learns how to find happiness. He learns the meaning of friendship and the meaning of love and, of course, becomes a better person for it.

The story opens with the narrator, Pip, who introduces himself and describes a much younger Pip staring at the gravestones of his parents. This tiny, shivering bundle of a boy is suddenly terrified by a man dressed in a prison uniform. The man tells Pip that if he wants to live, he'll go down to his house and bring him back some food and a file for the shackle on his leg.

Pip runs home to his sister, Mrs. Joe Gragery, and his adoptive father, Joe Gragery. Mrs. Joe is a loud, angry, nagging woman who constantly reminds Pip and her husband Joe of the difficulties she has gone through to raise Pip and take care of the house. Pip finds solace from these rages in Joe, who is more his equal than a paternal figure, and they are united under a common oppression.

Pip steals food and a pork pie from the pantry shelf and a file from Joe's forge and brings them back to the escaped convict the next morning. Soon thereafter, Pip watches the man get caught bysoldiers and the whole event soon disappears from his young mind.

Mrs. Joe comes home one evening, quite excited, and proclaims that Pip is going to "play" for MissHavisham, "a rich and grim lady who lived in a large and dismal house."

Pip is brought to Miss Havisham's place, a mansion called the "Satis House," where sunshine never enters. He meets a girl about his age, Estella, "who was very pretty and seemed very proud." Pip instantly falls in love with her and will love her the rest of the story. He then meets Miss Havisham, a willowy, yellowed old woman dressed in an old

wedding gown. Miss Havisham seems most happy when Estella insults Pip's coarse hands and his thick boots as they play.
Pip is insulted, but thinks there is something wrong with him. He vows to change, to become uncommon, and to become a gentleman.

Pip continues to visit Estella and Miss Havisham for eight months and learns more about their strange life. Miss Havisham brings him into a great banquet hall where a table is set with food and large wedding cake. But the food and the cake are years old, untouched except by a vast array of rats, beetles and spiders which crawl freely through the room. Her relatives all come to see her on the same day of the year: her birthday and wedding day, the day when the cake was set out and the clocks were stopped many years before; i.e. the day Miss Havisham stopped living.

Pip begins to dream what life would be like if he were a gentleman and wealthy. This dream ends when Miss Havisham asks Pip to bring Joe to visit her, in order that he may start his indenture as a blacksmith. Miss Havisham gives Joe twenty five pounds for Pip's service to her and says good-bye.

Pip explains his misery to his readers: he is ashamed of his home, ashamed of his trade. He wants to be uncommon, he wants to be a gentleman. He wants to be a part of the environment that he hada small taste of at the Manor House.

Early in his indenture, Mrs. Joe is found lying unconscious, knocked senseless by some unknown assailant. She has suffered some serious brain damage, having lost much of voice, her hearing, and her memory. Furthermore, her "temper was greatly improved, and she was patient." To help with the housework and to take care of Mrs. Joe, Biddy, a young orphan friend of Pip's, moves into thehouse.
The years pass quickly. It is the fourth year of Pip's apprenticeship and he is sitting with Joe at the pub when they are approached by a stranger. Pip recognizes him, and his "smell of soap," as a manhe had once run into at Miss Havisham's house years before.

Back at the house, the man, Jaggers, explains that Pip now has "great expectations." He is to be given a large monthly stipend, administered by Jaggers who is a lawyer. The benefactor, however,does not want to be known and is to remain a mystery.
Pip spends an uncomfortable evening with Biddy and Joe, and then retires to bed. There,

despite having all his dreams come true, he finds himself feeling very lonely. Pip visits Miss Havisham who hints subtly that she is his unknown sponsor.

Pip goes to live in London and meets Wemmick, Jagger's square-mouth clerk. Wemmick brings Pip to Bernard's Inn, where Pip will live for the next five years with Matthew Pocket's son Herbert, a cheerful young gentleman that becomes one of Pip's best friends. From Herbert, Pips finds out that Miss Havisham adopted Estella and raised her to wreak revenge on the male gender by making them fall in love with her, and then breaking their hearts.

Pip is invited to dinner at Wemmick's whose slogan seems to be "Office is one thing, private life is another." Indeed, Wemmick has a fantastical private life. Although he lives in a small cottage, the cottage has been modified to look a bit like a castle, complete with moat, drawbridge, and a firing cannon.

The next day, Jaggers himself invites Pip and friends to dinner. Pip, on Wemmick's suggestion, looks carefully at Jagger's servant woman -- a "tigress" according to Wemmick. She is about forty,and seems to regard Jaggers with a mix of fear and duty.

Pip journeys back to the Satis House to see Miss Havisham and Estella, who is now older and so much more beautiful that he doesn't recognize her at first. Facing her now, he slips back "into the coarse and common voice" of his youth and she, in return, treats him like the boy he used to be. Pip sees something strikingly familiar in Estella's face. He can't quite place the look, but an expression on her face reminds him of someone.

Pip stays away from Joe and Biddy's house and the forge, but walks around town, enjoying the admiring looks he gets from his past neighbors.

Soon thereafter, a letter for Pip announces the death of Mrs. Joe Gragery. Pip returns home again to attend the funeral. Later, Joe and Pip sit comfortably by the fire like times of old. Biddy insinuates that Pip will not be returning soon as he promises and he leaves insulted. Back in London, Pip asks Wemmick for advice on how to give Herbert some of his yearly stipend anonymously.

Narrator Pip describes his relationship to Estella while she lived in the city: "I suffered every kind and degree of torture that Estella could cause me," he says. Pip finds out that Drummle, the most repulsive of his acquaintances, has begun courting Estella.

Years go by and Pip is still living the same wasteful life of a wealthy young man in the city. A rough sea-worn man of sixty comes to Pip's home on a stormy night soon after Pip's twenty-fourth birthday. Pip invites him in, treats him with courteous disdain, but then begins to recognize him as the convict that he fed in the marshes when he was a child. The man, Magwitch, reveals that he is Pip's benefactor. Since the day that Pip helped him, he swore to himself that every cent he earnedwould go to Pip.
"I've made a gentleman out of you," the man exclaims. Pip is horrified. All of his expectations are demolished. There is no grand design by Miss Havisham to make Pip happy and rich, living in harmonious marriage to Estella.

The convict tells Pip that he has come back to see him under threat of his life, since the law will execute him if they find him in England. Pip is disgusted with him, but wants to protect him and make sure he isn't found and put to death. Herbert and Pip decide that Pip will try and convince Magwitch to leave England with him.

Magwitch tells them the story of his life. From a very young age, he was alone and got into trouble. In one of his brief stints actually out of jail, Magwitch met a young well-to-do gentleman named Compeyson who had his hand in everything illegal: swindling, forgery, and other white collar crime. Compeyson recruited Magwitch to do his dirty work and landed Magwitch into trouble with the law. Magwitch hates the man. Herbert passes a note to Pip telling him that Compeyson was the name of the man who left Miss Havisham on her wedding day.

Pip goes back to Satis House and finds Miss Havisham and Estella in the same banquet room. Pip breaks down and confesses his love for Estella. Estella tells him straight that she is incapable of love -- she has warned him of as much before -- and she will soon be married to Drummle.

Back in London, Wemmick tells Pip things he has learned from the prisoners at Newgate. Pip is being watched, he says, and may be in some danger. As well, Compeyson has made his presence known in London. Wemmick has already warned Herbert as well. Heeding the warning, Herbert has hidden Magwitch in his fiancée Clara's house.
Pip has dinner with Jaggers and Wemmick at Jaggers' home. During the dinner, Pip finally realizes the similarities between Estella and Jaggers' servant woman. Jaggers' servant woman is Estella's mother!

On their way home together, Wemmick tells the story of Jaggers' servant woman. It was Jaggers' first big break-through case, the case that made him. He was defending this woman in a case where she was accused of killing another woman by strangulation. The woman was also said to have killed her own child, a girl, at about the same time as the murder.

Miss Havisham asks Pip to come visit her. He finds her again sitting by the fire, but this time she looks very lonely. Pip tells her how he was giving some of his money to help Herbert with his future, but now must stop since he himself is no longer taking money from his benefactor. Miss Havisham wants to help, and she gives Pip nine hundred pounds to help Herbert out. She then asks Pip for forgiveness. Pip tells her she is already forgiven and that he needs too much forgiving himself not to be able to forgive others.

Pip goes for a walk around the garden then comes back to find Miss Havisham on fire! Pip puts the fire out, burning himself badly in the process. The doctors come and announce that she will live.

Pip goes home and Herbert takes care of his burns. Herbert has been spending some time with Magwitch at Clara's and has been told the whole Magwitch story. Magwitch was the husband of Jaggers' servant woman, the Tigress. The woman had come to Magwitch on the day she murdered the other woman and told him she was going to kill their child and that Magwitch would never see

her. And Magwitch never did. Pip puts is all together and tells Herbert that Magwitch is Estella's father.

It is time to escape with Magwitch. Herbert and Pip get up the next morning and start rowing down the river, picking up Magwitch at the preappointed time. They are within a few feet of a steamer that they hope to board when another boat pulls alongside to stop them. In the confusion, Pip sees Compeyson leading the other boat, but the steamer is on top of them. The steamer crushes Pip's boat, Compeyson and Magwitch disappear under water, and Pip and Herbert find themselves in a police boat of sorts. Magwitch finally comes up from the water. He and Compeyson wrestled for a while, but Magwitch had let him go and he is presumably drowned. Once again, Magwitch is shackled and arrested.

Magwitch is in jail and quite ill. Pip attends to the ailing Magwitch daily in prison. Pip

whispers to him one day that the daughter he thought was dead is quite alive. "She is a lady and very beautiful," Pip says. "And I love her." Magwitch gives up the ghost.

Pip falls into a fever for nearly a month. Creditors and Joe fall in and out of his dreams and his reality. Finally, he regains his senses and sees that, indeed, Joe has been there the whole time, nursing him back to health. Joe tells him that Miss Havisham died during his illness, that she left Estella nearly all, and Matthew Pocket a great deal. Joe slips away one morning leaving only a note. Pip discovers that Joe has paid off all his debtors.

Pip is committed to returning to Joe, asking for forgiveness for everything he has done, and to ask Biddy to marry him. Pip goes to Joe and indeed finds happiness -- but the happiness is Joe and Biddy's. It is their wedding day. Pip wishes them well, truly, and asks them for their forgiveness in all his actions. They happily give it.

Pip goes to work for Herbert's' firm and lives with the now married Clara and Herbert. Within a year, he becomes a partner. He pays off his debts and works hard.

Eleven years later, Pip returns from his work overseas. He visits Joe and Biddy and meets their son, a little Pip, sitting by the fire with Joe just like Pip himself did years ago. Pip tells Biddy that he is quite the settled old bachelor, living with Clara and Herbert and he thinks he will never marry. Nevertheless, he goes to the Satis House that night to think once again of the girl who got away.

And there he meets Estella. Drummle treated her roughly and recently died. She tells Pip that she has learned the feeling of heartbreak the hard way and now seeks his forgiveness for what she did to him. The two walk out of the garden hand in hand, and Pip "saw the shadow of no parting fromher."

3.5 Check Your Progress

- What is Pip's Unrealistic Expectations in Dickens' Great Expectations?
- What are Pip's Influences in Great Expectations?
- What is the Constructing Identity in Great Expectations?
- Discuss Great Expectations: In the Name of Profit.

3. 6 Summary

Great Expectations is the thirteenth novel by Charles Dickens and his penultimate completed novel. It depicts the education of an orphan nicknamed Pip . It is Dickens's second novel, after *David Copperfield,* to be fully narrated in the first person.The novel was first published asa serial in Dickens's weekly periodical.

The novel is set in Kent and London in the early to mid-19th century and contains some of Dickens's most celebrated scenes, starting in a graveyard, where the young Pip is accosted by the escaped convict Abel Magwitch. *Great Expectations* is full of extreme imagery – poverty, prison ships and chains, and fights to the death – and has a colourful cast of characters who have entered popular culture. These include the eccentric Miss Havisham, the beautiful but cold Estella, and Joe, and the unsophisticated and kind blacksmith. Dickens's themes include wealth and poverty, love and rejection, and the eventual triumph of good over evil.

The novel trace the psychological and moral development of a young boy (Pip) to maturity, his transition from a rural environment to the London metropolis, the vicissitudes of his emotional development, and the exhibition of his hopes and youthful dreams and their metamorphosis, through a rich and complex first person narrative. Pip's story is told in three stages: his childhood and early youth in Kent, where he dreams of rising above his humble station; his time in London after receiving "great expectations"; and then finally his disillusionment on discovering the source

of his fortune, followed by his slow realisation of the vanity of his false values. These three stagesare further divided into twelve parts of equal length.

3.7 Keywords

- Expectation
- Identity
- Unrealistic
- Influence
- Construction
- Forgiveness
- Novel

3.8 Self -Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- **Character Analysis of major character Pip**
- **Discuss the use of various symbols in The Great Expectation**
- **Bring out the theme of the Novel the Great Expectation.**

3.9 Answers to Your Progress

Character Analysis of major character Pip

Philip Pirrip, called **Pip**, is the protagonist and narrator in Charles Dickens's novel *Great Expectations* (1861). He is amongst the most popular characters in English literature. Pip narrates his story many years after the events of the novel take place. The novel follows Pip's process from childhood innocence to adulthood. The financial and social rise of the protagonist is accompanied by an emotional and moral deterioration, which forces Pip to recognize his negativeexpectations in a new self-awareness.

When the novel begins in the early 1800s, Philip is a seven-year-old orphan raised by his uncaring sister, "Mrs. Joe", who beats him regularly, and her husband Joe Gragery, a blacksmith and Pip's best friend. He lives in the marsh area of Kent, England, twenty miles from the sea.

Pip has no recollection of either of his parents; he is more than twenty years younger than his sister. Five brothers died in infancy between them: Alexander, Bartholomew, Abraham, Tobias and Roger. He is known to himself and to the world as Pip, because his "infant tongue could make of both names nothing longer or more explicit than Pip".[1] The opening scene of the novel shows Pip in a graveyard paying his respects to the graves of his parents and brothers. He says he is small for his age when he encounters the convicts at age seven, but when he is apprenticed to Joe, he is taller and becomes very strong to master the work of a blacksmith.

Pip is destined for, and wants, a career as a blacksmith like his brother-in-law, until an unexpected chain of events thrusts him into a different social class. Pip goes through many changes in his personality as he is influenced by various characters. As the novel

begins, he is an innocent young boy who does not mind his low rank in society. At around the age of eight, he meets a beautiful but proud girl named Estella who is of the upper class. Pip falls in love with her and becomes very ashamed of his humble background and his coarse-seeming relatives. When he is old enough he is bound apprentice to Joe. But he longs to be a gentleman, in a social class inaccessible to a village blacksmith. He suffers guilt for his ungrateful feelings toward Joe, who is a kind friend to him throughout his life.

When, four years into his apprenticeship, a mysterious benefactor enables him to escape the working class, Pip moves to London as a teenager to become a gentleman. In his youth, he believes that his patron is Estella's guardian Miss Havisham, who wants to make him a suitable contender for her ward's hand. Once he moves to London, though his benefactor is not named, Pip persists in believing that Miss Havisham means him to marry Estella. He is not wise in spending the money he gets before he comes of age at 21, running up debts. His legal guardian is Mr Jaggers, a lawyer, who points out the difficulties Pip creates, but leaves it to Pip to guide his own life. He does not entirely lose his good character, which is expressed mainly in his relationship with his friend Herbert Pocket.

Two years after Pip comes of age his benefactor appears in person, and it is Abel Magwitch, the convict he met as a boy. This deflates his hope that he is meant for Estella and at first disgusts him.

He knows nothing about what sort of criminal the man is. Despite his disgust and disappointment, the sense of duty that compels Pip to help the convict is a mark of his inner goodness, just as it was when Pip first met him at age seven. After Abel Magwitch dies and the Crown confiscates his fortune, Pip, aged 23,[3] understands that good clothes, genteel speech and a generous allowance do not make one a gentleman. At one point he was on the verge of being sent to debtor's prison, but the law granted him a reprieve due to his succumbing to an illness. Joe learns of this and comes to London to look after Pip until Pip is able to walk on his own. While recuperating, he finds a receipt stating that his outstanding debt was amortized by Joe and Biddy. A few days after Joe leaves, Pip goes home to find that Biddy has married Joe that very day (Pip's sister having died from being hurt in a burglary, then succumbing to her injuries years later). Without income or training for any profession, he is at loose ends. Herbert Pocket suggests Pip join the firm where he works, in an office in Cairo. Pip starts as a clerk. Herbert marries

his fiancee Clara Pocket, and Pip lives with them. There is irony in this, as Pip used his gift at age 21 of 500 pounds to engage Herbert with the new firm, despite the fact he was being dogged by creditors. Working for a merchant named Clarriker, Pip finally learns discipline and financial responsibility, and is now more careful.

Eleven years later, Pip returns to England to see Joe, Biddy and their children, a daughter and a son named after him, or a "little Pip". He walks to the land where Miss Havisham's house once stood and meets Estella there. Both have changed much from their experience of life. After they reconcile, they hold hands, and Pip sees no shadow to part them again.

- **Discuss the use of various symbols in Great Expectation**

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts. Dickens has used various symbols to bring out the theme of the novel.

Satis House

In Satis House, Dickens creates a magnificent Gothic setting whose various elements symbolize Pip's romantic perception of other upper class and many other themes of the book. On her decaying body, Miss Havisham's wedding dress becomes an ironic symbol of death and degeneration. The wedding dress and the wedding feast symbolize Miss Havisham's past, and the stopped clocks

throughout the house symbolize her determined attempt to freeze time by refusing to change anything from the way it was when she was jilted on her wedding day. The brewery next to the house symbolizes the connection between commerce and wealth: Miss Havisham's fortune is not the product of an aristocratic birth but of a recent success in industrial capitalism. Finally, the crumbling, dilapidated stones of the house, as well as the darkness and dust that pervade it, symbolize the general decadence of the lives of its inhabitants and of the upper class as a whole.

The Mists on the Marshes

The setting almost always symbolizes a theme in *Great Expectations* and always sets a tone that is perfectly matched to the novel's dramatic action. The misty marshes near Pip's childhood home in Kent, one of the most evocative of the book's settings, are used

several times to symbolize danger and uncertainty. As a child, Pip brings Magwitch a file and food in these mists; later, he is kidnapped by Orlick and nearly murdered in them. Whenever Pip goes into the mists, something dangerous is likely to happen. Significantly, Pip must go through the mists when he travels to London shortly after receiving his fortune, alerting the reader that this apparently positive development in his life may have dangerous consequences.

Bentley Drummle

Although he is a minor character in the novel, Bentley Drummle provides an important contrast with Pip and represents the arbitrary nature of class distinctions. In his mind, Pip has connected the ideas of moral, social, and educational advancement so that each depends on the others. The coarse and cruel Drummle, a member of the upper class, provides Pip with proof that social advancement has no inherent connection to intelligence or moral worth. Drummle is a lout who has inherited immense wealth, while Pip's friend and brother-in-law Joe is a good man who works hard for the little he earns. Drummle's negative example helps Pip to see the inner worth of characters such as Magwitch and Joe, and eventually to discard his immature fantasies about wealth and class in favor of a new understanding that is both more compassionate and more realistic.

- **Bring out the theme of the Novel the Great Expectation.**

The main themes in *Great Expectations* by Charles Dickens include social class, poverty, and crime. The main character, Pip, starts out a lonely orphan and becomes a young gentleman. Along

the way, however, he struggles to find himself, and he has many experiences that cause him to question his worldview. In the end, the central theme of *Great Expectations* may well be the searchfor one's identity.

The main themes in Charles Dickens's popular 1861 novel *Great Expectations* are class differences, crime and injustice, and dreams and aspirations.

Class differences

One of the main themes in the novel is social class, or rather class differences. Dickens explores the socio political structure and climate in Victorian England.

- One of the most important and common tools that authors use to illustrate the themes of their works is a character that undergoes several major changes throughout the story. In Great Expectations, Charles Dickens introduces the reader to many intriguing and memorable characters, including the eccentric recluse, Miss Havisham, the shrewd and careful lawyer, Mr. Jaggers, and the benevolent convict, Abel Magwitch. However, without a doubt, Great Expectations is the story of Pip and his initial dreams and resulting disappointments that eventually lead to him becoming a genuinely good man. The significant changes that Pip's character goes through are very important to one of the novel's many themes. Dickens uses Pip's deterioration from an innocent boy into an arrogant gentleman and his redemption as a good-natured person to illustrate the idea that unrealistic hopes and expectations can lead to undesirable traits.

  In the beginning of the novel, Pip is characterized as a harmless, caring boy, who draws much sympathy from the reader even though he is at that point content with his common life. The reader most likely develops warm and sympathetic feelings toward Pip.

  It is difficult to classify the personality of any one person as being entirely one way or another. So, too, it is difficult to classify a rich, round character like Pip in Charles Dickens'Great Expectations as being essentially passionate.

"We have no choice, you and I, but to obey our instructions. We are not free to follow our owndevices, you and I." (265).The question of self-determination is central in Great Expectations. Dickens struggles to determine and expression is the key factor of this novel.

Theme of money

As the novel's title implies money is a theme of *Great Expectations*. Central to this is the idea that wealth is only acceptable to the ruling class if it comes from the labour of others. Miss Havisham's wealth comes not from the sweat of her brow but from rent collected on properties she inherited from her father, a brewer. Her wealth is "pure", and her father's profession as a brewer does not contaminate it. Herbert states in chapter 22 that "while you cannot possibly be genteel and bake, you may be as genteel as never was and brew."Because of her wealth, the old lady, despite her eccentricity, enjoys public esteem.

She remains in a constant business relationship with her lawyer Jaggers and keeps a tight grip over her "court" of sycophants, so that, far from representing social exclusion, she is the very image of a powerful landed aristocracy that is frozen in the past and "embalmed in its own pride".

On the other hand, Magwitch's wealth is socially unacceptable, firstly because he earned it, not through the efforts of others, but through his own hard work, and secondly because he was a convict, and he earned it in a penal colony. It is argued that the contrast with Miss Havisham's wealth is suggested symbolically. Thus Magwitch's money smells of sweat, and his money is greasy and crumpled.

London as prison

In London, neither wealth nor gentility brings happiness. Pip, the apprentice gentleman constantly bemoans his anxiety, his feelings of insecurity, and multiple allusions to overwhelming chronic unease, to weariness, drown his enthusiasm (chapter 34).Wealth, in effect, eludes his control: the more he spends, the deeper he goes into debt to satisfy new needs, which were just as futile as his old ones. His unusual path to gentility has the opposite effect to what he expected: infinite opportunities become available, certainly, but will power, in proportion, fades and paralyses the soul. In the crowded metropolis, Pip grows disenchanted, disillusioned, and lonely. Alienated from his native Kent, he has lost the support provided by the village blacksmith. In London, he is powerless to join a community, not the Pocket family, much less Jaggers's circle. London has become Pip's prison and, like the convicts of his youth, he is bound in chains: "no Satis House can be built merely with money".

Gentility

The idea of "good breeding" and what makes for a "gentleman" other than money, in other words, "gentility", is a central theme of *Great Expectations*. The convict Magwitch covets it by proxy through Pip; Mrs. Pocket dreams of acquiring it; it is also found in Pumblechook's sycophancy; it is even seen in Joe, when he stammers between "Pip" and "Sir" during his visit to London, and when Biddy's letters to Pip suddenly become reverent.

There are other characters that are associated with the idea of gentility like, for example, Miss Havisham's seducer, Compeyson, the scarred-face convict. While Compeyson is corrupt, even Magwitch does not forget he is a gentleman. This also includes Estella,

who ignores the fact that she is the daughter of Magwitch and another criminal.

There are a couple of ways by which someone can acquire gentility; one being a title, another family ties to the upper middle class. Mrs. Pocket bases every aspiration on the fact that her grandfather failed to be knighted, while Pip hopes that Miss Havisham will eventually adopt him, as adoption, as evidenced by Estella, who behaves like a born and bred little lady, is acceptable. But even more important, though not sufficient, are wealth and education. Pip knows that and endorses it, as he hears from Jaggers through Matthew Pocket: "I was not designed for any profession, and I should be well enough educated for my destiny if I could hold my own with the average of young men in prosperous circumstances". But neither the educated Matthew Pocket, nor Jaggers, who has earned his status solely through his intellect, can aspire to gentility. Bentley Drummle, however, embodies the social ideal, so that Estella marries him without hesitation.

Moral regeneration

Another theme of *Great Expectations* is that Pip can undergo "moral regeneration."

In chapter 39, the novel's turning point, Magwitch visits Pip to see the gentleman he has made, and once the convict has hidden in Herbert Pocket's room, Pip realizes his situation:

Pip's problem is more psychological and moral than social. Pip's climbing of the social ladder upon gaining wealth is followed by a corresponding degradation of his integrity. Thus after his first visit in Miss Havisham, the innocent young boy from the marshes, suddenly turns into a liar to dazzle his sister, Mrs. Joe, and his Uncle Pumblechook with the tales of a carriage and veal chops. More disturbing is his fascination with Satis House –where he is despised and even slapped, beset by ghostly visions, rejected by the Pockets– and the gradual growth of the mirage of London. The

allure of wealth overpowers loyalty and gratitude, even conscience itself. This is evidenced by the urge to buy Joe's return, in chapter 27, Pip's haughty glance as Joe deciphers the alphabet, not to mention the condescending contempt he confesses to Biddy, copying Estella's behaviour toward him.

Pip represents, as do those he mimics, the bankruptcy of the "idea of the gentleman", and becomes the sole beneficiary of vulgarity, inversely proportional to his mounting gentility.In chapter 30, Dickens parodies the new disease that is corroding Pip's moral

values through the character "Trabb's boy", who is the only one not to be fooled. The boy parades through the main street of the village with boyish antics and contortions meant to satirically imitate Pip. The gross, comic caricature openly exposes the hypocrisy of this *new* gentleman in a frock coat and top hat. Trabb's boy reveals that appearance has taken precedence over being, protocol on feelings, decorum on authenticity; labels reign to the point of absurdity, and human solidarity is no longer the order of the day.

Estella and Miss Havisham represent rich people who enjoy a materially easier life but cannot cope with a tougher reality. Miss Havisham, like a melodramatic heroine, withdrew from life at the first sign of hardship. Estella, excessively spoiled and pampered, sorely lacks judgement and falls prey to the first gentleman who approaches her, though he is the worst. Estella's marriage to such a brute demonstrates the failure of her education. Estella is used to dominating but becomes a victim to her own vice, brought to her level by a man born, in her image.

Dickens uses imagery to reinforce his ideas and London, the paradise of the rich and of the *ideal* of the gentleman, has mounds of filth, it is crooked, decrepit, and greasy, a dark desert of bricks, soot, rain, and fog. The surviving vegetation is stunted, and confined to fenced-off paths, without air or light. Barnard's Inn, where Pip lodges, offers mediocre food and service while the rooms, despite the furnishing provided, as Suhamy states, "for the money", is most uncomfortable, a far cry from Joe's large kitchen, radiating hearth, and his well-stocked pantry.

Likewise, such a world, dominated by the lure of money and social prejudice, also leads to the warping of people and morals, to family discord and war between man and woman.[N 6] In contrast to London's corruption stands Joe, despite his intellectual and social limitations, in whom the values of the heart prevail and who has natural wisdom.

Pip's conscience

Another important theme is Pip's sense of guilt, which he has felt from an early age. After the encounter with the convict Magwitch, Pip is afraid that someone will find out about his crime and arrest him. The theme of guilt comes into even greater effect when Pip discovers that his benefactor is a convict. Pip has an internal struggle with his conscience throughout *Great Expectations*, hence the long and painful process of redemption that he undergoes.

In *Great Expectations*, the true values are childhood, youth, and heart. The heroes of the story are the young Pip, a true visionary, and still developing person, open, sensible, who is persecuted by soulless adults. Then the adolescent Pip and Herbert, imperfect but free, intact, playful, endowed with fantasy in a boring and frivolous world. Magwitch is also a positive figure, a man of heart, victim of false appearances and of social images, formidable and humble, bestial but pure, a vagabond of God, despised by men.[N 8] There is also Pip's affectional friend Joe, the enemy of the lie. Finally, there are women like Biddy.

In Great Expectations, Charles Dickens presents a social commentary that dramatizes the role Victorian society plays in shaping the lives of its members. In particular, the novel addresses how society shapes the definition of the gentleman and, In the first part of Dicken's Great Expectations, Pip confesses to his readers that "I had known, from the time when I could speak, that my sister, in her capricious and violent coercion, was unjust to me" (63)

Great Expectations is a novel which, in its first part, focuses largely on the education and upbringing of a young boy, Pip. Orphaned at a young age, he is raised "by hand" by his older sisterand her husband, a blacksmith.

> In Dickens's Great Expectations, the alienation of the amiable Joe Gargery speaks volumes about the values of high society at that time. Joe represents the epitome of friendship and love, but he is constantly out of his element when around...

> Great Expectations is the account of a young boy's transition into adulthood as Pip, the central character, searches for contentment. Born into no particular wealth or distinction, he may have lived wholly satisfied

> Victorian literature is over-populated with orphans. The Bronte sisters, Trollope, George Elliot, Thackeray and Gaskell all positioned orphans as leading characters in their novels. This trend continued into the Edwardian period, as Frances...

> Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice and Charles Dickens' Great Expectations

focus on the themes of money and social class. In both novels, money plays a significant role in shaping and directing human motives and actions. Through his novel Great Expectations, Charles Dickens emphasizes the perpetually domineering nature of 19th century England's uncompromising class structure system. Dickens satirizes the socially vital and inflexible natures of this system through. Simplistic and politically impartial as Victorian novels and their common familial themes of love and companionship may seem, there is customarily a greater sociopolitical concern inserted within the narrative for the reader of the time to have...

A key theme in both Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*[2] is cruelty. Both authors treat this cruelty in such a way as to expose the flaws of a society in which the powerful, either in terms .

'Eating and drinking are valued by Dickens as proofs of sociability and ceremonies of

love.'

Throughout the novel *Great Expectations*, numerous meals which have symbolic o.f social status are shown in the novel. Within Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations,* Joe Gargery is presented as the epitome of human compassion and kindness, the moral centerof the novel. He is a strange mixture of wisdom, stupidity and generosity.

In the novel, things are often not what they seem. The theme of "expectations" is illustrated by and through the major characters.

3.10 Suggested Readings

- *Paul Schlicke (1999), Oxford Reader's Companion to Dickens, New York: OxfordUniversity Press, ISBN 978-019866253-2*
- *Paul Davis (1999), Charles Dickens from A to Z, New York: CheckmarkBooks, ISBN 0816040877*
- *John O. Jordan (2001), The Cambridge companion to Charles Dickens, New York:Cambridge University Press, ISBN 978-052166964-1*
- *David Paroissien (2011), A Companion to Charles Dickens, Chichester: WileyBlackwell, ISBN 978-0-470-65794-2*

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Subject M.A	
Course Code: 103	Author: Dr.NutanYadav
Unit -:04 (1798-1914)Sem-1	
George Eliot- Middlematch	

Lesson Structure

4.9 Answers to Your Progress

4.10 Suggested Readings

4.1 Learning objectives

- To develop critical thinking among students towards literature.
- To enhance their knowledge of literature.
- To let them enjoy different genres of literature.
- To make them good in the English language.

4.2 Introduction

Mary Ann Evans, known by her pen name **George Eliot**, was an English novelist, poet, journalist, translator, and one of the leading writers of the Victorian era. She wrote seven novels:

- Adam Bede (1859)
- The Mill on the Floss (1860)
- Silas Marner (1861),
- Romola (1862–63),
- Felix Holt, the Radical (1866),
- Middlemarch (1871–72)
- Daniel Deronda (1876).

Like Charles Dickens and Thomas Hardy, she emerged from provincial England; most of her works are set there. She is known for their realism, psychological insight, and sense of place, and detailed depiction of the countryside**.** Her novels, set largely in provincial England, are well knownfor their realism and psychological perspicacity.

Victorian literature, particularly the novel, largely reflected the Victorian virtues of hard work, moral acuity, and sober living. Eliot represented an attempt to delve beneath bourgeois society and values into the psychological depths of her characters. Her novels, especially her Middlemarch,

introduced a much greater complexity to moral choice than was previously fashionable in the Victorian novel. Her great heroine, Dorothea, is faced with a series of moral

choices that try her noble intentions. Eliot used a male pen name, she said, to ensure that her works were taken seriously. At the time in England, female authors published freely under their names, but Eliot wanted to ensure that she was not seen as merely a writer of romances. An additional factor may have been a desire to shield her private life from public scrutiny and to prevent scandals attending her relationship with the married George Henry Lewes, who couldn't divorce his wife because he had signed the birth certificate of a child born to his wife but fathered by another man. Both through her life and the characters in her novels, Eliot demonstrates the real difficulties of living a moral life beyond mere slogans and rhetoric. Her characters are not perfect in making those choices, but her work helps the reader better understand the challenges that go with the attempt to live for a higher purpose.

4.3 Main Body of the Text

Middlemarch, A Study of Provincial Life is a novel by the English author Mary Anne Evans, who wrote as *George Eliot*. It first appeared in eight installments (volumes) in 1871 and 1872. Set in Middlemarch, a fictional English *Midland* town, from 1829 to 1832, it follows distinct, intersecting stories with many characters. Issues include the status of women, the nature of marriage, idealism, self-interest, religion, hypocrisy, political reform, and education. Despite comic elements, Middlemarch uses *realism* to encompass historical events: the *1832 Reform Act*, early railways, and the accession of *King William IV*. It looks at the medicine of the time and reactionary views in a settled community facing unwelcome change. Eliot began writing the two pieces that formed the novel in 1869–1870 and completed it in 1871. Initial reviews were mixed, but it is now seen widely as her best work and one of the great English novels.

Middlemarch is by general consent George Eliot's masterpiece. Under her hand, the novel had developed from mere entertainment into a highly intellectual form of art. Every class of Middlemarch society is depicted from the landed gentry and clergy to the manufacturers and professional men, the shopkeepers, publicans, farmers, and laborers. Several strands of the plot are interwoven to reinforce each other by contrast and parallel. Yet the story depends not on close-

knit intrigue but on showing the incalculably diffusive effect of the unhistorical acts of those who

"lived faithfully a hidden life and rest in unvisited tombs."

Eliot's most famous work, *Middlemarch*, is a turning point in the history of the novel. Making masterful use of a counterpointed plot, Eliot presents the stories of several denizens of a small English town on the eve of the Reform Bill of 1832. The main characters, Dorothea Brooke and Tertius Lydgate, long for exceptional lives but are powerfully constrained both by their unrealistic expectations and by a conservative society. The novel is notable for its deep psychological insight and sophisticated character portraits

4.3.1 About the Age

The Victorian Age is essentially the age of the novel or fiction. During this period, the novel maderapid progress.

Victorian Era is seen as the link between Romanticism of the 18th century and the realism of the 20th century. The novel as a genre rose to entertain the rising middle class and to depict contemporary life in a changing society. Although the novel had been in development since the 18th century with the works of Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding, Laurence Sterne, Samuel Richardson, and others, it was in this period that the novel got mass acceptance and readership. The growth of cities, a ready domestic market and one in the overseas colonies, and an increase in printing and publishing houses facilitated the growth of the novel as a form. In the year 1870, an Education Act was passed which made education easy access to the masses furthermore increasing literacy rates among the population. Certain jobs required a certain level of reading ability and simple novels catered to this by becoming a device to practice reading. Also, the time of the daily commute to work for men and the time alone at home for women could be filled by reading which now became a leisure activity. As a response to the latter, the demand for fiction rose substantially.

The novels of the age mostly had a moral strain in them with a belief in the innate goodness of human nature. The characters were well-rounded and the protagonist usually belonged to a middle- class society that struggled to create a niche for him in the industrial and mercantile world. The stress was on realism and an attempt to describe the daily struggles of ordinary men that the middle-class reader could associate with. The moral tangents were perhaps an attempt to rescue the moral degradation prevalent in the society then and supplied the audience with hope and

positivity. These moral angles allowed for the inclusion of larger debates in fiction like the ones surrounding “the woman question”, marriage, progress, education, the Industrial Revolution. New roles for women were created because of the resultant economic market and their voice which was earlier not given cadence was now being spotted and recognized and novels became the means where the domestic confinement of women was questioned. Novels reflect the larger questions surrounding women, like those of their roles and duties. In the latter half of the century, the Married Women’s Property Act was passed, women suffrage became an important point of debate, and poverty and other economic reasons challenged the traditional roles of women. The novel as a form became the medium where such concerns were raised. The age hence was important for the rise of the novel as a genre and form which itself saw transformation within the period. From romanticism to realism, politics to passion, optimism to pessimism, the novel could successfully deal with the changing mood of society. Classes, gender, individualism, society all were given space in the novel. The period was known to have witnessed the massive change of Britain from an agrarian to an industrial landscape. All concerns informed the novel and the novel was made into perhaps the most important genre of the age and the ones that would follow.

This was partly because this middle-class form of literary art was bound to flourish increasingly as the middle class rose in power and importance, partly because of the steady increase of the reading public with the growth of lending libraries, the development of publishing in the modern sense and other events which accompanied this increase, and partly because the novel was the best means to present a picture of life, lived under the stable background of social moral values by people who were like the people encountered by readers, and this was the kind of picture of life, the middle-class readers wanted to read about.

One of the prominent features, that the novel of the early Victorian era, had been the concern withthe “condition of England question”.

They chose for their themes the specific contemporary problems of the Victorian society caused by the predominance of industrialism and utilitarianism and wrote about them sometimes as satirists, sometimes as humanists, sometimes as moralists.

Even though they were conscious of the havoc caused by the industrial revolution, the

presence of mass poverty and accumulation of riches in a few hands, yet they believed like the common

Victorians that these evils would prove to be temporary, that on the whole, England was growing prosperous, which was evident from the enormous increase in material wealth and there was no reason why this progress should not continue indefinitely.

A significant shift in the English Novel in its movement from the 18th to the 19th century was the change of emphasis from action to character. They gave primacy to the character as opposed to Neo-classical novelists who gave more importance to action.

The early Victorian novel, unlike both the novel of the preceding era as well as the following novel of the later phase of the Victorian period, was rather formless. Like the Elizabethan drama, the novel in the early Victorian phase was written more for any entertainment than for any artistic purpose. But in spite, it contained the large purpose of offering a picture and criticism of contemporary life. If the novels of the early Victorians were written in the 40s and 50s, those of the later Victorians were published in the 60s and 70s. George Eliot, George Meredith, and Thomas Hardy all these major novelists of the period started publishing around the end of the50s or later.

The novelists of the later Victorian era were not entertainers and reformers, as were their elders. Instead, they were more serious composers with greater involvement in the deeper passions of life particularly love. Moreover, their main concern was with rural England, which was being destroyed by industry and commerce rather than the city working class and its masters, the mill- owners, etc. They depicted the tragedy of the transition from the agrarian way of life to the industrial order. Another change that took place in the English novel around the year 1860, was the shift in its focus from the city with its industrialism and utilitarianism to the village with its vision of destruction under the threat of the new scientific rationalism and evolutionism, which started new ethics and human relations inspired by the Darwinian concepts of *"struggle for existence"* and *"survival of the fittest".*

These new ideas made the novelists look at human society from a new perspective, not as a static Biblical model existing between the dynamic tension between good and evil, but as an evolutionary process of human nature, society and civilization, growing on the

Darwinian principles. Another significant change that took place in this era was the shift towards intellectualism. Although

Dickens and Thackeray were ‘educated’ enough to grasp the crosscurrent of ideas in their time, but were not ‘learned’ in the sense Meredith and Hardy were.

4.3.2 About the Author

As an author, Eliot was not only very successful in sales, but she was, and remains, one of the most widely praised for her style and clarity of thought. Eliot's sentence structures are clear, patient, and well balanced, and she mixes plain statement and unsettling irony with rare poise. Her commentaries are never without sympathy for the characters, and she never stoops to being arch or flippant with the emotions in her stories. Villains, heroines, and bystanders are all presented with awareness and full motivation.

Her well-known Novels are-

- *Adam Bede*, 1859
- *The Mill on the Floss*, 1860
- *Silas Marner*, 1861
- *Romola*, 1863
- *Felix Holt, the Radical*, 1866
- *Middlemarch*, 1871-1872
- *Daniel Deronda*, 1876

In addition to creating a thoroughgoing and rich portrait of the life of a small early 19th-century town, Eliot produced an essentially modern novel, with penetrating psychological insights and moral ambiguity. Eliot also broke with convention by refusing to end the work with the inevitable happy ending, as women writers of romance fiction were then expected to do. Instead, she detailed the realities of marriage. While male critics castigated the bold and daring narrative as too gloomy for a “woman writer,” novelist Virginia Woolf called it “one of the few English novels written for grown-up people.

4.4.3. Character List of Middlemarch

- **Dorothea Brooke**

She is the oldest of two daughters and was raised by her bachelor uncle, Mr. Brooke. Dorothea is an excessively religious, pious girl to the extent that she withdraws from the activities she likes most and convinces herself to marry a man, Mr. Casaubon, who cannot satisfy her emotionally or mentally. Dorothea, although she is fairly well-educated, is naïve about the outside world; when her marriage disappoints her, she is forced to learn that she cannot make a living through other people and that she must fulfill her purpose in life through her effort.

- **Celia Brooke**

She is Dorothea's younger sister, the more calm and ordinary of the two. Although she makes no challenges to the convention, Celia is sensible and very perceptive when it comes to people and the Middlemarch world around her. She marries the kind and sensitive Sir James Chettam, a much better match, and made for better reasons, than her sister's union.

- **Mr. Brooke**

He is Dorothea and Celia's guardian and uncle, brother to their deceased father. He is a strong- willed man, with definite, though outdated, ideas about what women should and should not do. Mr. Brooke means well, however, and has few qualms about flying in the face of Middlemarch conventions and politics if need be.

- **Edward Casaubon**

He is Dorothea's middle-aged husband, a crusty old scholar with an inability to feel emotion or love. He slaves away on a project called "The Key to All Mythologies," a work that is supposed to integrate his life's learning. However, Casaubon has no intention of writing or finishing it, and has lost his ability to live and his will to achieve in the musty pages of books. He is also a man prone to jealousy and insecurity, which places a great burden on his young wife, Dorothea.

- **Sir James Chettam**

He begins pursuing Dorothea at the beginning of the novel but gives her up for her sister Celia when Dorothea becomes engaged to Casaubon. Chettam is an affable, kind man, who listens ardently to Dorothea's plans for improving the lives of rural folk, and then takes great measures to make her plans a reality. Unlike many of the men in this novel, he does not subscribe to ideas that women should be weak, ornamental, and limited in their activities to household affairs; this makes his union with Celia a happy one and cements his friendship with Dorothea.

- **Mr. Cadwallader**

He is a Preacher of Sir James' parish, and a trusted friend and advisor to him as well. He is kind, though has strong opinions on certain issues. He is often at Freshitt, Sir James' estate, for casual occasions and conversations.

- **Mrs. Cadwallader**

She is the wife of Mr. Cadwallader, also rather kind-hearted, though with a tendency to be a bit of a busybody. She knows all about neighborhood affairs, showing perhaps a little too much interestin other people's business.

- **Will Ladislaw**

He is a young cousin of Mr. Casaubon, whom Casaubon has little regarded for. He is kind though proud and very intelligent. But, he is of lower social and economic standing than Casaubon because both his mother and grandmother married beneath themselves, and were disowned as a result. He is Dorothea's true love, and both of them bring out the best in each other.

- **Dr. Tertius Lydgate**

He is a young man of about 30, of good family and social connections. He is the newest doctor in Middlemarch and gains a lot of criticism from the old guard for his new methods and outsider status. He is proud to a fault, bright, and thinks that he can be a great innovator in medicine. He falls in love with Rosamond and marries her, though his finances are less than ideal.

- **Rosamond Vincy**

A very vain, empty-headed young woman, though her social graces and manner are perfect. She loves Lydgate because he is an outsider with impressive connections, and flatters her often. She needs constant attention from male suitors, even after marriage, and only the finest things around her. She treasures expensive possessions and furniture even more than her husband Lydgate, whichcauses great discord.

- **Mr. Vincy**

Rosamond and Fred's father, mayor of Middlemarch. His family is one of the foremost in local society, and he is a merchant of good standing, dealing in cloth. Their family is not all rich but got money from the business. Mr. Vincy is very economical and works hard, though the rest of his family does not.

- **Mrs. Vincy**

She is the wife to Mr. Vincy, and originator of many of her daughter Rosamond's flaws.

She is also rather empty-headed, materialistic, and impractical; she gets Rosamond used to a very high standard of living, beyond even her husband's needs. She is not a bad woman, though she is recognized as being flawed, and not as steady as her husband.

- **Fred Vincy**

The Vincys' only son; starts as a spendthrift and a very irresponsible young man, though by the end of the novel, he is doing decidedly better. He is in love with Mary Garth, though she is below him in social standing. However, Mary is much more sensible than he is and gets him to work hardand prosper.

- **Mary Garth**

He is the oldest child of the Garths, she works for Mr. Featherstone at Stone Court until his death. She is an intelligent girl who knows a good bit of literature, and she also has good experience with human nature. Mary is very affable, practical, and independent. She also helps Fred to improve himself immeasurably.

- **Caleb Garth**

Mary's father, a hard-working man who manages estates and does improvements and construction projects on properties. He is far from rich, and very generous in spirit; overall a good man, who is always honest, and treats people well. He has several children, Mary being the most prominent. Fred becomes his apprentice when he cleans up his act.

- **Mrs. Garth**

She is the wife of Caleb, just as honest and upstanding. She gives lessons to her children and village children as well, making extra money from this. She prizes responsibility, education, and honesty, and makes sure all of her children have these traits. She is a harder judge than her husband,but they are still a good match.

- **Mr. Featherstone**

Owner of Stone Court, and very wealthy; related to both the Vincys and the Garths through his two childless marriages. He is a stern, unkind old man who uses his wealth as a threat to other people. He leaves his estate to his illegitimate son Mr. Rigg, which disappoints the Vincy family a great deal.

- **Mr. Rigg**

He is an illegitimate son of Featherstone; he is disliked by people in Middlemarch for his common origins, and for being an outsider. He handles business and accountancy matters and sells Stone Court to Mr. Bulstrode. He is stern and not very social, but not as mean

as his father.

Mr. BulstrodeaHe is Another prominent figure in Middlemarch, who runs a bank, a hospital, and other institutions. He has a good deal of money and is prosperous, but his tendency to sermonize and keep an absurdly pious façade in public means that he is very unpopular with many people.

- **Mrs. Bulstrode**

Mr. Vincy's sister; is a very good woman, honest, upstanding, and faithful. She is also very good at evaluating other people, and their affairs. She gives excellent advice to Rosamond about marrying, and to the Vincy's as well. Though her husband got his start in London, she is a true Middlemarcher, with a long family history there.

- **Mrs. Waule**

Mr. Featherstone's sister, whom Mr. Featherstone does not like. She only comes to see him when he is dying, with the expectation that he will give her money in his will. A rather unpleasant woman, and not a good company either.

- **Farebrother**

A very honest and good man, though he is also human and would be the first to say so. He is in the clergy, and makes very little money; he supports his sister, mother, and aunt with this money, which is a bit of a strain. He is a good friend to Ladislaw, Lydgate, and others; he is also in love with Mary Garth, and she regards him highly.

- **Mr. Tyke**

Another clergyman in the area, though his preaching is more sanctimonious, and favored by Bulstrode. He gets the position as the chaplain at the hospital instead of Farebrother for political reasons, although Farebrother is favored personally and as a preacher by most of the neighborhood.

- **Naumann**

Will's painter friend in Rome, who appreciates Dorothea's beauty.

- **Trumbull**

Town auctioneer, and business advisor to Featherstone. He seems to know Featherstone better than almost anyone and is the only person other than Rigg who receives anything from his will.

- **Mr. Raffles**

Rigg's stepfather, a good-for-nothing. Also a former business partner of Bulstrode's. He helped Bulstrode in some very disreputable trades and comes back years later to

blackmail him. He effectively blackens Bulstrode's name, then dies of alcoholism while under his care.

- **Christy Garth**

The Garths' oldest son; is a real academic excelling in languages and other subjects. He is responsible, upright, and everything that the Garths treasure in a person's character.

- **Captain Lydgate**

Lydgate's flighty, wealthy, and airheaded cousin. Lydgate doesn't care for him at all, though Rosamond adores him because he pays her a lot of attention.

- **Godwin Lydgate**

Lydgate's very wealthy uncle, who turns down Rosamond's request for a loan. He seems rather haughty, and not generous at all.

- **Miss Noble**

Farebrother's aunt, who has never married. She is kindly, and Will is a very good friend to her.

- **Ned Plymdale**

Vain suitor of Rosamond's, though she rejects him. He goes on to do well financially, and getmarried to someone else.

- **Mrs. Plymdale**

Ned's mother, very proud and boastful about her son's success. Bitter that Rosamond rejects him.

4.3.3 About the Novel

Middlemarch centers on the lives of residents of Middlemarch, a fictitious Midlands town, from 1829 onwards – the years up to the 1832 Reform Act. The narrative is variably considered to consist of three or four plots with unequal emphasis: the life of Dorothea Brooke, the career of Tertius Lydgate, the courtship of Mary Garth by Fred Vincy, and the disgrace of Nicholas Bulstrode. The two main plots are those of Dorothea and Lydgate. Each plot occurs concurrently, although Bulstrode's is centered on the later chapters.

Dorothea Brooke is a 19-year-old orphan, living with her younger sister, Celia, as a ward of her uncle, Mr. Brooke. Dorothea is an especially pious young woman, whose hobby involves the renovation of buildings belonging to the tenant farmers, although her uncle

discourages her. Dorothea is courted by Sir James Chettam, a young man close to her age, but she is oblivious to him. She is attracted instead to the Rev. Edward Casaubon, a 45-year-old scholar. Dorothea accepts Casaubon's offer of marriage, despite her sister's misgivings. Chettam is encouraged to turn his attention to Celia, who has developed an interest in him.

Fred and Rosamond Vincy are the eldest children of Middlemarch's town mayor. Having never finished university, Fred is widely seen as a failure and a layabout but allows him to coast because he is the presumed heir of his childless uncle Mr. Featherstone, a rich but unpleasant man. Featherstone keeps as a companion a niece of his by marriage, Mary Garth; although she is considered plain, Fred is in love with her and wants to marry her.

Dorothea and Casaubon experience the first tensions in their marriage on their honeymoon in Rome when Dorothea finds that her husband has no interest in involving her in his intellectual pursuits and no real intention of having his copious notes published, which was her chief reason for marrying him. She meets Will Ladislaw, Casaubon's much younger disinherited cousin, whom he supports financially. Ladislaw begins to feel attracted to Dorothea; she remains oblivious, but the two become friendly.

Fred becomes deeply in debt and finds himself unable to repay what he owes. Having asked Mr. Garth, Mary's father, to co-sign the debt, he now tells Garth he must forfeit it. As a result, Mrs. Garth's savings from four years of income, held in reserve for the education of her youngest son, are wiped out, as are Mary's savings. As a result, Mr. Garth warns Mary against ever marrying Fred.

Fred comes down with an illness, of which he is cured by Dr. Tertius Lydgate, a newly arrived doctor in Middlemarch. Lydgate has modern ideas about medicine and sanitation and believes doctors should prescribe, but not themselves dispense medicines. This draws ire and criticism of many in the town. He allies himself with Bulstrode, a wealthy, church-going landowner, and developer, who wants to build a hospital and clinic that follow Lydgate's philosophy, despite the misgivings of Lydgate's friend, Farebrother, about Bulstrode's integrity. Lydgate also becomes

acquainted with Rosamond Vincy, whose beauty and education go together with shallowness and self-absorption. Seeking to make a good match, she decides to marry

Lydgate, who comes from a wealthy family and uses Fred's sickness as an opportunity to get close to the doctor. Lydgate initially views their relationship as pure flirtation and backs away from Rosamond after discovering that the town considers them practically engaged. However, on seeing her a final time, he breaks his resolution and the two become engaged.

Casaubon arrives back from Rome about the same time, only to suffer a heart attack. Lydgate, brought in to attend him, tells Dorothea it is difficult to pronounce on the nature of Casaubon's illness and chances of recovery: that he may indeed live about 15 years if he takes it easy and ceases his studies, but it is equally possible the disease may develop rapidly, in which case death will be sudden. As Fred recovers, Mr. Featherstone falls ill. He reveals on his deathbed that he has made two wills and tries to get Mary to help him destroy one. Unwilling to be involved in the business, she refuses, and Featherstone dies with both wills still intact. Featherstone's plan had been for £10,000 to go to Fred Vincy, but his estate and fortune instead go to an illegitimate son of his, Joshua Rigg.

Casaubon, in poor health, has grown suspicious of Dorothea's goodwill to Ladislaw. He tries to make Dorothea promise, if he should die, to forever "avoid doing what I should deprecate, and apply yourself to do what I should desire". She is hesitant to agree, and he dies before she can reply. Casaubon's will is revealed to contain a provision that, if Dorothea marries Ladislaw, she will lose her inheritance. The peculiar nature of the condition leads to the general suspicion that Ladislaw and Dorothea are lovers, creating awkwardness between the two. Ladislaw is in love with Dorothea but keeps this secret, having no desire to involve her in scandal or cause her disinheritance. She meanwhile realizes she has romantic feelings for him, but must suppress them. He remains in Middlemarch, working as a newspaper editor for Mr. Brooke, who is mounting a campaign to run for Parliament on a Reform platform.

Lydgate's efforts to please Rosamond soon leave him deeply in debt and he is forced to seek help from Bulstrode. He is partly sustained in this by a friendship with Camden Farebrother. However, Fred Vincy's humiliation at being responsible for Caleb Garth's financial setbacks shocks him into reassessing his life. He resolves to train as a land agent under the forgiving Caleb. He asks Farebrother to plead his case to Mary Garth, not realizing that Farebrother is also in love with her.

Farebrother does so, thereby sacrificing his desires for the sake of Mary, who he realizes truly loves Fred and is just waiting for him to find his place in the world.

John Raffles, a mysterious man who knows of Bulstrode's shady past, appears in Middlemarch, intending to blackmail him. In his youth, the church-going Bulstrode engaged in questionable financial dealings; his fortune is founded on his marriage to a wealthy, much older widow. The widow's daughter, who should have inherited her mother's fortune, had run away; Bulstrode located her but failed to disclose this to the widow so that he inherited the fortune instead of her daughter. The widow's daughter had a son, who turns out to be Ladislaw. On grasping their connection, Bulstrode is consumed with guilt and offers Ladislaw a large sum of money, which Ladislaw refuses as being tainted. Bulstrode's terror of public exposure as a hypocrite leads him to hasten the death of the mortally sick Raffles while lending a large sum to Lydgate, whom Bulstrode had previously refused to bail out his debt. However, the story of Bulstrode's misdeeds has already spread. Bulstrode's disgrace engulfs Lydgate: knowledge of the loan spreads and he is assumed to be complicit with Bulstrode. Only Dorothea and Farebrother retain any faith in him, but Lydgate and Rosamond are still encouraged to leave Middlemarch by the general opprobrium. Disgraced and reviled, Bulstrode's one consolation is that his wife stands by him as he too faces exile.

When Mr. Brooke's election campaign collapses, Ladislaw decides to leave the town and visits Dorothea to say his farewell, but Dorothea has fallen in love with him. She renounces Casaubon's fortune and shocks her family by announcing that she will marry Ladislaw. At the same time, Fredhas been successful in his new career, marries Mary.

The "Finale" details the ultimate fortunes of the main characters. Fred and Mary marry and live contentedly with their three sons. Lydgate operates a successful practice outside Middlemarch and attains a good income, but never finds fulfillment and dies at the age of 50, leaving Rosamond and four children. After he dies, Rosamond marries a wealthy physician. Ladislaw engages in public reform, and Dorothea is content as a wife and mother to their two children. Their son eventually inherits Arthur Brooke's estate.

4.3.4 Further Body of the Text

Middlemarch was first published in 1871 and 1872, as a serial novel in eight parts, which came out every two months. This was Eliot's most comprehensive and sweeping

novel to date and was

intended as a study of provincial British life. Eliot worked on several different stories, starting with Lydgate and his trials as a young doctor; then she worked on Dorothea's story, writing the first ten chapters as they appear in the finished book with only this character and her world in mind. Eliot then decided to build a world around these two characters, and create a more sweeping portrait of an entire town and its various inhabitants; Lydgate and Dorothea acted essentially as the core of the novel, as two somewhat similar figures who were the soul of the novel. Both are alike in their unhappy marriages, their social aspirations, and how they react to societal pressure.

The novel, when it first appeared, was a huge success, both with critics and readers; it made Eliot's name one of the greatest novelists in Britain, and her fame spread. Her intention with the novel was to analyze recent political, social, and economic threads through a series of personal accounts. The characters and stories told within the novel are meant to show how people are affected by historical change while it happens, and how progress happens in people's lives. Eliot manages to weave in the Catholic emancipation, the death of George IV, the dissolution of Parliament in 1831, the outbreak of cholera in 1832, and the passage of the Reform Bill later that year. Eliot manages to weave these things into the concerns of the characters and the narrative; they are not the focus of the novel but are balanced with the novel's literary concerns.

One of the most widespread concerns in the novel is change, and how people react to it. All the historical concerns in the novel are involved in this, as are people's reactions under stress, and to progress in their society. Eliot can show people acting naturally in close detail, and present criticism on them, while still allowing the readers to form their own opinion of them. Overall, every character in this novel is human; each of them can be liked or disliked according to their foibles and flaws. But Eliot's point is that we, like they, are human; we can only judge them as we judge ourselves. She is not impartial in the narrative, which would be impossible in making criticisms; but there is still plenty of room for people to make up their minds, and interpret the characters in their way.

Eliot's stated goal with writing this novel, along with her others, was to give her readers "a clearer conception and a more active admiration of those vital elements which bind men together and give a higher worthiness to their existence," according to a letter of 1868 that she wrote. The novel, especially the characters of Dorothea and Farebrother, are

very much influenced by Eliot's

personal belief in the religion of humanity. Her views of marriage are also interjected into the novel; Eliot was not favorable about society's ideas of gender roles and marriage, hence her depictions of Rosamond and Lydgate's marital troubles.

The novel is very much concerned with women's roles, women's lives, and how they should be changed. However, it also exposes Eliot's ambivalence on the subject. Although she had no children and lived with her lover, George Lewes, without being married, at the same time she believed that women should be married, and had obligations to their husbands and children. The novel advocates change in women's roles, and their spheres of influence; but, at the same time, no woman is happy who isn't married, and in a solid partnership with her husband. This tension in Eliot's personal views forms the struggles that Rosamond, Dorothea, and Celia face, and determines the outcome of their unions according to their character and effectiveness.

If there is one metaphor that serves to sum up the way people and society work in Middlemarch, it is a web. Just as Rosamond and Lydgate spin their web and get caught in it, every character is bound in a huge web, and if one pulls one way or another, the web shifts and someone is affected. Things and people are inextricably connected and an event, like Featherstone's funeral, can have a very palpable meaning to someone who has no involvement, like Dorothea. Middlemarch is a very carefully woven work of social commentary and human analysis, with many living, breathing characters that are as real as the historical period they inhabit.

Middlemarch is a highly unusual novel. Although it is primarily a Victorian novel, it has many characteristics typical to modern novels. Critical reaction to Eliot's masterpiece work was mixed. A common accusation leveled against it was its morbid, depressing tone. Many critics did not like Eliot's habit of scattering obscure literary and scientific allusions throughout the book. In their opinion, a woman writer should not be so intellectual. Eliot hated the "silly, women novelists." In the Victorian era, women writers were generally confined to writing the stereotypical fantasies of conventional romance fiction. Not only did Eliot dislike the constraints imposed on women's writing, but she also disliked the stories they were expected to produce. Her disdain for the tropes of conventional romance is apparent in her treatment of the marriage between Rosamond and Lydgate. Both and Rosamond and Lydgate think of courtship and romance in terms

of ideals taken directly from conventional romance. Another problem with such fiction is that marriage marks the end of the novel. Eliot goes through a great effort to depict the realities of marriage.

Moreover, Eliot's many critics found *Middlemarch* to be too depressing for a woman writer. Eliot refused to bow to the conventions of a happy ending. An ill-advised marriage between two inherently incompatible people never becomes completely harmonious. It becomes a yoke. Such is the case in the marriages of Lydgate and Dorothea. Dorothea was saved from living with her mistake for her whole life because her elderly husband dies of a heart attack. Lydgate and Rosamond, on the other hand, married young.

Two major life choices govern the narrative of *Middlemarch.* One is married and the other is a vocation. Eliot takes both choices very seriously. Short, romantic courtships lead to trouble because both parties entertain unrealistic ideals of each other. They marry without getting to know one another. Marriages based on compatibility work better. Moreover, marriages in which women have a greater say also work better, such as the marriage between Fred and Mary. She tells him she will not marry if he becomes a clergyman. Her condition saves Fred from an unhappy entrapment in an occupation he doesn't like. Dorothea and Casaubon struggle continually because Casaubon attempts to make her submit to his control. The same applies to the marriage between Lydgate and Rosamond.

The choice of an occupation by which one earns a living is also an important element in the book. Eliot illustrates the consequences of making the wrong choice. She also details at great length the consequences of confining women to the domestic sphere alone. Dorothea's passionate ambition for social reform is never realized. She ends with a happy marriage, but there is some sense that her end as merely a wife and mother is a waste. Rosamond's shrewd capabilities degenerate into vanity and manipulation. She is restless within the domestic sphere, and her stifled ambitions only result in unhappiness for herself and her husband.

Eliot's refusal to conform to happy endings demonstrates the fact that *Middlemarch* is not meant to be entertainment. She wants to deal with real-life issues, not the fantasy world to which women writers were often confined. Her ambition was to create a portrait of the complexity of ordinary human life: quiet tragedies, petty character failings, small triumphs, and quiet moments of dignity. The complexity of her portrait of provincial

society is reflected in the complexity of individual characters. The contradictions in the character of the person are evident in the shifting sympathies of the reader. One moment, we pity Casaubon, the next we judge him critically.

Middlemarch stubbornly refuses to behave like a typical novel. The novel is a collection of relationships between several major players in the drama, but no single person occupies the center of the action. No one person can represent provincial life. It is necessary to include multiple people. Eliot's book is fairly experimental for its time in form and content, particularly because she was awoman writer.

4.5 Check your progress

- What would you say *Middlemarch* is about?
- What is the plot of the novel?
- When and where does this story take place?
- Who is the main character of *Middlemarch*?
- Who are the other major characters in *Middlemarch*?
- How do relationships impact the way that characters change, or the ways that we learnmore about these characters?
- How important are relationships in this novel?
- What are some of the main relationships that we see?
- What is Dorothea's relationship like with Edward Casaubon?
- What is Mary and Fred's relationship like? What is Rosamond and Lydgate's relationshiplike? What is Dorothea and Ladislaw's relationship like?
- What is the central conflict that drives the plot of this novel?
- How is this conflict resolved?
- How does *Middlemarch* end?
- What has happened to each character and relationship? Why did Dorothea choose tomarry Ladislaw? What do you think the author is trying to say?

4.6 Summary

Middlemarch centers on the lives of residents of Middlemarch, a fictitious Midlands town, from 1829 onwards – the years up to the 1832 Reform Act. The narrative is variably considered to consist of three or four plots with unequal emphasis: the life of Dorothea Brooke, the career of Tertius Lydgate, the courtship of Mary Garth by

Fred Vincy, and the disgrace of Nicholas

Bulstrode. The two main plots are those of Dorothea and Lydgate. Each plot occurs concurrently,although Bulstrode's is centered on the later chapters.

Dorothea Brooke is a 19-year-old orphan, living with her younger sister, Celia, as a ward of her uncle, Mr. Brooke. Dorothea is an especially pious young woman, whose hobby involves the renovation of buildings belonging to the tenant farmers, although her uncle discourages her. Dorothea is courted by Sir James Chettam, a young man close to her age, but she is oblivious to him. She is attracted instead to the Rev. Edward Casaubon, a 45-year-old scholar. Dorothea accepts Casaubon's offer of marriage, despite her sister's misgivings. Chettam is encouraged to turn his attention to Celia, who has developed an interest in him.

The fictional town of Middlemarch, North Loamshire, is probably based on Coventry, where Eliot had lived before moving to London. Like Coventry, Middlemarch is described as a silk-ribbon manufacturing town.

The subtitle—"A Study of Provincial Life"—has been seen as significant. One critic views the unity of *Middlemarch* as achieved through "the fusion of the two senses of 'provincial' On the one hand it means geographically "all parts of the country except the capital"; and on the other, a person who is "unsophisticated" or "narrow-minded class. Steedman suggests *Middlemarch* "is a portraitof Philistine Provincialism".

It is worth noting that Eliot went to London, as her heroine Dorothea does at the end of the book. There Eliot achieved fame way beyond most women of her time, whereas Dorothea takes on the role of nurturing Will and her family. Eliot was rejected by her family once she had settled in her common-law relationship with Lewes, and "their profound disapproval prevented her ever going home again". She omitted Coventry from her last visit to the Midlands in 1855.

4.7 Keywords

- Pious
- Despite
- Misgiving
- Relationship
- Illustrated

- Unusually
- Interest
- Attention
- Encouraged

4.8 Self-Assessment Questions (SAQs)

- Discuss various themes in Middlemarch.
- Discuss George Eliot as a moralist.
- George Eliot as a modern novelist
- Character sketch of Dorothea Brook.

4.9 Answers to Your Progress

Discuss various themes in Middlemarch The "Woman Question

Central to *Middlemarch* is the idea that Dorothea Brooke cannot hope to achieve the heroic stature of a figure like Saint Theresa, for Eliot's heroine lives at the wrong time, "amidst the conditions of an imperfect social state, in which great feelings will often take the aspect of error, and great faiththe aspect of illusion"

The literary critic Kathleen Blake notes Eliot's emphasis on St Theresa's "very concrete accomplishment, the reform of a religious order", rather than her Christian mysticism.

A frequent criticism by feminist critics is that not only is Dorothea less heroic than Saint Theresa and Antigone, but George Eliot herself. Eliot has also been criticized more widely for ending the novel with Dorothea marrying Will Ladislaw, someone so clearly her inferior. The novelist Henry James describes Ladislaw as a *dilettante* who "has not the concentrated fervor essential in the manchosen by so nobly strenuous a heroine".

Marriage

Marriage is one of the major themes in *Middlemarch*. According to George Steiner, "both principal plots [those of Dorothea and Lydgate] are case studies of unsuccessful marriage". This suggests that these "disastrous marriages" leave the lives of Dorothea

and Lydgate unfulfilled. This is

arguably more the case with Lydgate than with Dorothea, who gains a second chance through her later marriage to Will Ladislaw, but a favorable interpretation of this marriage depends on the character of Ladislaw himself, whom numerous critics have viewed as Dorothea's inferior. In addition, there is the "meaningless and blissful" marriage of Dorothea's sister Celia Brooke to Sir James Chettam, and more significantly Fred Vincy's courting of Mary Garth. In the latter, Mary Garth will not accept Fred until he abandons the Church and settles on a more suitable career. Here Fred resembles Henry Fielding's character Tom Jones, both being molded into good husbands by the love they give to and receive from a woman.

Dorothea is a St Theresa, born in the wrong century, in provincial Middlemarch, who mistakes in her idealistic ardor, "a poor dry mummified pedant... as a sort of angel of vocation"*Middlemarch* is in part a *Bildungsroman* focusing on the psychological or moral growth of the protagonist: Dorothea "blindly gropes forward, making mistakes in her sometimes foolish, often egotistical, but also admirably idealistic attempt to find a role" or vocation that fulfills her nature Lydgate is equally mistaken in his choice of a partner, as his idea of a perfect wife is someone "who can sing and play the piano and provide a soft cushion for her husband to rest after work". So he marries Rosamond Vincy, "the woman in the novel who most contrasts with Dorothea", and thereby "deteriorates from ardent researcher to fashionable doctor in London".

Responsibility

This is a major theme of Fred's story, and he must become responsible for his finances and his choices. Will does too, to a certain extent. Both men must learn how to rely on themselves, not infringe upon others, and how to become independent in many ways.

Stubbornness

Rosamond is extremely stubborn, meaning that if things aren't done her way, she will go behind other people's backs to do things the way she thinks they should be done. Societal stubbornness is responsible for Lydgate's failure with his medical practice; people want what they want, for whatever reasons, which means that they are blind to things that might be best for them.

Prejudice

People in Middlemarch dislike anyone who is not from Middlemarch, or anyone whose reputation seems questionable. Will and Lydgate are both good people, but it is initial prejudice, sometimes based on invalid or circumstantial reasons, that means that they are never liked or accepted in Middlemarch.

Conformity

People are supposed to conform to certain social ideals and norms. Dorothea is supposed to be a proper wife and then a proper widow, and follow society's set guidelines about how to fill each position. Will fits no position that society tries to group him into, so he is disliked; he refuses to be conventional or proper or to fit into that society and its ideas of how someone like Will shouldact.

Love

Love keeps people together, or the lack of it lets them drift apart. Those who are truly in love like Will and Dorothea, Mary and Fred are bound together by it and are very alike in temperament and outlook. Those who lack it like Lydgate and Rosamond, Casaubon, and Dorothea are ill-suited to each other in marriage and are very disappointed by their unions.

Unity of Middlemarch

The decisions made by every person in Middlemarch seem to have a direct effect on at least one other person. Mary's decision to marry Fred means that Farebrother is without a wife. Dorothea's decision to choose Casaubon leads Sir James to choose Celia. Bulstrode's dirty dealings about Raffles mean disgrace to both Lydgate and Will Ladislaw. Everyone in Middlemarch is intimately connected, and it seems that no one can move around without disturbing someone else.

Societal Expectations

Closely linked to society's hierarchy, are ideas about how everyone should act in certain situations. Lydgate proposes to Rosamond because society expects that he should do it. Dorothea is pushed to live with someone else or marry again after she is widowed because society expects that it is right. People don't necessarily follow these expectations, nor should they, but they do exist and play a part in people's lives.

Vanity

Rosamond is exceptionally vain about her charm and her appearances, so much so that it is ashock to her when her friend Ladislaw says he doesn't love her. Her unsuccessful

suitors are all

equally vain and blame Lydgate, rather than Rosamond's lack of interest when she won't returntheir favor.

Self-discovery

There are certain truths that every character learns about himself in the course of trials; Lydgate and Rosamond find out more about their characters through their money troubles, though they do not always adjust accordingly. Dorothea makes the most dramatic journey of self-discovery and changes a great deal within the course of the novel.

Reality vs. Expectations

Many characters' preconceived ideas, especially of marriage, are proven tragically wrong in the course of the book. Casaubon and Dorothea both have unrealistic ideas about marriage, and are disappointed. Lydgate and Rosamond have the same idea and are let down. Life often defies what one expects, or could predict, and the happiest people are the ones who have few expectations or are most flexible.

Conscience vs. self-interest

This is a question that comes to play in Lydgate's life in particular. Does one do what one thinks is right, or what gives one the most benefit? Lydgate often goes for self-interest, though it gets himinto trouble.

Gender roles and expectations

Middlemarch society has very defined ideas of what people of each gender should do within the society, and people, especially women, who deviate from this norm, are looked down upon. Dorothea is tolerated because she is of a good family and does not disrupt the society she is in. However, she faces a great deal of pressure to change herself, conform to others' ideas, and submitherself to male leadership at all times.

Progress

Much is changing in the world of Middlemarch; English society is evolving in social, economic, technological areas. Socially, ideas of gender and class are in flux, as women are proving more and more competent, and the Industrial Revolution is causing a greater amount of social mobility. The economy of England is changing, from an aristocratic, inheritance-based system of holding wealth and land, to one based on commerce, business, and manufacturing. Technology is also changing, in medical science, and areas like transportation, and these are changes that are beginning to sweep through

Middlemarch.

Pride

This is something that both helps and hinders many people in the book and is most applicable to Dorothea, Will Ladislaw, and Lydgate. With Lydgate, pride is a stumbling block, something that keeps him from putting his affairs in order, and sometimes doing what is necessary for his marriage and practice. Dorothea and Will's pride is more involved in who they are personally neither of them likes to be regarded poorly, will defend themselves and their decisions if needed, and follow their course with regards to everything.

Money

Money is the root of many evils, but much good, in the novel. Lydgate gets desperate for want of it, Fred despairs when he has little, Dorothea becomes generous when she has too much, and the Garths save carefully since their money is limited. Money has a profound effect on character within the novel, and though many people are judged by how much money they have, many of the best people in the novel, like Will Ladislaw and Mr. Farebrother, have very little.

Strength of rumor

Rumor can do a great deal of damage in Middlemarch, having even more weight than fact in some cases. Both Bulstrode and Lydgate are blackened by rumors passed around society, and Will is blackened as well, though he is falsely accused.

Politics

Everything is political in Middlemarch, with most people strongly backing the conservative party. Personal alliances and aversions are based on matters of politics and political identification. But even political matters, like all things, get personal; people decide who or who not to support by how they like them, even more so sometimes than any dependence on issues.

Family obligation

People within the novel have varying ideas of family obligation in the novel, though it is a strong force in Middlemarch society. Mr. Featherstone's relations believe they are entitled to the money; Mrs. Bulstrode believes that she must help and advise her family to show support. Sir James shows his regard for his family by being very protective and a constant advisor as well. Casaubon dispenses of his obligation through money, and Bulstrode attempts also to do the same.**Social position**

Social position means a great deal in Middlemarch; it means how much respect a person gets, how people treat them, how they are regarded, etc. People of high status are generally treated more

delicately than people with little money, like Lydgate and Will Ladislaw. Birth and connections are also important in determining a person's place, and also what benefits they will receive from society.

2. Discuss George Eliot: A Moralist

George Eliot is known as a modern moralist despite living in the Victorian Age. Other Victorians did have a moral touch but Eliot had moral earnestness. She wrote to inculcate morals in the people. She reshapes the perception of the people to remold the whole structure of the society. She believes in the presence of the moral code at the heart of the universe.

She made novels the epithet of her moral ideas. In “The Mill on the Floss”, she accuses the dominance of self recklessness, loose-living, etc, and stresses the absoluteness of duty, renunciation endurance, etc. Her concept of morality is based on human values and the laws of human heart.

George Eliot wrote in a fashion contrary to that of her contemporaries, Dickens, Thackeray, etc. She is not completely divorced from the traditions. She draws her picture in the Victorian style, but she develops it in a new direction. The Victorians, on the whole, were instructive and they wrote what they wanted to write. Eliot, on the other hand, was an intellectual and she wrote what she should have written. She is known as the first intellectual novelist. Her novels are the embodiment of her ideas.

The main charm of the Victorians lies in the individual expression, whereas, in Eliot, our interest is kept up in the way she analyses and diagnoses problems. Eliot rejects dogma and wants to analyze the causes of every problem she comes across. This brings moralist concepts in her novels.

Her realism is not only documentary but also psychological. To other novelists, realism is an intellectual necessity but in her case, it is a creed and emotion rather than ambition that follows avidly. Her picture is more realistic owing to her clear perception of realities. She draws her characters inside out. in this way, she highlights moral values for

society.

The Victorians were satisfied with the apparent realities whereas Eliot penetrated deep into the phenomenon and brought to light the hidden causes.

The Victorians, too, were satirists but they satirize just to create humor so they were ordinary humorists, whereas, Eliot satirized as a serious thinker. Her humor was of a distinct type i.e. intellectual and psychological humor soaked into deep pathos. She fused comic irony and mild satire to create humor and her end was to moralize. Her humor had a serious message underlying it. This kind of humor is employed by modern novelists.

Other Victorians did have a moral touch but, in Eliot, we find moral earnestness. Like Fielding, she wrote to inculcate morals in the people. But her concept of morality was quite different from that of Fielding's. She reshapes the consciousness of the individuals to remold the whole structure of the society. She believes in the presence of the moral code at the heart of the universe. She made novels the embodiment of her moral ideas. In "The Mill on the Floss", she denounces the dominance of self recklessness, loose-living, etc, and emphasizes the absoluteness of duty, endurance, renunciation, etc. her concept of morality is based on human values and the laws of thehuman heart.

Her psychological approach also makes her a moralist. The clear-sighted vision of the essence of character gives her a definite edge over the Victorians like Bronte, Dickens, Austen, etc. The grasp on the psychological essentials makes her draw complex characters better than the Victoriansbecause she draws them inside out.

The insight into human nature makes Eliot's picture of human nature more homogeneous than that of Dickens, etc. She shows that saints and sinners are made of the same clay; however, the latter lacks the necessary strength of mind. She has ardent sincerity which compensates for many of thefeelings of her aesthetic judgment.

To conclude George Eliot is a moralist in a practical sense. She is not a preacher. She does not want to summon anyone. But she wants to bring something good for society that makes her a modern moralist.

3. George Eliot as a modern novelist

Though Eliot lived in the Victorian era yet she is a modern novelist since she wrote in modern fashion. But she cannot be called 'Victoria-Modern'. Eliot, in contrast, is

exclusively orthodox and Victorian in her ideas and modern in her approach. She can also be differentiated from Hardy in

the sense that he is peculiarly Victoria in his style and approach and modern in his ideas. To be curt, Eliot is a modern novelist living amongst the Victorians.

Eliot is the revealer of the self. Characters like Maggie are the self-portraitures of Eliot. She unveils herself through her female characters. She broke away from the fundamental conventions of form and matter. She rejected the standardized formula. She conceived one idea and its logical development. She is modern in inspiration, too. Eliot's intellectual approach made the novel a 'meeting place of problems'. She studied Man about higher aspects of life. Eliot was the first novelist to discover this particular track on which modern novelists are treading today.

Eliot attacks self-dominance in her novels. Egoism is at the center of her novels. She shows the egoistic self coming in contrast with other-selves and leading to tragedy. Mr. Tulliver due to his obstinacy destroys his family. Eliot wants us to hit a balance between the interest of the self and the other-selves. She thinks that no one can be moral unless he redeems himself from the prison of the self and regenerates. She wants us to think for our fellow men, pity them, and have sympathy for them. Even the weakest person should be admired. To her, temperate happiness comes by keeping a constant relationship with people.

Eliot emphasizes the importance of sufferings and considers them a boon, and not a bane, for life. They help us come out of the egoistic self and develop our personalities on the right lines. She shows her characters suffering and learning a lot. Eliot wants us to maintain emotional self-control. She thinks passions should always be under the control of reason; sentimentality annihilates us. But for the sentimentality of Mr. Tulliver, his family couldn't have been devastated. Austen also denounces a sentimental attitude.

Eliot lays stress on the absoluteness of duty. To her, one must never compromise on duty at any cost. Maggie remains throughout dutiful. She disconnects her relationship with Philip for the sake of her duty towards her family and, then, breaks away from Stephan for being dutifulto Philip and Lucy.

Endurance and renunciation are certain for a happy life. Maggie is a symbol of both. She loved Philip but on Tom's interference, she endured and sacrificed herself. She

never objected to his resolution. Tom turned her out, but during the flood, she went out to rescue him

endangering her life. Eliot teaches us that one has to sacrifice his interest for the sake of othersif one wants to have a happy life.

Eliot believes in free will. To her, everyone's character is in his own hands to mold into the right or wrong direction, but one must utilize all the powers to mold it right. Matthew Arnold declared conduct as three-fourths of life; Eliot proclaimed it as four-fourths. To her, our activities determine the whole of our future life. Activities, if assist us to be good, are right, and, if lead us to become bad, are wrong; however, some are neither right nor wrong rather frivolous which can't interest a serious fellow.

Eliot believes in the basic value of personality and that a fully matured personality is highly valuable and its innate qualities cannot be denied. To her, the vital object of all religions is to develop the personalities on the right lines and to the maximum. She shows her characters learning and growing into fully developed personalities. Maggie, in the beginning, was impulsive and ill-mannered but she finally developed into a mature and sensible lady.

Eliot believes in the sovereign importance of one's inner consciousness, determining one's activities and one's future as well. Maggie's inner consciousness was that elder brothers should be obeyed and the whole of her activities was determined by this inner consciousness.

The moral conflict lies at the root of her chief character. The conflict is possibly between duty and love or the ideal and the real. The characters, in a position to do right, are tempted to do wrong. Maggie thirsts for virtue, but she finds no way to satiate her desire. She miserably fails to please Tom and annoys him instead. Eliot's serious characters are envisaged exclusively in their moral aspects. She concentrates on the moral side of human nature and her revolt has always been intellectual, and never moral.

Eliot linked ethics with aesthetics – the driving force of her novels. Earlier, she made her stories melodramatic. As time passed on, she attempted stories of emotional self-control.

The above points conclude that Eliot was a moralist like other novelists. Her novels were

'criticism of life'. However, her approach to moralization was aesthetic, and not conservative.

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