

**People's Democratic Republic of Algeria
Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research
Mustapha Stambouli University-Mascara
Faculty of Letters and Languages
Department of English**

**الجمهورية الجزائرية الديمقراطية الشعبية
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قسم اللغة الانجليزية**



History of the British Literature

This course guide is designed for second year LMD students

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Preface

Throughout the whole world, the field of literature receives great interest. The world of literature is seen as a profound and interesting one, and entering and understanding this world needs a serious interest and a deep thinking. However, as far as the Algerian context is concerned, the majority of students of English give little attention to this field. The main reason is the lack of students' background knowledge about literature. They find it difficult to analyze literary works; mixing between the summary and the analysis most of the time.

This course guide is designed for second year EFL students. It includes an overview of the history of British literature from the Renaissance to the Victorian period. The main objective of this guide is to pave the way for students to generate background knowledge about the development of literature through the ages. Furthermore, it familiarizes them with the key literary figures and works in each period. At the end of each period, a literary work is selected for analysis so that students can illustrate some of the ideas dealt with in the theoretical lecture.

The lectures are organized in a form of eleven units. Each unit starts with the main headings that form the lecture. Then, each heading is explained theoretically. By the end of each unit, a number of questions are given to students in order to test their understanding and prepare them for the following lecture. At the end of this guide, an answer key is offered so that students can check their answers.

Finally, it is pleasing to introduce students to the history of literature through the ages and prepare them to taste and appreciate literature. Their understanding of cultural, religious, political, and social contexts' effects on the production of literary works enable them to start being interested in it. This will ignite their passion about literature and its beauty too. Thus, hopefully this guide will be useful to students.

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Unit 1: The Renaissance Part I: The Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.Characteristics of Renaissance England

2.a. The strong desire for learning

2.b. Influence of the Humanists

2.c. Strong English nationalism

3.Elizabethan Poetry

4.Elizabethan Drama

5.Elizabethan Prose

a.The Essay

b.Religious Prose

c.Prose Romances

6.Conclusion

7.Test

1.Introduction

The accession of King Henry VII in 1485 introduced the Tudor dynasty which coincided with the beginning of a new era full of change and development. That is, the coming of Henry VII marked the beginning of the Renaissance period, a period during which English language, in general, and English literature, in particular, witnessed a huge improvement. Seven years after the accession of the same king, Christopher Columbus discovered America, paving the way for the English language to colonize the New World. Furthermore, great cultural changes took place when William Caxton published the first book in English in 1474. Additionally, the influence of the Humanists also left its deep impact on literature. The aim of this lecture, then, is to introduce students to the main characteristics of renaissance England as well as the development of the three literary genres: poetry, drama, and prose during the Elizabethan age.

2.Characteristics of Renaissance England

The Renaissance (meaning rebirth or revival) appeared first in Italy in the 14th century and its spirit was brought to England through the Humanists (a group of travelers who visited Italy, admired the change that was taking place at the time, and got influenced by it). The Renaissance

meant a revival of learning, literature, and the arts “inspired by the rediscovery of classical manuscripts from antiquity” (Griffith 21) from the accession of Henry VII in 1485 to the restoration of King Charles II in 1660 (Griffith).

a. The strong desire for learning: Before the publication of Caxton’s book, as stated previously, only 2% of the population was able to read. Later on, learning and the desire to learn increased due to several factors including the fact that Henry VII contributed to writing poetry and Elizabeth I supported learning and the arts (Griffith).

b. Influence of the Humanists: Influenced and inspired by the Greeks and Romans, the Humanists highlighted the importance of the individual’s action and not “God’s power” (Griffith 22).

c. Strong English nationalism: The political and religious happenings that occurred during the Tudors’ reign led the English people to develop a nationalistic pride towards their country and language (Javidshad and Nemati).

3.Elizabethan Poetry

The Elizabethan age was very rich in poetic production. They brought the sonnet from Italy and it became a common type of poetry. Other kinds that existed in this era include pastoral poetry as a result of the influence of the Roman poet Virgil. Philip Sidney’s *Arcadia* can be considered as an example of this kind of poetry. Allegorical poems, inspired by “classical epic poems”, were also popular like Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*, as well as lyrics which were mainly on the theme of love (Griffith).

Writing poetry was considered as a great achievement in the Elizabethan age. The poets of the period imitated the Italians to produce sonnets. However, they also experimented with new meters and dealt with different topics including religious, love, philosophical topics, etc. (Griffith). However, it must be indicated that though Elizabeth I’s reign lasted from 1558 to 1603, “the great Elizabethan literary age is not considered as beginning until 1579” (Thornley and Roberts 23). Before this year, only Sir Thomas Wyatt and Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey produced important works.

Both of Wyatt and Surrey were influenced by Greek, Latin, French, and Italian poets. As a result of the influence of the Italian poet Petrarch, Wyatt produced similar sonnets as he was considered as the first one who brought the sonnet to England due to his interest in Petrarchan

poetry. As for Surrey, his contribution to English literature deserves mention since he was the first one who used the blank verse (Griffith).

As previously stated, the great Elizabethan literary age started in 1579, the date of publication of Edmund Spenser's *The Shepherd's Calendar*. The selection of Spenser's work to introduce such an interesting literary age shows the value of Spenser's poetry. Such a poet was the one who inaugurated the Elizabethan literary age with the publication of *The Shepherd's Calendar*, a pastoral poem that consists of twelve books. The English population was thirsty for the emergence of a great literary age and Spenser's work was considered as its introduction (Thornley and Roberts).

Other great and interesting Elizabethan poets who deserve mention include William Shakespeare. Some of his poems include: *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece* and Christopher Marlowe. The latter was a well-known dramatist and poet. His famous pastoral poem is entitled *The Passionate Shepherd to his Love* (published in 1599) (Thornley and Roberts).

4.Elizabethan Drama

The Elizabethan age was the golden age of drama because the latter witnessed a great development that took place soon after the introduction of the same age. An interest in the renewal of "classical drama" highly contributed to its development. The Romans Seneca and Terence played a key role in shaping its formative years. The former had a deep influence on tragedy while the latter affected the development of comedy (Thornley and Roberts).

The Elizabethan stage

Before 1576, theatres did not exist and hence, plays were performed in homes and inns. After this date, when they started building theatres, plays were performed in these buildings but women were not allowed to appear on the stage so they were replaced by young men to act their parts (Grellet). A variety of plays existed in this period including comedies, tragedies, romances, and historical plays. For instance, *The Spanish tragedy* (1592), by Thomas Kyd is a famous tragedy during this period. Its main themes are blood, death, and revenge; which makes it similar to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. In both plays, a ghost appears seeking revenge. However, in Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, it appears to the son while in Kyd's *The Spanish tragedy*, it appears to the father of an assassinated son (Grellet). Another interesting dramatist of the time is Christopher Marlowe (1564-

1593). Some of his tragedies include *Tamburlaine the Great* (1587) and *The Jew of Malta* (1590). As for *Dr Faustus* (1588), it mainly revolves around Dr Faustus' attempt and strong will to own "forbidden knowledge which leads [him] to sell his soul to the devil" (Grellet 30). As a result, it well pictures the conflict between good and evil in the main character's mind (Grellet).

In addition to the above-mentioned dramatists, William Shakespeare (1564-1616) is worth mentioning too because he is one of the great playwrights of the Elizabethan age. He contributed and enriched the period through the production of diverse works. For instance, his comedies tackle the theme of love but in a happy and a comical spirit. This includes: *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. For his tragedies, the most important ones were produced in the period that goes from 1601 to 1606, focusing on dark themes like death and revenge. This includes: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *Macbeth*. Furthermore, he also produced romantic and historical plays (Grellet).

Other dramatists who deserve mention include Benjamin Jonson and John Webster. Jonson's best known plays are *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) and *Volpone the Fox* (1606). Webster's most important two plays are *The White Devil* (1611) and *The Duchess of Malfi* (1614) (Grellet).

5.Elizabethan Prose

Though the Elizabethan age is actually the golden age of poetry and drama, prose also deserves mention since writers experimented with different types and styles. This includes:

a.The Essay

Francis Bacon produced his famous intellectual essays in 1587 and the publication of these intellectual essays introduced essay writing to English literature (Griffith).

b.Religious Prose

The King James Bible or the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611) had a huge and deep impact on both "everyday speech" and literature beginning from the 17th century. The style of this version was deeply influenced by that of two translators of the Bible: William Tyndale (c. 1494-1536) and Miles Coverdale (1488-1568). As far as literature is concerned, this version influenced several generations of English writers in terms of spiritual themes as well as its impressive and beautiful prose style (Griffith).

c. Prose Romances

This type of prose is very similar to modern fiction though it was not called as such at the time. The fictional content of prose romances of this century is close to that of the novel which appeared in the eighteenth century. The translation of Greek romances into the vernacular played a key role in generating this kind of writing. As a result, they became very popular and the “university educated class” was interested, which led them to create their own English romances. However, they kept imitating the Greeks’ plots and settings in the same type of stories. The eminent English figures who contributed to this kind of prose are John Lyly with his famous work *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit* (1578) and Sir Philip Sidney who contributed with his prose romance *Arcadia* (1590) (Griffith).

6. Conclusion

To conclude, one can say that the Elizabethan age is an extraordinary period of creativity at the level of poetry, drama, and prose. However, such a prosperity in terms of literature is expected since queen Elizabeth I herself supported literature and the arts as she mastered several languages. Thus, thanks to her interest in the field as well as the reasons mentioned above, such a great literary age was witnessed.

7. Test

1. In which of the following tragedies of Shakespeare is there the role of a ghost? *Othello*, *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *King Lear*
2. Summarize the different influences that contributed to the development of poetry, prose, and drama.
3. The Elizabethan age is part of the Renaissance. Thus, prepare few ideas about the development of literature in the remaining part of the Renaissance.

Unit 2: The Renaissance part II: From the Metaphysical Poets to the Commonwealth (1603-1660)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.Metaphysical poetry

3.Cavalier poetry

4.John Milton

5. Drama and Prose

6.Conclusion

7.Test

1.Introduction

Though still in the Renaissance, the death of Elizabeth I in 1603 marked the introduction of a new literary period. However, when talking about the period from the metaphysical poets to the Commonwealth, it should be clear that this period includes three eras: the Jacobean era, under the reign of James I (1603-1625); the Caroline era, under the reign of Charles I (1625-1649); and the Commonwealth period, under Oliver Cromwell (1649-1660). The objective of this lecture is to introduce students to the development of three literary genres in the remaining part of the renaissance.

2.Metaphysical poetry

The age that followed the Elizabethan era was the Jacobean age. Compared to the previous age, this one was not full of energy and zest for life. It was interested in the intellectual side more than the emotional one. A kind of poetry called Metaphysical poetry came into existence during this age. This poetry generally “synthesizes passion and intellect, to display both feeling and learning” (Griffith 37). That is, the Metaphysical poets blend both aspects in order to highlight sentiments and knowledge.

The critic Samuel Johnson was the first one who used the word “metaphysical” to describe them because he noticed that their poetry gives little attention to feelings as it is hard to understand. Hence, the term “metaphysical” is used here to mean that. The metaphysical poets prefer what is obscure and difficult to comprehend rather than the clear and easy to understand. Actually, the members of this group did not recognize that they were named metaphysical poets and many of

them were not familiar with each others' poems. Some metaphysical poets include: John Donne, George Herbert, and Henry Vaughan (Rajagopalan).

3. Cavalier poetry

During the Caroline era, under the reign of Charles I (1625-1649), a different group of poets appeared called the Cavalier poets or the "Tribe of Ben" because they were admirers of Ben Jonson as they got influenced by him. As for the name "Cavalier", it is used to describe them because they were supporters of Kings Charles I during the civil war against the Puritans (Griffith). Cavalier poetry is different from metaphysical poetry as it did not come as a reaction to it. It is characterized by the preference of the clear and direct style; and its shortness. Unlike metaphysical poetry, this one avoids the use of difficult metaphors. Thus, the Cavalier poets succeeded in carrying the readers with them in search of meaning. Some Cavalier poets include: Robert Herrick, Richard Lovelace, Sir John Suckling, and Thomas Carew. However, after the execution of Charles I, Oliver Comwell became the lord protector of the realm. Therefore, these poets disappeared since they supported Charles I. Some of them fled and others were put in jail (Holliday).

4. John Milton

John Milton can be compared to Shakespeare in his greatness. Milton can be considered as the dominant figure in the concluding years of the renaissance. "His writings combine the restless intellectual spirit of the earlier period with the later emphasis on religion and politics" (Griffith 39). Hence, Milton is the product of the vitality of the early renaissance and the strictness of the commonwealth period. In other words, though he is a Puritan himself, Milton admired and was influenced by the spirit of the Renaissance. Some of his works include: *Paradise Lost* (c.1667) and *Paradise Regained* (1671) and he wrote many sonnets, to mention only few of his works.

5. Drama and Prose

The civil war and the dominance of the puritans were catastrophic for the development of drama. Because the puritans closed the theatres in 1642, the production of plays turned to be small and unimportant. Worded differently, this period was almost blank in theatrical production (Javidshad and Nemati).

While drama was insignificant in the years that preceded 1660, prose well improved and numerous works were produced. Jeremy Taylor, for instance, contributed with his collection of sermons, known as *The Liberty of Propheying, Holy Living and Holy Dying*. The Puritan Richard Baxter produced *The Saint's Everlasting Rest*. Izaak Walton who is still rememberd and read

contributed with *Compleat Angler* (1653). John Milton also was active during this period through the production of several pamphlets. *Aeropagitica* is his finest prose work (Thornley and Roberts).

6. Conclusion

As a final note, one can say that the fact that the period from 1485 to 1660 is an interesting and rich period is undeniable. It is a rich period in literary production in terms of poetry, prose, and drama. Though the latter declined in the concluding years, it will regain dominance in the following period with the restoration of king Charles II.

7. Test

1. Read the poem entitled *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* by Christopher Marlowe and prepare a stanza by stanza summary.

2. Answer the following comprehension questions:

- a. What gifts does the shepherd offer his beloved in Marlowe's poem?
- b. What does the shepherd ask from his love in return?
- c. What type of poetry does this poem belong to?

Unit 3: *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* (1807) by Christopher Marlowe

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.A Short Biography

3.A Stanza by Stanza Summary

4. The Speaker

5.Pastoral Poetry

6. Analysis of the pastoral aspects in Marlowe's poem.

7.Conclusion

8.Test



The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

by Christopher Marlowe

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove¹
That valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields.

And we will sit upon rocks, 5
Seeing the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

And I will make thee beds of roses 10
And a thousand fragrant poises,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle²
Embroidered all with leaves of myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool 15
Which from our pretty lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and ivy buds, 20
With coral clasps and amber studs;
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my love.

¹ **Prove:** Experience

² **Kirtle:** Skirt

1. Introduction

Poets of the Elizabethan age used poetry as a means to show their artistic genius, and Christopher Marlowe is no exception. Christopher Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* is a perfect example of one of the poetic genres of this era. The aim of this lecture, then, is to familiarize students with pastoral poetry, which was common during the Elizabethan age, through analyzing Marlowe's poem as an example of this kind of poetry.

2. A Short Biography

Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) was one of the prominent Elizabethan poets and playwrights. He produced a large body of poems though he lived for a short period of time. His *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* is one of the significant and influential short works he created. This poem inspired other poets to produce similar poems like Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd* (c. 1592), as well as John Donne's *The Bait* (1633) (Rokeya and Ahammed).

3. A Stanza by Stanza Summary

Stanza 1: Lines 1-4

Come live with me and be my love,
And we will all the pleasures prove,
That Valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
Woods, or steepy mountain yields

This opening stanza of the poem establishes from the very beginning the main topic of the poem and the way the speaker will deal with this topic. He is addressing someone, without clarifying the gender of this person. He is trying to seduce the addressee to live with him and to be his love, promising her of pleasure and entertainment. Further, the title indicates that the speaker is a shepherd, the person who takes care of the sheep. But it is clear from these opening lines that the person he is addressing does not live in the countryside like him because he is trying to attract her to the magic of the countryside (Altman).

And we will sit upon the Rocks,
Seeing the Shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow Rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing Madrigals.

In this stanza, the speaker insists on attracting his lover. He moves to focusing on what they will see and listen to in the countryside. He promises her that they will entertain and experience pleasure through "sit[ting] upon the Rocks" (Stanza 2 line 1) and watching shepherds and their sheep. He also personifies birds, promising her to listen to their songs (Altman).

And I will make thee beds of Roses

And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

A gown made of the finest wool
Which from our pretty Lambs we pull;
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold;

A belt of straw and Ivy buds,
With Coral clasps and Amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me, and be my love.

In the succeeding three stanzas, the speaker starts listing the gifts he will offer her just for the sake of being his love. He promises to provide her with a long list of fanciful gifts but the latter gives the reader a hint that the speaker is not an ordinary shepherd. Rather, one can infer that he may be a landowner because some of the gifts he listed cannot be afforded by a simple shepherd. For instance, offering her a "kirtle embroidered with leaves of myrtle," a "gown made of the **finest** wool/Which from **our pretty lambs** we pull," "fair-lined slippers," "buckles of the **purest** gold,". These examples clearly indicate the position of the speaker and the words "finest" and "purest" are highly indicative. In addition to that, the expression "our pretty lambs" shows that he is an owner, to mention only few examples. Then, in the concluding lines, he tells her that if you find these delights motivating and captivating, be my lover (Altman).

The Shepherds' Swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me, and be my love.

The last stanza shows that the speaker is not satisfied yet, after this long list of gifts. He makes one last effort to convince his love to live with him in the countryside. This time, he promises her to let the other shepherds "dance and sing" everyday throughout the whole month of May. Then, he emphasizes his invitation in the concluding two lines by asking her to see whether these promises are enough for her to join him. Finally, the choice of the conclusion of the poem with an 'if' statement indicates that the speaker is not certain at all whether all what he listed is enough for his love to live with him in the countryside (Altman).

4. The speaker in a poem is the voice created by the poet, the one that talks directly to the reader. In poems, this voice is called speaker and in fiction, it is called narrator. However, the speaker is not necessarily the poet him/herself, even when s/he uses the pronoun I (Poetry Terminology).

5. Pastoral Poetry

A **pastoral** is a kind of poetry that was prominent during the Renaissance. Poets used this form of poetry in order to convey their ideas and emotions on different topics. That is, the subject of pastoral poetry is not always love, as in Marlowe's *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*. The speaker in pastoral poetry is generally a shepherd. It is mainly characterized by its rural setting, an idealization of life in the countryside, and shepherds' speech in this kind of poetry is extremely polite and full of respect (Altman)

6-Analysis of the pastoral aspects in Marlowe's poem

As a pastoral poem, *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* is full of details that are used as a means to create an idyllic picture of life in the countryside. To create that perfect image, Marlowe describes the countryside as a peaceful place and empty of problems and risks. In order to attract his love to the countryside, the speaker exaggerates the portrayal of life there. For instance, when he tells her that they will watch the "shepherds feed their flocks," he does not mention any of the threats that face shepherds and their "flocks" like the threat of wolves, for instance (Altman).

The speaker also promises his love to provide her with a dress that is "made of the finest wool," that they are going to pull from their lambs. Thus, the reader notices that cutting off the wool of one lamb is not an easy task, without mentioning a large number of sheep, especially at that time. (Altman) Hence, such a simplified and idealized description of such hard tasks makes the poem fall into the pastoral tradition.

In addition to what has been mentioned, the shepherd affirms in the last stanza that he and his love will sit and "The shepherd swains shall dance and sing / For thy delight each May morning." By giving her such a promise, the speaker neglects the fact that the shepherds are busy doing several other hard tasks like feeding their flock and protecting them from other animals' threats. Further, they need to put off the wool from the sheep as he promises her to entertain in May while in fact, the weather is not that stable in this month. Therefore, having all these responsibilities, the other shepherds will not have enough time to organize that show for the two lovers. Thus, the speaker, again, paints this picture of an imaginary way of life in the countryside far from reality since his only purpose is to convince his lover to live with him in the countryside. Additionally, this

perfect and idealized image of life in the countryside is, as previously mentioned, the key feature of pastoral poetry (Altman).

7. Conclusion

As a final note, one can say that *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* fits perfectly to the pastoral tradition since the speaker is a shepherd, the setting is the countryside, and throughout the whole poem, the speaker keeps celebrating and idealizing life in the countryside.

8. Test

Pastoral poetry derives its imagery from the countryside. Find an example of imagery in the poem.

Unit 4: The Restoration Period (1660-1700)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.Literary Characteristics of the Restoration Age

3. Poetry of the Restoration Age

4. Prose of the Restoration Age

5.Restoration Drama

a. The Restoration Heroic Tragedy

b. Restoration Comedy of Manners

6. Conclusion

7.Test

1-Introduction

The period from 1660 to 1700 is known as the Restoration period or the Age of Dryden. Dryden was the representative writer of this period. The restoration of King Charles II in 1660 marks the beginning of a new era both in the life and the literature of England. The King was received with wild joy on his return from exile. The objective of this lecture, then, is to highlight the shift of literature into a different focus from that of the previous period. This will be achieved through demonstrating the improvement of the three literary genres: poetry, prose, and drama.

2-Literary Characteristics of the Restoration Age

Restoration literature witnessed a radical break with Renaissance literature. The literature of this period is a faithful picture of the Restoration *zeitgeist*. With the restoration of king Charles II, corruption and immoral behavior were restored and spread in society. As a result, the literature of the period was a mirror of the social happenings of the time (Daiches).

The main characteristics of Restoration literature are:

- a.English writers tend to imitate the Ancient ones: they considered them as their model.
- b.English writers followed the French style of writing: since the king spent the period of exile in France, he encouraged them to write in a style that he became familiar with.

c. Restoration literature is realistic: it mirrored social reality faithfully.

3. Poetry of the Restoration Age

Restoration poetry is highly intellectual and, as previously mentioned, realistic. The most dominant and influential figure of this era is John Dryden (1631-1700) and he is considered as such because he contributed to all types of writings that were popular at the time. His works included tragedy, comedy, satire, etc. Some of his works include *Absalom and Achitophel* and *The Fables*. Another significant figure who deserves mention is Samuel Butler (1612-1680) whose poetry also contributed to the development of Restoration poetry. In his *Hudibras*, he satirized the puritans as he included the comic aspect in it (Javidshad and Nemati).

4. Prose of the Restoration Age

The Restoration prose witnessed a deep improvement in terms of style, compared to that of the previous period. During this period, writers abandoned the tradition of writing in a complex and difficult style. Instead they preferred the clear, simple and direct style. In other words, they got rid of all unnecessary additions. John Dryden (1631-1700) appears again as the most important prose writer of the age since, as it has been mentioned, he contributed to all the literary genres of the period. His *Essay on Dramatic Poetry* (1668) is an essential work in English prose. It was written in an easy, precise, and clear English style, which makes him a pioneer in English prose. Like Dryden, John Bunyan (1632-1704) is also a remarkable figure whose style is clear and simple too. He contributed through the production of *Grace Abounding* and *The Pilgrim's Progress*, to mention few (Thornley and Roberts).

5-Restoration Drama

In this period, drama, which declined due to closing theatres in 1642, was regenerated. In other words, the theatres, which were closed previously, were opened again during the Restoration. However, they were mainly visited and enjoyed by the upper class because Restoration writers meant to address this class in particular. As a result, this gave birth to two main kinds of plays: the heroic tragedy and the comedy of manners (Thornley and Roberts).

5.a. The Restoration Heroic Tragedy

The Restoration tragedy is also called the Heroic Tragedy. This kind of heroic plays was the result of the influence of French dramatists. The main emphasis of these plays is the aristocratic

class and their artificial emotions on honour and the latter's clash with love. Furthermore, the male characters are depicted as "splendidly brave, and the women wonderfully beautiful" (Thornley and Roberts 63). The main writer who produced Heroic Tragedies is John Dryden. His famous ones are *Tyrannic Love*, *Conquest of Granada* and *All for Love*.

5.b. Restoration Comedy of Manners

The Restoration comedy is also called the Comedy of Manners. The latter came as a reaction against the Puritan severity. The main topics of such comedies are: marriage and adultery. The Comedy of Manners is a close observation and portrayal of the mood, manners, and morals of the upper class. Hence, Restoration drama was realistic too. They copied their characters as well as their topics from real life (Daiches).

The Comedy of Manners was influenced by the "native tradition" which appeared in the Elizabethan age in addition to the effect of French dramatists. Moliere and Spaniard are key figures whose influence on English dramatists was apparent. For example, they learnt new ideas on the construction of plot and the creation of comic characters from Moliere. Furthermore, the main purpose of this kind of plays is to mirror the manners of the aristocracy. The setting in such plays is generally fashionable places (Daiches).

Though love forms an essential subject in these plays, it is dealt with in a cold manner. That is, emotional love is not taken seriously and the lovers enjoyed this fake game of love. In addition to that, extramarital affairs were fashionable. As a result, they were classified as "anti-social" because they deal with such a sacred social institution like marriage in a dishonest way. Additionally, when males select a woman for marriage or a relationship, they base their choice on the woman's appearance, wit, intelligence, and fashionable manners. The main purpose of playwrights was not the development of events. Their main interest was the depiction of the aristocracy's manners and wit (Daiches).

The main figures who contributed to the Comedy of Manners include the excellent playwright **William Congreve** (1670-1729). Some of his works are: *The Old Bachelor*, *The Double Dealer*, *Love For Love* and *The Way of the World*. He is a comedy of manners writer per excellence because his plays are excellent in terms of plot, characterization, and the portrayal of the manners of the upper class. **George Etherege (1635-91)** is another interesting writer whose plays also faithfully mirrored the temper of the aristocracy. His plays are *The Comical Revenge*, *She Wou'd If She*

Cou'd, The Man of the Mode or Sir Foppling Flutter. **Sir John Vanbrugh (1664-1726)** also contributed through the production of such plays as *The Relapse* and *The Provok'd Wife* (Thornley and Roberts 63).

6. Conclusion

In a nutshell, Restoration literature flourished again, especially drama after its decline. It is not surprising since the king himself supported literature, in addition to the influence of the ancients and the French writers, and the changing culture of this era. This helps literature to appear with new themes and a different focus from that of the previous era.

7. Test

Read William Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700) and analyze it as a comedy of manners.

Unit 5: *The Way of the World* (1700) by William Congreve

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.Biography

3.Characters

4.Plot

5.Congreve's *The Way of the World* as a Comedy of Manners

6.Conclusion

7.Activity

1.Introduction

This lecture is an attempt to introduce students to a Restoration comedy of manners. The choice fell upon William Congreve's *The Way of the World* in particular because it is a close observation of Restoration culture and life. The objective of this unit, then, is to analyze this play as a comedy of manners.

2.Biography

William Congreve (1670-1729) is one of the most important playwrights of the Restoration period. He deeply affected the development of the Restoration comedy of manners, due to the production of significant comedies that well illustrate the spirit of the age (Moore).

3.Characters

The main characters of the play are **Mirabell** and **Millamant**. They are lovers but Mirabell does not want to marry Millamant without her inheritance. In order to marry her, they need the approval of **Lady Wishfort**. However, the latter wants to marry her to her own nephew **Sir Wilfull Fainall** and **Mrs Fainall** are depicted as a married couple who do not stand each other. Fainall has an extramarital relationship with his wife's best friend **Mrs. Marwood**; and his wife Mrs Fainall who also had been once in an adulterous relationship with Mirabell.

Waitwell is Mirabell's servant and **Foible** is Lady Wishfort's servant. Waitwell is married to Foible based on Mirabell's demand. The two plotted behind the back of Lady Wishfort and to achieve their purpose, Waitwell disguised himself as **Sir Rowland** and he deceives her through a fake, unreal engagement (Moore).

4.Plot

The play consists of five acts. The first one takes place in chocolate house, a men's club. Readers are introduced from the very beginning to the male characters of the play. A discussion about Mirabell's love to Millament occurs between Mirabell and his servant. As they are introduced to the fact that Lady Wishfort hates Millament and wants to wed her niece to another person. Mirabell pretends to love Lady Wishfort just to make her agree to their marriage (Moore).

Act 2 occurs in St. James' Park where readers are introduced to two female characters Mrs Fainall and Mrs Marwood. While talking about their abhorrence to men, Mr Fainall interferes accusing Mrs Marwood of being in love with Mirabell. At the same time, Mrs Fainall confesses to Mirabell that she does not stand her husband. As a result, Mrs Fainall and Mirabell start to intrigue Lady Wishfort for the sake of her niece's marriage approval (Moore).

All the remaining three acts take place in the house of Lady Wishfort. In this part, the focus will shift to Lady Wishfort's marriage. Her servant tries to convince her to marry Sir Rowland (who is in reality Waitwell, Mirabell's servant). They try to convince her to marry him so that Mirabell will not be able to inherit her fortune. However, the plan is soon revealed when Mrs Fainall talks to Foible about that marriage and Lady Wishfort hears the discussion. After that, Mirabell and Millament go deeper in details and decide that they want to marry each other. However, Lady Wishfort soon appears and insists that she will marry her niece to her nephew Sir Wilfull Witwoud. By the last act, the plot of Sir Rowland is completely revealed and Waitwell is imprisoned. Mrs Marwood is the one who reveals the plot to Lady Wishfort. Now, when Mr Fainall realizes that his wife Mrs Fainall, Lady Wishfort's daughter, had been in an adulterous affair with Mirabell, he uses this piece of information against Lady Wishfort. He tells her that she has to transfer all those money to him. Lady Wishfort tells Mirabell that she will agree to his marriage with Millamnet if he saves her property. Mirabell, with the help of his servant, ensures Mrs Fainall her possession and as a result, he can marry Millament with her property of £6000 (Moore).

5.Congreve's *The Way of the World* as a Comedy of Manners

The Way of the World by William Congreve is the finest example of the comedy of manners because it faithfully reflects the society of the time as well as it focuses on the upper rank of society.

Hence, it is a good illustration of the characteristics of the comedy of manners. To start with, the aristocratic class is dominant in this play as it deals with such themes as love, marriage, and adultery; which are essential elements of this kind of comedies. Furthermore, the setting has to do with the aristocratic class too. As previously mentioned, the play takes place in chocolate house, St James park, and Lady Wishfort's house. Thus, all the three places are aristocratic (*The Way of the World as a Comedy of Manners*).

The characters portrayed in this play are also a reflection of the age's culture since they are wealthy, fashionable, brilliant, witty, and morally bad. This lack of morality is apparent in the illegal love between Mr Fainall and Mrs Marwood, and when their secret affair was revealed to the other characters, Mr Fainall faces them without fear or shame. Also, the relationship between Mirabell and Mrs Fainall gives the readers a clear idea about how immoral these characters are (*The Way of the World as a Comedy of Manners*).

It also noticed that married couples are not happy in their life, which is another reality lived at that time. For instance, Mr and Mrs Fainall do not love each other and even do not feel at ease in the presence of each other. Additionally, one has to mention materialism and greed as key phenomena of the Restoration age. In the play, characters are depicted as greedy and materialistic. They can do anything to achieve their materialistic aims. Further, such aims lead them to intrigue, which is another feature of the comedy of manners. For example, Mr Fainall is married to Mrs Fainall just for the sake of money. Mirabell, though depicted as a character who loves Millamant, does not want to marry her without her dowry. And his materialistic purposes lead him to create the plot of Sir Rowland to deceive Lady Wishfort. Hence, such intrigues were part of the social life of the time (*The Way of the World as a Comedy of Manners*).

Another key characteristic of the comedy of manners is the complicated plot. This play, though it contains only five acts, these acts include sixty five scenes. Also, as it has been noticed, there exist complicated relationships among the characters. For instance, Mirabell is loved by several characters, Millamant, Mrs Fainall, Mrs Marwood, and Lady Wishfort (though no one knows that she does) (*The Way of the World as a Comedy of Manners*).

6. Conclusion

To conclude, one can say that *The Way of the World* is a good illustration of the comedy of manners because it paints the image of the Restoration society in a detailed way. This was done

through the creation of comic characters and events, as it includes satire. Hence, it is a fine illustration of this type of comedies.

7.Activity

-Improvise:

- a. Mirabell attempting to woo Lady Wishfort
- b. Lady Wishfort teaching her daughter to hate men

Unit 6: The Augustan Age/ The Age of Pope/ The Neo-Classical Age (1700-1750)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2.Background

3.Augustan poetry

4.Augustan prose

5.Augustan drama

6.The Rise of the Novel

7.Conclusion

8.Test

1.Introduction

The Augustan age is called as such because the writers of the period imitated Augustan writers like Virgil, Horace, and others; and Augustus is the name of a Roman emperor. It is also called the age of Pope since Alexander Pope was the dominant figure. The same age is referred to as the Neo-Classical Age because writers referred to the classics as their model like Homer, Virgil, and Horace. This age was an introduction to a different mood, a different social reality, and hence different interests. The literature of this period saw a radical shift of focus from that of the previous one. The aim of this lecture, then, is to introduce students to the interest of Augustan writers and the focus of the literary production of the same age.

2.Background

This period witnessed many political and social changes. The two political parties: the Whigs and the Tories dominated the scene. During this era, a large number of coffee houses appeared. They were visited by educated people mainly writers and intellectuals. This educated class was mainly interested in politics (Abrams et al.).

A powerful middle class appeared during this era. That is, the upper class will no longer remain the focus of literature. And as a result of this rise, a moral note was called for. In other

words, people got fed up of the immorality of the previous age. Therefore, the middle class appeared as an influential class calling for morality again (Abrams et al.).

Concerning literature, drama is no longer the dominant genre. Rather, this age is an age of prose. It is also called the age of reason because the writers of the period considered art as intellectual rather than emotional. Hence, their main emphasis was on reason. Writers also produced many satirical works which made it an age of satire (Abrams et al.).

3. Augustan poetry

As far as poetry is concerned, it was the embodiment of reason. That is, the emotional side is absent. In addition to that, Augustan poetry was satiric, since it's an age of satire. Further, as a result of the imitation of the classics, the poets of the period used the Heroic couplet, two rhymed lines of iambic pentameter, in their poems (Abrams et al.).

Alexander Pope (1688-1744) is the most prominent poet of the age because he produced a large body of works. Additionally, his poems closely mirrored the age. He is the most influential figure of the period since several English as well as foreign writers followed him as their example. His works include *Pastorals*, *Windsor Forest*, and *The Rape of the Lock*.

Samuel Johnson (1709-1784) can be classified as an essential poet for his poetry also reflected the spirit of the age. Some of his poems are *London* and *The Vanity of Human Wishes*

Other poets who deserve mention are John Gray, Edward Young, and Matthew Prior (Abrams et al.).

4. Augustan prose

Prose is the dominant literary genre in this age which made it an age of prose. However, the prose of the period lacked creativity and imagination. They are heavily realistic. The most popular works of prose are periodical essays, biographies, political writings, etc. The periodical essay is called as such because it used to be published "periodically" in journals. And since this age reacted against the immoral principles of the previous age, the writers' aim behind writing this kind of essays was to encourage people to better and correct their manners and morals (Abrams et al.).

Daniel Defoe (1661-1731) and **Jonathan Swift (1667-1745)** are unavoidable since their contribution to Augustan prose is highly valued. Defoe is a key figure in the periodical essay since he published several ones in order to improve his society. However, Swift produced only few periodical essays. His major contribution was felt in the novel. He is a satirist *per excellence* and his

satirical novels are classified among the best ones because his style is very powerful and influential (Abrams et al.).

5. Augustan drama

During this age, drama declined. The Restoration comedy of manners is over because the aristocratic class is no longer the focus of interest and the voice of the middle class call for morality was heard. George Lillo published *London Merchant* and *Fatal Curiosity* as domestic plays. In this type of drama, the characters are taken from “common life” (Abrams et al.).

6. The Rise of the Novel

Before the 18th century, the novel as a genre did not exist. Critics consider this century as the first time during which the novel, as a fictional narrative, appeared and developed. Several reasons paved the way for its appearance and popularity including the industrial revolution, the increase in the number of readers, the decline of drama, and the rise of the middle class (Hasan).

To start with, the industrial revolution helped through the availability of machines. For instance, before this time, only the members of the upper rank of society could buy books because they were expensive. But during this period, the printing press became available and as a result, a large number of copies were produced and their price was cheap. Thus, books became available for all types of classes and not only aristocrats (Hasan).

As it has been mentioned above, this is an age of prose while in Restoration society drama was playing a key role. So, the decline of drama gave a favorable situation to the rise of the novel. In addition to that, the middle class appeared as a powerful one and middle class members demanded a different kind of literature; one which is suitable to their interest, taste, and mood. As a result, novelists depicted characters from the middle class in their writings and portrayed their psychological state like Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, Richardson’s *Pamela*, and Fielding’s *Tom Jones* (Hasan).

The first pioneer of the novel that deserves mention is **Daniel Defoe (1660-1731)**. He is considered as the founding father of the novel in English literature. His *Robinson Crusoe* was his first novel that was published in 1719 followed by *Moll Flanders* in 1722. Another pioneer is **Samuel Richardson (1689-1761)** who contributed through the publication of his famous novel *Pamela or Virtue Rewarded*. **Henry Fielding’s (1707-1754)** narratives also formed one of the pillars of 18th century English literature. His well-known novels are *Shamela*, *Joseph Andrews* (1749) and *Tom Jones* (1742). **Laurence Sterne (1713- 1768)** is another essential novelist that

must be mentioned. His famous work is *Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentlemen* (published in nine separate volumes between 1759 and 1767) (Hasan).

7. Conclusion

To sum up, one can consider this age as a key and rich one in the development of prose, both fictional and non-fictional. Many factors helped its development like the people's interest in literacy, politics, and reason. And later, the rise of the novel made it richer and more interesting since it introduced the fictional side of prose. The novel's development was also helped with the rise of the middle class, the industrial revolution, and the decline of drama.

8. Test

While preparing for the following lecture, say how will the following period be different from this one?

Unit 7: The Transitional Period (1750-1798) and the Romantic Period (1798-1837)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2. The Transitional Period (1750-1798)

3.The Romantic Period (1798-1837)

3.1.Political Background

3.2.The French Revolution

3.3.The Industrial Revolution

3.4.The Shift from Reason to Passion

3.5.Romantic Poetry

3.6.The Novel

4. Conclusion

5.Test

1.Introduction

The year 1750 was the concluding year of the Augustan age, enabling literature to shift to a new focus. Hence, the years from 1750 to 1798 are called the Transitional years because literature witnessed a period of transition from classicism to romanticism; from reason to passion. That is, this period preceded the Romantic age and introduced the first seeds of the Romantic principles. The objective of this lecture, then, is to familiarize students with the development of literature in the Transitional and the Romantic periods. Both periods are grouped together in the same lecture since the former is merely an introduction to the latter.

2.The Transitional Period (1750-1798)

This period is also called the age of Gray and Collins because Thomas Gray and Collins were the prominent figures in these years. The writers of this period appeared as a reaction against the Augustan age and its focus on reason and rejection of feelings and emotions. Transitional writers were highly affected by Renaissance poets like William Shakespeare and Edmund Spenser. Their poetry highlighted the importance of rural life. It focused on ordinary people, interest in nature, and the importance of feelings. It was during this period that writers started to see nature as a source of inspiration (Abrams et al.).

Thomas Gray's famous poems include *The Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard*, *Hymn to Adversity*, and *To Spring*. As for Collins, he contributed with *Oriental Eclogue* and *Ode to Evening*, to mention a few. By the closing years of the 18th century, the focus on reason had completely disappeared. Also, many other writers who supported the interest in feelings and emotions appeared like Robert Burns and William Blake, who are considered as the early models of romantic literature. Burns' *The Cotter's Saturday Night* and *Tam O'Shanter* are considered as the initial expression of the principles of romantic literature. Blake's well remembered poems are *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience* (Abrams et al.).

3.The Romantic Period (1798-1837)

3.1.Political Background

The beginning of the Romantic age coincides with the publication of the *Lyrical Ballads* in 1798 by Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Wordsworth or the French Revolution in 1789. The same period ended with the passage of the 1832 Reform Act or the accession of Queen Victoria in 1837 (Grellet). Romantic literature was the product of several happenings:

3.2.The French Revolution: The romantics were highly affected by the democratic thoughts and emotions generated by this revolution, which was the result of French people reaction against the old system. The influence was deep to an extent that several English writers visited France in order to see and experience the "new regime" themselves. William Wordsworth was one of the writers who travelled to France (Grellet).

3.3.The Industrial Revolution: This revolution is another key influence upon the Romantics because it shifted England from a pastoral and rural country into an industrial one. Also, Adam Smith's policy of "laissez-faire" enlarged the gap between the wealthy and the poor, "creating what Disraeli was later to call 'two nations'" (Grellet 82). In addition to that, child labour and the miserable conditions of life led people to revolt against the new machines. Later on, several reforms took place to regulate the social and political demands. The main act was that of 1832 (Grellet).

3.4.The Shift from Reason to Passion

The Romantics came as a reaction against the Augustans' insistence on rationality and reason. While the Augustans believed that "civilization could reach perfection if only passions were controlled" (Grellet 82), the Romantics believed that individuals must follow their "instincts". This movement also reacted against John Locke's belief that the mind is a blank slate, and outer experiences write on it. Stated differently, he emphasized the passivity of human beings. On the contrary, the Romantics believed that human beings are creative and their imagination can change the world around them. The Romantics' interest in nature and simplicity is also the result of the influence of J. J. Rousseau. His attraction to nature and emotions influenced the Romantics. Thus, they referred to nature as a source of inspiration (Grellet).

3.5.Romantic Poetry

As it has been mentioned, the Romantic period is an age rich in poetry. Romantic poets, though they have many things in common, each poet left his own touch through the focus on different themes. To start with, William Blake is the most famous early Romantic poet. His poetry highlights his rejection of "materialism" and all kinds of rules. He believed that such rules act as an obstacle in the face of his creativity and imagination (Grellet).

Wordsworth and Coleridge, who introduced this age with their *Lyrical Ballads*, are classified as the first generation of Romantic poets. Wordsworth emphasizes the importance of nature to "the human mind" and that human beings can be rescued only through their reliance on nature. Coleridge, on the other hand, refers to the romances of the Medieval period in order to highlight the "power of poetic imagination" (Grellet 83).

The second generation of Romantic poets includes Shelley, Keats, and Clare. Shelley denied in her poems laws, institutions, and morality. Keats' poetry sheds light on the world of eternity and beauty and its difference from the world of suffering and death. Clare contributed to the Victorian

age also but he is considered as Romantic. His view of nature is dominated by anguish and grief (Grellet).

3.6.The Novel

Although the Romantic age is generally considered as an age of poetry, the novel remained a well established genre. Different kinds of novels appeared and they all attracted the attention of readers like:

The Gothic novel (Ann Radcliffe)

Political novels (William Godwin)

Historical novels (Walter Scott)

The novel of manners (Jane Austen)

The appearance of the Gothic genre was a means through which Romantic writers expressed their feelings of fear and threat. These frightening emotions were the result of the revolutions that were taking place at that time as well as the economic results of the industrial revolution. Thus, the inclusion of the gothic aspect gave readers the opportunity to share similar feelings (Grellet).

4.Conclusion

To conclude, one can say that the Romantic age came as a reaction against the focus on reason in the previous age. It also meant a rejection of J. Locke's ideas. The Romantics were affected by the French and Industrial revolutions as well as J. J. Rousseau's interest in nature. Thus, all these factors led to the appearance of a powerful generation in an era full of literary production and prosperity in terms of fiction and poetry.

5.Test

- What are the main characteristics of Romantic literature?
- What was the main purpose of Romantic poetry?
- Read the poem entitled *The Daffodils* by William Wordsworth and analyze the Romantic elements in it.

Unit 8: William Wordsworth's *The Daffodils* (1807) or *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*

Lesson Plan

1. Introduction

2.A stanza by stanza summary



3.Themes

4.Figures of Speech/ Literary Devices

5.Conclusion

6.Test

Daffodils by William Wordsworth



*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 line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.*

*The waves beside them danced; but they
Out-did 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.*



1. Introduction

William Wordsworth (1770-1850) is a key figure in the Romantic period. His *Lyrical Ballads* introduced the age as he is considered the most influential writers of this age. His emphasis on the importance of nature to the human mind and psyche gave a special taste to his works. His most famous poems include *The Prelude* (1850), *The Lyrical Ballads* (1798), and *The Daffodils* (1807). The aim of this unit is to familiarize students with one of his poems, *The Daffodils*, in order to illustrate some of the ideas discussed in the lecture. By the end of this unit, students will have a clear idea about the inclusion of nature in Romantic poetry and its importance to Wordsworth.

2. A stanza by stanza summary

Stanza 1: lines 1-6

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.

The opening line of the first stanza gives the reader an immediate impression about the speaker's state. That is, we are introduced to the speaker as a lonely person who is "wandering" in a natural place. He compares himself to a cloud in terms of loneliness. On the other side, we are introduced to the natural scene he is "wandering" in. He is attracted to daffodils in that scene. But unlike the speaker, the daffodils are happy and "dancing". That is, the speaker and the daffodils he is attracted to are not in the same state (Liu).

Stanza 2: lines 7-12

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

In the second stanza, the speaker compares the daffodils to the stars in terms of light and brightness. In this stanza, he emphasizes the large number of daffodils he sees. He does so through the use of the word "continuous", the expression "never-ending line", and "[t]en thousand" (Liu).

Stanza 3: lines 13-18

The waves beside them danced; but they

Out-did 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:

Though the previous stanzas establish a kind of contrast between the speaker and the daffodils through highlighting the former's loneliness and the latter's happiness, in the third stanza the focus shifted into an emphasis on the close connection between the two. Stated differently, the happiness of the daffodils changes the mood of the speaker, which can be illustrated through the use of such words as "gay" and "jocund". Then, in lines 17-18, he realizes the importance of such a natural scene. He repeated the verb "gazed" twice and this repetition shows the speaker's deep engagement with nature and how the latter affected him deeply (Liu).

Stanza 4: lines 19-24

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.

In the last stanza, that experience with the daffodils is called up again. Now, the speaker is far from the daffodils physically but a sense of close connection between the two is highlighted. Stated differently, he is trying to emphasize the long-lasting effect of the daffodils. This can be illustrated through his description of his loneliness. Whenever, he feels lonely again and he lies on his "couch", thinking of something or of nothing: in "vacant or in pensive mood", that experience with the daffodils accompanies him again. As a result, this makes him feel as if he is experiencing it in the moment because remembering the scene makes his heart dance, just like the flowers were dancing. Thus, although he is lonely, he enjoys his loneliness due to the daffodils' permanent effect (Liu).

3. Themes

Nature

Nature is a key theme in this poem. Wordsworth highlighted the importance of nature to the human mind. Thus, this poem is a means through which the poet delivers a message to the readers

which is the close and important connection between nature and humanity. Nature is symbolized by the daffodils and humanity is symbolized by the speaker. As it has been noticed, nature is depicted as a source of joy and happiness. As if the poet wants to say that nature is crucial to human beings' happiness and they cannot be separated from each other. This closeness is emphasized in the poem through shedding light on the permanent effect the daffodils have on the speaker. In fact, Wordsworth's reference to nature as a means of rescue from social issues is justified since he reacted against industrialization. His intention is to re-establish the relation between nature and humanity which has been deeply affected by industrialization (Liu).

Memory and the power of imagination

Through this poem, Wordsworth, in addition to highlighting the importance of nature, he puts a special emphasis on the power of imagination in relation to memory. The whole poem is a memory of the experience of the speaker in nature. Furthermore, whenever the speaker feels sad, the memory of the daffodils dancing saves him from his loneliness and changes his temper. Hence, the memory of the daffodils turns to be "the bliss of solitude". However, the retrospection of this experience is not possible without the power of imagination. Hence, it is through his strong imagination that he recalls this pleasant memory. Imagination becomes a source of rescue for him. This can be illustrated through reference to the last stanza where the speaker clearly indicates that whenever he is in "pensive mood", imagination saves him through bringing this experience back in form of a memory. As a result, he imaginatively dances with the flowers (Liu).

4. Figures of Speech/ Literary Devices

Personification

The daffodils are described as a "crowd" and that they are "dancing". (stanza 1: lines 3 & 6)

The daffodils are described as "tossing their heads" (stanza 2: line 12)

The waves are described as dancing too (stanza 3: line 13)

The speaker's heart is described as dancing (stanza 4: lines 23-24)

In all the above mentioned instances, natural elements: the daffodils and the waves are personified. That is, they are given a human quality which is the act of “dancing”. Human beings dance while flowers and waves do not. In the last instance, the heart, which is a body organ is personified as a human being who dances.

Simile

The speaker says: “I wandered lonely as a cloud” (stanza 1: line 1)

Simile means the comparison between two things using the tools of simile like ‘like’ or ‘as.....as’. In this example, the speaker compares himself to a cloud in terms of loneliness, using ‘like’ as a tool of simile. Wordsworth’s selection of comparing the speaker to a cloud, which is a natural element, and personifying the waves and daffodils strengthens the impossibility of separating nature from human beings, as discussed above.

Hyperbole

In an attempt to describe the large number of daffodils that the speaker sees, he exaggerates by mentioning that the daffodils “stretched in never-ending line” (stanza 2: line 9). Further, when he says: “Ten thousand saw I at a glance,” (stanza 2: line 11), he again exaggerates in their description because he cannot count such a number “at a glance”.

Alliteration

Alliteration is the repetition of the initial consonant sound in the same line of a poem. In the following example, the consonant sound /b/ is the first sound in both words: ‘beside’ and ‘beneath’ as the two words exist in the same line: “**B**eside the lake, **b**eneath the trees,” (stanza 1: line 5)

5. Conclusion

To sum up, one can say that Wordsworth emphasized the key role nature plays in the life of human beings. Also, there is a hint behind this poem which is the impossibility of separating nature from humanity, through describing nature as a source of delight. In addition to that, the poet

focused on the power of imagination to bring pleasant experiences to life again and change the person's psychological state.

6.Test

-What is the effect of the daffodils on the speaker?

-What is the bliss of solitude according to the poet?

Unit 9: The Victorian Era (1837-1901)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2. Historical Background

3.Victorian Conflicts

4.Literary Background

4.1.Early and Mid-Victorian Literature (1832-1870)

4.2. Late Victorian Literature (1870-1901)

5.Conclusion

6. Test Questions

1.Introduction

Though in each of the previous periods Britain witnessed several changes, during the Victorian age, a dramatic and deep change took place. Industrialization gave birth to a period of prosperity but this was for the minority while the majority was sunk in poverty and misery. This was mainly due to the disorganized and unfair industrial techniques. Now, since the industrialization of Britain left its positive as well as negative traces, Victorian writers did not have the same reaction towards this issue. Some of them supported and praised the prosperity generated by industrialization while other criticized it because of its negative consequences. By the end of this lecture, then, students will be able to identify and explain the main conflicts that defined the Victorian era as well as the main literary characteristics and figures of the same period.

2. Historical Background

The Victorian age goes from the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne in 1837 or from 1832, the date of the first Reform Act to the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. As a result of the Industrial revolution, Britain witnessed a huge technological development which led to Britain's wealth and prosperity. As a result, Britain became the first developed and powerful country in the

world in terms of industry and imperialism. Thus, Britain reached its peak in this century, the nineteenth century (Grellet).

Unfortunately, this huge development resulted in a large gap between the rich and the poor. Consequently, the English population felt that there's an urgent need for "social reform" because of "class conflict" and "social unrest". People soon became aware of the miserable conditions the English society was passing through at all levels. This includes the situation of women who used to "crawl half-naked in coal mines", five and six years old children used to work for long hours in factories, and the dirty houses and cities poor people used to live in. Consequently, a number of factory Acts were passed in order to improve the situation of workers (Grellet).

3. Victorian Conflicts

The Victorian Era was, in many ways, "the Best of times" and "the worst of times", as Charles Dickens mentioned in his *A Tale of Two Cities*. On one hand, members of the aristocracy felt that this time of prosperity is the best ever; and on the other hand, the lower classes were suffering and dissatisfied (Javidshad and Nemati)

In terms of morality, the accession of Queen Victoria meant also the establishment of respect and honor. However, there existed many dishonest activities in society like gambling and prostitution. Furthermore, for the technological and industrial side, although industrialization led to many positive results like the mechanization of factories and the creation of railroads which brought wealth to the country, many people suffered as a result of this. For instance, the working conditions in factories were unbearable because neither the age nor the hours of work were limited; in addition to child labour (Javidshad and Nemati).

In addition to what has been mentioned, the Victorian society was also shaken by scientific theories like those generated by Charles Lyell and Charles Darwin. Darwin's work entitled *The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection* (1859) caused a great debate at the beginning because its content completely opposed the story of creation as the Victorians knew from the Bible. He denied the existence of a divine power in the world through generating the belief that everything happens through "natural selection". Nature is responsible of the creation of human beings and not God. Such theories have been considered as opposing to the Victorians' religious beliefs. Consequently, people started to doubt the presence of God in this universe and the importance of

Christianity in their lives. The main reason that led to such shaken faith was the appearance of these scientific theories as well as the lack of interest in poor people's sufferings (Javidshad and Nemati).

As far as imperialism is concerned, Britain's prosperity led to a strong desire to expand its material gain and start the mission of civilizing people that are considered as inferior. Thus, the British society which was divided in terms of religion and class suffered also from a split among people. One group supported imperialism for they really wanted their country to help in civilizing people while another group meant to increase their own wealth as well as that of their country (Javidshad and Nemati).

4.Literary Background

As it has been mentioned above, the Victorian age lasted for a long period of time and many happenings took place in this age. This is a reason for the difficulty of describing its literature in one way or to use the same features to describe it. Therefore, many critics divided its literature into two main phases:

4.1.Early and Mid-Victorian Literature (1832-1870)

During this early period, the English population was optimistic. The literature of this phase, then, mainly mirrored this optimism and strong belief in literature to reflect the social reality and people's suffering, as well as awakening people's awareness and morality. This purpose was meant to be achieved through the novel because the latter reached its peak at that time. It was the main genre the population relied on to entertain. The main topics the literature of this phase highlighted include the miserable reality of the working class and the new British industrialized society. Further, several writers commented on the emergence of two groups: the wealthy minority and the poor majority (Grellet).

The main poets who contributed to this phase include Alfred, Lord Tennyson and Robert Browning. Tennyson's poems deal with topics inspired from the lived reality like scientific discoveries and faith and doubt. His famous poems are *In Memoriam* (1850) and *The Princess* (1847). Browning is famous of his use of the poetic form known as "dramatic monologue". The latter means that the poem reflects "the mind of a character in a dramatic situation." Thus, readers do not hear the words of a listener to the speaker. The only one who reveals his mind is the speaker. His well known poem is *The Ring and the Book*. (Grellet). As for long narratives, the novel became very popular and enjoyed by the English. Members of different classes read the novel. Some of the

key figures who contributed include William Thackeray, Charles Dickens, and Thomas Hardy (Grellet).

4.2. Late Victorian Literature (1870-1901)

These last years of the Victorian age witnessed a change in perspective towards literature's mission. That is, they ceased following the early Victorians' belief in literature as a means to deliver moral and social lessons. As a reaction against the idea that art should have a didactic aim, the late Victorians revolted through Aestheticism. This change in belief was mainly due to the fact that in this last period, the English people moved from strong belief to doubt and therefore, they refused to follow the earlier generation blindly (Grellet).

Aestheticism as a movement emerged in Britain in the last years of the 19th century. It came as a reaction against the Early Victorians' insistence on the didactic aim of literature. The main principle of this movement is “**art for art's sake**” (page). This means that it is not the role of art to improve society. Rather, a piece of art must be enjoyed for its beauty and valued for its aesthetics. This movement appeared first in France. In Britain, the main Aesthetic theorist is Walter Pater. He had a deep influence on artists because he opposed religion and faith and believed that the main purpose behind the existence of human beings was pleasure. This belief was new at the time as it opposed the well established Victorian morality. However, the Aesthetes, though they have had a different perspective, did not criticize society. Instead, they avoided reflecting it. It is also interesting to mention that the Aesthetes and their principles influenced the modernist writers (Grellet).

Victorian writers contributed during this period through different literary genres. In poetry, Gerard Manley Hopkins produced his famous poems *Pied Beauty* and *God's Grandeur*. His ideas affected twentieth century poets deeply. In fiction, Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey* is a good illustration of Aesthetic principles. Rudyard Kipling also deserves mention because he was highly affected by the British imperialism and his novels dealt with this topic. His main focus was on the British-Indians relations. His famous novel is *Kim*. Oscar Wilde emerged as a great dramatist too. Through his plays, he criticized the early Victorians' support of morality. His most important play is *The Importance of Being Earnest* (Grellet).

5. Conclusion

To wrap up, one can say that the Industrial Revolution covered more than a century and led to Britain's power and wealth, since it became the richest country and the most powerful empire. But at the same time, the British society became the first to experience deep social problems, as a result

of industrialization. In literature, the early writers reflected the main issues that were taking place in society, considering literature as a key means to deliver their messages. However, later writers criticize such optimism and opposed the dominant beliefs of the Victorian Era.

6. Test Questions

1. What conflicts did the Victorian society wrestle with?
2. Did writers agree on a feeling of optimism in the face of the strong economic growth?
3. Why did Darwin's theory lead to a wave of pessimism among the Victorians?

Unit 10: Analysis of Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854)

Lesson Plan

1.Introduction

2. Biography

3. Characters

4.Summary

5.Themes

6.Conclusion

7.Test Questions

1.Introduction

Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* is considered as one of the most important works produced during Victorian England. In it, Dickens touches almost all the issues people suffered from at that time, as a result of industrialization. This includes the miserable life of the working class, education, and the working conditions inside factories. Hence, this lecture aims at analyzing Dickens' *Hard Times* in order to familiarize students with the novel as an instance of Early Victorian literature. This will help also in providing students with a clear picture of the Victorian society, including the effect of the Industrial Revolution on people and several other issues. This will help students to make the link between this literary work and the pieces of information introduced in the lecture.

2. Biography

Charles Dickens (1812-1870) is considered as the most famous and influential novelist of the Victorian age because his works well illustrated the Victorian life and issues. They were well received by the English population. Dickens' father was a poor man whose dream was to become rich and his mother was a teacher. However, his father used to waste money which led to his

imprisonment because of debt. When put in jail, Charles was only 12 years old. Charles left school and worked in a factory which means that he experienced child labour. But although he left school at an early age, he produced many fictional and non-fictional works. He published 15 novels and five novellas. He also contributed to many social reforms. Some of his novels that were very popular are: *The Pickwick Papers*, *A Christmas Carol*, *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and *A Tale of Two Cities* (Gibson).

3. Characters

Mr. Thomas Gradgrind is a master of a school as he is depicted as wealthy. He is a character who believes in facts and reason only. He excludes everything emotional or imaginative in his school.

Lousia Gradgrind is Thomas Gradgrind's obedient and submissive daughter. She does not dare opposing her father's strong belief in reason, which leads her into an unsuccessful marital relationship.

Mr. Josiah Bounderby is a rich factory and bank owner.

Tom Gradgrind is Thomas Gradgrind's son and works in Bounderby's bank.

Sissy Jupe is the daughter of a circus performer, the world of imagination. She joins the Gradgrinds family to take care of Mrs Gradgrind and be a student in that school too.

Stephen Blackpool is a worker in Bounderby's factory. He is married to a drunken woman and that's why he cannot marry the woman he loves, Rachael.

Mrs. Gradgrind is Gradgrind's wife. She does not agree with her husband's beliefs but she cannot oppose him.

Jane Gradgrind is the youngest child in the Gradgrinds family. Unlike Louisa, she was influenced by Sissy Jupe's interest in emotions and imagination.

Hands: Coketown's factories' workers are called hands.

James Harthouse is a rich man who comes to teach in Mr. Gradgrind's school.

Mrs. Pegler is Mr. Bounderby's mother that has been mistreated by him. She is from the middle class and she comes to Coketown to watch him secretly from a long distance

Rachael is the lady Stephen Blackpool loves but cannot marry. She is a sincere and modest worker in a factory.

4.Summary

Dickens' *Hard Times* is mainly centered on the character of Thomas Gradgrind and his philosophy of reason and facts. He raises his children the same way. He excludes everything imaginative from their life. When her father disappears, he takes Sissy Jupe as a student in his school. When his daughter, Louisa, grows up, he marries her to his friend Josiah Bounderby, the factory and bank owner. However, the latter is twice her age and follows the same system as her father's. As a result, she suffers from a psychological crisis because she couldn't cope with her husband. Because she lacks the emotional side, she finds it hard to love him. Furthermore, her brother, Tom, also works in Mr Bounderby's bank and becomes an alcoholic adult (Gibson).

Stephen Blackpool is a poor worker in Bounderby's factory who suffers from his alcoholic wife. He wants to get his divorce so that he can marry the innocent lady he loves. He visits his master Bounderby to help him get his divorce. The latter informs him that he cannot help him since only upper class people can get divorce. Later on, the factory worker, called the hands in the novel, decide to create a union to revolt against the harsh condition. Staphen Blackpool is the only one who avoids this union because he believes that such acts do not solve any problems. Instead, this will create pressure and other problems between the master and his workers. Mr Bounderby also asks him to spy on the other workers. When he refuses, he fires him. Consequently, he decides to leave the city. Louisa and Tom visit him before leaving. Louisa gives him a sum of money to support him and Tom tells him that he has to wait next to the bank at night and a sum of money will reach him. Stephen does so but nothing comes. He leaves the city, as planned. Several days later, the bank has been stolen and Stephen is the first one who has been accused of robbery because he has been noticed wandering next to the bank for several nights before he leaves the city (Gibson).

By the end of the novel, Dickens depicts Louisa as the character who wakes Mr Gradgring up by revealing to him her psychological crisis. She informs him that the way he raises her is not the appropriate one since as an adult, she is detached from her emotions and could not succeed in

her marital relationship. Fortunately, Mr Gradgrind realizes his mistakes and confesses that his method is wrong (Gibson).

5.Themes

Industrialization

The Industrial Revolution created harsh social conditions and a difficult economic situation. As a person who experienced child labour himself, Dickens well pictured the Victorian reality inside factories. In the novel, the masters are portrayed as considering child labour and the miserable conditions inside factories as something natural. The factory's workers are depicted as seeking pleasure and entertainment to escape this reality. Stephen Blackpool's wife well illustrates this situation. She becomes alcoholic as a result of that escape as she ends up living on the streets (Gibson).

The large gap between the upper and lower classes is also clearly mirrored in the novel. In addition to that, the fact of changing or improving one's class is almost impossible. For instance, the factory owner, Josiah Bounderby, spends most of his time blaming his workers and accusing them of laziness. He keeps narrating to them his life story, trying to convince them that he raises himself from nothing. From a poor child who was abandoned by his mother into a wealthy man. However, his story is a lie because he was raised by his mother, who sacrificed in order to raise him and who cared for his education. On the other hand, Stephen Blackpool, as a working class character, illustrates the fate of the members of this class. Though a hard worker, he does not achieve any financial success. He dies as poor. He is also a character who is victimized by the industrial system. He suffers, as a worker, from the harsh conditions in the factory; and as a husband, he suffers from the inability to get divorce although wealthy characters can get it. Therefore, such a contrast between these two characters embodies the economic effects of industrialization (Gibson).

Another disastrous result of industrialization is pollution. Coketown, the city where the events of the novel take place, is depicted as dirty and polluted. Even its name, Coketown, is symbolic because "coke" means that black substance that is produced from coal. The river is pictured in the novel as black. Thus, the color of the river and the pollution of the city symbolize the polluted minds of the inhabitants of this city. The factory owners do not care about the health of the

other people. The most important thing is that the more they produce, the more they benefit (Gibson).

Reason vs. Imagination

Mr Gradgrind and the other school teachers are painted as characters whose main aim is to omit all the traces of imagination and beauty from their school and their students' life. They insist on teaching facts and reason only. Mr Gradgrind and Mr Bounderby always try to convince their students that because they believed in facts only, they are now successful. As an instance of their insistence on facts only, one can refer to the teacher in Mr Gradgrind's school who explains to his students the fact that some drawings like horses on the wall and flowers on carpets are not attractive and do not make a good design. He explains it this way because he believes that *in fact* horses do not live on walls and flowers do not grow on the floor. This illustrates these characters extreme reliance on facts (Gibson).

These two characters, Mr Gradgrind and Mr Bounderby, always try to convince the workers that they remained poor because when they finish their work, they go to entertain and some of them waste their times reading fictional stories. They advise them to work hard instead and to focus on facts only. However, Louisa's end illustrates the uselessness of such a way of thinking. She ends up losing her balance as she does not lead a successful marriage because she is unable to cope with her emotions. Tom is another example that illustrates the disadvantages of such a method simply because he missed pleasure and entertainment in his childhood which creates later an irresponsible adult (Gibson).

While Louisa and Tom lead an unbalanced life in their adulthood, Sissy Jupe leads a balanced personality and satisfactory life. Sissy experiences a more comfortable childhood. She spends most of her time with her father in the circus, the world of imagination and creativity. When she joins Mr Gradgrind's school, she finds it hard to cope with the educational system there because she cannot get rid of her imaginative side. Hence, she considers herself as a failure in that school. However, she is the only one who is saved as an adult because she groups her father's education as well as that of Mr Gradgrind. Additionally, she is the one who helps to recover from her psychological crisis. This character, then, is an embodiment of the importance of imagination, creativity, and emotions in one's life. Reason and facts only are not enough. Both the factual and the imaginative sides are necessary for a balanced personality (Gibson).

6. Conclusion

Finally, one can say that *Hard Times* is a faithful portrayal of nineteenth century English society. In other words, Dickens used *Hard Times* as a means in order to criticize several issues like economy, the educational system, politics, etc. This makes it one of the most literary productions of this period.

7. Test Questions

1. Can you tell why the work is called *Hard Times*?
2. What does the word “Hands” symbolize in the novel?
3. Why is Stephen Blackpool unable to marry the woman he loves?
4. -Explain the following quotes:

1. Mr. Gradgrind says : “Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life” (Book 1, Chapter 1).

2. Louisa Gradgrind says: “I do not know that I am sorry, I do not know that I am ashamed, I do not know that I am degraded in my own esteem. All that I know is, your philosophy and your teaching will not save me. Now, father, you have brought me to this. Save me by some other means!” (Book 2, Chapter 12).

ANSWER KEY

Unit 1: The Renaissance Part I: The Elizabethan Age (1558-1603)

Test

1. In which of the following tragedies of Shakespeare is there the role of a ghost? *Othello, Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear*

Answer: *Hamlet*

2. Summarize the different influences that contributed to the development of poetry, prose, and drama.

Answer: The Italian renaissance, the Greeks, the Bible, etc.

3. The Elizabethan age is part of the Renaissance. Thus, prepare few ideas about the development of literature in the remaining part of the Renaissance.

Answer: Here, students are supposed to prepare the following lecture.

Unit 2: The Renaissance part II: From the Metaphysical Poets to the Commonwealth (1603-1660)

Test

1. Read the poem entitled *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* by Christopher Marlowe and prepare a stanza by stanza summary.

Answer: Here, students are expected to prepare a summary of Marlowe's poem.

2. Answer the following comprehension questions:

a. What gifts does the shepherd offer his beloved in Marlowe's poem?

b. What does the shepherd ask from his love in return?

c. What type of poetry does this poem belong to?

Answer:

a. He offers her a cap of flowers, a kirtle, a gown, slippers for the cold, and a belt of straw and ivy buds

- b. The shepherd asks his beloved to live with him in the countryside
- c. This poem is a pastoral one.

Unit 3: *The Passionate Shepherd to His Love* (1807) by Christopher Marlowe

Pastoral poetry derives its imagery from the countryside. Find an example of imagery in the poem.

Answer:

The line "I will make thee beds of roses" suggests a romantic image that is derived from the countryside.

Unit 4: The Restoration Period (1660-1700)

Test

Read William Congreve's *The Way of the World* (1700) and analyze it as a comedy of manners.

Answer:

Here students are meant to prepare the play for the following lecture.

Unit 5: *The Way of the World* (1700) by William Congreve

Activity

-Improvise:

- a. Mirabell attempting to woo Lady Wishfort
- b. Lady Wishfort teaching her daughter to hate men

Answer:

Students are supposed to act these roles.

Unit 6: The Augustan Age/ The Age of Pope/ The Neo-Classical Age (1700-1750)

Test

While preparing for the following lecture, say how will the following period be different from this one?

Answer

The Romantic age is different from the Augustan one since the former celebrated imagination, emotions and feelings while the latter excluded all these elements and its literature is the product of reason only. Romanticism, then, came as a reaction against the Augustan classicism.

Unit 7: The Transitional Period (1750-1798) and the Romantic Period (1798-1837)

Test

1-What are the main characteristics of Romantic literature?

2-What was the main purpose of Romantic poetry?

3-Read the poem entitled *The Daffodils* by William Wordsworth and analyze the Romantic elements in it.

Answer

1-The main characteristics of Romantic literature:

- The belief that imagination, rather than mere reason, was the best response to the forces of change.
- The preference of poetry that spoke of personal experiences and emotions.
- The Romantics turned to a past that they felt was more picturesque and magical than the ugly industrial age they lived in.

2- The main purpose of romantic poetry was to express the poets' personal feelings and emotions.

3-Students are expected to prepare the following lecture.

Unit 8: William Wordsworth's *The Daffodils* (1807) or *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*

Test

1-What is the effect of the daffodils on the speaker?

2-What is the bliss of solitude according to the poet?

Answer

1-The daffodils fill the poet's heart with pleasure and he feels happy with them.

2- In the poem, the speaker says that when he is either busy thinking or not thinking about anything he is reminded of the daffodils. He says that loneliness becomes lovely if he thinks about daffodils in his loneliness. When he re- members the daffodils he starts feeling happy, content and perfectly at peace with himself. This happens because of solitude.

Unit 9: The Victorian Era (1837-1901)

Test Questions

1. What conflicts did the Victorian society wrestle with?
2. Did writers agree on a feeling of optimism in the face of the strong economic growth?
3. Why did Darwin's theory lead to a wave of pessimism among the Victorians?

Answer

- 1-The Victorian society wrestled with conflicts of morality and religion, science and technology, faith and doubt.
- 2-No, writers did not agree on a feeling of optimism. The early Victorian writers were optimistic but the late ones refused that complacency with the earlier generation.
- 3- Darwin's theory led to a wave of pessimism among the Victorians because it shook their belief and perspective toward the creation of the world.

Unit 10: Analysis of Charles Dickens' *Hard Times* (1854)

Test Questions

1. Can you tell why the work is called *Hard Times*?
2. What does the word "Hands" symbolize in the novel?
3. Explain the following quotes:

1. Mr. Gradgrind says : "Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life" (Book 1, Chapter 1).

2. Louisa Gradgrind says: "I do not know that I am sorry, I do not know that I am ashamed, I do not know that I am degraded in my own esteem. All that I know is, your philosophy and your teaching will not save me. Now, father, you have brought me to this. Save me by some other means!" (Book 2, Chapter 12).

Answer

1-The title *Hard Times* or the full title *Hard Times for These Times* clearly refers to the harsh and hard conditions of life the Victorians were suffering from, as a result of industrialization. This includes education, working conditions, child labour, etc. (Gibson).

2-The word “Hands” symbolize the perception of the workers by the factories’ owners as workers and producers only while their human side is completely neglected.

3-Explanation of the quotes:

1.Mr. Gradgrind says : “Now, what I want is, Facts. Teach these boys and girls nothing but facts. Facts alone are wanted in life” (Book 1, Chapter 1).

Explanation

Mr. Gradgrind opens *Hard Times* with this famous address to the class at his school. His words outline his philosophy of educating children: facts are more important than all else, as they are key to understanding the world and achieving success in it. This philosophy, rejected by Dickens, dismisses emotional understanding, analysis, and creative thinking, as it presents factual analysis as the answer to *everything*.

2. Louisa Gradgrind says: “I do not know that I am sorry, I do not know that I am ashamed, I do not know that I am degraded in my own esteem. All that I know is, your philosophy and your teaching will not save me. Now, father, you have brought me to this. Save me by some other means!” (Book 2, Chapter 12).

Explanation

When Louisa finds herself tempted into an affair with James Harthouse, she flees to her father's house. She is unable to identify any true feelings for James Harthouse, just as she is unable to identify any feelings of shame for her relationship with him. She realizes she can no longer live happily being cut off from her emotions, so she demands her father’s help by preventing her from pursuing whatever disruptive emotional desires she does have and allowing her to process less destructively.

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