



NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Course Code: ENG 216

Course Title: Mediaval Literature II

Course Developer/Writer: STANLEY ADELODUN ORIOLA

Programme Co-ordinator: DR. A. M. YAKUBU

Programme Leader: DR. O. F. IWUCHUKWU

National Open University of Nigeria  
Headquarters  
14/16 Ahmadu Bello Way  
Victoria Island  
Lagos

Abuja Office  
No. 5 Dar es Salaam Street  
Off Aminu Kano Crescent  
Wuse II, Abuja  
Nigeria

e-mail: [centralinfo@nou.edu.ng](mailto:centralinfo@nou.edu.ng)

URL: [www.nou.edu.ng](http://www.nou.edu.ng)

Published By:  
National Open University of Nigeria

First Printed

ISBN:

All Rights Reserved

Printed By:

## **CONTENTS**

### **MODULE 1 EXPERIMENTING WITH ENGLISH HISTORY AND LITERATURE FOR THE HUMAN GOOD (1649 to Present)**

- Unit 1 History and English Literature (I) (1649-1789)
- Unit 2 History and English literature (II) (1789-1900)
- Unit 3 History and English literature (III) (1900 to present)
- Unit 4 Themes and style in English Drama (I)
- Unit 5 Themes and style in English Drama (II)

### **MODULE 2 RESPONSE TO CREATIVITY: IMPRESSIONS AND EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH POETRY (1608 to Present)**

- Unit 1 Nostalgia in the poetry of John Milton (1608-1674)
- Unit 2 Reminiscences: The poetry of John Keats(1795-1821)
- Unit 3 Poetry and Nature. A discussion of the Poetry of William Wordsworth (1770-1850)
- Unit 4 Other Prominent English poets: William Blake (1757-1827), Alexander Pope (1688-1744) and William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)
- Unit 5 Poetry in Depth: The ‘Mathematical’ language of English Poetry

### **MODULE 3 NARRATIVE DESIGN AND THE ENGLISH SOCIETY (1649 to Present)**

- Unit 1 The English Novel
- Unit 2 Theme and Style in the English Novel (I)
- Unit 3 Theme and Style in the English Novel (II)
- Unit 4 Theme and Style in the English Novel (III)
- Unit 5 Theme and Style in the English Novel (IV)

Module 1	Experimenting with English History and Literature for the Human Good (1649 to Present)
Unit 1	History and English Literature (I) (1649-1789)
Unit 2	History and English literature (II) (1789-1900)
Unit 3	History and English literature (III) (1900 to Present)
Unit 4	Themes and style in English Drama (I)
Unit 5	Themes and style in English Drama (II)

## UNIT 1 HISTORY AND ENGLISH LITERATURE (I) (1649-1789)

### CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	The Restoration Age (1649-1713)
3.1.1	English Literature and the Restoration (1649-1713)
3.2	The Augustan or Neo-Classical Age (1713- 1789)
3.2.1	English Literature and the Augustan or Neo-classical Age (1713-1789)
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
7.0	References/further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have designed this unit to introduce you to the history of English Literature, the Restoration and Augustan or Neo-classical. The purpose is to enable you understand the Literature of England from the perspectives of the periods. This will enable you discuss English Literature from a much more chronological and scholarly angles, with the understanding of the major events that distinguished one age from another, especially the literary output of the Restoration and Augustan age. You will then know that the social problems including wars and conflicts are also important or instrumental to the growth of English literary tradition as well as the eventual social political and economic stability/growth of England of the relevant periods up to the present. This unit will enable you have

a comprehensive awareness of the Ideologies that defined the Restoration and Neo-classical or Augustan. Below are the objectives of this unit:

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain why the periods have been named Restoration and Augustan or Neo-classical respectively
- make an outline of the important events that characterized the Restoration age
- determine the major events that differentiate Augustan from the Restoration
- equip yourself with some of the works of the major English Literary writers of the Restoration
- state the works of the major English Novelists of the Augustan age
- outline the causes and consequences of the revolution and rebellion of the Restoration and Augustan age.
- state some of the writers of the Augustan
- identify at least five writers and works of each age with the relevant age
- compare the major conflicts of the Restoration with the Augustan
- differentiate the literary works of the Restoration from the Augustan
- review the history of the English Literature of the Restoration
- select the events you found interesting in the English Restoration period.
- recognize the literary works that interests you in the Augustan age
- underline two specific works discussed in this unit
- choose a particular literary work from either the Restoration or Augustan and explain why you will like to study the particular work again .
- match a specific writer with the relevant age and English Literary genre
- select the events that interests you, either in the Restoration or Augustan (Neo-Classical)

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 The Restoration (1649-1713)

The Restoration (1649-1713) is derived from the restoration of the Stuart Royal family (Charles II) in to the English throne in 1660 at the end of the Commonwealth. The Restoration reduces the tension and seriousness of the Commonwealth that marked the beginning of the Restoration with high brow conflicts, thus the Restoration is noted for witty, urbanity and licentiousness and this is evident in the literatures of the writers of the period, some of them are John Dryden, William Congreve, Wickerley as shown in the Restoration comedy

(comedy of manners), John Dryden a major critic and poet of the period wrote tragic plays called “Heroic Drama”.

### 3.1.1 English Literature and the Restoration (1649-1713)

The Restoration (1649-1713) period in the history of England was characterized by years of conflicts, intrigues and wars between the King and parliament in the 1640s. In 1649, the Puritans, (Round heads) executed king Charles I shortly after they emerged victorious in the war; leading to the emergence of Oliver Cromwell as the Lord Protector. His son reigned in his stead after he died in 1658, his weak and unsuccessful reign made the parliament to invite the son of Charles I who was in France installed him as king Charles II. The monarch was a puppet, as the parliament controlled power, but with the emergence of two strong parties, the Whigs and Tories supported by the minister, the country moved on in her usual crisis, but Charles II died in 1685, and was succeeded by his brother King James II, but when he became a Catholic, his reign came to an abrupt end with what was described as “glorious or bloodless” revolution of 1688. That brought the monarchical reigns to an end in the England of the Restoration. Afterward and with the reign of Mary (sister of Charles) and James (her husband), William of Orange from Holland, the new ideology of the society shifted to non revolutionary consciousness.

With the first half of the century dominated by Revolution, society was no longer interested in Revolution. The middle class members of the society were no longer interested in anything that will hinder progress and wealth creation and the individual’s economic advancement and general stability of the society at the period of scientific advancement and growth in commerce, especially with the establishment of the Bank of England in 1694. The philosophy of the second half of the century entered into imaginative English Literature with the publication of Thomas Hobbes’s *Leviathan* which was published in France in 1651. The allegorical novel in brief is about a huge animal character, *Leviathan*, a metaphor for England. The writer is of the opinion that a strong government is necessary to control the citizen of any nation because only a strong and powerful government can prevent the outbreak of another revolution and this was the picture of Britain after the Restoration. Also, the citizen of the state needed to be totally controlled. After Europe had gone into war with the Spanish between 1710 and 1713, the Treaty of Utrecht took place and the United Kingdom became temporarily united when the union of the parliament of England and Scotland took place in 1707, but with Ireland still uncooperative. When England took the title, Commonwealth under the reign of Oliver Cromwell, who led the Round Heads, Andrew Marvel’s poem “An Horatian ode upon Cromwell’s return from Ireland” (1650) that commemorated/documentated the heroic return of Oliver Cromwell was not just the main text of the period, but notable political poem in English. The poem that

celebrates Cromwell's strength and heroic exploits earned Andrew Marvel the unofficial poet Laureate during the Commonwealth. Also, Richard Lovelace's, "To Lucasta, going to the wars" is a feeling of nostalgia combined with regret and complaint of having to leave his loved ones for the war unavoidably.

The Restoration literary writers combined politics with the philosophy of man and his society, John Milton, who lived from 1608 to 1674 was one of the great poets in England who believed in Latin tradition and gave himself to the styles of some English poets like Chaucer, Classical and Christian influences run through his works one of such is "On the morning of Christ's Nativity", 'Lycidas' (1637) 'Paradise Lost' (1667) a major epic poem in English. The poem uses the creation myth, placed Satan and God side by side. Eve disobeyed God and ignored the divine path preferred to be separated from God, chose human path of knowledge and freedom. John Milton was also a prose writer on controversial issues of his time. Some of them are war, divorce, politics, religion, freedom, of the press and education. He also wrote "Paradise Regained" and "Samson Agonistes". Another English poet, John Bunyan in the second half of the Seventeenth century wrote, 'The Pilgrim's Progress' (1678) and "Second Part". In what looks like an account of Christian's difficult journey through this world, while he looks up to the unknown God. He faces hardships from the Giant Despair, and the slough of Despond (depth of depression) to vanity fair (pride), bringing to serious questioning the value humanity attached to life or the world of materialism, but recognizes the more valuable existence of the Christian faith. The poem "Pilgrim's Progress" is still being widely read in England.

Another Religious writer of the Restoration, John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, was reckless, gave his life to extensive sex and alcohol, but, died a Catholic. He was a symbol of the Restoration, His poetry is humorous, rude, satirical celebrates the pleasure of society, especially life and time of the merrymaking, fun-loving King Charles II. He is in the class of the metaphysical poets and the first of the Augustan age too. Also, John Dryden, a poet, playwright and essayist wrote "To his sacred Majesty," "Absalom and Achitophel" (1681), *The Medal*, *Mac Flecknoe* (1682), *of, Dramatic Poesy* (1688) and the *Secular Masque* (1700) some of his numerous plays are *marriage- a-la mode* (fashionable marriage) (1672), *All for Love* (1678). Other writers of the age are George Ethereges who wrote *Comical Revenge* (1664), *Man of Mode* (1664), William Wycherley wrote *the Country wife*, (1675) the play is the playwright's attempt to revive, Loose morals of London's society, William Congreve also wrote "The way of the world," others are George Farguhar's, *Susannah Centlivre*. Aphra Behn. And Mary delà Riviere Manley. The works of Dryden and Shadwell copied the style and version of William Shakespeare and Christopher Marlow, thus *king Lear* and *Doctor Faustus* and *The Tempest* were rewritten to comedy . Henry Fielding, Richard Sheridan Thomas Otway Sheridan wrote the historical register for the year 1736. *The Rival* (1775), *The Critic* (1779), *The School Of Scandal* (1777) before fielding joined the league of English novelist, he wrote the historical register for the year 1736.

### 3.2 The Augustan or Neo-classical Age (1713-1789)



The Augustan period also known as the age of Pope (1713-1789) was also the literary age of Horace, Virgil, and Ovid during the reign of the Emperor of Rome, Augustus (27 BC-AD.14). The period has been applied to England since the time of the brilliant and leading writers like Addison, Steele, Swift and Alexander Pope who imitate the literary forms and subjects and emphasized the philosophy of decorum, moderation, urbanity and social issues.

### 3.2.1 English Literature and the Augustan or Neo-classical age (1713-1789)

The Augustan, (1713 – 1789), was a clearly marked age of rebellion. The German house of Hanover evaded and took over the British throne. The grandson of James II, (1715-1745) a Catholic led an invasion but lost power to the Parliament and Prime Minister. The event coincided with the time of great revolutions like Agricultural, Industrial, and the Declaration of American independence in 1776 as well as the French revolution in 1789. Britain became threatened as she preferred to see her agricultural market grow to witnessing a repeat of the revolution of 1649. The theatre License Act of 1737 made Drama infamous and the Classical idea of the Augustans was replaced by a more rational society where men got the freedom of independent thinking in a world that became more friendly with nature. Thus, the novel grew in popularity. As English readership increased, people left other jobs for agricultural economy, novels were more in demand among women.

The novel genre began as early as 1700. It began with the works of Thomas Nash after the Restoration of 1660. Aphra Behn wrote about *Thirty Novels*, some of which are in the forms of letters, *Love letters between a nobleman and his sister* (1683). Aphra Behn wrote *Oroonoko* (1688). Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift's works were followed by Samuel Richardson's and Henry Fielding. Defoe wrote *Robinson Crusoe* in 1719. The hero of the novel, Crusoe makes a home of the Island where he found himself after the ship in which he was traveling wrecked. Being the sole survivor of the wreckage, he lived in the island for more than twenty-eight years. Crusoe's first human companion, Man Friday and later his bird, Poll became his companion in the Island. The famous story maybe read as a fable of survival in place of human spirit. Man Friday came with inferior value and ideology of his own kinsmen into the island, but Crusoe's European philosophy overpowered his and he became a model for the new capitalist Europe. Defoe recounts the story using the first – person 'narrative' technique, "I" he was inspired by the story of Alexander Selkirk who was marooned in island for many years.

Daniel Defoe also wrote *Moll Flanders* (1722) a woman who has been a thief, prostitute, committed incest and has been in and out of prisons. The woman tells her own story as a refined citizen of her society. The novel reflects the immoral nature of the Augustan age or Eighteenth century. But, Jonathan Swift's *Battle of The Books* (1704) tells the differences between the ancient (classical writers) and moderns (literary ideology after Augustan period). The work appeals to the ancient to give the modern a room for creative expansion *Gulliver's* (1726) sense

of satire and humour took over the English creative windspace with its humorous way of telling the world what he saw that was really wrong with it. In the novel, which is in four parts, Gulliver travels to Lilliput met the small inhabitants, but met more gigantic' people when he got to Brobdingnag. The king, of Brobdingnag when he heard the description Gulliver gave about the people of England concluded that the English are 'the most pernicious' race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to creat upone the surface of the earth" the third part of the book reveal the Royal Society of 1662 and 1663 that was found for the improvement of natural knowledge (science and culture) but, in the forth part of the book. Gulliver mets the more cultured horses, the houyhnhnms and compared their culture to that of the naughty monkey – like social yahoos called man. He also wrote *A Modest Proposal* (1729) Sarnuel Richardson wrote *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa*, 1747-49, Henry Fielding wrote *Joseph Andrew* (1742), *Tom Jones*, (1749), but Charlotte Lennox wrote, *The Life Of Harriot Stuart*\_(1750), *Quixote* (1752), Harace Walpole wrote *The Castle Of Otranto*\_ (1764) after John\_Dryden died, Alexander Pope wrote *The Rape Of The\_Lock*, (1712), *Dunciad*, (1728,) Dryden's *Mac flecknoe*, *Essay On Criticism*, 1711, *Essay on Man*, 1733-4 Thomas Gray wrote, "Elegy written in a country Churchyard" and (1750), *Edward Young's* "Night thoughts", (1742) Robert Blare's "The Grave" (1743) James Thompson "The Seasons" (1726-1730), Oliver Goldsmith's *Poem*, "*The Deserted Village*," (1770), William Groper's "the Task" (1785), Fanny Burney's *Evelina* (1778), Robert Burns "to a Mouse", (1786) James McPherson's verse, "*Fingal*" (1762), "*Temora*",(1763). With the growing demand for the printed word among the middle classes, writing became a profession as people became full time writers of poetry, prose, play, essays as well as journals, Gentleman's journal (1692-94), *Gentleman's Magazine*, (1731) magazines and journalism too became popular, thus there was growth in information and communication about Scotland, her capital, Edinburgh, capital city, London. Philosophical writings too became part of the development of the Eighteenth Century with the works of the Economist, Adam Smith and David Hume. Richard Steele started *The Guardian* and the *Englishman Magazines* (1793-1714). These magazines were often about the socio- economic and political developments in England, such issues often birthed controversies whenever discussed in the Magazines. As a result, many writers and Editors were often imprisoned for expressing their opinions too frankly or disparagingly. For example, Daniel Defoe had ones been imprisoned for writing a pamphlet, *The Shortest Way With the Dissenters* (1702). Samuel Johnson too had written for magazines. (1737)He wrote the *Dictionary of the English*. (1755) and a preface to William Shakespeare (1765, a work that marked the beginning of critical writings on Shakespear and the *The Lives of English Poets* (1779- 1781) was the genesis of Major tradition of English Literary criticism. Johnson's Impressive comment on the works of William Shakespeare promoted the aesthetics of his works as well as shakespeare's personality. James Boswell wrote *Life of Samuel Johnson*\_(1791) which is the first great biography in English. Oliver Goldsmith wrote *She Stoops to Conquer* (1767). All kinds of writing existed in the period, letters, Diaries, Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to his son*, (1774), described as book of manners his two sons have all died, many critics, including Samuel Johnson disliked the kind of manner the letters

described. Lady Mary Wortley's Montague letters were famous. Beyond what plays could describe, the letters were detailed refashion of the Restoration.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Conflicts, war and rebellion formed part of the Restoration Literature. Discuss

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have defined the Restoration as well as the Augustan. We have also explained the reasons the Restoration and Augustan are so named. We have also provided useful information on causes of the various rebellions and conflicts in the Age of Restoration as well as Augustan. We also mentioned the names and works of great writers in the Restoration as well as the Augustan. Reading through the unit, you will realize that, the end of commonwealth marked the beginning of the Restoration. You will discover that the Restoration and Augustan overlapped. The point at which they appeared separated too is apparent in the unit

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- the reasons Restoration and Augustan have been so described
- that it is important for you to know the causes of the major rebellion in the Restoration and Augustan
- the Restoration is different from the Augustan if you consider that different, but related events characterized the periods.
- how the Restoration and Augustan evolved.
- the chronology of the works and popular genres of the Restoration and Augustan.
- in the next unit, you will read another aspect of the history of English Literature but the next unit will focus on the Romantic and Victorian periods.

#### 6.0 TUTOR – MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the questions below

1. (a) What is Restoration?  
(b) Define Neo- classical or Augustan
2. How is the age of Restoration different from Neo- classical or Augustan?
3. (a) List at least five major- writers of the age and their works.  
(b) Outline the themes of the writer's works.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Alex, A. (1994). *English Literature: From History to History*. New York. Longman
- Allen, W. (1984). *The English Novel*. New York: E.P Dutton and Co, Incorporated.
- Benjamin, T (2001). *A short History of English Literature*: California: Chandler Publishing Company.
- Booker, C. (2000). *Literature and the English Revolution: from Age to Age*. Trenton: New Man Prints.
- Bookers, K. M. (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London: Lens
- Carroll, E. (2003). *English Literature from Restoration to Augustan*: Springfield: Learning Field Publishers.
- Damrosch L. (1982). *Adventures in English Literature*: New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Eagleton, T. (1983). *Literary Theory: An introduction*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota.
- George. B. (2003). *Victorian and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Berkshire: Cox and Wyman.
- Hall, L.S. (1965). *A Grammar of Literary Criticism*: New York: The Macmillan.
- Hornby, A.A. (1995). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of current English* (5th edition) London: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, V. (2012). *English Literature and the Age of Revolution*. London: Macmillan
- Kennedy, X. J. and Giola Dana (2007). *An Introduction to Poetry*. Pearson: Longman.
- Mead. G. (2011). *The Restoration Age (1649-1713)* London: English University Press.
- Ogunpitan, S. A. (1999). *A Comprehensive Grammar of Literary Studies*. Lagos: Arimus International.
- Philip, B. C. (2014). *Revisiting the English Literary Age*: Ibadan: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, B. (2002). *Writers of the Augustan Age, (1713-1789)* New Jersey: Prentice Hall Incorporated.
- Todorov, T. (1992). *Introduction to Poetics*, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Victor, W. (1967). *The Sociology of English Literature* London: Eaglewoods.

## UNIT 2: HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE (II) (1789-1900)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Romantic Age (1789-1832)
    - 3.1.1 English Literature and the Romantic (1789-1832)
  - 3.2 The Victorian Age (1832-1900)
    - 3.2.1 English Literature and the Victorian (1832-1900)
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading.

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to further the history of English Literature that began this module. This unit discusses the literary experience of the Romantic and Victorian age of English Literature. It reveals the literary developments with their related socio-political and economic events that essentially differentiate the Romantic from the Victorian. Such experiences include the English literary and other developments across the periods. The specific events that clearly marked the ‘borderline’ of the Romantic and Victorian have been highlighted. Below are the objectives of this unit.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- relate the early events of the Romantic Age in your own words.
- list the common literary experiences of the Romantic and Victorian Age separately.
- outline the writers and works of the Romantic and Victorian Age separately.
- explain briefly how the idea of the Romantic Age differs from that of the Victorian
- state the chief events of the Romantic and Victorian separately.
- compare the major historical facts of the Romantic with the Victorian.
- relate the early literary experiences of the Romantic with the Victorian.

- underline the specific works of the Romantic and Victorian and state why you will like to read one of them.
- match a specific written work of the Romantic with the Victorian and state what endeared you to such works.
- review the history of the Romantic
- state some non-literary events that endeared you to either the Romantic or Victorian.
- identify two genres each from the Romantic and Victorian as well as their writers, revealing any similarity in the writer's works.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Romantic Age (1789-1832)

The writings and beliefs of the Romantic (1789-1832) Age; quite different from those of the preceding periods like Restoration and Augustan. This is because the Romantic ideals favoured innovation in place of traditionalism as seen in the themes, styles, and general subject matter of the literature. In *Lyrical Ballads*, William Wordsworth takes his materials from 'common life'. Though, John Keats and Coleridge explore the supernatural and distant past, the works of William Blake and Percy Bysshe Shelley and William Wordsworth are visionary poets. The Romantics experience the beauty of the landscapes, write about themselves defining many of their characters as rebels, Cain, idiots, Jew, questionable and satanic figures as protagonists.

##### 3.1.1 English Literature and the Romantic Age (1789-1832)

Beginning from the French Revolution in 1789 to the Reform Act of 1832, the Romantic period lasts forty years. Great and notable Revolution are identified with the Romantic period. Some of them are the American Revolution of 1776, the French Revolution that came with the policy of liberty, equality and fraternity, all combined to re-christened the Romantic age as the Age of Revolution.

The series of Revolution of the period was part of the reason the poetries of the Romantics, beginning with William Wordsworth and Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads," (1798) are about war at a time the society was becoming industrial and the power of the middle class grew and the government moved towards voting reform and great democracy. Though, soldiers who fought and suffered defeat with Napoleon in the battle of Waterloo in 1815 became disillusioned, suffered depression and unemployment. All these increased the social, economic and political problems of the period that led to the Waterloo massacre when soldiers attacked a large group of and killed eleven people and injured about four hundred thus, the name, Waterloo was derived from or given after the Waterloo bloodshed.

The prevailing Revolution too splashed into English imaginative literature, especially poetry. Wordsworth and Coleridge wanted literary Revolution in the language of poetry with popular themes which is in contrast with the Augustan age, the later hates independent reasoning and exercise of the imagination; hence many of the writers of the period went on self exile, away from the government that considered intellectual exercise dangerous and unacceptable.

Indeed, the name Romantic was not immediately given to the period, it was until when the philosophy of independent reasoning,(freedom) and hope became recognized as important moment of change in Europe. An important poet of the period, William Blake had poetic ideal that is in contrast with the Augustan world. His best known poetic collection, *Songs of Innocence and Experience* (1794) reveals the Lamb as a symbol of Innocence and the tiger, a symbol of mystery, contrasting the world of nature with childhood innocence. But in his poem "London", he sees the London society in chains in which the individual is imprisoned. Such manacle does not exclude the river Thames which has been restricted for commercial use by the Royal Charter.

Wordsworth's autobiographical poem "The Prelude" sees into the heart of things, the feelings and thoughts of the individual that is expressed in the poem Juxtaposes the past and the present. In "Daffodils", the Augustan believed that an orderly society is still possible, but the Romantic writers believed that the life of the individual spirit was important. These different views birthed the different use of language and mark of identities in styles, for instance, Wordsworth was known to write in his poem, using the simple language of the ordinary people to describe nature using human memory as the (engine room) or pivotal , mover of creativity and the world ,but when memory fails, man has failed totally. Augustan poets use special language of poetry. We have seen evidence in English literature that there are great relationships between the two English poets, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

Apart from the fact that these first generation Romantic poets wrote *Lyrical Ballads*, though different in creativity and philosophy, for instance Wordsworth is more about the day-to-day activities of man while Coleridge's poetry is more about the supernatural world. Wordsworth and Coleridge were known to have spent many days in each other's company from the moment Wordsworth moved into Alfoxden House in June 1797, which was four miles walk from Coleridge's cottage at Nether Stowey. Of the four poems Samuel Taylor Coleridge wrote in *Lyrical Ballads*, his best was "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (Rhyme/song of the old sailor).In the poem, an old sailor tells how he shot a large white bird when his ship could no longer sail but afterward had terrible dreams, but knew he must suffer for what he had done. His suffering taught him never to drink until his soul is refreshed, renewed. He also wrote *Christabel and Kubla Khan* (1797) but published in (1816). In the poem, he creates symbolic sceneries or landscapes to probe the human imagination, which to him is the most powerful of the human senses. Some of his poems are conversational, like Wordsworth's "Dejection" and "Frost at midnight". Both poets are of the opinion that poetry should be in a language of the ordinary man. Their styles influenced many poets

who expressed poetry in the style of modern writers. In “Literaria” (1817) modern writers were influenced, became more conscious of the creative style of the duo.

John Keats, a second generation Romantic poet was born in (1795), three years before “Lyrical Ballads” was published. Most of his poems were in fragments, very imaginative, about the nature of literature, his letters are considered critical, the most famous of his poems are “Ode on a Grecian Urn”, “Ode to Nightingale”, “la Belle Dame Sans Merci” (The beautiful lady with no pity), “Lamia”, “The Eve of Saint Agnes” and “Isabella”. His interest in mythical and distant past inflamed his interest of medieval literatures. The main themes of the poems are the unnecessary search for lasting beauty in a temporal world where everything fades and gives way for death. Thus, only the work of arts is permanent and can keep human ideas and philosophy alive forever. The expendable nature of man is incomparable to the lasting aesthetics and happiness that the work of Art can bestow. You can consider the following lines from Keat’s “Ode on a Grecian Urn”.

... When old age shall this generation waste.  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe.  
That ours, a friend to man, to whom thou sayest  
Beauty is truth, truth is beauty-that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

John Keat’s death came early in life, at the age of twenty-five, thus making the Romantic Movement a contrast between life and death, longevity and temporal nature of existence.

However, Percy Bysshe Shelley felt the death of Keats very deeply such that he had to immortalize his death in his poem, “Adonais” (1821) capturing deep painful personal experience. His poem is similar to Blakes as he condemns the religion and morals of the age in his popular essay ”The Necessity of Atheism” (1811) in which he doubts the existence of God. He wears the mask of politics in his long poem, “The Mask of anarchy” (1832) in which he responds to the Waterloo massacre of (1819) when a group of workers were attacked in Manchester for daring to ask for social and political reforms. Shelley predicts a new life of freedom for the individual in his “Ode to the West Wind” (1819), metaphorically requesting for a change of power the same way the wind blows away the particles of old life and through dispersal by wind plant new seeds to usher in a new life of freedom for all, something similar to a regeneration or renewness (transformation). He wrote “Julian and Maddalo”, in 1818 but published it in 1824. In the poem, he reduces the modern world to a wasteland where people are individualistic in nature. He sees the poet as hero who can build a better and more productive society capable of reforming the world. *In Defence of poetry* (1840) he kicked against the problem of inequality in the English society of the Romantic period in which the richer became richer and the poor gets poorer. His famous statement that poets are unacknowledged legislators has come through the ages.



Another notable Romantic figure is Lord Byron, an influential poet known all over Europe in the Nineteenth Century. He attacks social conventions and authorities of the age who searches for elusive peace. He satirises and questions unethical values of the society. Other poets of the period are Robert Burns and John Clare. The former describes nature in his poem. But John Clare who was said to be the least of the Romantics notable for a description of the rural countryside became insane and ended in mental Hospital but died in 1850. Apart from poetry, prose writing also flourished in the Romantic age, some of the novelists of the period are Thomas de Quincey, William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb. Thomas Love Peacock had his works written in both the Romantic and Victorian, satirizing selected Romantic Ideals and lifestyle in novels such as *Northanger Abbey* (1818). Other novelists are Jane Austen, Walter Scott, Fanny Burney (*Evelina*, (1778) and *Camilla* (1796), Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* (1818). Women dominated Novel writing in the time, Jane Austen is different among the writers of the period, because her interest is in man's moral consciousness and the psychological behaviour of her characters, often in ironic sense as seen in her *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) a novel which contrasts the Romantic and Augustan periods as in the metaphor of two sisters, the more rational and self-controlled Elinor (sense) and emotional Marianne, (sensibility). Other novels by Jane Austen are *Northanger Abbey* (1818) her first novel, *Pride and Prejudice*, (1813), *Mansfield Park*, (1814), *Emma* (1816). The novels of Jane Austen generally cautions against hasty choice in life; especially in marriage as one needs to know oneself in order to make the right choices in love and marriage. Sir Walter Scott writes about social change, history and revolution. Scott is identified with the novel as popular genre in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries especially as he identified with Great Britain in his work by creating memorable characters, using fine plot. All these earned him famous identity as influential writer across Europe, and was a best selling author of his time. With these, the novel grew rapidly in a period of social and political awareness and became a major medium of exploration for the English society for the human good.

The Victorian period (1832-1900) birthed the types of writing that reveals the social economic and intellectual issues of the time. Some of them are the Industrial revolution, the Charles Darwin's theory of Evolution, the latter had a strong influence on the period, hence often describe as "priggish", because those who lived in the period are often seen as being pretensions and complacent. Some writers of the period are Browning, Tennyson, Arnold, Pater, Carlyle, Dickens, Samuel Butler Yeats, Thackeray, Meredith, Thomas Hardy, George Eliot and Trollope.

### 3.2.1 English literature and the Victorian period, (1832-1900)

Indeed in history, the Victorian Age is often said to begin with the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, but in English Literature, the period begins with the death of

Sir Walter Scott in 1832 to 1914. Queen Victoria inherited social problems with her Monarch, trade unionism was forbidden with the Corn Laws that kept the price of bread high. The population of England increased from two million to six and half million leading to bigger city and Britain's status improved as the world richest manufacturer in the world. Also, the Empire and Colonies were another big market for Britain's products. But, the crime and war of 1854-1856 which lasted for forty years increased the social problem of Britain, coupled with the Indian mutiny of 1857, with the death of Queen Victoria's husband, Prince Albert in 1861

Reducing the status of the Queen to a widow for forty years, William Gladstone or Benjamin Disraeli became the prime minister for most of the second half of the century. Then, rebellion rose against the monarchy and powerful Republican movement grew in the 1870's, but Disraeli challenged this and increased the social status of the Queen who became the Empress of India, and with more problems in Britain, she became the symbol of Britain.

In the Victorian period, while the popularity of the novel increased in Britain and all over the world, novel became the most important literary form, this was as a result of the great acceptability that was attached to the novels of Sir Walter Scott that became best seller between 1814 and 1832 serialised in the Waverley novel, a practice which became fashionable with the novel genre published in monthly series in triple Volumes sometime called "Triple Decker Novel" the reading public had access to Scots historical novel through private commercial libraries. While Scott had a tradition of seeing the English society from the perspective of history, Charles Dickens brought the social concern of the English into the novel thirteen of which he wrote. He was one of the mostly widely read English writers, even after his death like William Shakespeare.

Dickens wrote *Sketches by Boz* (1836) *Mystery of Edwin Drood* 1870, and the year he died, *The Pickwick papers* (1836-1837). Also, in *Oliver Twist* (1837-1838) *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838-1839) Dickens was interested in the social problem of the youths in the city where they are never considered in the development of the society or given a fair deal in the self-growth and development of the society including education. As result, youths like Oliver and Nicolas got swept off by the tides of the English society, thus they lost focus and became social miscreants, young criminals and gluttons. The social problem of the Victorian world particularly of England and how it affects school ages children was the direction of the creative thought of Charles Dickens. Dickens soon extends his creative lens to the English society generally, seeing beyond how educable children had no chance to be educated. In *David Copperfield* (1849-1850) the hero, David is wealthy marries, the novel is the type of social status the Victorian society admired and in a way parodying Charles's Dickens's own childhood and success; thus ending happily. His other partly autobiography, *Great Expectation* (1860-1861) *Hard Time* (1854), a replay of the disappointing education of the English doubtful future of the society as industry contrasted with the development of the individual; *Little Dorrit*, (1855-1857) and *Our Mutual Friend* (\*1864-1865) are his later novels that show his hatred for the city of

London. *A tale of two cities* his literary review of the French Revolution, *A Christmas Carol*, (1843). The Dickens' social education and industrial issue was not the concern of Thomas Carlyle whose philosophy of the time was a critique of the economy and Revolutions, In search of ideal democracy and sympathies with the industrial poor some of his works are on *Heroes*, (1841), *Past and Present*, (1843), *The French Revolution*, (1837). The great writings of Fiedrick Engels and Karl Marx were important too. Not comfortable with the condition of the workers in Manchester, Engel wrote the condition of the working class in England (1845) but, Marx's political theory in *Das Capital* (1867-1895)criticizes capitalism, Marx had lived and worked in Britain, unsatisfied with the social status of the workers came to believe that workers revolution would begin in Britain.

Other important writers of the time are Elizabeth Gaskell who wrote *Mary Barton*, (1848)and *Northland South*, (1855), Novel about social concerns, Emily Bronte wrote her psychological Novel, *Wuthering Heights* in (1847), Ann Brote, youngest of the three Bronte Sisters who are all writers wrote *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall*, (1848). Beginning with Aphra Behn in the late Seventeenth century, there had been many women Novelists, greatest of which was George Eliot (her real name was Mary Evans), an experienced translator and writer, who on the advice of George Henry Lewes, began to write fiction, she wrote *Scenes of Clerical Life* (Church Life) (1857 1858) A collection of short stories, then her very first Novel, *Adam Bede* (1859) she is known to write about themes that relates to home, marriage and women. Her *Middle March* (1871- 1872) which was considered the greatest Novel in the English Language was set in (1832) during the first Reform Act, with fictional setting in a town in central England with women, voting systems and advent or Rail Transport as themes. William Makepeace Thackeray and Anthony Trollope. Thackeray was a writer from the colony, *Vanity Fair* (1847- 1844) is a historical Novel, a comic satire of the upper-class London, questioning some Victorian practices. The novel is similar to her other novels: *Henry Esmond* (1852), *The Virginians* (1857 1859), *The New Comers*, (1853 - 1855)

Also, Thomas Hardy's Novels reflect a part of the century with fictional Wessex in the South –West of England in *Far from the madding Crowd* (1874). He borrowed a line from Gray's "Elegy Written in a country Churchyard". *The return of the Native* (1878), the Mayor of Casterbridge, (1886) *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, (1891) and *Jude the Obscure*, (1895)

In the English poetry of the Victorian age, William Wordsworth who was the last Romantic poet became the first of the Victorian. Before and after his death in 1850, a new language of expression had taken over the English poetry of the Victorian. Alfred Tennyson (Lord Tennyson) began his career as a verse writer in 1830 when he published "Chiefly Lyrical" a concept which had earlier been used by Wordsworth and Coleridge in their lyrical Ballads in 1798, but Tennyson's differs in the language of expression of the Romantic. Tennyson, an (English poet of sadness and loss) Tennyson is best known for "In Memorial A.H.H" (1833-1850) An Elegy to a friend of his, Arthur Hallam in which he expressed

his sadness in the times of loss and regrets much to the likeness and acceptability of the English readership in the second half of the century. For instance, the poem became the favourite of Queen Victoria when she became a widow after the death of her husband, Albert in 1861. Tennyson's, other poems in dramatic monologue, a telling voice reveals the thoughts and ideals of the character as in "Ulysses", hero of Homer's "Odyssey" who, in old age was desirous of finding a new ambition. He was not known only as a writer of poem in which he shows unhappiness, as English national poet, he wrote on historic issue like the crime and war which he reduced to poetry, "The charge of the light Brigade" (1855) in praise of the heroes of the war and in recognition of soldiers who died in the war. Towards the end of his life, he continue to write poetry of sadness on the "Legends of king Arthur", and "knights of Round Table", known as the idylls of the king. He began working on the twelve poems in the 1830's until they were published together in (1891), the best selling part which was published in 1859 and 1869 sold Ten Thousand copies in six Weeks.

Apart from Tennyson, the word "lyric" again came up in the poem, of another Victorian poem, Robert Browning in "My last Duchess" (my noble Lady). This appeared in 1842 in a volume called "Dramatic Lyrics". This is where the word "lyric" came up again, but his many dramatic monologue reveal violence of concealed emotions, exposing the hidden and unknown sides of the Victorian society and behavior which were not noticed or popular. For instance, in "Porphyria's lover", a man discussed his love for a woman he loves, who is sitting on his knee, but whom he has just killed. In Bishop Blogram's "Apology" a Christian or church pastor, probably Victorian England reveals, confesses his secret desires as he was dying. Andrea del Sarto, a Renaissance Italian painter discusses his art and ambitions. Browning became more famous when he ran away with a female poet, of the century, Elizabeth Barrett Browning with whom they live in Italy for many years. Some of her beautiful poems of love to her husband are "Sonnets from the Portuguese" (1850). Her "Aurora Leigh", (1857) is long poem is on women's themes on Victorian feminist. Browning's poem are set in Italy which he loved, perhaps because he lived there with her wife for many years, thus he was not as famous as Tennyson some of his poems are "the king and the Book", (1868-1869) which have been praised for the poets technical and skillful use of language to discuss serious themes such as death and love. Mathew Arnold's, "Balder Dead", (1855) about the death of a Viking God and the scholar-Gipsy (student traveler 1853), a poem about the old university city of Oxford. In "Dover Beach" (1867), he looks over the English channel from Dover, but seeing the calmness of the sea that seems to hide-something, the struggles and changes which affect everyone, somewhat predicting the pessimistic nature of the Victorian writing. In his poetry, "The latest Decalogue" (the commandment) and "There is no God" Clough reviews the feeling of doubt of the time, the crisis of faith. He also wrote "Dipsychus" (1865) "The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam", the verse of Edward Fitz Gerald (1859) and Ebenezer Elliot's (The Corn Laws Rhymer) ballads, corn laws, written to criticize the corn laws that kept the prizes of bread high so that the poor will not be able to eat bread, Thomas Hood's "The Songs of the Shirt", (1843), is a protest poem in favour of women Edward Lear's Nonsense poem in rhymes, Limerick form. A Book of

Nonsense (1845) was preceded by travel writings and three volumes of Nonsense in 1870's. but, the pre-Raphaelite group of writers (fleshy) and artist interpreted the mood of the time through sketchy artistry using human body. Dante Gabriel Rossetti published Sonnets in magazines like *The Germ* and *Fortnightly Review*. Algernon Charles Swinburne follows Dante Gabriel's *Rossetti*, Every writing of the Victorian period was not about poems and novels, there were essays too written in magazines edited by Thackeray, Dickens and others. Charles Lamb was a great essayist of the 1820's. His essays of Elia got published in a London magazine but later in book form in 1833.

He was not more of social observer than literary critics as does Doctor Johnson in the last century or Leigh Hunt and William Hazlitt who were notable literary critics. Hazlitt wrote *spirit of the age*, (1825), wrote *Essays on Politics* and *English comic writers* in 1819. Leigh Hunt wrote essays in the magazines. *The Tatler and The companion* (1828) Men, Women and Books (1847) Matthew Arnold was both a poet and critic of note, his *Culture and Anarchy* (1869), Essay in Criticism (1865 and 1888) changed the reading perception of his generation as defence against societal lawlessness and culture disorientation. Ruskin, the first art critic of Britain changed Victorian perception of painting and educated them on what art stood for its strength in having positive impacts on the society. His *The Stones of Venice* (1851-1853) exhibited the art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance. Art became more appreciated by the people, so art for art's sake became the popular or catching phrase for the age. As the Victorian moved toward it's close the playwright and Novelist Oscar Wilde wrote *The Soul of Man* under socialism in 1891. George Bernard Shaw, a theater critic and playwright wrote *Arms and the Man*, Oscar Wilde, a nineteenth century playwright essayist and short story writer wrote works, including *The picture of Dorian Gray* (1891), *Lady Windermere's Fan* (1892), *The Happy Prince and other stories* (1888). *The Importance of Being Earnest* (1895). *The Ballad of Reading Gaol* (Jail) in 1898, was his experience in London prison where he spent two years after he was charged with homosexual offences, escaped and lived in England where he was sent to jail.. He was suspected to have written a homosexual novel, *Teleny* which was published privately in 1893. The first novel on gay, reveals the merit of being a gay and as a form of love one should be ready to die for though, such theme was kept out of English writing for many years. Rudyard Kipling the first English writer to win the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1907, another important writer from the colony of India wrote His *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888), *The Jungle Book* (1894). *The second Jungle Book*, (1895) Charles Kingsley was one of the English writers who wrote moral children's stories in the Victorian period, his *The Water Babies* (1863) is one of the English famous moral stories of the Time, Queen Victoria read it to her children. In the story, a chimney-sweeper falls into the bedroom of the little children, runs away into a river leading to series of adventures after which he emerges a good child willing to return to the middle-class Ellie represents. *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) by Thomas Hughes is a famous school Novel. Ballantyne published *Coral Island* (1857), one of the first modern writers, Lutwidge Dodgson, (Carol) wrote *Alice's Adventure in Wonderland* (1865) for Alice, the daughter of a friend of his. The story continues *Through the Looking Glass* (mirror) (1871).

The period witnessed the beginning of the writing of modern science fiction, H. G Wells wrote *Time Machine* in 1895, *The Invisible Man*, (1897), *The First Men in the Moon* (1901), *The War Of The Worlds* (1898). Samuel Butter Published *Erewhon* (1872) a Novel in the same class of thought as *Gulliver's Travels*. William Morris published *News From Nowhere* (1891).

Drama in the early years of the Victorian period was not considered part of serious Literature, farces and melodrama were types of play produced in the Victorian until, in the 1850's. George Bernard came into the scene as playwright with his controversial plays, *Widows Houses* (1892), *Arms and the Man* (1894), *Mrs. Warren's Profession*, (1898).

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- (1) Review the Romantic Age
- (2) Summarize the Victorian Age

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the philosophies of the Romantic and Victorian, we have also given you a comprehensive literary history of the works of the Romantic and Victorian. Reading through the unit, you will realize that we have identified the various Revolutions with the different English Age, (Romantic and Victorian). We have also done our craft carefully such that you will not find it difficult to understand/ know when? Where? And how a particular age ends as well as the beginning of the next age of English Literature, though the ages overlap significantly, sometimes, a writer may live through the previous and into the new or emerging age.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- how the various human experiences differentiate one English age from the other i.e ( Romantic from the Victorian).
- the factors that evolved the Romantic as well as the Victorian.
- about the popular writers and genres of the Romantic and Victorian.
- in the next unit, you will read more about History of England and her literature except that the unit will focus on the Twentieth century up to the present.

#### 6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the questions below

1. Outline how the age of Romantic differs from the Victorian.

2. Mention some popular writers of the Romantic and Victorian and their works.
3. Outline the themes of the works selected from the Romantic and Victorian (one creative work for every age)

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Abetria, A. (2008). *A Handbook of English Literature*: London: Penguin.
- Abu, A. (2004). *Understanding English literature and Literary Age*. London: Macmillan.
- Abu, K. (2002) *The Romantic and Poetry*: Jos: Klens Blooks
- Allen, C. (1999). *A Review of English Literature*. London: Heineman.
- Allen, V. (1985). *The Victorian Novelists*. Greece: T. Best Publishers.
- Allison, A (2004). *Theme in Selected Victorian Novels*: London: Wessex.
- Artking, C, (2005). *English Literature Across the Centuries*. London: Eaglewoods.
- Ashkelon, T. (2000). *The English Writers In the Victorian Age* Trinidad: Miami. Books
- Bavk, Left (2012). *Poetry and the Romantic*: London: Harp.
- Benson, Ifeoma (2011). *A Short History of English Literature* Abuja: Resort Prints.
- Berard, K. (1994). *Between Facts and Fiction in English Literature*. Jos: Beta Publishers.
- Bright, L. (2000). *Style in Selected English Novels*. Trenton: University Press
- Bright, T. (1980). *England and Her Literature*. Boston: KT Publishers.
- David, D. (2010). *The Verse in the Romantic Age*. India: Helluxs Publishers.
- Edward, S. (1978). *Getting Started With English Literature- A Handbook for Students*.Trenton: Africa World Press.
- Kennedy, K. J. and Giola (2007): *An Introduction Poetry*. Boston. Pearson: Longman.

## UNIT 3 HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE (III) (1900 to Present)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Twentieth Century to 1939 (1900 to 1939)
  - 3.2 The Contemporary English Literary Period (1939 to Present)
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References /Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have also written and developed this unit to complete the History of English Literature, as designed for and required in this module. Our concern in the present unit is the Twentieth Century Literary experience of England to the present. With a thorough understanding of this unit that completes the history, you will no doubt be better 'Schooled'; in the discussion of the Literature and history of England. This is important as condition may arise in the future that may require that you contribute to a popular discussion on History of English Literature. Below are the objectives of this unit.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the early experiences of the Twentieth century History of English Literature
- compare some of the events of the Twentieth century.
- outline some of the events of the Twentieth century English literature
- summarise the Twentieth century English Literary experience
- review the present century English Literary experience
- match selected literary genres of the present with the Twentieth century English Literature
- name some famous writers of the English Literature and the present century
- outline the major Literary/historical events of the twentieth century England



- write some of the chief events of the twentieth century English Literature
- Record the chief events of the English Literary History of the present century.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The Twentieth century Period of English Literature to 1939 (1900 to 1939)

With rapid industrialization in Britain in 1911, rural life had almost disappeared in 1900. The British Empire had conquered and annexed many parts of the world. But the British lost out in the Boar war in South Africa. British colonies around the world began to revolt and British lost grip of many of them The first world war of 1914-1918 changed people's view of the world as men and material loses in the war were in the millions and nearly unquantifiable. At last people saw no reason for the war, thus they questioned political and religions beliefs, that led to the war. In the process, the Russian communism and fascism in Germany and Italy became more powerful, Fascist ideology was a reason for the Second World War (1939-1945). Also, workers had interest in trade unions, as the British Labour party grew; women were allowed to vote for the first time in 1928. writers of the period desired a new forms in which to express themselves, perhaps with little difficulty so as not to be too simplistic in communicating ideal to a more educated audience. The novels in the twentieth century discuss theme that range from private individual to the Universal. England was no longer the only focus of writers who use relevant themes beyond the English environment, but applicable to England yet with world or universal applicability.

William James the American psychologist popularized the stream of consciousness as the 20<sup>th</sup> century writing became popular. Different points of view to the novel was desirable rather than seeing the world through one characters eyes, different forms of setting and movements within scenes became identified with modern writing.

William James brother, Henry James though born in America acquired British citizen, and his novels moved from America to European in search of fixed social cultural values. His novels are *Roderick, Hudson, and Washington Square, The Wings of Dove* (1902), *The Ambassadors* (1903), *The Golden Bowl* (1904). Their themes are international, contrasting American culture and character with the European using complex characters. Joseph Conrad like James was not born in England but in Ukraine; of Polish parents, later on, he acquired British citizenship, a well traveled sailor where he derived his creative experience in *Lord Jim* (1900) and *Nostramo* (1904) both are Novels of the sea, exploring sea struggle conflicts, dangers, question of honour. Materialism, corruption and self realization are the focus of the Novel set in the imaginary south American country. In the time of revolution as the main character is obsessed by silver,

destroys his relationship with others and became immoral. The hero in Lord Jim dies in the end after the serious error of leaving his ship and succumbed to fear.

*Heart of Darkness* (1902) is one of Joseph Conrad's most famous works which explores the mysterious behaviour of the uncivilized people living in the interior of Africa. The successful colonial trader in Africa, Mr. Kurtz lived and worked in the central Africa where he exercised mysterious power over the natives, but the attempt to find him looked tedious and remote like traveling back to the very beginning of the world. Kurtz is consumed in the very darkness of Africa. Other Novels of Conrad are *Under Western Eyes* (1911) *Typhoon and other stories* (1903). His Novels earned him a citation as part of the Great Tradition by the critic F.R Leavis in 1948 along with earlier writers like Jane Austen and George Eliot, (Mary Evans). Every novel of the period, including Conrad's had the aim to exercise and re-engineer the moral codes of the new century. Also E.M. Forster, an English man of the middle class, a homosexual was interested in class conflict which was part of the issues of the Twentieth century, *Howard End* (1910) demonstrates class conflicts in the 20<sup>th</sup> century England. *In A Room with a View* (1908) the social conflicts and classism continue in the setting of English tourists in Italy. But the culture of East and West, the British colonial way of life and local culture of India is revived in *A passage to India*. The novel which shows the difference in beliefs and an attitude of culture is the story of an English woman, Adela who traveled to India to marry a colonial official who became friendly with the India people. she believed she is sexually abused by one of the India men in the Marabar caves. She later stopped to accuse the man. *Maurice* (1971) explores the conflicts within a society and behavior outside the acceptable codes of conflict. Of note is D.H. Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers* (1913), an autobiographical novel, a psychological Novel of the period, married to a German woman 1919, spent most of his times outside England, traveling around the world and writing about the countries he visited including Australia and Mexico *The Rainbow* (1915) and *Women in Love* (1920) brought his reputation to disrepute as the novels are on sexual themes including *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) which was banned in Britain until 1960. It examines themes and relationship between man and woman comprehensively and the industrial Spirit which subjugates man. Lawrence is also a poet. Travel writer, critic, short story writer playwright and essayist; his themes are mostly on nature, primitive religions, psychology, and spiritual existence, he wrote on psychoanalysis (ways of analyzing the human mind) (1921), his plays are *David* (1926), and *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd* (1914). His other works are *The Plumed Serpents* (*Feathered Snake*) (novel 1926). *Kangaroo* (Australian Animal) (1923) (a Novel). *Birds, Beasts and Flowers* (1923), *Look, We Have Come Through* (1917) Lawrence was interested in the journey of the human soul to truth, knowledge, through nature and forces of the spiritual. Like Lawrence, James Joyce and Virginia Woolf are prolific writers who see through the minds of their characters using the system of the consciousness technique. James Joyce also wrote in multiple genres including Drama, *Exile* (1918), *Dubliners* (1914), *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young man* (1914-1915), In 1922. T.S. Elliot's *The Waste Land* Was published as T.E .James Joyce's *Ulysses* was published in pairs but trailed by controversy with various views, to some of it was a great novel of the century,

but the government banned it for reasons of obscenity until 1936. Finnegans Wake, (1939) with a rare combination of and use of pun (play on words), created words and humour dream a unique and experimental, came up with Dublin as setting and thematically focusing on the fall and resurrection. Such unique exploration make her texts unique. Virginia Woolf, the most popular and highest paid journalist of her time Bloomsbury Group was at the center of creativity and intellectuality in 1905 to 1906 reached its height in the 1920s She published, popularized the impressionistic technique with her Novel, *Jacob's Room* that was set during the First World War. The story predicted the death of her own brother, Thoby. Her first Novel was *The Voyage Out*, (1915), *Night and Day*, (1919) *Mrs. Dalloway*, (1925) *To the Lighthouse* (Building to guide ship) (1927), *The Waves* (1931). The Novel shows how six characters in different locations were each affected by the death of someone known to them closely. The different reaction of each of the six characters is still the Novelist's attempt at the exploration of emotions and action. *Orlando* (1928), *The Years* (1937) and *Between the Acts* (1941) are her last works. She committed suicide in 1941. John Galsworthy, like Trollope was interested in the social class, successful upper middle-class family, Galsworthy was also interested in the social problems of the lower classes, especially poverty. He wrote *The Man of Property*, (1909), *The Forsyte Saga*, (1922), *The Island Pharisees* (1904) and *Fraternity*, (1909) Emerging writers from Scotland write on issues of destiny and moral as well as religious awareness. George Douglas Brown wrote *The House With The Green Shutters*, (1901), Lewis Grassie Gibbon published. A Scot's Quair between 1932 and 1934. *Forrest Reid's* a trilogy are, *Uncle Stephen*, (1931) *The Retreat*, (1936) and *Young Tom* (1944) He also wrote about social problems of the individual trying to improve their lives, as well as about the English society and her many problems in the early Twentieth century Among the list of popular Literatures of the Twentieth century are the Novels of Evelyn Waugh and Aldous Huxley who are also comic Novelist, writing about the life of the young people of the 1920s a period also often described as the "Jazz" or "Aspirin Age". Particularly in America The emergence and popularity of such creative work may have been considered for the society by writers in order to reduce the effects of the First World War on children, women and adults generally. Perhaps, the society needed a form of literature that will not aggravate the human emotion as the war, but that which will exercise human psychology for a lighter mood and experience. Waugh wrote *The Decline and Fall* (1928), *Vile Bodies* (1930), Huxley wrote *Crome Yellow* (1921) *Brave New World* (1932). William Somerset Maugham was a known Novelist; playwright and short story writer, his published works include *Liza of Lambeth*, (1897) *Of Human Bondage* (1915).

Interestingly a new technique came into the Novels in the 1930s when Christopher Isherwood invented the use of photograph narrative expression into Literature "I am a camera". He used his two Novels about Berlin as example; they are *Mr. Norris Changes Trains* (1935) and *Goodbye to Berlin* (1939). These Novels are about the issues that surround Germany during the rise of fascism. The Novels of adventure also became famous in the century as seen in the following examples Anthony Hope and Rider Haggard took their readers to imaginary lands in their creative works in the invented country of Ruritania or

the colonies: *King Solomon's Mines* (1886), *She* (1887) *The Prisoner of Zenda* (1894) also in John Buchan's a German pension (1911), *Bliss and other stories* (1922). Also Dorothy Richardson, an inventor of the psychological sentence, "feminine gender", (a style which expressed women's feelings and issues) used the stream of consciousness technique in his Novels, *Pilgrimage* which was published between 1915 and 1938. *The three Sisters* (1914), Mary Olivier. A life (1915), *the Return of the Soldier* (1918) *the strange. Necessity* (1928). *The Thinking Reed* (1936). Rosamond Lehmann wrote on very sensitive and controversial subjects like abortion, homosexuality and other male and female related issues in a clever, clear and sympathetic manner in his Novels: *Dusty Answer* (1927), *A Note in music* (1930), *The weather in the streets* (1936). Most of the Novels of Compton Burnett in the century are *Brothers and Sisters* (1929) *A house and its Head* (1935) *A family and a fortune* (1939), Richard Aldington published *Death of a Hero* (1929) to revisit the nostalgic feelings of the first world war, some that are autobiographical in nature, some of them are in verse form, like Robert Grave's *A poet wrote Goodbye to All* (1929), Siegfried Sassoon published his *Trilogy the complete memoirs of George Sherton* all very revealing about the devastating effects of the war. The issues of war continues in English Literature with the beautiful effort of the Irish play wright and leading figure in English drama and Theatre in the 1890s Shaw believed that drama can be used to explore ideas and issues. His plays are popular success; *John Bull's other Island* (1904), *Man and Superman* (1905) *major Barbara* (1905), *Arms and the man*. The end of the Victorian age experienced the crisis of values and it affected poetry. Thomas Hardy and Gerard Manley Hopkins can be seen as Victorian in some ways and modern poets in other ways Hopkins wrote about the techniques of poetry celebrating Nature and investigating men's relationships with God. Hardy's poem shows the use of irony as does in his short stories like *Life's Little Ironies* (1894). One of his poems is *Wessex Poems* (1898). Hopkins's *Darkling Thrush* (1900) used the image of a bird signing. Hardy also wrote the *Dynasts* 1904 -1908. A.E. Housman published "Shiropshre Lad" (1896). The changing fashion in poetry did not affect Housman's poetic style as he discusses the subject of Nature in a more traditional rather than modern style in beautiful description, employed the use of fine language. W.B. Yeats published "the Easter Rising" in 1916, "the second coming" (1921) He was also a poet of the Revolutionary years end of wars. He played a noticeable role in the revival of Irish writing, including drama, he was part of the Celtic Revival. He had his plays staged in the famous Abbey Theatre in Dublin. The Georgian Poets, named after King George V was a collection of the new, young writings of the period. Their works were in five volume called *Georgian Poetry* 1912 and 1922. Many poets reduced the horrors of the war to poetry, they were did not see the soldiers who fought in the first world war that the world thought will end all wars as heroes, poets including poet soldiers who took part in the war were concerned about the futility or uselessness of Fighting in battle. Wilfred Owen wrote "Futility" (1918) in his description of the war borrowed a line from Latin into his poem, questioning the needlessness of fighting in wars or even creating the atmosphere, of conflicts that could lead to war; *Dulce et decorum est pro Patria mori* meaning, it is sweet and correct to die. Like many other soldiers, Wilfred Owen was killed in the war the same way Rupert Brooke also got killed in the

war not long after he immortalized England in the poem, *The Soldier* (1915)“If I should die, I think only this of me that there are some corner of a foreign field that is forever England”.

Edward Thomas also described the effects of the war on the English countryside, Isaac Rosenberg in “Dead man’s Dump describes the lasting horror of seeing corpses after the war. Siegfrieds Sasoon survived the war, went on to write about the war in prose and poetry, *The General* (1918) criticizes the negligence of war commanders, nations that caused the death of soldiers. Many generations of young English poets and writers died in the war. For instance, Wilfred Owen died at 25, T.E. Hulme was 34, Roseberg, 28, Edward Thomas was 39. the horror of the war tormented those who survived it many years after the war. T.S. Eliot published “The Waste land” in 1922. *Murder in the Cathedral* (1935) some poets who followed Eliot in the 1930’s wrote more on politics, some of them are Stephen spender, Day-Lewis, Lois Mac Neice and W.H. Auden.

### 3.0.1 The Contemporary English Literary Period (1939 to Present)

The Second World War ended in 1945 but a bad signal was sent throughout the world when atomic bombs were dropped in the two great cities of Japan, Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. The world therefore came to the realization that a moment of world peace may not be so easily attainable in our crises-ridden world. In the 1980s the United States of America got involved on the First World War in 1917 and the Second World War in 1941. The irony of the war has been a boost of the American economy and strengthened technological and cultural force in the World.

The Second World War broke up the British Empire and troubled her imagination about her place in the world. There had been interests between London and the regions between England and the other countries of Britain Empire and troubled her imagination about her place in the world. There had been interests between London and the regions between England and other countries of Britain (Ireland, Scotland and Wales). The social economic disparity between Black Briton and white Briton, between the employed and the unemployed, there was also raging war in Northern Ireland, between the Catholics and Protestant and many British soldiers died between 1960s and 1990s.

The Second World War helped to weaken the grip of the British Empire over her colonies. During these years, the people’s standard of living in England improved and people gave more attention to social engagements like watching Television and reading books, newspapers, listening to radio, and going to the Cinema. The war made people to develop interests in the writing of poems, thus individuals feeling of the war was expressed in the language of poetry. The Novel too gave attention to the war. For instance, Henry Green wrote *Blidness* in 1926, *Party Going* (1939), *Caught* (1943) and *Loving* (1945) and *Nothing* (1950). Graham

Green also wrote *The Power and the Glory* (1940) *The heart of the Matter* (1948), *The End of the Affair* (1951), *A Burnt-Out Case* (1961).

The Irish playwright and novelist, Samuel Beckett wrote *Murphy* (1938) *How it is* (1961), *Imagination and Dead Imagine* (1966) *Sword of Honour* (1961), *Brideshead Revisited* (1945). Charles Morgan wrote *The River Line* (1949) George Orwell also wrote *Keep the Aspidochelone flying* (1936) *Homage to Catalonia* (1938), *Animal Farm* (1945) *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949), August Wilson, also wrote his traditional styled novels *Hemlock and After* (1952), *Anglo-Saxon attitudes* (1956), *The Middle Age of Mrs Eliot* (1958), *No Laughing Matter* (1967). Among the famous women writings of the 50's are Dorris Lessing *Memento Mori* (1959), *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* 1961, *Canopus in Argos* (1983).

William Golding's novel, *Lord of the Flies* (1954) tells the unusual story of a group of boys who are abandoned on a tropical island, set up a social organization that will help their survival like hunting, making fire, gathering, building shelter, feeding and construction. The more the boys hoped to be rescued the further they strayed from the notions of civilization. They tried to build a more civilized and democratic setting, but they ended up hunting each other as the façade of democracy is pulled down, the conch shell that is symbol of authority and expected of a civilized society is broken into pieces as the real animal in the boys dominate and they began to hunt each other. Ralph the symbol of rationality is pursued across the island and must be killed by all means. The island is set on fire. At last, a naval officer who has come to rescue them questioned their misbehaviour. Golding explains that the modern man is primitive, and violent, true human culture and basic decency is a shadow, what is left of the modern man is the beastly and murderous parts of the hominid.

Another contemporary writer of note is Iris Murdoch who published *Under the Net* (1954), *The Bell* (1958), *The Red and the Green* (1965) *The Black Prince* (1973), *A Word Child* (1975), *The Sea* (1978) Anthony Burgess wrote, *A Clockwork Orange* (1962) *Earthly Power* (1980), Margaret Drabble was among the famous women of the 1960s, she wrote *The Summer Bird-cage* (1963), *The Garrick Year* (1964) *The Radiant Way* (1980), *The Gate of Ivory* (1987-1991), Also, O'Brien is famous for her novel *The Country Girls* (1960-1963), Food William Trevor was known for his short stories and novels *Fool of Future* (1983), *The Old Boys* (1964) Jean Rhys wrote *Wide Sargasso Sea* (1966), Ruth Rendell wrote psychological thrillers, women writers like Margaret York and Joan Smith are also among today's woman detectives stories writers. The novel took a new shape in the 1970's; a shape described as magic realism. Many of the writers born outside Britain brought in new experience in to the modern novel, Kazuo Ishiguro, a Japanese wrote *A Pale View of Hills* (1982), *The Remains of the Day* (1989), Timothy wrote *Sour Sweet* (1982), *An Insular Possession* (1986). *The Redundancy of Courage* (1991) *Hanif Kureishi in The Buddha of Suburbia* (1990), *My Beautiful Launderette* (1984), (a film), Ben Okri from Nigeria set his prize-winning novel, *The Famished Road* (1991), Caryl Phillips wrote novels set in the West Indies, *A State of Independence* (1986), *Crossing the River* (1993)

Young generation of British writers, Martin Amis wrote *The Rachel Papers*, (1973) and *Dead Babies*, (1975), *Success* (1978), *Money* (1984), *London Field* (1989) and *Time Arrow* (1991) Julian Barnes published *A History of the world in 10½ Chapters* (1989), *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984). Other writings of the period are an MCE wan's *The Child in Time* (1987), Graham swift's *Waterland* (1983), Brookner Spinster's *A Friend from England* (1983), Elizabeth Jennings's *A way of Looking* (1955), Sterie Smith, *Not waving But Drawning* (1957), James Fenton, *Memory of war and Children in Exile* (1981). There was a time that poetic drama became popular after T.S. Eliot's *Murder in the Cathedral* was published in 1935. Christopher Fry was the main poetic dramatist with his *The Lady's Not for Burning* (1949), *Venus Observed* (1950). Play of Terence Rattigan were not poetic but were successful in the 1940's and 1950's. The trends in the drama of the 50's are absurd drama and social drama. Absurdity began in France in the 1940's and reached Britain with *Waiting for Godot* by Samuel Beckett in 1955, the critic, Martin Esslin first used the word, "absurd" to describe Samuel Beckett's drama type which showed the meaninglessness of life, and there has been no suitable name than apart from the adjective Beckett an, a derivative of the playwright's name Beckett. In *Waiting for Godot*, Vladimir and Estragon waited endlessly for Godot, the characters had to keep waiting, thus wasting, time and timelessness became the themes of the play. Later plays of Beckett explored these themes as he reduces the characters and settings as in *Endgame* (1958), Knapp's *Last Tape* (1958) Two of the characters lives in dustbin in *Endgame* while the only character lives his past and present with the help of a tape recorder, a process of reduction known as minimalist drama which reached its height with *Brecht* in 1969 which are all strong symbols of the restlessness confusion of the modern age. The example of the new social drama which was popularized also in the 1950's may be given with John Osborne's *Look Back In Anger* (1956) *Martin Luther* (1961), *A Patriot for me* (1965). Harold Pinter was famous for his comedies of menace such as the *Birthday party* (1958), *The Care Taker* (1960) Pinter created the word, "picturesque" to describe his impression of the world in his fictive settings. The other plays are *Homecoming*. (1965) *Old times* (1971.) Themes on politics were not that popular in Britain in the 1960's and 70's, but Edward Bond a new political tone into the theatre. *Saved* (1965) is drama of social conflict. He reworked William Shakespeare's *king Lear* as *Lear* (1971), *Bingo*, (1971) But David Hare documented Britain of the 1980's and 1990's *Knuckle* (1974) and *Plenty* (1978) *The Secret Rapture* (1988), a critique of the Margaret Thatcher's politics in Britain. Caryl Churchill, a female dramatist of the 1980's and 1990's published *Top Girls* (1982), *Serious Monkey* (1987) *The Striker* (1994) Timberlake Wertenbaker wrote *With our Country's Good* (1988), *Three Birds Alighting on a Field* (1992), Michael Frayn's *Noises off* (1982), *Benefactors* (1984) Television drama was also popular in the period, with millions of audience, Dennis Potter, was famous with his *Pennies from Heaven* (1978) and *Singing Detective* (1986) and Allen Bleasdale, *Boys from the Blackstuff* (1983) which was about the search for job in Britain.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- (1) Outline the literary issues in England that defined the 1900 to Present
- (2) State the non-literary events in England from 1900 to Present

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the English History and Literature, with specific reference to twentieth century to the present. We also discussed the relevant and popular events that differentiate the 20<sup>th</sup> century from Today. We have also mentioned the names and works of writers in the Twentieth century to the present and some significant events that chronicled the periods.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

- In this unit, you have learnt what differentiates the 20<sup>th</sup> century from the present
- About the series of rebellion and wars that define the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the present
- The major literary experiences of the 1900 to 1939
- To get yourself familiar with the literary genres of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the present
- In the next unit, you will read about theme and style in selected English Drama

#### 6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and Answer the questions below

With the aim of appropriate texts, differentiate the 20<sup>th</sup> Century writer's view of life with the present

#### 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Addison, T. (1999). *English Literature in Perspective (1939 to Date)*. Middlesex.
- Alfred, O. (1979). *English Literature- 20<sup>th</sup> Century to Date*. England: Middlesex Boyles Publishers.
- Armitages, I. (1970). *Select English Verses*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Bandlin, S. (2003). *Theme and Style in the English Drama*. Garamond: Penguin Books.
- Benison, B. A. (2010). *The Novels of Samuel Richardson Daniel Defore and George Eliot*. Ibadan: Macmillan
- Carter, R and Mcrae John (1995). *The Penguin Guide to English Literature: Britain and Ireland*. Toronto: Penguin Books.
- Churchill, A. O. (2011). *The Historical England*. England: Longman.



- Gatwick, T. J. (1962) *Watching the House. The English Literary Experience*.  
Trenton: Random House Incorporated.
- Kennedy, X. J. and Gioia (2007). *An Introduction to Poetry*. Boston: Pearson:  
Longman.
- Steinbeck, J. (1966). *Flight the English Street Poems*. London: Oxford University  
Press.
- William, S. T. (2006). *Theme in Selected English Plays*. Greece: Thames Books.
- Woolf, V. (1955). *To the Light*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jaranovich.

## UNIT FOUR:           THEME AND STYLE IN ENGLISH DRAMA (1)

### CONTENTS

#### 1.0 Introduction

#### 2.0 Objectives

#### 3.0 Main Content

##### 3.1 What is Drama?

##### 3.2 Elements of Drama

###### 3.2.1 Plot

###### 3.2.2 Dramatic Irony

###### 3.2.3 Situation

###### 3.2.4 Performance

##### 3.3 Summary of Oscar Wild's *The Importance of Being Earnest*

##### 3.4 Theme

###### 3.4.1.1 Materialism

###### 3.4.1.2 False Appearance

###### 3.4.1.3 Worthlessness of Marriage

###### 3.4.1.4 Upper Class Concept of Marriage as a Contract

###### 3.4.1.5 Lower Class Members of the Victorian as Underdog

##### 3.5 Style and Language

###### 3.5.1 Dramatic Irony

###### 3.5.2 Paired/duplication of characters

###### 3.5.3 Epigrammatic or Conversational Humour

###### 3.5.4 Use of Symbolism

##### 3.6 Summary of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*

##### 3.7 Theme

###### 3.7.1 Patriotism

###### 3.7.2 Co-operation

###### 3.7.3 Desire and Social Strength of the English Aristocratic Social Class

###### 3.7.4 Love, Courtship and Marriage

###### 3.7.5 War

##### 3.8 Style and Language

###### 3.8.1 Language and character's Plausibility

###### 3.8.2 Character's Plausibility

###### 3.8.3 Use of Comedy

3.8.4	Use of Contrasts
3.8.5	Dramatic Irony
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
7.0	References/ Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have designed this unit to introduce you to the theme and style of the English Playwrights we have selected for our study in this unit. Apart from discussing Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* so as to be familiar with how they represent England in their works, you will also learn the Elements of drama in the Present Unit. Please read carefully. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define drama as a concept
- explain the elements of drama
- summarize George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*
- comment on the style of the playwright in *Arms and the Man*
- outline the themes in Shaw's *Arms and the Man*
- summarize Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- state and explain the themes in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- reveal the style of Oscar Wilde in *The Importance of Being Earnest*
- write a play about a notable event in your country
- compare the creative designs of the English playwrights and argue in favour of their creative/ literary success or otherwise
- assemble the main themes of the plays on the basis of their literary qualities review the literary stylistics of the English plays.
- outline the least focus of the playwrights
- chose a character from the play and explain the qualities that make the character memorable

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Drama

Drama which is taken from the Greek word “dran” means to perform, act or do may be defined as a composition in prose verse or a combination of both. Plays which are provided for the purpose of being performed on stage are often acted by actors and actresses in the presence of an audience. Every written dramatic text is performed on stage in the presence of an audience. Drama as a genre of literature has its own features some of which it shares with the prose and verse genres. The genres of literature, poetry drama and prose all tell stories all attempt to interpret or mirror or reflect the society but as the narrator may tell his story directly, the dramatist narrates/ imitates his story or the action.

Drama present stories in the present as if such stories are just happening. When we watch a play, we do so with the hope and anxiety to know or see what will happen next, we pass through this experience from the beginning to end of the play, keenly following the plot and movement of the story. Drama is also different from other genres of English literature in its objective ways of presenting a story. For instance, lyric poetry discusses the individual subject emotion of the poet. The prose fiction is also written from the point of view of fixed narrator. In drama however, the playwright has identity taken (submerges) into each of the characters who express opinion individually. This is unlike in the poem it becomes difficult to differentiate the voice and opinion of the playwright from the characters in the play as the play is presented in the present, even where flashback is used, events are still narrated in the present.

The playwright economizes time and word (do not waste time/ words). This is because a play is expected to be acted within a period of time, it could be a few hours, no matter the length of year the story actually happened, the time of action is usually less than the actual period in real life when acted on stage it has time limits/ time schedules even as event in a play are divided into acts and scenes. This does not mean that dramatic texts can not be enjoyed when read alone in ones private library or bedroom, but its potential can be fully realized when events in the play are represented in real life situation brought out acted on the stage. When such is done, ‘drama as a public art achieves its role of attending to more people at a time than poetry or prose. That is why drama, be it Africa or English African-American, German, Russian, American, French or Portuguese is often described as the “genre of literature that walks and talks”.

### 3.2 Elements of Drama

Some of the elements of drama have been identified and explained briefly below.

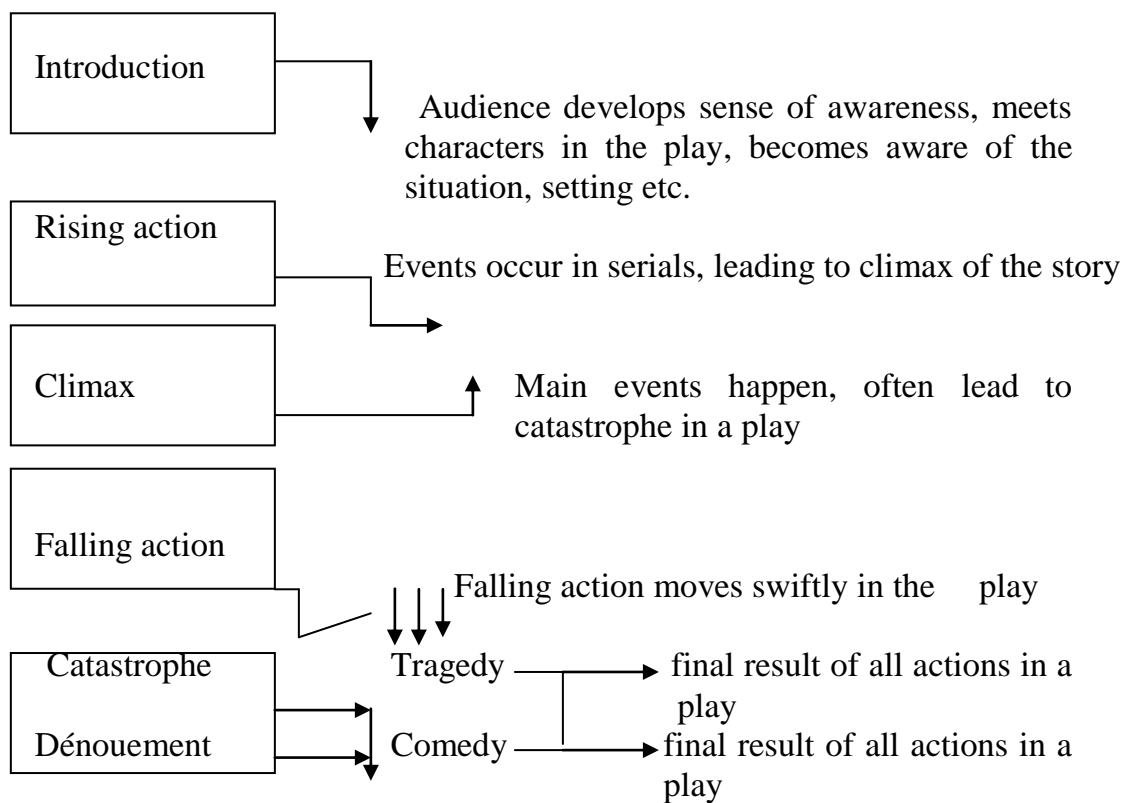
#### 3.2.1 Plot

Aristotle in his *Poetics* has said that plot is one of the most important elements of drama. He adds that plot is not the same thing as story. The story is like a raw material that playwright has fashioned or formed into a plot. Most plays may be taken from history the way plots are narrowed “telling”, more directional more concern with the stage of the movement of a whole story the story in a play is arrowed down to a plot to room for a quick view of the significant path and

pattern of the story to following a logical or connection and connectivity of the story of one part and another especially in a dramatic work that is tragedy. The division of tragedy is said to have five main part, they are.

Introduction rising action climax falling action and a catastrophe (denouement)

Fig .1.



A play is another world and something good or bad pleasant or unpleasant must happen to justify the world of the play. The play may be a comedy or tragedy, it may even combine both qualities of comedy and tragedy (tragicomedy) to give either the anticipated or unanticipated result to the delight or shocking reality of the audience. In all of these, language must be used appropriately or correctly to suit the theme and justify the reality of the story of the play.

### 3.2.2 Dramatic irony

Dramatic irony may be verbal irony for example, in a play when a character says the opposite of what he really meant, the audience really understands this whenever it is used in a play by a character, but the character to whom it is directed may not understand it. Word often expresses meaning which may be the opposite of the intended.

### 3.2.3 Situation

This refers to the general atmosphere, mood physical, chronological and general circumstances or overall make up of the play.

### 3.2.4 Performance

The main purpose of the written text is for it to be performed on the stage for people to see, feel entertained and educated. The written text brings the distant or remote event written about in text to the close view of the audience.

## 3.3 Summary of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest*

Algernon Moncrieff and John Worthing are in pursuit of Gwendolen Fairfax respectively and Jack Ward, Cecily Cardew. These men lead duplicated double or "invisible" lives as Jack is known in town as Ernest while representing to his ward Cecily in the Country that he has a wicked brother, Ernest. Algy has created a fictitious character the sickly Bunbury which ill health requires a visit whenever engagements in town, particularly those with formidable aunt Lady Bracknell render his absence desirable. After many conflicts, confusions and confessions of identities during which its revealed that Cecily's governess, Miss Prism had once mislaid Jack as a baby in a handbag at a Victoria Station. At last, it became exposed that Jack and Algy are indeed brothers and Jack's real name is actually Ernest. All objections to pairings, misgivings and conflicts were at last settled and Gwendolen's Keen likeness to the name of Ernest is fulfilled. Ending the play happily and in humorous reflection of the social trivialities of the Victorian England.

## 3.4 Themes

A number of themes have been identified and discussed with examples drawn from the play.

### 3.4.1 Materialism

The play ridicules the Victorian upper class that controlled the wealth of the period. It questions the ideals and belief of the ruling class of the Victorian age as seen through the ways in which the characters are portrayed. Lady Bracknell represents the example of the upper class who dissociates themselves from the lower and middle class people. But there are other leading factors or qualities that are often considered first before marriage is allowed among the upper class. In the play Lady Bracknell makes up the overriding importance of material wealth

and class distinction, hence she opposes the engagements of Gwendolen Jack and Cecily to Algernon on ground of status symbol.

#### 3.4.2 False Appearance

Jack is further questioned about his parentage and parental social status, wealth, politics and relevance among the upper class member. The play explores the pretension of the upper class, in London. The upper class measures the people by their social worth, economic status and general societal importance and success. The playwright further ridicules the social economic and political compulsion social pursuit of pleasure of the Victorian age. To the upper class of the age everything is possible, the height of socio economic ladder of wealth is attainable and possible as it defines the true humanity and character of man Algernon pretends to be Dandy and dresses, concealing his true identity in the play as a debtor, he represents the life of hidden filth, lies, corruption and duplicated existence that characterized the age. The belief in False appearance among the upper class is also depicted in the life of young Lady Lancing who has been transformed within three Months by a French man such that “her own husband did not know her.(p.59) and after six months nobody knew her “(p.59), a replay of the social possibilities that was the focus of the age just as the name, mere name, “Earnest” became a source of attraction to the girls, the basis for which they based their love.

#### 3.4.3 The Worthlessness of Marriage

From the beginning of the play, a reader becomes suspicious of how marriage is considered less important and based on worthless value by the aristocratic class of the Victorians society. The much respected human social institution is seen as depreciating in the English society that considers it socially misleading and valueless. When Algernon asks the reasons for the high depletion of the stock of his Champagne from Lane, she is told that “In married households the champagne is rarely of a first rate” (p.7). This means that married couples have low social status and hardly associate with or know what is good for them and the society, particularly the finest of wines.

#### 3.4.4 The upper class concept of marriage as a contract

The irony of the period is leaned on the on the assumption that their ideological leaning of marriage is different from the views expected of the learned members of the society. But, the upper class sees marriage as a contract and not a life long affair. For instance, Algernon in the play sees marriage as the unfortunate edge of the pleasure of life, thus he advises that every man should be satisfied with the pleasure of life before even thinking of getting into marriage which ends all pleasures and freedom, hence in the view of Dr. Chasuble when taking a walk with Miss Prism, he went against the woman’s view that “no married man is ever attractive but to his wife” this indicates that marriage is never a safe haven or place for immorality or promiscuity. This view is not different from the

expression of Algernon put in another form again that “ a man who marries without knowing Bunbury has a very tedious time of it (P.14), to him marriage is an agreement that do not worth the trouble that is attached to it, but Jack insists that once married to his heart’s desire, ideal love he will not bother himself with Bunbury. The Victorian aristocrats, it appears do not know the true meaning and or natural ideal that is attached to love and marriage, as a result, they are often tickled or tricked into meaningless love by trivialities. For example, to marry Jack based on the name” Ernest” which Cicily believes is symbolic, has social significance, emotionally satisfying spiritually comforting, divine and vibrantly attractive appears stupid Jack is also ready to undergo rechristening to marry, Cecily tells us that the name “Ernest” has hunted her love since childhood, hence will marry anyone by the name, that gives confidence thus any married woman whose husband do not go by the name Ernest is considered poor and socially backward. Name is also vital to Algernon in love and marriage. The whole trivial and ridiculous way the Victorian characters in the play discuss love, courtship and marriage reduces the concept of marriage to ordinary, unserious engagement, common contractual arrangement that may even be broken or separated at will or the moment the simple and irrelevant driving force and quality that pull them into marriage disappears. In other words, the upper class, Victorian concept of marriage is that it should not be a continuity. Yes!, for better for the worst but temporal and conditional too. The play discusses the prevailing problem of social class conflict in the Victorian society and marriage. we see the difference between the, upper and the lower classes , the unequal social structure of the society the class differences and the conflict that ensure in the play as manifested in the life of Algernon and Lane, his servant Miss Prism ,a member of the upper class had a hidden hatred for the members of the lower class, prefer to the unequal structure of the society and likes to see it going as long as it favours the upper class and keeps them going and on the leading edge of the structure of the society.

### 3.4.5 Lower class members of the Victorian as Underdog

The sermon of Dr Chasuble on the discontent among the upper class virtues at the expense of other classes has the collaboration which favours the upper class member of the society. The sermon was calculated and conscious attempt by the upper class member to uphold their dignity and further empower and make them have stronghold of the society by ruling over others. As such, Lady Bracknell is against inter-class marriages and entrenched discrimination by condemning as unfashionable and of low social ebb of the environment when Jack says his house is in 149 Belgrade square. The education and realization of the self worth of the masses is unnecessary hence, education to her is better for the upper class so as to guide, thus it is better the lower class masses are kept lower and away from being educated to avoid possible uprising both physical and instinctual in the society that may contest the value of the leading aristocrats. It is therefore not surprising that Oscar Wilde explores the aspect of “Art for Arts sake” to comment on Literature and the Victorian society, Jack says he “has told

the whole truth pure and simple” (p.13). But, Algernon argues that there is nothing like whole truth, the pure or even simple truth. This expression drives home the argument over the ages whether modern literature can really be achieved, and is it possible to have wholly truth without mixture of fiction but when Jack seems to agree with the view, Algernon says that literary criticism is not his terrain and such argument should be left for those who have no experience of university education, but do it well in the “daily papers” (p.13). This fair reference recreates the popular journalistic practices of the 19<sup>th</sup> century who dominated daily newspapers with literary comments, argument and criticisms as though, they were literary experts. The intelligence of Dr Chasuble notwithstanding, Miss Prism misses him for not being creative. The Playwright kicks back at the readers through his character that literary creative is not an exclusive preserve of the intelligent and there are many intelligent people who may not be creative writers. A character, Cecily prefers record keeping in the form of a diary than creative fiction to avoid the unrealistic, perhaps an attempt by the playwright to differentiate between fiction and non-fiction in literature, because non-fiction is nearer the truth than Novel, the Victorian age according to Oscar Wilde often unfairly explored the avenue of the Novel to tell lies, the untruth or half truth to mislead the society of the Victorian period with Novels that either ends happily or unhappily, a famous literary controversy or argument of the period.

Social corruption, falsehood and misinformation as escapist in the Victorian age. The Playwright creates Jack as a character of dubious purpose, liar, in cultured and unreliable, makes him duplicate his character as “Jack” and as “ Ernest” with dual location or dual or experience of life but geared towards a achieving a goal, to gain the live of Cecily who was not too much interested in him. He is the Ernest in town and Jack in the country, he is the fictive self who wants to marry and runs in to difficulties. Jack loves Gwendolyn, a daughter of the Autocratic Lady Blackwell, flirts with her, desperate, proposed to her, and agrees to marry her.

### 3.5 Style and Language

The playwright presents his themes and view of life using a language that is uniquely his, to promote literary aesthetics.

#### 3.5.1 Dramatic Irony

In this technique, the audience by the utterances of the characters knows something's which are not known to some of the characters the way it affects others some of the characters. The playwright uses this to create room for comedy in the play. Dramatic irony has been used in the play in the following instances.

When Jack arrives from London, he appeared mournful even in his way of dressing, says his brother, “Ernest” died of severe chill at the Grand Hotel in Paris. Mrs. Prism and Dr. Chasuble condole with him, but the audience is aware



of his treacherous lies that he is the same Ernest who is now pronounced dead, so he really actually have no brother by the name Ernest who is in London. In reality Jack has been going around London enjoying himself, he only came to his objects of mockery to wear deceptive look. When Jack tried to get Algernon out of his house, Jack tells his buter to get a dog-cat to take the visitor away, but on hearing this, Algernon protests frighteningly and calls Jack a fearful liar. Though Jack tells a lie but also lied by pretending to be Ernest. Always and everywhere in the play, whenever Algernon assume the name Ernest, ironic situation comes to play. Apart from themselves, everyone falls for the deception. At last the principal player seized not to be Ernest when he assume the name Ernest.

### 3.5.2 Paired/duplication of Characters.

Some of the characters are presented in a way that they parallel the other. For example Jack Worthing and Algernon Mancriff are characters that pair with Gwendolen. Fairfax and Cecily Cardew, Jack is in love with Algernon's cousin while Algernon is also in love with Jack's ward. They are all from the upper class. They both assumed a life of duplicity, paralleling the other characters in the same act. Each woman falls in love with the other's relatives. They both fall in love for no any serious reason. They were presented as smart in the way they pursue their intentions. They are presented as being capable of out writing the authorities under which they exist. For instance, Gwendolen outsmarts her mother to fall in love with Jack the same way Mrs. Cicily manipulates Miss. Prism to give up German Grammar lesson and out wit Jack in the process.

### 3.5.3 Epigrammatic or Conversational Humour.

The play which is a comedy of manners provokes laughter but not from action but from what is said. The playwright uses epigram to provide humour. When Jack says he won't be interested in Bunbury once married to Gwendolen, Algernon Jokes about it by saying "You don't seem to realize that in married life, there is company and two is none. (p.14) There are many instances of the use of dark humour in the play. Perhaps the subject matter of the poem which is love, courtship and marriage helped the playwright to achieve this. Wilde may have chosen to discuss love and marriage to be able to re-enact the social experiences of the Victorian age which are more manifested in the institution of marriage. while disagreeing with Jack on how best to relate to a woman, Algernon offers his own humorous view of woman, love and marriage, though his view reduces the woman to mere articles that can be used and discarded, "if beautiful, but unusable if not pretty". To him, women are sensuous and necessary "snare" desirable by man. Man's love for woman should not exceed cupboard's love and orconcubinage.

### 3.5.4 Use of Symbolism

The playwright uses some characters and names as symbols, to present the Victorian aristocratic class. For instance, Lady Bracknell and her daughter and Gwendolen symbolize Victorian's earnestness and autocratic and oppressive

value of the upper class. Their desire to keep the people of the lower class down the bottom of the ladder, socially stagnant and backward economically but contempt while keeping the high class members of the society high beyond the reach of the commoners, lower and middle class members of the Victorian society, the latter do not deserve economic and security allowance. Miss. Prism and Dr. Chasuble as well as Jack and Algernon are the true colour of the deceptive life of the Victorian age, and this is seen in the dual life pattern of the characters. Also, Miss. Prism (light of multifarious colors, rainbow appearance) symbolizes that which functions to process light into various attractive colors.

### 3.6 Summary of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.

The play begins with a memorable night in Bulgaria with Raina Petkoff, Catherine Petkoff. and Raina's house help, Louka discussing the news of Bulgarian Solder's victory at the war field in Slivnitza. The rumoured victory was led by Raina's fiance, Sergeant Sergius Saramoff. Raina react appreciatively promising a gratifying welcome back home for her fiancé when the war ends as she elevates the hero to a god-like status, sporadic gun shots interrupted their discussions, penetrating the quiet Bulgarian night. A fleeing soldier (a Swiss) Captain Blutschli also known as (Chocolate cream soldier) escapes from the battle field into Bulgaria. He climbs through the water trough into Raina's Bedroom chamber through the Shutters. Louka announces the arrival of a search party who had been after the mercenary soldier fighting on the side of the Serbs, she protects the professional fighter from the search party. The soldier's revolves frightens her, but the man confesses that he stuffs his gun's catridge with chocolate cream and not ammunition "I've no ammunition. What use are catridge in battle? I always carry chocolate instead; and I finished the last cake of that hours ago" Raina is marveled at the revelation; but he explains further that such reveals the professional worth of an experienced soldier. "the young one carry pistols and catridges, the old ones grub". The soldier's idea and or art of war as well as her high social class attracts Raina "my rank is the highest known in the whole of Switzerland". She is also from the Petkoff's, a family of the upper class in Bulgaria. Thus, Raina falls in love with the soldier, who now feels safe and request that Raina tells her mother about his secret presence for days in the family. He leaves disguised with the Raincoat of Raina's father Major Petkoff is the revealed as the reason the gross unprofessional display of Sergeant Sergius Saramoff in the war, and how he does not deserve to be promoted. He is frustrated, disillusioned, resigns from the army on the advice of Captain Blutschli. At last, Louka betrays Raina to Sergius Saramoff, falls in love with the latter while Raina falls in love with the swiss soldier. Unable to cope with the realistic lifestyle of Raina, Sergius promises to marry Louka. "He assures" if these hands ever touch you again, they shall touch my affianced bride".

### 3.7 Theme

We have observed some interesting themes in George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the man*. Some of them are:

### 3.7.1 Patriotism

The Soldiers were driven into the war by patriotism, the allegiance to their nations, hence Sergeant Sergius Saranoff, and Major Petkoff are to Bulgaria whom the Swiss Professional soldier, Captain Bluntschli is to Switzerland. Even, he latter escapes into the enemy country, he is still proud of his patriotism to his home country, Switzerland, Captain Bluntschli exclaims to Raina “My rank is the highest known in the whole of Switzerland. Catherine also demonstrate a high sense of patriotism while reacting to the rumoured victory of Bulgarians in the field of battle, particularly the Calvary charge by Sergeant Sergius Saranoff. She soliloquizes “The campaign has improved you. Everybody here is mad about you. We were all mad with enthusiasm about your Calvary charge”.

### 3.7.2 Co-operation

Naturally war is often characterized by hostilities as seen in the confrontation that involved the Bulgarian and Serbs and their Swiss and Russian allies. But, in this case it promotes co-operation.

Ironically, at the end of the war at Slivnitsa, the warring faction meets, honouring a gentlemanly agreement to exchange their Prisoners of war at Parrot. Also Captain Bluntschli became friendly with Sergius Saranoff and advises the latter to quit soldering. The swiss soldier was even variously warmly welcomed as a friend by Major Petkoff and Sergius “My dear Captain Bluntschli,” and “Welcome our friend, the enemy”.

### 3.7.3. Desire and social strength of the English aristocratic social class

The play reflects the nature of the English Aristocratic social class. This played out itself in the play as seen in the behaviours of Nicholas who had spent ten years as a servant, working for the Petkoffs (the latter symbolizes the English aristocracy family. In spite of that, he intends to join the aristocratic class by hoping to start a business (shop) in Sofia. Even those who are already members of the upper class are ready to do anything to maintain their stronghold in such height of social department of life; hence Raina preferred Captain Bluntschli to Sergeant Sergius Saranoff. This implies that a movement by marriage from one aristocratic class to another, but in different country (Bulgaria to Switzerland)

### 3.7.4 Love, Courtship and Marriage

The playwright reveals this theme carefully, juxtaposing war and love as reflective possibilities. Both exist in the conflictive progression of the human society but with one trying to out do the other. The complexity of war cannot hinder love from blossoming where man and woman are present. We see how captain Bluntschli got caught or Raina got caught dramatically in the web of love that connects the soldier and a Major’s daughter in the time of war. The unpredictable circumstance too explains te overriding mysteries and possibilities

of love in any available atmosphere. Also, the damnable heroism and confused existence of Sergeant Segius Saranoff found therapy in Louka, Raina's house help.

### 3.7.5 War

The play discusses the theme of war. The Bulgarian is in war with the Serbs and the Austrians. They also invited the Russian war general, Colonel Cossack. With the fusion of the various war mercenaries, the war progressed. This is because the war experience of the foreign soldiers strengthened the experience of the home soldiers. The war ended with the defeat of the Serbs the wrong way by the unprofessional conduct against the ethics and principles of warfare by Sergeant Sergius Saranoff, of the Bulgarian army. At last, the warring parties exchanged the Prisoners of war at parrot.

### 3.8 Style

Below is the writer's creative mark or identity in *Arms and the Man*

#### 3.8.1 Style and Language

The language used by Shaw suits the situation and the characters. In the idealist concept, Raina, Catherine and Major Paul Petkoff at different times discuss dazzling dreams clothed in the colourful words of Bernard Shaw

You touch a button, something tinkles in the kitchen and then  
Nicolas comes up...civilized people never shout for their servant.  
I've learnt that while you were away (p.39)

The edge which the Bulgarian soldier had over the Serbians was also reported by Catherine in a very beautiful flowery and rhythmical language

You can't guess how splendid it is  
A Calvary charge, think of that!  
He defiled our Russian commanders  
Acted without orders-led a charge  
on his own responsibility (pp.16-17)

#### 3.8.2 The use of Comedy

George Bernard Shaw employed the use of comedy in his play, similar to the plays of William Shakespeare. All the problems of the play got resolved as each romantic bird ends up having his partner. The love inscription on the portrait that Raina inserted in her father's rain coat for Captain Bluntschli to escape from Bulgaria in the period of war is humorous and entertaining.

### 3.8.3 Use of Contrast

The romantic and dreaming nature of Raina in the beginning of the play contrasts with the night. The unkept appearance of captain Bluntschli in the play is in contrast with the smart appearance of Sergius in the photograph hung on the wall of Raina's bedroom Chamber. The exchange of love interests and desires as seen in Saranoff and Louka, Bluntschli and Raina indicate contrasts.

### 3.8.4 Dramatic Irony

When Bluntschli condemns Sergius's risky and unwarranted Calvary charge in the battle field as amateurish and as an invitation to die, not realizing he was Raina's lover, the audience know the truth.

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare the artistic merit of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the concept of drama, elements of drama and summarized Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest*. We have also explained the themes in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and we have discussed the summary of George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*, mentioned and explained the styles in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt about

- drama and its elements
- summary of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.
- the styles in Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.
- themes of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of being Earnest* and George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*.
- the next unit completes the reading of theme and style in English Drama.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the following question

1a. what is drama?

- b. With the aim of a text, explain the plot as an Element of drama
2. Summarize Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest*
3. Discuss the theme of class status in George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*
4. Discuss the uses of comedy in George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Atkison, Belt (2002). *Drama*: New York: York Press.
- Ben, Bruce (2004). *English Literature in Perspective*: England: Macmillan.
- Blackstone, T. (2001). *Biographies of English Plays*: Oxford: Macmillan.
- Blanket, Cruse (1992). *Relativities and Affectivities in English Plays of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*: Scotland: Heinemann
- Blean, Truth (2002). *Styles in English Plays Across Centuries*. England: Macmillan.
- Cleare, Rockinson (2001). *Language and Styles in English Drama*: New Delhi Heinemann.
- Drabble Margaret and Hahn Daniel (2007). *The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## UNIT 5: THEME AND STYLE IN ENGLISH DRAMA (II)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Summary of Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*
  - 3.2 Theme
    - 3.2.1 Hatred for London Immigrants
    - 3.2.2 Survival instinct
    - 3.2.3 Unemployment
    - 3.2.4 Complacency
    - 3.2.5 Police corruption and brutality
  - 3.3 Language and Style
  - 3.4 Summary of Richard Brinsley Butler Sheridans *The Rivals*
  - 3.5 Theme
    - 3.5.1 Gender Discrimination
    - 3.5.2 Class Conflict and Materialism
    - 3.5.3 Female Restriction
    - 3.5.4 Inheritance as Bait to Marriage
  - 3.6 Style
    - 3.6.1 Comedy of Manners
    - 3.6.2 Surprise and Suspense
    - 3.6.3 Paired Characters as Comedy
    - 3.6.4 Allusions
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/ Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have designed this unit to continue our interesting discussion of the theme and style in selected English drama. Understanding of the theme and style in Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness* and Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals* will widen your scope of the knowledge of English drama and how the selected

playwrights have been able to correctly represent the events that characterized their periods. The works will then give you the chance to evaluate how such plays mirrored England. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- Write a summary of Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*.
- Discuss the themes in Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*.
- Explain the language and style of the playwright in *Weapons of Happiness*.
- Outline the summary of Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals*.
- Review the themes of Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals*.
- Compare the main focus of the playwright in *Weapons of Happiness* and *The Rivals*.
- Write a play about an interesting aspect of your society.

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Summary of Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*

Josef Frank, an exconvict and Czechoslovakian, Socialist Republic migrated to live and work in a factory in London. He meets Ralph, Janice, Billy, Ken, Alf, Lizy and Stanley who all migrated to work in London factory. While trying to cope with and survive in London's harsh social-economic system of overworked and underpaid manual job environment and the prejudice, unemployment, discrimination as well as the generally unsafe situation in which they found themselves, each of them struggle in the inner self and discuss with friends on how to survive their present ordeals, and police harassment as they keep abreast with the news back in their home countries. The situation they found themselves in London populace was demeaning and critical. Ralph Makepeace walks in, meets Josef Frank who have been discussing the general condition of London immigrants, including the difficult unethical working condition, starvation, sleeplessness, homelessness and frustrated Ralph Makepeace meets Frank, a new employee in a difficult London factory. They discuss how they have been trying to cope with their socio-economic conditions of living. Suddenly, some young London rascals appeared, attacked and injured Ralph Makepeace, seized his car keys and one of the gang ordered "Flash away with his flashy car". Miller, a police inspector is invited to the scene of crime, he asks Josef Frank to write a statement on his previous attack. The police officer suspects Franks co-workers, made to interrogate workers in the factory where the victim works, but while the victim decline. Inspector Miller insists "All I need is a simple statement. Tell what happened. I will write it down you can read it through in your own good time and make any amendments... changes" (p. 15).

The victim agrees but consoles himself over the pain and the injuries he sustained from the previous attack "a blow healed with time". The police officer, a queer,



shippery and crafty fellow quickly accused Frank of being a criminal and spy; but the accused imagines the bitter experience of police detentions, the starvation, handcuffed, blindfold, sandwich as food and the possibility of being beaten against the wall and all manner of humiliation Inspector Miller is not comfortable with Frank being an alien. Miller questioned the workers, “who really attacked Makepeace?” But, Frank and Clement discuss the socio and economic invitation of the trade agreement between Soviet Russia in London, foodstuffs and grains will be exchanged for steel and iron. Frank gets frustrated, compared the word to a filthy, empty room in which all humanity fled for safety; whereas there is really no where that is safe in the world where people kill at will. Through the discussion between Frank and Janice, we get to know that the formal had been imprisoned at the age of fourteen for twenty-five years when the Russian government found a communist leaflet under his bed. Janice then immediately reveals the wickedness and insensitivity of communist government when she said the first book she read about communism was called “the evil that was Lenin”. The play moves between the individual characters. Experiences back in their countries and in London, we became aware through Ken that Stanley, a foreman in the factory lost a finger to a manual machine with the general social unrest, insecurity and economic hardships, the factory workers consider a strike action, even as the condition made them get involved in various habits, in questionable life styles, Janice is into prostitution, refused that Billy, though a writer and poet is promiscuous. She admits “He’s going to screw us throw us away like we were nothing you understand. That’s why we got away...” the London of the playwright was characterized by various social abuses, bribery and corruption, rape, drunkenness, prostitution, robbery, racism. When Stanley reported to Sylvia that the factory was broken into the previous night, she suggested they inform the police; but was indifferent when she remembers police corruption and the death of some of her friends in London, detention, Frank advises Janice not to get pregnant, but she confesses that she is divorced. At last, the various characters ended without realizing their desired dreams only trying to cope with challenges of life in London, while still in search of the weapons of happiness.

### 3.2. Theme in Howard Brenton’s *Weapons of Happiness*

#### 3.2.1 Hatred for London Immigrants

London immigrants are discriminated against not only for reason of colour, but for other social economic reasons. Foreigners in London are attacked or denied employment for such reason. Ralph Makepeace was attacked and injured by the young London rascals who also made away with his car because of the hatred they have for aliens who had come to work in London. The young woman among the rascals exclaimed describing him as “foreign gift”.

#### 3.2.2 Survival instinct.

Every alien in London are pre-occupied with survival instincts the terrible condition of work in London manual factories the condition of being

overworked, underpaid and job insecurity was never a great problem to the immigrant workers. Stanley had worked years in the manual factory where he rose to the position of a foreman. He lost a finger to a machine in the factory. Frank says “work is work”: Ralph supports his view “what? Ah yes”.

### 3.2.3 Unemployment

This arises principally from the immigrant’s misconception that the streets of London are paved with money, gold and job. On arrival, they are soon disillusioned as no jobs are available in the streets of the tick London populace. They are soon frustrated by the non-availability of job. Ralph recalls that “my father always made a point of sprinkling the work force with foreigners, foreign people. And disabled... disabled people. We get by, don’t you think?”

### 3.2.4 Complacency.

Many of the characters are contented with their socio-economic conditions of life. They hardly nurse any ambition greater than working in a manual London factory. It appears they are satisfied with their static social and economic conditions of existence. For instance, Frank refused to pick up appointment to teach history at Cambridge University, London, Janice who is divorced never nurse the ambition of getting married. Frank and Ralph are contented with their working conditions in London factory and are proud of it “work is work”, “what Ah! Yes” they all agreed. Although, Frank desire to work in a place of reasonable height” but could not pursue his goals, as he merely speculates.

### 3.2.5 Police Corruption and Brutality

The play reveals the very corrupt and brutality of London police. Inspector Millan subjects Frank, an alien to a vigorous interrogation because he is a foreigner. He even volunteered to help him write a statement and make possible changes. The manner or conduct of the metropolitan Police, who often maltreat, blindfold, feed criminals with sandwiches or get them starved and beaten against the wall. The police ignore the young London: criminals who “flashed a way” with the car of Ralph Makepeace, and injured him. Instead, they preferred to question his co-workers whom they suspect for the attack.

## 3.3 Language and Style

The playwright deliberately mixed Standard English diction with London street language or Jargons so as to realize the appropriateness and capture the necessary speech suitable for his character. He lets his characters themselves speak their own language. This confirms his character’s plausibility. With this style, Brenton avoids tedious narration in often unrealistic language. For example, Miller the Police Inspector uses a suitable language of expression: He says: “All I need is a simple statement; tell me what happened I will write it down. You can read it through in your own good time and make any amendments”.

The police questioned Ralph further “Are you a registered alien sir, or do you hold a British Passport?” Also, the young man, London hoodlums used a language that suits their lawless behaviours. When they came to rob Ralph; The first man ordered “flash away in his flashy car”. The second young man used invective language on their victim “case we wan, idiot”. The woman among them uses a coded expression to hasten them away from the scene of crime “split let’s split”.

### 3.4 Summary of Brinsley Butler Richard Sheridan’s *The Rivals*

Captain Absolute the son of Sir Anthony Absolute falls in love with Lydia Languish, the niece of Mrs. Malaprop. But, Lydia prefers Lieutenant to the heir of a baronet of three thousand a year. He assumed at birth, the character of Ensign Beverley. Lydia loses part of her fortune if she marries without her Aunt’s approval and Mrs. Malaprop will not say a word to a beggarly ensign. Sir Anthony arrives at Bath, unaware of his son’s intention to propose a match with Lydia Languish, a proposal favourably disposed to by Mrs. Malaprop. Humour sets in as Captain Absolute hides his deception of Lydia while Bob Acres remain his rival, the latter has heard of Ensign Beverley and of how Sir Lucius Trigger has been encouraged to go into a relationship with Lydia.

Lucius Trigger asks Captain Absolute to challenge Beverley. Sir Lucius has been deceived to believe that the letters received from Mrs. Malaprop are from Lydia meets and challenges Captain Absolute. When Acres finds that Beverley is his friend Absolute bows out of the fight. Sir Lucius is disabused by the arrival of Mrs. Malaprop and Lydia, the latter quarrels and later forgives her lover who made it possible for her to elope.

### 3.5 Theme

Many ideas cross one’s mind as one reads Richard Sheridan’s *The Rivals*, a comedy about the English society of the Augustan period, one of such themes is gender discrimination and its consequences.

#### 3.5.1 Gender Discrimination

The playwright recreates this problem that was prevalent in the English society of the period. The society beliefs that there is always a stop line for the female gender in the English society, as she cannot do as much as her male counterpart can do or go. The prevailing social vices among children can hinder the educational goals and desires of parents may have for them. Females do not have the freedom and power to make a choice of spouse for themselves, as such is the exclusive right of their parents.

### 3.5.2 Class Conflict and Materialism

The English society ensures that her wards and children are within the desired social class of the society. Females/girls of a particular social class are forbidden to cross the 'red dotted line' that demarcates or separates the classes. The rule must be adhered to by eligible spinster of the English society, even when her parents dies, she will have a right to her parent's will based on her strict adherence to the code of conduct required by her parents as in the case of Lydia, Mrs. Malaprop, her administrators reminds her of such necessity and needful compliance. Also, Julia Melville obeyed her father who wished she must get married to Mr. Faulkland before he dies. Mrs. Malaprop testifies to the practice as a legalized social norm which she had undergone and for which the deviant Lydia or any young English lady need not to reconsider or turn over in her mind as it is based on unconditional acceptance.

Even Sir Anthony wondered why Lydia should have contrary view of what is a societal norm in England, he dammed Lydia's defiance on ground of her education that teaches girls to probe common societal norms. Mrs. Malaprop also argued that on no account will she ever encourage any of her daughters to be educated because, education which to her is "diabolical knowledge" gives females excessive freedom. The play is comprehensive on the extensive discrimination that girls suffer in the Victorian age for reason of materialism and social advantage. Even married women who were not supposed to correct their husbands, and those who were mostly fairly educated are from the upper class, and by the time boys are already attending higher institutions, they should be on the way to their husbands homes that is the major and approved career that was approved for females of the Victorian period.

### 3.5.3 Female Restriction

Sheridan presents Lydia as a character who is unyielding and incorrigible, not willing to agree to the practice, she rejects Beverley whom she later discovered to be captain Absolute, and Mrs. Malaprop plays the adamancy of the Augustan to certain norms as she consistently cautions and harasses Lydia insulting her and trying to force her to accept arranged love proposals. At a time she chastises and queried Lydia

"She's as headstrong as an allegory on the bank of Nile, thou unblushing rebel-didn't you tell this gentleman to his face that you loved another better Lydia, Lydia, you ought to know that lying didn't become a young woman!, Didn't you boast that Beverley- That stroller Beverley- possessed your heart (p. 19)

The society insists on restricting females, particularly spinsters who must accept unquestionably the scripted love proposals presented to them. Females are also denied education so as to limit their social-economic visions and participations in

the English society. Apart from getting them perpetually devalued, the organized restrictions care less about the implications such practice can have on females and the English society.

#### 3.5.4 Inheritance as Bait to Marriage

Lydia has a Thirty thousand pound inheritance, she is betrothed to Fankland by her father while captain Absolute plays around using deception to win over Lydia but he failed as Lydia prefers to loss her inheritance and marry a man of her choice putting every suitor on their toes including captain John Absolute, the first son and heir appeared to Sir Anthony of a baronet of three thousand a year.

### 3.6 Style

The playwright uses various literary styles in a discussion of the English society of his time.

#### 3.6.1 Comedy of Manners

The play is an example of the comedy of manners because it satirizes the follies, vanities and social extreme of the English society of the Victorian age. The play is humorous, ridicules, the convention, practices of the Augustan society in which the members of the society pay a little attention to virtue in marriage rather explore deceits and reduces marriage to a mere worthless article of trade that can be bought at will, to them emotion has little or no place in love and marriage hence the question of personal choice becomes unnecessary, thus marriage is a mere symbol, commonality and material. For instance Sir Anthony Absolute is kept in the knowledge of captain Absolute's proceedings in Bath as he proposes a match between his son and Miss Lydia Languish, Mrs. Malaprop's niece with a fine inheritance of thirty thousand pounds. Mrs. Malaprop eavesdropped that Ensign Beverley is in love with Lydia, and has intercepted their correspondence but had not seen him, but Mrs. Malaprop is also eager to get Lydia. The involvement of most of the characters on the issue of love, playing with the hearts of the spinsters in the play reduces love and marriage to a 'humorous tragedy', as it provokes laughter all through the play.

#### 3.6.2 Suspense

Sir Lucius O. Trigger challenge captain Absolute. Sir Lucius draws sword while pretending to be on behalf of Mr. Bob Acres. It later surprises that he later directed his challenge to captain Absolute. But, the truth is obvious to the audience who knows that captain Absolute has no business to do with Delia or Celia and this Lydia, Lucy and Mrs. Malaprop has indicated. Lucy reveals Sir Lucius dilemma.

#### 3.6.3 Paired Character as Comedy

Characters are paired unconsciously, not mostly by any arrangement or artistry or logic but by the desires of other characters in the play, by age, social and class rankings. For instance, Lydia is paired with Absolute and Julia with Faulkland, to deliberately create contrast and heat of the atmosphere of the play to cause conflicts among the different lovers, to put the other to the test, to measure themselves of the existing or imagined love. For instance, where captain Absolute is cool, calm, self-confident, and unassuming, Faulkland is apprehensive and restless. Also, Mrs. Malaprop describes captain Absolute to Miss Lydia and Miss Lydia to captain Absolute by Sir Anthony are ravishing and exaggerative, to provoke immediate and anticipated results on the character to whom a subject is described.

#### 3.6.4 Allusions

There is also the free use of Biblical and classical allusions and apostrophe. In the play, Faulkland anxiously addresses love as if it is ever physically present. “O love-tormentor friend whose influence likes the moon acting on men of dull soul’s makes idiots of them but meeting subtler spirits, betray their course, and urges sensibility to madness. “Love Thomas who had been a masquerader ever since the days of Jupiter”. Reference is made to one of the planets, Jupiter, a classical god who sometimes assumed the shape of a bull in the hot pursuit of woman. This classical reference reveals the rivalry among the lovers in the play.

Also, Sir Anthony describes Miss Lydia; “her eyes shall be the Promethean torch to you” if Lydia’s marrying Captain Absolute. Prometheans is a classical being which according to legend has two horns about him. This means Lydia’s glazy eye that out smart that of the gods will give life to Captain Absolute. Sheridan’s introduction of the name Mrs. Malaprop has aligned the play with the literary concept, malapropism, a character, Julia foreshadows Mrs. Malapropism with the careful manner in which she select and use words with precision, accuracy and comparison, particularly metaphors, she once described Miss Lydia’s attitude, refusal to be yield to any match as “headstrong as an allegory on the banks of the Nile, a progeny learning”.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Outline the artistic qualities seen in Howard Brenton’s *Weapons of Happiness* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *The Rivals*.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the summary of Howard Brenton’s *Weapons of Happiness* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *The Rivals*. We have also discussed the themes and styles of Howard Brenton’s *Weapons of Happiness* and Richard Brinsley Sheridan’s *The Rivals*.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- about the summary of Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*
- theme in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rival*
- the summary of Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rival*
- theme in Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*
- styles in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals* and Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*
- module 2 of this course discusses English Poetry from the age of John Milton (1608 – 1674) up to the period of William Butler Yeats (1865-1939). Some relevant concepts that make the reading of English poetry easy and interesting to read are also discussed in the next Module.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the following questions.

- (1) State and explain the themes in Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*
- (2) Discuss the style in Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals*
- (3) Discuss language and style in Howard Brenton's *Weapons of Happiness*

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Atkson, Belt (2002). *Drama*: New York: York Press.
- Ben, Bruce (2004). *English Literature in Perspective*: England: Macmillan.
- Blackstone, T. (2001). *Biographies of English Plays*: Oxford: Macmillan.
- Blanket, Cruse (1992). *Relativities and Affectivities in English Plays of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Scotland: Heineman
- Blean, Truth (2002). *Style in English Plays Across the Centuries*. England: Macmillan.
- Cleare, Rockinson (2001). *Language and Style in English Drama*: New Delhi Heineman.
- Drabble Margaret and Hahn Daniel (2007). *The Concise Oxford Companion to English Literature*. New York: Oxford University Press.

## MODULE 2 RESPONSE TO CREATIVITY: IMPRESSIONS AND EXPRESSIONS IN ENGLISH POETRY

- Unit 1 Nostalgia and the Poetry of John Milton (1608 – 1674)
- Unit 2 Reminiscences: The Poetry of John Keats (1795 – 1821)
- Unit 3 Poetry and Nature: A discussion of the Poetry of William Wordsworth (1770 – 1850)
- Unit 4 Other Prominent English Poets: William Blake (1757 – 1827), Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744) and William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939)
- Unit 5 Poetry in Depth: The ‘Mathematical’ Language of English Poetry

### UNIT 1 NOSTALGIA AND THE POETRY OF JOHN MILTON (1608 – 1674)

## CONTENTS

### 1.0 Introduction

### 2.0 Objectives

### 3.0 Main content

- 3.1 A Discussion of Poem No. (1) “When I Consider how My Light is Spent”
- 3.2 A Discussion of Poem No. (2) “How Soon Hath Time”
- 3.3 A Discussion of Poem No. (3) “another on the same”
- 3.4 A Discussion of Poem No. (4) “At A Solemn Music”
- 3.5 A Discussion of Poem No. (5) “An Epitaph on the Marchonest of Winchester”.
- 3.6 A Discussion of Poem No. (6) “Paradise Lost”.
- 3.7 A Discussion of Poem No. (7) “At a vacation Exercise in the Colledge, part Latin, Part English, the Latin Speeches Ended, The English thus Began”.
- 3.8 A Discussion of Poem No. (8) “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet W. Shakespeare”.

### 4.0 Conclusion

### 5.0 Summary

### 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)



## 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This module has been designed to discuss and interpret the selected poetry of major English poets, beginning from the Restoration to present. Specifically this unit has been written to interpret the selected poetry of John Milton, our choice of poetry for the Restoration. We have written to clearly reveal the various themes which the poet discusses. So far, we have treated the chosen poems as though they are prose. Our effort exposes the general aesthetics of the poems. Below are the objectives of this unit.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- give your own interpretation of “when I consider how my light is spent”
- explain the themes in “How soon hath time”
- reveal the poet’s main points in “Another on the same”
- outline the major facts raised by the poet in “At a solemn music”
- reproduce the subthemes revealed in “An epithaph on the Marchioness of Winchester”
- discover the poet’s impression in “At a vacation Exercise in the college, part Latin, Part English, The Latin speeches Ended, The English thus began”.
- compare the related issues raised in the poems
- rate the interpretations given to the poems of John Milton
- argue in favour of the real and possibility in the poems of John Milton.
- design a poem of your own either about any individual or notable events in your society or country.
- underline some key words in each of the poems.
- review Milton’s “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet W. Shakespeare”.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Poem No (1) “when I consider how my light is spent”

In this poem, John Milton discusses the temporal nature of man or the transience of life. The terrestrial is placed side by side or compared with the celestial and man’s place in the world and hereafter. John Milton reminisces his and man’s activities on earth and what God expects of humanity when he dies. The poet speaks as a man who is conscious of death and the brevity of life as well as man’s likely experiences after death. The title of the poem is deliberately metaphorical as the poet compares his life to “light”, and as the life bearer, he defines man’s existence on earth with some degree of discomfort” ... half my

days in this dark world”, and thus death becomes a general ‘talent’ of all irrespective of social status, race and positions. “Death is a talent” that no man can hide, as it will come unannounced when it will and deprive humanity of his most cherished soul, as he begins a new eternal journey to serve his maker “and present his ”my true account”. It then means, as the poet reminds us that after death, one will surely render accounts of ones sojourn here on earth to one’s maker or God. the poet probes his own conscience, asking if God really need man’s work, the poet answered his own question, that God do not really need man’s work or labour, instead God bears man’s burden “yoke”, the yoke of thousands at his bidding which He bears”. Man relies on His grace, but God requires that man serve as the “land” and “ocean” also serve God restlessly. The poet compares man’s journey on earth after which he must give accounts of his earthly activities to the Almighty God as the Bible records in the book of Mathew chapter 25 verses 14-30. Milton had become blind when this verse was composed. Thus, he juxtaposes his blindness to his soul as both the eyes and soul functions as light of humanity, man’s oiling wheel of progress. At blindness, the poet became even more conscious of death, so he speaks like one who is prepared to die, and ready to give accounts of his journey into the world when he finally returns to God. We are not surprised, therefore, that the poet compares his earthly journey to the parable of the kingdom of heaven given in the book of Mathew. In brief, the kingdom of Heaven is compared to a man traveling to a far country but distributed talents to his servants based on his ability but with a free will to use, trade with the talents given. His servants used the talents given according to their discretions, but for which all the servant will give accounts of the use to which they put the talents given. The man and giver of talent here is the Almighty God while humanity is the servant who will give account of how he has used his talent. The various use to which each servant channels his talent will also justify his reward before God, the giver of talents. This is expressed in Mathew, chapter 25 verses 29 and 30.

for unto every one that hath shall be given and shall have abundance but from he that hath not shall be taken away even that which he hath. And, cast ye the unprofitable servant into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

### 3.2 Poem No. (2) “ How soon hath time”

Poet discusses the themes of death, anxiety, longevity, time, endurance, and hope. The poet places time at the forefront of man’s total existence, longevity or otherwise, expectations and career. We see time in this poem as the sole determinant of every aspect of man, his youthfulness, ageing, death, success, desires and failure in life. Whatever the ambition of man may appear to be, time becomes a major sole determinant of every goal. Milton questions, “How soon hath times, the subtle thief of youth, stol’n on his wing three and twentieth year”.

John Milton, in this poem reveals the strength overpowering influence of time that has quickened his age which time parallel with the poet's career at a young age, moving at a pace unimaginable through all the seasons such that time advances the youthful appearance of the poet close toward manhood. It appears the poet dislikes this natural development and role played by time in his life, because, had he a choice, he would have preferred to be ever young, youthful, agile, hence the poet criticizes the inevitable role played on humanity by time. The poet says his youthful appearance played deception and that time inevitably stole in to advance his age" to manhood "am arrived so near" inwardly. By all definitions whether our age appears slow or fast time, according to the poet will still not deny itself of its strict responsibility of ageing the youthful. The poet blames time for advancing him towards heaven as it makes him grow older and nearer to the grave.

Time leads me, and the will of Heav'n  
All is, if I have grace to use it so

The poet ends the poem on a note of grudging and indifference as he surrenders to time and concludes that he has no grace to change times eternal responsibility of making youth grow old and drawing nearer to heaven. As a result, Milton leaves time disagreeably to continue his goodwill eternal role as man's greatest umpire. He also recognizes that the power of humanity to take the least advantage of time is by the "grace" of God.

Poem No. (3) "Another on the same"

John Milton reveals the themes of death, man's restlessness, vanity, vain assumption, deterioration. The poem appears as a warning to energy driven restless and workaholic individuals who rarely take time out to rest after much of the days work assuming immortality to his mortal nature. It appears almost every individual is guilty of this assumption of ascribing immortality to their destiny. The poet assures

Herelieth one who did most truly prove  
That he could never die while he could move,  
So hung his destiny never to rot  
While he might still jogg on, and keep his rot.

The poet warns of the danger that is inherent in man's conscious desires to get himself over worked, relying and taking his ability to move around as perfect health, whereas no man is comparable to a metal that will never decay or rot.

Milton warns:

... So hung his destiny while he might still jog  
on, and keep his trot made of sphear metal,  
never to decay

But, every act of man, the poet explain is judged by time that “numbers motion numbered out his time” Human movement “motion” and advancement are indeed timed by nature, and time is also the major predeterminant of man’s dreams and vision. John Milton compares the inevitable role of time in man’s wheel of progress to “an Engin world with wheel and weight”. The dual nature of time is expressed in the poem as the giver of life and death,” givers all men life, gave him his death”. The danger of man’s excesses is also brought to the known “too much breathing put him out of breath”. The poem adds that when man’s time is ill-planned his progress is impeded as he is quickened towards the grave by restlessness, illness and diseases all of which renders his doctor helpless as his days of leisure are withdrawn by time, a witness of his “last breath”, as he becomes an immortal but in death, contrary to his notion of immortality before death. As he meets his fate, his soul is reduced to the “mutual flowing of the seas” which waves are destined to flow to and fro ceaselessly.

### 3.4 Poem No (4) “At a solemn music”

John Milton praises the serene and harmonious nature of the rhyme. He describes the verse as the synonym of music, the heavenly choreography that keeps Angels busy and dutiful “.... pledges of Heaven’s joy ... voice and verse, that is made in Heaven, divine sounds” so powerful is the divine excellence that is attached to the verse that is capable of penetrating the soul. The verse is purified, admirable verse of “sapphire coloured” capable of radiating around the throne of God, where the heavenly saints abound “saintly shout and solemn jubilee”. The seraphim” in orderly “ burning row” the Angel trumpets blow” the cherubic host in thousand choirs” are all busy singing with inertial Herpes of golden wires” while the glorious spirits too were busy in the apparel of “ victorious psalms... Hymns devout and Holy psalms” the primary duty of the heavenly. Angels is to sing “everlasting” The poet compares the spirituality of Heavenly Angels with human made melodies and concludes that man made songs are inferior to heavenly hosts as ours is coloured by sins, and devoid of love and goodness The last few lines of the poem predicts man’s soon transformation into the celestial where the mortal will be united with God and sing in “endless mourns of light” the poet states

That we on Earth with undiscording voice  
 May rightly answer that melodious noise  
 As once we did, till disproportio’d sin  
 Jarrid against Nature’s chime, and with harsh in  
 Broke the fair music that all creatures made...  
 In first disobedience, and their state of good  
 And keep in tune with Heaven till God are long  
 To His celestial consort us unite.

The last few lines of Milton’s poem refers to the songs of man as filthy melody engineered by his sins, the sins of Adam and Eve and man’s later sins brings him to disrepute with the Almighty God.

### 3.5 Poem No (5). “An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester”

John Milton mourns and praises the marchioness of Winchester who died at a young age. As the poem unfolds with the main theme of death, surprises and the shocking revelation of the gracefulness, honour and love even in death of the deceased. Milton rebels against death’s modus-operandi of depriving humanity of a treasured life and throwing every loved ones of the deceased into sudden mourning.

As the poet mourns the life of Winchester an “Earls heir” blaming death for depriving all of the virtues of a woman of “noble birth” Apparently angry, the poet raises surprising expressions, questioning and embarks on speculative naming of the reasons for her short life.

Nature and fate had no strife  
In giving limit to her life

The epitaph combines the biography of the Marchioness of Winchester. He states that the deceased married early “Quickly found a lover meet” leading to elaborate marriage feast” After her marriage, she had had a son when she died at child birth. “And row with second hope she goes.” The poet tells our subject how people reacted to her absence by “surrounding tears of perfect wept for thee in Helicon while numerous other mourners presented ‘flower and some bays ‘to hid her farewell”. “Whilst thou bright saint high sit first in glory “John Milton consoles the deceased by telling her that the Surian Shepardsess “ who had been barren for years was later favoured to be deliver ed of a son “Joseph bore and while the world waited to celebrate her “next birth much like thee “the shepardsess died and there with thee. New welcome saint. And like the fate of every man, both of them are now united by fate in heaven.

### Poem No. (6) John Milton’s Paradise Lost

The theme of the epic poem is of national and universal significance. The poem deals with the genesis or beginning of the suffering of the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and by extension the suffering of the entire humanity after Adam and Eve took the path of Satan who deceived and lured them away from the presence of God. The Holy Bible records this clearly in the book of genesis chapter 3. The fate of the hero and his experience in the poem typified the fate of every man, other themes of the poem are deception, suffering, pain. This major epic poem in English uses the myth of creations, reflecting the mythical conflict between God and Satan (the devil), Adam and Eve and the fall of man. The first line of the epic introduces the discussion between Satan and his mate (Eve and Adam), mirroring the book of genesis, chapter 3’ verses 1-4 cited here:

And he (Satan) said unto the woman yea, hath God  
said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And

the woman said unto the serpent, we may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die.

The first few lines of Milton's epic indicates Satan's readiness to cajole and mislead Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden; he had come to engage Eve in free discussion as a friend, but underneath the discussion and his total appearance was "deception" eyes sparking blazed", has other parts besides" that other "parts" or hidden nature in the devil was not immediately visible to the tenants of the garden thus, the tenants got swept away by the beguiling spirit the same way disobedient children of Adam and Eve were swept off by the Noahic flood. Adam and Eve floated around like the victims of the flood, as they lost the garden, the path of God, choose the path of Satan and became homeless. Adam and Eve got more than they bargained for through their disobedience to God as their problems became massive, towering monstrously huge or giant" Titanian" leviathan". Apart from the main theme of deception in the poem, other theme are conviction, pride, determination, pride, innocence, suffering and separation, disfavours and disaster.

The poem was written in elated style with generous use of imagery, uses historical, Biblical and literary, and classical allusions "Satan flood "Briareas" ancient Tarsus" sea beast "Leviathan" God, "Norway foam". The poem is also exaggerative, but the allusion all combined to place the epic correctly in its weighty and grand, and sweeping style. The beauty of the poem lies on the generous use of far fetched, Latinate expressions and syntax that elevates the themes of the poem above ordinary level of, verse compositions. John Milton's use metaphor and extended simile and ironies predominates in the poem. The poem combines natural setting with classical landscaping pitched against a historical context in the Milton's epic poem, Satan it seems played the hero as juxtaposed with Adam and Eve, as seen in the long time effect of Satan's craftiness the serpents successful but subtle way of making enmity out of the beautiful relationship that had existed between God and man. The wining position of the epic eventually earned Satan a heroic status, thus the exaggeration and various Latinate comparisons which the poet used. The elevated use of language and Latinate borrowings may not make the poem immediately clear in expression yet, Milton achieved poetic communicability in his poem that is loaded with image that quite naturally carry the whole weight and characteristic of epic the historical and classical references meet with equal force in the poem to magnify the themes and styles of the poet.

Also, with the use of simile, of multiple comparisons in John Milton's poem reveal the poet's religious aesthetics. There is the inversion of order in the poem with Satan who should have played the villainy, antagonist now playing the protagonist in Milton's epic, using conceits, far fetched the vehicle of comparisons (Titan, giants and from biblical epic Leviathan). The language used,

in the poem, “Satan” mates are not common like the “dove” peace used., There are also Christ and Christological related symbols that have no external or suggested interpretation, and are found floating in the unfamiliar wind scape of the poem.

The first few lines of the poem contrast different personalities by placing together Satan and Eve (Antithesis), the line also double as Euphemism, there are also the express use of inversion (change in normal sentence order) in the poem order as seen in “with head uplift above the wave and eyes lay floating many a road in bulk as huge Leviathan which God of all his works”

Poem No. (7) “At a vacation Exercise in the college. Part Latin, part English. The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began”

This poem of Milton praises his native language/mother tongue, the English that belongs to the group of language to which German, Dutch, Flemish, Danish, Swedish and Norwegian also belong “Hail native language, that by sinews weak, didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak”. The poet emphasizes his connectivity to his language and culture of first contact “Half unpronounced, slide through my infant lipps”. More than half of the vocabulary of the English language is derived from Latin. The poet adores his language of nativity. Milton reminiscences his affinity with his English culture as infant, but has now asked for “pardon ask” for the brief disconnection he experience with his mother’s tongue. He regrets his temporary dissociation with his mother’s tongue. The poet confesses that he could not do without language which he “now use thee in my latter task” but, he’s caught in between the Greek and Latin civilization that civilization that competes with his mother’s tongue. Despite the obvious competition experienced by the culture contracts, poet is comfortable with or himself expressing the multiplicity of idea and the refinement of thought in his native English tongue. He sees the English language as asset and begs that he be not denied by his culture as he is not willing to deny his literary expression and communications, despite the mixed character of the English language vocabulary. The poet considers the language a treasure rich, and gladdens pleasure giving’s” thy wardrobes bring thy chaffiest treasure” Milton states that the burning thought and knowledge that grows in him can only be clothed appropriately with his mother tongue. He considered the English language as the best and befitting language of cultural expression better than the Greek, Latin and German languages he had contact with. The poet’s spiritual connectivity to his language of birth is deeply expressed. He merges the terrestrial with the celestial reviving the aesthetic relevance of the English language. John Milton reveals.

I have some naked thoughts that role about  
And loudly knock to have their passage out,  
And wearies of their place do only stay  
Till thou hast deck’t them in thy best array;  
That so they may without suspect or fears  
Fly swiftly to this fair Assembly ears;

Yet I had rather if some graver subject use

The poet elevates his native language to the high heavens, decorating it in god-like status in power and strength as “blissful Deities”... Apollo sings.” Nectar”. Neptune”, the English language is capable of representing wonderful; thoughts conceived in the poet’s mind, able to sustain” substances with canons” To Milton, the English represents and enjoys exceptional advantage over all other major European languages.

Poem No. (8) “An Epitaph on the Admirable Dramatic Poet William Shakespeare”

The poet combines a discussion of the ephemeral nature of life with the lasting beauty of the work of Arts in his eulogy of the English poet and dramatist, William Shakespeare. The poet argues in favour of the English poet’s honour, labour of an age” Shakespeare in death”, labor of an age implied stone a”,... a star- y pointing pyramid”. Milton addresses the deceased with a deep expression of love and nostalgia, he reminisces but questions the weak and unpopular respect accorded Shakespeare in death

Dear son of memory, great heir of fame.  
What needs’ t thou such weak witness of thy name?

The poet observes that Shakespeare’s” excellent artistry should not have been “(hidden) under a pyramid “that will wither, after all the English poet, he adds has fashioned a credible and lasting image for himself, as symbolized in his creativity while alive” show – endeavoring art” that became a gratifying source of human wisdom and knowledge and many bear testimony to his numerous books, which though many found it difficult to value “thy unvalued book”. He regrets we were ever bereaved of the valuable William Shakespeare and his Arts. But Milton is satisfied that the creative works of the English poet and dramatist was his ideal marble and already immortalized him, compared to the now “sepulchered in such pomp dost lie”. The kings and honourable men of this world will prefer Shakespeare’s stately honour which his Art earned him even in death. His works are themselves more reliable marble in comparison to the honour accorded his “bones” and “labor” of a whole age that is now “in piled stones”

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the themes in John Milton’s “when I consider how my light is spent”.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION



In this unit, we have treated John Milton's "when I consider how my light is spent", "how soon hath time", "another on the same", "at a solemn music", an epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester", "Paradise Lost", As well as "At a vocation Exercise in the college, part Latin, part English The Latin speeches ended, the English thus began" and an Epitaph on the admirable Dramatic Poet W. Shakespeare.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- the poet's impression in "when I consider how my light is spent"
- The themes in "how soon hath time"
- The poet's perspective in "At a solemn music"
- The creative focus of "An Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester"
- The universal relevance of the themes in "Paradise Lost"
- the poet's concern in "Another on the same"
- The relevance of "at a Vatican Exercise in the college, part Latin, part English, the Latin speeches ended, the English thus began".
- How John Milton celebrates William Shakespeare in "Epitaph on the admirable dramatic poet W. Shakespeare".

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

- 1) Discuss the themes in John Milton "Paradise Lost"
- 2) Discuss the poet's impression in "when I consider how my light is spent"
- 3) Compare Milton's "how soon hath time" with the Epitaph on the Marchioness of Winchester"

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Byron, McGunn (1986). *Poetry*. London: Oxford.
- Chernaik, Judith (1972). *The Lyrics of Shelley*. Cleveland.
- Dand Duff (1994) *Romance and Revolution: Shelley and the Politics of Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Duncan, Wu (2001). *John Scott's Death and Lamb's Imperfect Sympathies*. Ireland: Lens Prints.
- Kennedy, X. J. and Gioia, Dana (2007). *An Introduction to Poetry*. Boston: Pearson: Longman.
- King, Penny (2002). *Reading the Poetry of John Milton*. London: Penguin Books.
- Lath, Ruth (1989). *Conflict and Achievement in Wordsworth's Poetry*. Oxford.
- Neville Rogers (2000). *William Butler Yeats and William Wordsworth's Poems Revalued Oxford*. London: University Press.

- Richard, Chronim (2002). *Restoration and Augustan Poetries at Work*. Ohio: Ohio University Press.
- Robert, Southey (2004). *Poetical Works (1793-1810)* Lyndia Pratt, Tim fulford and Damel Roberts 5 vils. London: Heineman.
- Roy, Parked (1980). *Lamb as Critical*. London: Penguin.
- Stephen, C. Behrendt (1986). *Shelley and his Audiences*. Lincoln: Neb.
- Wolfson, Susan (1977). *The Shaping of Poetry in British Romanticism*. Stanford: California Press.

## UNIT 2: REMINISCENCES: THE POETRY OF JOHN KEATS (1795 – 1821)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 A Discussion of Poem (1) Sonnet, “When I have fears that I may cease to be”
  - 3.2 A Discussion of Poem (2) “Ode on a Grecian Urn”
  - 3.3 A Discussion of Poem (3) “This living hand, now warm and capable”
  - 3.4 A Discussion of Poem (4) “Ode to a Nightingale”
  - 3.5 A Discussion of Poem (5) “Bright Star, Would I were Steadfast as thou Art”.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to introduce you to the selected poetry of John Keats. Your understanding and experience of the selected poetry will educate you about the nature of the craftsmanship of John Keats, based on personal experience and his ability to adequately represent the events of the England of his time in poetry. Such will then put you at a vantage position to evaluate the poet’s success or otherwise as English poet and writer. Below are the objectives of this unit.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you will be able to

- discuss the themes in John Keat's "sonnet, when I have fears that I may cease to be"
- explain the poet's impression of the Urn in his "Ode to a Grecian Urn"
- summarize the poet's feeling in "this living hand, now warm and capable"
- state the poet's aesthetics in "Ode to a Nightingale"
- write a poem on any exciting experience of your choice

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

Poem No (1) Sonnet: "when I have fears that I may cease to be"

The poet discusses the themes of death, fear of the unknown, the vanity of life, love and fame. The poet is preoccupied with the thought of his end, the death that will put an end to his wisdom and knowledge of creativity.

When I have fears that I may cease to be  
 Before my pen has gleaned my teeming brain  
 Before high-piled books, in character'y  
 Hold like rich garners' the full-ripened grain.

In his consciousness of the temporal nature of life, the poet believes that the time gets nearer that the inevitable end, "night will stare him in the face". He reflects on all that he will lose when he dies. "...Cloudy symbols of a high romance" and the books Keats thinks of the hour that his life will stop suddenly, "Shall never look upon thee more"

"Never have relish in the fairy power", a time when his love and fame will sink.

Poem No. (2) John Keat's "Ode on a Grecian Urn"

Keat's Urn symbolizes the work of Arts, religion and the beauty of nature, especially its lasting value over the ages, a legend any artifact of god-like status, Arts is also symbolized in the flower vase which reflects perpetual quietness and serenity, its innocence, simplicity, beauty and legendary value of the flower vase, are rare qualities that makes the vase fascinating and elevates it to a god-like status, immortality, thus are useful in the ancient "temple or the dales of Arcady" gods and goddesses of the Greek and Latin. The symbols of the arts are the 'pipes' and "Timbrels" are also melodious and expressive as the vase as they all perform the responsibility of giving generous happiness and beauty to the human soul, thus capable of prolonging the soul. Thus, Keats ordered the pipe to release its fine tone "therefore, ye soft pipes play on: not to the sensual ear, but, more endeared, pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone"

The youthful lovers who are under the tree are also encouraged to keep up their love and courtship affairs under the quiet leafy tree that gives room for practical display of genuine and long lasting love. The poet encourages the young lovers to be bold to engage the characteristics of love in their lively engagements with other such as ‘kiss’ that is the avenue by which the lovers will not experience grief and unhappiness and their type of love will not fade, and they are therefore guaranteed eternal or everlasting happiness such that their love will compete favourably with or outlive nature, thus when the tree under which they practice their love withers, as much as they remain steadfast and youthful in love, they will be happy continually happy. And when the leaves of the trees bid farewell to nature and the time, their love will grow steadily across seasons and will not (by the spring advice) the love to poet, if well nurtured and rigid located, and if nature is invited unto man’s game of love, a form happy melody is attained. John Keats unfolds the role of traditional society, the altar which is a work of arts, the garlands too with and priest who leads with an “helper” “flanks garlands dressed” very well beautified all symbolizes the work of Arts. Though, Keats has refused to give the name of the town located near the river or shore or mountain built with perfect citadel we may not blame the poet for such restraint of Arts. Keat’s nameless town may be taken as his acceptance of the universality of Arts. The town, its streets are as quiet as the work of Arts, thus sharing a most admired the quality of the work of Arts, serenity and beauty with very attractive shape “Attic shape”, “marble men”, “and maidens” consider the eternal beauty of the work of Arts. The poet’s tribute to the Arts, Keats concludes involving the immanent destruction that awaits the world and her generation, and material comforts of man as predicted in the bible book of Revelation, Matthew and so on; only the work of Arts as the indestructible will remain. John Keats insists.

When old age shall this generation waste  
 Thou shall remain, in midst of other woe  
 Thou ours, a friend to man to whom thou say’st  
 Beauty is truth, truth beauty that is all

Readers cannot but be moved by the Keats cant’s, “thus”, “thou”, “thy”, “ditties”, “loath” and so on are the poet’s generous use of symbolism to revive the work of arts, some of them are “vase” “pipe” tamborine “garland” green altar, “marble” vault “heifer” The symbols used in the poem compliments the metaphor “thou still unrushed bride of quietness, thou foster-child of silence and slow time “flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme, “Heard melodies are sweet but those unheard are sweeter, therefore, ye soft pipes play on”. The symbols and metaphorism over haul the usefulness of the subject matter, but the use of Rhetorical question re enact the seriousness of the universal relevance and eternal quality of the work of Arts, “What men or Gods are these? What maidens to? We also noticed deliberate omission of words and the use of inverse in the sentence and word arrangement of the poem; Examples are,

“when old age shall this generation waste.”  
 “Beauty Is Truth, Truth Beauty- That Is All

“Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know will  
silent be and not a soul to tell”

“Thou still unravished bride of quietness” personified the symbols of the works of art used in the poem, such has been used to further justify the humanity of the Arts.

Poem No. (3) “This living hand, now warm and capable”

John Keats in this poem is preoccupied with the transient nature of life, especially the symbols of death in comparison with the living. He examines his appearance that comprises his “living hand” that is warm and “capable” functional “grasping” According to the poet, it will be impossible for the poet to function adequately when he dies. He adds that a “cold” body only adds to the cool and icy silence of the tomb. Keats warns the living to “haunt the days and chill thy dreaming nights”.; John Keats embark on rhetorical questioning, speculates. He is sure of the imminence of death but not sure of what will become of man after death. The reality of death and man’s activities in the world is an experience we are familiar with, but he wonders what will become of man after death. In his bitter anticipation, he continues his speculative reflections imagining his very end. He asks consistently in clearly confused tone and feeling aggrieved.

Where shall we be?  
(She whispers) where shall we be,  
When death strikes home. O’ where then shall we be  
Who were you and I?  
Counting the heats.  
Counting the slows heart beats  
The bleeding to death of the time in slow heart beats,  
Wakeful they lie.

The poem arose our curiosity even more delicately as he moves between now and hereafter probing man’s speculations of death. Keats advises humanity to be conscious of the approaching death and time, the latter he says defines our existence and serve as ensign to our daily advancement to the grave.

Poem No. (4) “Ode to a Nightingale”

The poet was driven by Keats experience of the aesthetics in the songs of a Nightingale in the spring of 1809. The first stanza of the poem expresses the poets deep feeling that overwhelmed him while listening to the beautiful songs of the bird. Such feeling becomes apparent in the poets “heart aches” “drowsy numbness of pains”. This is further revealed as the poet compares this emotional transport to that of a “drunk” or “emptied some dull opiate to the brain”. The poet explains that the experience triggered in him by the songs of the Nightingale is not out of being envious of the song star- bird. But, he views and creates a

convergence between his rhythm and the songs of the Nightingale- the songs unites him with the Nightingale. Keats declares:

Tis not through envy of the thy happy lot  
But being two happy in the thine happiness  
That thou, light winged dryad of the trees  
In some melodious plot

John Keats is further enthused by the bird's song that he embarks on a comprehensive, description of the bird's activities in the green foliage of the "green trees a draught of vintage" "deep –delved earth" "Tasting of flora and the country green" The songs of the bird in the green trees of the green country. The bird's beak provides warmth and comfort as thus, his songs of truth about life and humanity. The poet says the Nightingale is quite familiar and comfortable with his green environment where he lives and feeds on, the leafy green trees also provides shade for man. The bird and humanity are brought to the fore, as the green environment serves as shade and comfort for the Nightingale, so also it comforts humanity from youth to old age and death.

The poet's descriptive and solemn time change in verse four of as the poet ordered the songster to go away "Away!" "Alway" for I will fly to thee" as he compares himself to Bacchus (the god of wine). Keats actually deeply impressed by the songs of the Nightingale, thus completely won over by the "poesy" so drunken is poet that he feels demeaned, perplexed and retorted, feeling reconciled with the night, the "green moon in her throne" The disillusioned experience Keats is thrown in to over powers him such that the poet cannot see what "flower are at my feet Nor what soft incense hangs upon the bough". But, in embalmed darkness guess each sweet The beautiful songs of the Nightingale in the poem is reconciled with nature "the grass" "the thicket" "fruit three wild" "fast fading violet covered up in leaves". Indeed, the poet wishes the Nightingale longevity so that generations could be at a vantage position to benefit from the bird's wealth of songs. The magic in the songs of the Nightingale makes it ever famous and inviting to the soul. He bids the Nightingale farewell as he admires how he glides through the still stream and valley.

Poem No. (5) "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art"

John Keats turns his search light on nature, praising the consistence of the bright star that gives light to illuminate the night, fulfilling her eternal responsibility of "watching with eternal lids apart." He admires nature's patience and enduring ability. The star awakes all the time watching over the seas, moving round the earth "human shores" the mountains and moons as well as humanity. The poet wishes he were the star. The poem reads "Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art not in line splendor hinge aloft the night and watching with eternal held apart like nature patient, sleepless eremite".

SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare at least two of the poems discussed in this unit revealing their relevance to the human society.

## 5.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed John Keat's "When I have fears that I may cease to be", "Ode on a Grecian Urn", "This living hand, now warm and capable", "Ode to a Nightingale", and "Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art".

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- the poet's impression in "When I have Fears that I May Cease to be"
- themes in "Ode on a Grecian Urn"
- the poet's perspective in "Ode to a Nightingale"
- the poet's creative focus in "this living hand, now warm and capable"
- how the poet celebrates nature in "Bright Star, would I were steadfast as thou art."
- in the next unit, you will be introduced to the Poetry of William Wordsworth.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the questions below

1. discuss the poet's impression of life and death in "When I have fears that I may cease to be"
2. explain the poet's speculations in "this living hand, now warm, and capable"
3. value the urn in John Keat's "Ode on a Grecian urn"

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Brooks, L. (2003). *Selected Twentieth Century Poets. Harrap's English Classics*. Hammondsport: Penguin Books.
- Daniel, B. (2000). *Neo-classical and the Verse*. London: Ken.
- Daniel, Doe (1984). *The Poetry of John Keat and William Wordsworth*. Middlesex: Klen Books.
- Daniel, Wue (1987). *English Romantic Verse*. England: Penguin Books.
- Earnest, R. (1962). *The Gold Treasury of English Poetry*. Great Britain: Macmillan.

- Hey Woods, A. M (1998). *Crossings: An Anthology of Selected English Poetry*. Delhi: Macmillan.
- John, H. (Ed.) (1968). *Penguin Book of English Verse*. London: Penguin Books.
- Kennedy, X. J. and Giola, Dana (2007). *An Introduction to Poetry*. Boston: Pearson: Longman.
- Leddeit, Beal, R.D. (1988). *A Handbook of English Literature*. Prentice Hall: Eaglewood Cliff.

### UNIT 3: POETRY AND NATURE: A DISCUSSION OF THE POETRY OF WILLIAM WORDSWORTH (1770 – 1850)

#### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main contents
  - 3.1 A Discussion of Poem No. (1) “The world is too much with us”
  - 3.2 A Discussion of Poem No. (2) “A night piece”
  - 3.3 A Discussion of Poem No. (3) “The discharged soldier”
  - 3.4 A Discussion of Poem No. (4) “I wondered lonely as a cloud”
  - 3.5 A Discussion of Poem No. (5) “The prelude: Glad preamble”
  - 3.6 A Discussion of Poem No. (6) “I traveled among unknown men”
  - 3.7 A Discussion of Poem No. (7) “The London Beggar”
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/ Further Reading

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to discuss the selected poetry of William Wordsworth. The thematic preoccupation of the poet has been clearly discussed to reveal the poet’s concern for humanity, as well as his private and public opinions of the world around him, emotional and psychological experiences of life in England. Below are the objectives of this unit.

#### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:



- explain the themes in William Wordsworth's "The world is too much with us"
- outline the themes in "A Night piece"
- state the poet's impression of "the discharged soldier"
- discuss the poet's emotional state in "I wondered lonely as a cloud"
- argue in favour of the poet's view in "The prelude, Glad preamble"
- discover the poet's view in "I traveled among unknown men".
- reflects the poet's view of the London society of his time in "The London Beggar".
- compose a poem on any subject in your own city or country.

### Poem No (1) "The World is too much with us"

William Wordsworth in "the world is too much with us" takes man back to his natural environment to which he pays little or no attention. Perhaps, the poet is a review of the prevailing social problems of the Romantic and Victorian periods. Humanity prefers to be occupied with material things of life instead of the need to be close to nature and the natural environment as emphasized in the lines of the poem. Man has lost touch with the essence of nature, its revitalizing strength, productive power and maternal beauty such that our preoccupation with the perishables is to man's disadvantage, demeaning and to the disappointment of the Almighty God who created nature for the comfort of man. Wordsworth observes that humanity is indeed

...spending, we lay waste our powers,  
 Little we see in nature what is ours  
 The sea that bares her bosom to the moon  
 The winds that will be howling at all hours...  
 For this, for everything we are out at tune.

Other themes of the poem are neglect, misplaced priority, social recklessness and wastefulness, disappointment, beauty.

The poet choice of language is a generous use of natural allusion to further drive home the nature related themes of the poem, "moon", "winds", "flowers", and "sea". Allusion is also made to "proteus", sea goddess of the Greek and "Triton", Greek goddess of nature and fertility. With the use of visual and auditory images, "winds that will be howling at all hours". "Sight of proteus rising from the sea", "this pleasant lea", "or hear old Triton below his wreathed horn. The images used make the poem pictures que, and the poet's choice of words are familiar, chosen from the natural environment, examples are "world", "sun", "powers", "moon", "sea", "flowers" all of which give room for clarity and easy comprehension by readers.

### Poem No. (2) “A Night Piece”

The poem reveals the poet's impression of his observation of the cloud. He experiments with natural imagery. He looks up at the cloud, “the sky is overspread” to connect the continuous cloud with a “veil”. The moon gives “whitened” light to brighten the extending cloud in strange grasp to provoke shadowy appearance on plants and trees, though not in such a generous beam but the cloud is helped by a multitude of stars to produce “instantaneous light” making it possible for the “musing man” to share from the magnificence of the cloud, humanity gets pleased by the “glory of the heavens”, impressive sailing cloud accompanied by the numerous stars...”that small, and bright, and sharp, along the gloomy vault gorgeous and dazzling as she “drives... fast they wheel away” but “vanish not”!! Roll along’ the stars move quietly around the “white clouds”, enormous clouds”. The poet recalls the dignity of the stars and clouds from her great summit, the windy and spirited beauty of the combined marriage of convenience of the stars and cloud are generously expressed in the poem. The poet recalls

The sky is overspread  
With a close veil of one continuous cloud  
All whitened by the moon that just appears  
A dim-seen orb, yet chequers not the ground  
With any shadow-plant, or tower, or tree  
At last, a pleasant gleam breaks forth at once  
An instantaneous light; the musing man  
Who walks along with his eyes bent to earth  
Is startled. He looks about, the clouds are split  
As under land above his head he views.

### Poem No. (3) “The Discharged Soldier”

The subject of the poem, a discharged soldier who is apparently disillusioned takes a walk along the “public way” that is quiet and deserted in the night “a character of deeper quietness” “pathless solitudes”. The poet feels watchful, heightened and difficult as he walked up the road to “watery surface to the ridge of the surprising” where the brook and valley were united. The imaginary discharged soldier, a mental traveler moved on wearied and fatigued “exhausted mind worn out by toil”. The entire universe with all her elemental bodies, star, moons seems united on the streets perhaps to “sympathises” with the lonely soldier who claims he is “unworthy of deeper joy, thus he had to

“...steal along that silent road  
My body from the stillness drinking in  
A restoration like the clam of sleep

In his strange experience, he feels the peace and deep solitude. The new pictures of his once familiar street of imagery conceived from the deepest part of his soul “like dreams” and “obscurely mingled with their passing forms”. The poet's

emotion and consciousness write in “self possession falls in every pause” and “in every gentle movement of my frame”. The poet, obviously a discharged soldier who has just returned home to his familiar terrain probably after a murderous war experience is led on by his conscience along a lonely grave-like pathway.

The poet reveals:

A consciousness of animal delight  
A self possession felt in every pause  
And every gentle movement of my frame  
While thus I wandered, step by step led on  
I chanced a sudden turning of the road  
Presented to my new on uncouth shape

The poet presents how much has changed in a familiar terrain of the discharged soldier, the curved road, uncouth shape, the marked thick “hawthorn” in “status tall” the letter a “foot above man’s common measure tall” lank and upright. He had long leg, shapeless, statures, which is that of a hero of war, a demobilized soldier had lean and long arms with bar hardies. His visage, wasted though it seemed was large “on feature, his cheek sunken”, and his mouth “showed ghastly in the moonlight from behind”... “his figure seemed “half sitting and half-standing”. I could mark that he was “clad in military garb”.

The poet’s representation of the stature of the soldier was so vivid that one would take the standing posture for a real human: “the simplicity, glove in hand”, “made him more akin to man” The man in the middle of the village is located among the scattered trees, distant from spot of an arrow’s flight. The poet wishes to see the hand made man more based on his real artistry. He stood and watches on gazing in either amazement, then, he left the shady nook from where he had “stood to watch and hailed the stranger” apparently taken off by his imagination, his feeling fell as he imagines the lean soldier a fallen hero rose to return his salutation. The poet desires to know the history of the fallen hero, he was a soldier to the tropic isles, though returned to his native home after he was dismissed from the military. The poem reveals the pain, indifference, truth, the integrities of war.

Poem No. (4) “I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud”

The poet recalls his experience of wandering over the hills, mountains and valleys. He ran into a crowd and then a golden “daffodils beneath the trees, fluttering and dancing in the breeze”. The poet explains:

...continuous as the stars that shines  
And twinkle on the miky way  
They stretched in never ending line  
Along the margin of a bay  
Ten thousand saw I at a glance  
Tossing their heads in rightly dance

Nature here complements the other for a healthy living; the shining stars helped the lily to “toss their heads in rightly dance”. Wordsworth recalls the dancing and “sparkling waves in glee”. But the poet could not avoid gazing at the daffodils that gives the poet a wealth of creativity “what wealth the show to me had brought”. The gaze triggered Wordsworth’s creative imagination so beautiful and torturous is the poet’s inner eyes that gave him his creative wondrous thoughts.

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 when my heart with pleasure fills  
And dance with the daffodils.

Poem No. (5) “The Prelude: Glad Preamble”

The poet conceives and exhibits the abundant blessings in nature including the comfort that nature provides. In what looks like an adventure through the “breeze” that blows from the green fields, and from the clouds”, the beats of the sky against the check releasing abundant joy to satisfy humanity. So precious is nature that the poet could not avoid embracing nature’s generosity. He admits

Oh welcome messenger, Oh welcome friend!  
A captive greets thee coming from a house  
Of bondage from yon city’s walls set free

The poet shows the conjugal relationships between man and nature but profitable as William Wordsworth confesses that he has been released from where he was confined at Goslar in Germany. He admits being free “enfranchised and at large” free to fix my habitation where I will”. He is ready to practice his Arts wherever he chose, he anticipates “what dwelling shall receive me? In what value shall be my harbour?”

Underneath what grove shall I take up my home?” Wordsworth recognize the freedom that nature allows in creativity, the encouragement and love as well as the admission that is the

Joyous, nor scared at its own liberty  
Be nothing better than a wandering cloud

William Wordsworth is haunted by the creative will deposited in him by nature “Mounting of the mind comes fast upon me”

The purgative power in creativity makes the poet bold, give him peace and the miracle of life “promises of life” and “undisturbed delight”. The poet believes in the visionary ideal and prophetic ability of nature to support prospects, leads to the pathway “point me on my course” helps along the path of a “chosen tasks”, the maternal role of nature to the poet is emphasized, “dwell on shore”, “gather

fruits fresh” from nature’s trees. All such gifts of nature, the poet says consecrates his joy, the breeze which he describes as the Breath of heaven blowing on his “body felt within” all with “mild creative breeze”. The poet recognizes the creative power in nature “vexing its own creation” that comes with recognizable identity, its “virtue”, “thoughts”, “dignity”, “prowess”, “pure passion”, “knowledge”, “delight”, “holy life of music” and of the verse”.

#### Poem No. (6) “I traveled among unknown men”

William Wordsworth’s journey here refers to both mental travel and actual journey, the latter probably to Germany. He journeyed among “unknown men” in “lands beyond the sea” Nor England”. The poem is also Wordsworth’s declarative statement and patriotism to the new verse.

He conceives his verse but not pre-meditated, the imaginative process is the journey, the outcome of the poet’s thought is the newness, the unknown. The poet confesses his love for the verse “the love I bore to thee”, “nor will I quit thy shore”, “I seem to love thee more and more”. He admits, “Among thy mountains did I feel the joy of my desire.

From the first to the last stanza, the poet openly declares his interest in poetry or the Arts for which he vowed never to quit, a reflection of his commitment to his creative experience and novelty.

#### Poem no (7) “The London Beggar”

The poet paints a gruesome picture of the city of London beginning with a friendly note, he reports the mystery, neglect and wretchedness that characterized the great city of London. “Oh friend, one felling was there which belonged to this great city by exclusive right”. Wordsworth calls our attention to the tickly population of London. “In the overflowing streets”. He tells us one could easily read about the city of London, from her social to economic experiences, by merely taking a glance at the faces of passers-by in the streets of London.

Have I gone forwards with the crowd, and said  
Unto myself, “The face of everyone  
That passes by me in a mystery

The poet vows to live above the mystery that characterized the city of London, like a plague, and for which he also suffers but “ceased to look oppressed” the development inflicts frights in the minds of the populace “the present, past, hope, fear all stays”. Beggars litter the streets of London in search of survival, the poet doubts if social begging is not already endemic or a plague that could afflict anyone. The poet paints the picture of a blind beggar who “with upright face”, stood propped against a wall, up on his chest”. The beggar wears a written paper to explain the “story of the man”, and who he was”. The poet is familiar with the

emblem of the blind beggar, a common experience with the poet's universe. He explains that the emblem

Of the utmost that we know...  
Both of ourselves and the universe  
And, on the shape of this unmoving man

Wordsworth ends his poem with a note of doubts and surprises, apparently embarrassed by such development

...the unmoving man  
His fixed face and sightless eyes, I looked  
As if admonished from another world

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the poet's vision in "The Word is too Much with Us".

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed William Wordsworth's "The Word is too Much with Us", "A Night Piece", "The Discharged Soldier", "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud", "The Prelude: Glad Preamble", "I Travelled among Unknown Men" and "The London Beggar".

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- the poet's impression in "The Word is too Much with Us"
- themes in "A Night Piece"
- the poet's focus in "The Discharged Soldier"
- the focus of the poet in "I Wondered Lonely as a Cloud"
- the poet's feeling for the London populace as seen in "The London Beggar"
- the poet's aim in "The Prelude: Glad Preamble"
- nature of the poet's journey in "I Travelled among Unknown Men"
- in the next unit you will be introduced to the poetry of selected prominent English poets like William Blake, Alexander Pope and William Butler Yeats.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

1. How did William Wordsworth experiment with the problems of the Romantic and Victorian periods in his poem "The World is too much with us"?

2. Discuss the poet's impression of nature in "A Night Piece"
3. Explain reminiscences in William Wordsworth "The Discharged Soldier".

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Abu, A. (1984). *Themes in the Selected English Drama-Restoration to the Romantic*. Enugu: Klean Publishers Limited.
- Alex, B. (2011). *Looking back into English Literature: Restoration to Victorian*. Abuja: Pukman
- Allen, C. (1980). *English Literature and the Age of Revolution*. Ibadan: Macmillan
- Anna and Kriten (1975). *The Enigma of Values – An Introduction*. Denmark: Kangaroo Press.
- Auden, W. A. (1970). *In Memory of W. B. Yeats in Selected Poetry of W. H. Auden*. New York: The Morden Library
- Carlyle, T. (1969). *Condition of England. The Victorian Mind*. New Delhi: Newlink and Capricon Books.
- Carter, R. (1996). *The Penguin Guide to English Literature*. Britain and Ireland. London. Penguin Group.
- Currtin, P. (1964). *The Image of Africa: British Ideas and Actions*. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press.
- Fowler R (1973). *Poetry and William Wordsworth*. London: Routledge and Kegan.
- Fowler, R. (1973). *A Dictionary of Modern Critical Terms*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- William, B. (1966). *The Complete Writings of William Blake with Variant Readings* Ed. Geoffrey Keyens: London: Oxford University Press.
- Wolf, V. (1955). *To the Light* New York and London: Harcourt, Brace Jaranovich

UNIT 4: OTHER PROMINENT ENGLISH POETS: WILLIAM BLAKE (1757 – 1827), ALEXANDER POPE (1688 – 1744) AND WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1865 – 1939)

CONTENTS

1.0 Introduction

2.0 Objectives

3.0 Main content

3.1 The Poetry of William Blake (1757 – 1827)

- 3.1.1 A Discussion of Poem No. (1) “Songs of innocence – introduction”
- 3.1.2 A Discussion of Poem No. (2) “The shepherd”
- 3.1.3 A Discussion of Poem No. (3) “The Echoing Green”
- 3.1.4 A Discussion of Poem No. (4) “The Lamb”
- 3.1.5 A Discussion of Poem No. (5) “The Little Black Boy”
- 3.1.6 A Discussion of Poem No. (6) “The young Black Slave”
- 3.1.7 A Discussion of Poem No. (7) “To see a world in a grain of sand”
- 3.1.8 A Discussion of Poem No. (8) “The Blossom”
- 3.1.9 A Discussion of Poem No. (9) “Chimney Sweeper”
- 3.1.10 A Discussion of Poem No. (10) “The little Boy lost”
- 3.1.11 A Discussion of Poem No. (11) “The little Boy found”
- 3.1.12 A Discussion of Poem No. (12) “Laughing song”
- 3.1.13 A Discussion of Poem No. (13) “A cradle song”
- 3.1.14 A Discussion of Poem No. (14) “The Divine Image”
- 3.1.15 A Discussion of Poem No. (15) “Holy Thursday”
- 3.1.16 A Discussion of Poem No. (16) “Night”
- 3.1.17 A Discussion of Poem No. (17) “Spring”
- 3.1.18 A Discussion of Poem No. (18) “Nurses song”
- 3.1.19 A Discussion of Poem No. (19) “Infant joy”
- 3.1.20 A Discussion of Poem No. (20) “A Dream”
- 3.1.21 A Discussion of Poem No. (21) “On another’s sorrow”
- 3.1.22 A Discussion of Poem No. (22) “The Garden of love”
- 3.1.23 A Discussion of Poem No. (23) “London”



- 3.1.24 A Discussion of Poem No. (24) “The marriage of Heaven and Hell”
- 3.2 The Poetry of Alexander Pope (1688 – 1744)
  - 3.2.1 A Discussion of Poem No. (1) “Rape of the Lock”
  - 3.2.2 A Discussion of Poem No. (2) “Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate Lady”
  - 3.2.3 A Discussion of Poem No. (3) “Eloisa to Abelard”
- 3.3 The Poetry of William Butler Yeats (1865 – 1939)
  - 3.3.1 A Discussion of Poem No. (1) “An Irish Airman Foresees His Death”
  - 3.3.2 A Discussion of Poem No. (2) “The second coming”
  - 3.3.3 A Discussion of Poem No. (3) “Sailing to Byzantium”
  - 3.3.4 A Discussion of Poem No. (4) “When you are old”
  - 3.3.5 A Discussion of Poem No. (5) “In memory of Major Robert Gregory”
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/ Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit completes our selection of major English poets. In this unit, we have selected poetry variously from the works of William Blake, Alexander Pope and William Butler Yeats for our discussion. Their various themes and general perspectives to life as revealed in their poems are our main concern. The poems are treated in a comprehensive and prose-like form in such a way that you will find your contact with their poems and English poetry generally interesting to read. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- outline the poet's concern in the shepherd and “The marriage of Heaven and Hell”
- discuss Blake's view in the introduction to Songs of Innocence
- explain the themes in Alexander Pope's “The Rape of the Lock” and “Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate Lady”
- state the poet's view of love in “Eloisa to Abelard.
- review the poet's main concern in William Butler Yeats “An Irish Airman foresees His Death”
- comment on William Butler Yeats “The second coming”
- assess the poet's view in William Blake's “The Garden of love
- give your impression of Yeats sailing to Byzantium
- explain the poet's phobia in “When you are old”
- support on the poet's reminiscence in “In memory of, Major Robert Gregory
- rate William Blake's shepherd

- value William Blake's Echoing Green
- defend the little black boy in Blake's poem of that title
- argue in favour of the young black slave in William Blake's Songs of Innocence
- compare William Blake's blossom with Chimney Sweeper
- appraise Blake's the little boy lost and the little boy found
- judge Blake's laughing song with cradle song
- score William Blake's Night and Spring
- estimate William Blake's Nurses Song
- defend Infant Joy in William Blake's Songs of Innocence
- assemble the themes in "a dream"
- write the poet's feelings in "on another's sorrow"
- report the main and sub themes in Blake's in "the garden of love"
- relate the position of William Blake in "London" and "the Marriage of Heaven and Hell"
- underline the poet's creative design in "to see a world in a grain of sand"

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### The Poetry of William Blake

##### Poem No.1: Songs of Innocence - Introduction

William Blake begins his songs of Innocence by invoking the Innocence of a child he ran into while 'piping down the valley's wild' Apparently moved by the poet's tune, the child cuts in, requesting that the poet composes a rhyme about a lamb, to which Blake agreed cheerfully. The poet's song, it appears struck the boy's emotion, provoked him to shed tears. The poet's emphases here is the achievement of the powerful "force of emotional feeling that is contained in poetry" "... he wept to hear" "wept with joy to hear". In selfless curiosity and desire to share with others the limitless aesthetics of the rhyme, he insists that the piper sits down and write his songs for others members of his generation to enjoy the wisdom/knowledge that is contained in a work of Arts. The poet adhered to the boy's suggestion that poetry be expanded from restricted and private theme to the universal. Our poet suggests a need to change from the complex, unmusical and esoteric verse inherited from the classical tradition of poetry to a more socially engaging, simple and familiar poetry with new themes. He states:

Piper, sit dee down and write  
 In a book that all may read...  
 And I plucked a hollow reed  
 And I made a rural pen,  
 And I wrote my happy songs  
 Every child may joy to hear

In continuation of the overriding theme of innocence in Blake's songs of innocence, the poet takes a cursory look into the 'valleys wild' examining the quiet hills, valleys, and in the process, he saw a child who was laughing, and then approached and instructs him to sing a long to him about a lamb, to which he obeyed him cheerfully, and piped, but while he innocent child listened, the boy falls into a more deeply state of innocence by weeping. And in between the expression of his state of innocence, the child requests our dear poet never to stop his happiness giving songs, so the poet piped on gladly; a confirmation of the therapeutic power of poetry/literature.

... 'pipe a song about a lamb'  
So I piped into a merry cheer  
Piper, pipe that song again  
So I piped, he wept to learn.

The lad, this time preferred a song of happy cheer, not with the pipe, but as the poet begins, the boy again weeps in his sore state of innocence. The lad preferred to watch the piper who sits down and write his songs down in a book "that all may read and disappeared from the poet's presence. At last the poet adhered to the child's request made a rural pen and wrote all he had sang for others to read. The Arts which is symbolized in the poet's state of innocence, the good Knowledge or the poet's intuition address him to return to nature poems so that the inhabitants of rural England may enjoy the beauty of his craft. Blake obeys.

... And I made a rural pen.  
And I stained the matter clear,  
And I wrote my happy songs  
Every child may joy to hear  
The shepherd

Our poet suggests a need to change from the complex, unmusical, and esoteric verse inherited from the classical tradition of poetry to a more socially acceptable and refashioned familiar, simple poetry in new or current themes.

#### Poem No 2 The shepherd

The shepherd continues the theme of innocence in the poetry of William Blake "Songs of Innocence". The shepherd's experience in the field from morning to evening is discussed in this poem, he "strays", following his sheep to everywhere praising the Almighty God as he roams around in his sheep, in strict adherence to the "innocence call" of his sheep who cooperates with the shepherd as does the threshold.

#### Poem No. (3): The Echoing Green

William Blake praises the sun for the her great work of giving happiness to all, the "skies" making everything in nature happy, the spring "sky lark "through

“bird” of the bush echoing all that represent nature. The singing birds were able to do that as a result of the strength they derived from the “sun” the “spring” is able to release her water by relying on the productive capacity of the sun to be able to do that. Every man in different kind of vocations; sport; and still able to live long as a result of the caring nature of the sun that gives longevity to man. The poet recalls:

The poetry recalls.  
Old John with white hair  
Does laugh away care.  
Sitting under the Oak  
Among the old folk  
Such were the joys  
When we all girls and boys..

Blake rolls out the inexhaustible table qualities of nature as symbolized in the sun air, spring water the green, as give of happiness, assuage his man thirst, refreshes, consoles, comports aids remembrances, heals, revitalizes the human memories, promotes longevity. To this poet, nature is a leader, I till the little ones heary, no more can be merry”, it reaches to and meets the needs of every inhabitant of the earth, “The sun does descend “ The sun determines the nature of man’s welfare, helps man to select his daily activities, when to play and end his sports, as well as the time to rest.

#### Poem No. (4): The lamb

The lamb in the poem is identified with Jesus Christ, a symbol of innocence, conscience the quality of the lamb is compared to that of Jesus Christ. The lamb in the poem shares similar characteristics with Jesus Christ meek “mild” like a “child”, the Blessed and so on in various allusion to the Holy Bible Jesus like life a great provider the giver of clothing and shelter to the needy, gives a tender voice, “joy”. The supernatural quality of the lamb is repeated in the poem in rhetoric’s.

#### Poem No. (5): The Little Black Boy

This poem of William Blakes commemorates the passing of a Bill proposed in the house of commons on 21<sup>st</sup> may 1788 by Sir William Dolben which restricted the number of Slaves who could be transported from Africa to British colonies in the West Indies.

The little black boy in the poem is a slave who tells his life history in simple, emotion filled and touching language after realizing his experience and shattered life in his new world. He explains that he was born in the Southern world “wild”, he admits that he is black but his “soul is now white” by his allegiance and new cosmopolitan English cultural setting. He noticed the colour differentiation

between black and white. He reports the colour bar, discrimination he encountered in the following lines.

My mother bore me in the Southern wild  
And I am black, but O! my soul is white  
White as an angel is the English child  
But I am black as if bereaved of light

Poem No. (6) The Young Black Slave

The young black slave explains the psychological and emotional torture his severance from his native land has caused him. As a black boy, he is constrained to learn white culture, and he notices the honor bestowed upon the white child and how he is treated as underdog and isolated “as if bereaved of light”. In the poem, he regrets how he is isolated; the nostalgia he suffers in the poem is regrettable; without any relation. He recounts how he experiences series of indignities, emotional and physical, “wet with dew” and his night weeping; loneliness reduced to vagabondage. He cried every night until God appeared to him at night in a “white” apparel, kissed and led him by the hand, just as his sorrowful mother appeared to console her weeping in the boy’s imaginative reverie in the poem. While his mother consoles him, she instructs him to direct his thoughts, ill-feelings to God who will bear his troubles, brighten his days and comfort him, “...gives his light and gives his heat away” the same way, “flowers”, ...trees, ...beast,” and receive comfort in the morning, joy in the noonday. She teaches her boy that the true love that eludes him, can be given by the Almighty God who gives joy and care to all without discrimination. She comforts the boy further, explaining the rationale behind the colour bar. She advises that such discrimination should be seen as God’s natural way of shielding the black man’s soul, “a cloud like a shady grove”. She insists that the moment he is enslaved and oppressed blacks in England overcomes the heat of disparity and bear other indignities in the English world of division, “the cloud will vanish”, and the good God will receive the oppressed in his open arms warmly, wrapped them with his superior love and care “like lambs rejoice “. After she had consoled her boy, the boy found it possible to admits “the little English boy”; his mates, no longer nurse and grudge against them, as his soul unites black and white who were thought of to emanate from different worlds...”from black and he from white cloud free”.

The overriding sense of joy, unity and oneness will then take over the racial prejudice that had once defined separately the black and white world, and as a result, both race will find everlasting peace and joy and be able to endure each other, ignoring the colour bar and other complexes and stigma that separate the two worlds. The boy foresees, close interaction between him and other white boys, enjoying the value of quality that defines the nature of the Almighty God.

To learn in joy upon our father’s knee;  
And then I’ll stand and stroke his silver hair,  
And be like him and he will then love me.

The style of the poet in the group of poem is similar, communicative, simple language is used, lyrically and economy of words through short phrases and sentences, drawing some significant mode of stylistic expression from the Bible helps to achieve musical excellence. One of the group of poems, Shepherd has religious "innocent call", alludes to the call by Jesus Christ, "lot"! There is also natural allusion, hence such words that relates to nature like "sun", "skies", "spring", "skylark", "thrush", "birds of the bush", "green", "oak", the "Lamb" is compared with the qualities that are identified with Jesus Christ in the Bible, such as Meek, "mild" and tenderly; In the Little Black Boys Blake's, style is very revealing and nostalgic with simile. "but I am black as if be reared of light, "And round the tent of God like lamb, Biblical allusion prepared the poem, "God" "souls"

The opening lines of the poem are entirely conversational the introductory parts of the songs of innocence look like a conversational between the piper and the innocence boy. "piper" a song about a lamb on a cloud I saw a child, he laughing said to me" piper a song about a Lamb!!

The conversational and child like language which Blake adopted in his poem makes the whole experience very practical, revealing and successful.

Poem No. (7): To see a world in a grain of sand.

To see a world in a grain of sand  
 And a heaven in a wild flower,  
 Hold infinity in the palm of your hand  
 And eternity in an hour

In this quatrain of William Blake we see the theme of transience as the temporal nature of our world is compared with the beauty and eternal presence of heaven and heavenly bodies. Other themes are theme of permanence, the transience nature of the human world with her vanishing possibilities, the excessive adornment by which heaven is identified. Heaven, though seems far, yet the poet believes is so near to us. The first lines of Blake's quatrain is apocalypse, reminds one of the ruinous end of the world as predicted in the Bible book of Revelation.

Blank's style in the short poem is loaded with metaphor, which appears in every line. And every metaphor of the poem is loaded with meanings as our temporal world is compared to a grain of sand that could vanish in a moment of encounter with a passing wind; while at the earth is placed in contrast with heaven and heavenly bodies of lasting qualities and affects.

Poem No. (8): The Blossom

The blossom reflected on the sparrow, paying specific attention to its characteristic and behaviour. The poet observes that the bird, plays hide, and seek under green leaves swiftly. The poet echoes the sharp and penetrating voice of the bird. Blake recalls

Merry Merry sparrow  
Under leaves so green  
A happy blossom  
See you swift as arrow.

Poem No. (9): The Chimney Sweeper

The poet reminiscences the innocence of a boy, or, of the poet as a boy. The poet is so innocent that when his mother died, he hardly knew what he should do. In the combination of innocence and confusion, even when his father compels him to cry, he hardly knew the reason, rather he recalls how. Tom Dare cried when his hair was shaved.

Poem No. (10): The Little Boy Lost

The theme of innocence continues here with poets homeless boy who walks along a foot path night with his father, complaining angrily and weeping in fear, asking his father not walk too so that he may not get lost. As he weeps, the sapour which his tears produced disappears, an indication of the ephemeral nature of child innocence.

Poem No. (11): The Little Boy Found

The boy's premonition the he might get lost happened as he got "lost in the lonely fen" without his father any near in sight, but the maternal, protective and paternal roles of nature took over human responsibility as the "wandering light" of the night assumed a paternal figure and led the way "appeared care to the child kissed the child" led him by the hand through the "lonely dale".

Poem No. (12): Laughing Song

The poet personifies nature here, the green woods, "hills" dimpling stream runs laughing, as does the air, the noise produced by the median assumed a song like status the same way the grasshopper laughter reminds the poet of the songs of laughter's of Mary Susan and Emily. The reverberating aesthetics of nature becomes a street rhyme, "ha, ha, he!" that soothes the soul.

Poem No. (13): The Cradle Song

The poet recalls the pleasant beauty of infants dream, merged with the "pleasant streams" "sweet sleep" Angelic like innocence the smile the beguiling night

sweet moan like sighs, the poet lullaby lulls the child to a wonderful night rest of happiness. The cradle song immortalizes the poet's infant memory and gives confidence.

#### Poem No. (14): The Divine Image

William black equates child's innocence with godly virtues of "mercy, peace and love" he found in the virtues of delight, care, human face, love as reversion qualities of the divine, found in such characteristics is God himself "God is dwelling too".

#### Poem No. (15): Holy Thursday

Reminiscences a Thursday declared holy by St. Paul in England. Children appeared in pears wearing colourful attires with such colours that symbolizes holiness and purity, "red", "blue", and "green", with "white" wands as "snow". The free movement of the many children to the dome of St. Paul is compared to the free flow of the River Thames, just as the beauty formed by the colour combination of the innocent children, the radiance, and flowery appearance is also compared to "multitudes of lambs". The thunderous songs of the numerous boys and girls, the harmony of thought, voices are compared to that of heavenly Angels and hosts.

#### Poem No. (16): Night

Nature is appraised in this poem with the sun "descending in the west", the evening star shines", as all the birds had gone into their nest, the moon takes over the responsibility of shedding his light down the Earth. The green fields and groves have gone to sleep after the day's work. The birds too have retired into their nests, whereas the night is a time for Lion, Wolves and tigers to hunt for preys while the gentle Lamb "lie down and sleep".

#### Poem No. (17): Spring

The poet harmonizes the image of man and nature here as seen in the "bird's delight, "Lamb", "little boy", "little girl", who all welcome the spring with joy and admiration "merrily merrily to welcome in the year", a source of attraction to man and animals, so inviting "soothes the "little Lamb" which submits themselves, "come and lick, my white neck". The spring in conversational mode responds"... Your soft wool let me Kiss your soft face".

#### Poem No. (18): Nurses Song



The joy of weaning children is celebrated by the poet, freedom from infancy “...My heart is at rest within my breast”. As the children are weaned and they advanced from infancy, could walk, run, and play in the field, shouting and laughing, echoed in the hills, nursing mothers are relieved, freed from the worries that accompanies the care for a child in infancy.

#### Poem No. (19): Infant Joy

When a child is born, there is a great joy for the infant child and his mother, a latter is reoccupied with what name to give to the child, he guesses and speculates amidst the bountiful joy that accompanies the baby’s arrival.

#### Poem No. (20): A Dream

William Blake recalls a dream while his Angels guard his bed probably in the meadow where he “lay” after he lost his way as a traveler is tired and down cast, “heart-broke”. The traveler remembers his children and loved ones, wondered if they ever thought of him or “weep for me” him but while speculating, “a glow-warm” nearby replied him, advised him not to wail, rather he should direct his complaints to the night who goes round, watching over man, day and night, he assures the poet that the watch night, probably God, will not only solve his problems, but will also lead him back home.

#### Poem No. (21): On Another’s Sorrow

William Blake’s sorrowful heart calls and merges the pain of private emotion with the universal. But, he feels that a grief shared is half solved, but will surely be solved if the Almighty God is petitioned accordingly over our grieves, even as we realize how much He cares for the “small birds grief” and cater for infants from cradle, “sit both night and day wiping all our tears away”... He doth give his joy to all “to make all happy. Jesus cares for us because he has experienced pain and sorrow in the cross of Calvary, so it’s not difficult for him to share our pains and care for us as “... a man of woe...” who feel the sorrow too”. The poet advises that whoever is sorrowful should never think that his maker is not near, hence cannot help. He explains that our maker “gives to us his joy” to put an end to our “grief which“... is fled and gone and our maker is ever “by us”.

#### Poem No. (22): The Garden of Love

The poet refers to a chapel that was built in South Lambeth Green in 1793. Every member was charged to pay for their places, thus revealing the irony of the poem. In place of green where the poet used to play as a boy stand a building for worship where man's inhumanity, and wickedness abound. The poet was disappointed that in the garden of love where many graves and tombstones and the priests in black gown walk tirelessly making proclamations in the garden. The poet observes.

And I saw it was filled with graves  
And tombstones where flowers should be  
The priests in white gowns were walking their rounds  
And binding with briars my joys and desires.

#### Poem No. (23): London

In what looks like the poet's experience of the people and city of London, he wandered through the mapped street of London owned by corporations around the Thames. The expression of tears and comfort, agony, depression, and hunger were boldly written on the faces of all the poet ran into on the streets of London.

I wonder through each chartered street  
Near where the chartered Thames does flow  
And mark in every face I meet  
Marks of weakness, marks of woe

In every cry of every man  
In every infant's cry of fear  
In every voice, in every ban  
The mind forged manacles I hear.

The apparent hardships spread into the church and "the chimney sweeper's cry", the sight of the disillusioned around was weary. The social and economic problems in London of the poet's age had overpowering influence on the young English women, many of whom had been reduced to harlots low long in the midnight streets of London with their "howling babies". The effect of the biting social economic problems in London affects a great number of the populace such that the poet described it as a plague.

But most through midnight streets  
I hear how the youthful harlots curse  
Blasts the new born infant's ear  
And blasts with plagues the marriage hearse.

#### Poem No. (24): The Marriage of Heaven and Hell (The Argument)

The poet begins on a note of confusion, rage and anger by referring to “Rintrah”; the angry voice that re echoed to burden the air and clouds. The confused beginning is hung around the events of the Garden of Eden, the damnation of the consequence of the threaded path of all disobedience and hell preferred by Adam and Eve.

One meek and in a perilous path  
The just man kept his course along  
The vale of death.

The poem justifies the necessary existence of the dual features of everything in nature “Roses are planted where thorns grow”. In what looks like a travel through the Garden of Eden, the poet refers to the perilous path that existed along “a river and a spring “as thus” to every cliff and tomb”. The inhabitants were comfortable in the Garden till “the villain left the paths of ease to walk in perilous paths and drive the just man into barren climes”.

The beguiling serpent “walks in mild humility” to deceive Adam and Eve who were driven out of the paradise, thus Evil dominates the good as much as both exist simultaneously.

The poetry of Alexander Pope (1688-1744)

Poem No. (1): The Rape of the Lock

The Rape of the Lock is a mock-heroic narrative poem written by Alexander Pope, published anonymously in Lintots’s miscellany in May 1712 in 334 Lines {Two cantos}. The poem was revised and expanded into 5 canto version, 794 lines in pope’s name in March 2, 1714.

The poem was written to commemorate a real life event based on a quarrel that involved young Lord Petre and Isabella Fermor, the latter’s hair was cut off by young Petre; all of which were from Roman Catholic families. Alexander Pope wrote the poem to end the quarrel based on the advice of his friend, John Carl. The catholic background of the feuding parties from conflicting families is the reason for the elaborate use of religious figures, expressions or terminologies in the Pope’s poem.

Isabella Fermor and her suitor, Lord Petre came from aristocratic Catholic families at a period in England when Catholicism was banned. Petre, who was lusting after Isabella had cut off a part of her dreadlock uninformed. This led to a great quarrel between the two popular catholic families. The reason Alexander Pope thinks of the possibility of uniting the conflicting parties through the use of humour.

The two catholic families were seen by pope to be playing the gods in the quarrel hence he compared the incident to the epic world of the gods. Pope created, a

character he named Belinda to represent the real Arabella and imaginatively journeyed into the world of “sylphs” or guardian spirits imitating the gods and goddesses. And, in a mockery of the traditional classical epics; the act is humorously considered synonymously to a rape, hence the rape of Helen of Troy becomes minute “sylphs”, Aeneas, and lock, hair. The gods become Belinda’s voyage through the Thames, the nature of Achille’s shield becomes Bellinda’s petticoats.

We have to see beyond the art of Bellinda’s hair and the petty conflict that ensured to extract the important theme of the beauty and loss of beauty in the poem. In the Augustan tradition, women’s hair was considered a very important part of her beauty, and women’s beauty generally was very important to her and her society. It then means that loss of one’s beauty was an important matter as she ought to be a decorative apparel as beauty in the age of Pope had the highest scoring, degree than any other feminine virtue attainable. Her hair was more important. When the Baron took a secret look into the Lock’s hair. He cherished it’s shining and inviting earlier mythical pears and nursed the secret desire to cut it ad he invokes the similar voyage of the gods. Pope remarks

The peer now spreads the glittering furfex wide,  
T’ inclose the lock, now joins it, to divide  
Ev’n then, before the fatal Engine clos’d  
A wretched sylph too fondly interpos’d,  
Fate urged the sheers and cut the sylph in twain.

The poem discusses the themes of wealth, laziness of the society of the time as well as the making of complex conflicts out of trivial issues of life. We were immediately introduced to the heroine, Bellinda and then immediately afterward connected to the supernatural, the sylph, an imitation of the gods and Romans and Greek. The Alexander pope’s theme reveals man as predatory, a natural predator whom every beautiful Belinda must beware of because of his egoistic and overpowering com destructive purpose which they often achieve through sexual ego hunt for the female Belinda. Pope equates the might in man’s tendency when confronted with Belinda to the gods of the Greeks and Romans (epics); thus every woman should beware of man according to pope. Women too as Belinda are obsesses in their beauty which they nurture desperately and determinably. In canto I of the poem, Belinda is preoccupied with beautifying or adoring herself in front of the mirror, even glorifying herself, and this also suggests that Belinda already elevates herself to a goddess who must be worshipped, the way she worshipped her reflection in the mirror, the reflection of her own vanity, the vanity of every human being, her goddess like beauty that every man desires to prey on.

Now fully dressed, Belinda sets off to a social occasion in canto II of the poem. On her journey, pope reminds us of her two famous locks of hair as well as the ambition of the Baron to possess them as token of her love. The Baron turns to the supernatural to assist him possess the totality of Belinda’s love, But half his wish is granted, one lock, not both. But, as Belinda sails off beautifully, flowing

temptingly freely in the air, Ariel who is now disturbed ordered the sylphs to be on her trail to be able to guard her against predators.

The canto III of the poem, Belinda arrives in Hampton court palace, where she plays a game of cards described in epic term as the parody of the battle scenes. Pope invokes the theme of waste here in Belinda as the much treasured time and energy meant for serious purpose is here channeled to the unnecessary gambling by Belinda. Belinda and the Baron flirts over a pack of card, gambling and other trivial or not so important things of life, the social engagement extends to the coffee time perhaps to direct Belinda's attention from his genuine or real intention. The Baron borrows a pair of scissors from Clarissa and snips off one of the unsuspecting Belinda Locks. Thus Belinda shrieks in dismay, the Baron triumphs as Belinda lost one of her locks, somewhat similar to a successful rape of Belinda. Pope equates the successful cut of Belinda's hair to the fall of an empire.

The fourth canto explains Belinda's emotional feelings to the triumphant will of violent passion. The gnomes and Umbriel descends to the underworld care of epic heroes such as Aeneas Spleen and Odysseus and returns with a bag filled with violent passion and a bottle with a little sorrows. With the mixture of passions and sorrows released into Belinda, she's further empowered, through the genuines of the passion which has been released into Belinda is doubtful, thus Thalestris speech in the poem raises doubts as its tinted with dishonour, but elevated with the intervention of the comic interludes Sir Plume in resolute. At last, Belinda comes off her ego as she pleads but her plea shows admixture of bitterness as she recalls her bitter experience. With all these, the certain is drawn off to unveil Clarissa's speech to correct and unite the quarrelsome, justifying the intention of pope's friend, John Carl that pope should write an epic poem to immortalize the conflict. But Clarissa's speech would have gotten the much praiseworthy effect, but for the fact that she played the accomplice in the defeat, cutting of Belinda's hair, by giving the Baron the fatal engine with which Belinda's lock was cut. Thalestris and Belinda, elegant ladies and other men in attendance descend to violence, fighting. At last, Pope achieved the erotic intention of his epic, the erotic quality realized in the physical contact, the snuff which Belinda throws in the Baron's face makes him to sneeze and then collapse, as pope's way of reversing Belinda's defeat, the latter threatens him with a long hair pin demands her lock back, but the irony is that the hair cannot be returned because it got lost, consumed in the confusion. With this, pope achieved mock-heroic end, a compliment to the lady. Other themes are themes of journey, secret desire, violence, triviality, vanity, praises, deception, and so on.

Pope uses classical borrowings, referring to the gods of the Latin, Roman and Greek to elevate the heroic status of Belinda in elevated language; the Syphs, Homer's *Illiad*, Aeneas, Tiber, Thames, Achilles, dressed up in the suitable language of lamentation and incantations, as well as parody, similes and exclamations seen in Homer's *Illiad* and *Odyssey*. The long epic is clothed in humour, for instance, when the Baron secretly saw the lock he immediately developed irresistible secret desire, first he admires it and desire to possess, get it

cut off, thus Pope creates something out of a ridiculous and trivial situation, mimicking William Shakespeare's *The Tempests*. The name, Ariel appeared in *The Tempests*.

The style of Pope's Rape of the lock is a mock-heroic. The structure of the epic like others before it, expanding and making sense out of trivial issue in a witty or humorous manner, yet, in grander language of chains of comparisons. Belinda's weakness; vanity, faults is combined with her unrivalled beauty, beauty that typifies the godness of the Greek and Roman, her beauty made her a heroic target of the Baron, prey men; but pope reorders life's possibilities in the poem, as Belinda's weird beauty which is her source of attraction reduces her to prey for the Baron, thus Belinda's private world of beauty as created by Pope soon became her major weakness as she combines godlike qualities with human to make her delicate, irresistible, thus ensnares men and draw them to errors, to fall at her feet. Pope insists:

If to her share some female errors fall,  
Look on her face, and you'll forget 'em all

In Pope's willful exaggeration combined with dark humour, Even the sun notices Belinda's dazzling beauty and mocks her as pretentious and predatory. For instance, when she adorns herself ready for a visit to Hampton court in canto I, she stands or sits before a mirror to assess her level of irresistibility to men when she gets cut into the society, and didn't set out for the journey until, she was sure she had certified herself in re-creating or refashioning her beauty like an army set for a battle. This could be the reason pope alludes to epic scene like the arming of Achilles in Homer's *Illiad*. He also states that her power or beauty could affect any judgment or change the natural order of things, the same way Belinda's very exaggerative beauty in the epic penetrated and gauged the conscience of the Baron, thwarted it and reversioned it to nurse secret evil against her even desperately.

#### Poem No. (2): Elegy to the Memory of an Unfortunate Lady

The first stanza of the poem published in 1717 begins with a meeting with the ghost of a young woman who has just stabbed herself to death. We do not know why she killed herself, but the suicidal may have to do with love. The poet believes that she is such a good woman who should not have lived in this world because she is so pure and innocent which is the reason for her early death. The woman's death, we are left to further torture our imagination and probably feel that her attack on her brother may have tried to lure her into marrying a man she do not really love. Our poet sympathizes with the unfortunate lady and regrets her early and unwarranted death in exile. This tragedy makes the poet to feel deeply for the innocent woman whose grave she devoted some beautiful lines. It seems that the poet generalizes the human habit of suicidal probably either for concealed reasons or reasons too trivial to warrant act of suicide; hence Pope leaves our memory confuses and wandering on the identity of the unfortunate

woman she invites his readers to mourn. The poem reminds us of the violent habit of an average Augustan or of the Neo classical age and society.

Poem No. (3): Eloisa to Abelard (Translated Poetry, French to English Language)

The poem, a heroic epistle that reminiscences John Hughes epistle of Eloisa and Abelard originally written in French language the latter also an artistic reflection of the Roman poet, Ovid. In what appear like a poetic craft of legendary people in dilemma, the legend of Dido's letter to Aeneas after they separated and then eventual suicide of Dido. The poet contracts emotion with suicide. The Poem probes man's psychological state of mind, the progression of thought (invented by the American psychologist, William James in the 20th century) running in him, the inner with self to arrive at a violent end is revealed in the form of letters. In the heroic epistle, the poet registers the vital emotional concerns of Abelard and Eloisa a myth that was famous in the age. The duo were great in learning and history but famous for their unfortunates' passion, experience chains of calamity after which they resigned to religion to overcome their tragedy for the rest of their lives. Several years after they separated, Abelard writes to a friend explaining his bitter experience but the letter got to Eloisa provoked by series of conflicting emotional response leading to celebrated passion, the frightening mysteries of love, emotional relationships directly in conflict with Eloisa's love for her Abelard and Christian duty

We see in Eloisa, the conflict between stunning and burning erotic desire and Christianity as well as traditional. Pope's emphasis is more on man's carnality than spirituality.

The poem takes off with Eloisa's outburst and excitement over the letter from Abelard after which the poet recounts history of their love relationships, and their current state of affairs, especially why Eloisa decides she will not marry Abelard, the violent end of their love and how Eloisa becomes a nun. The poet unites the Eloisa's state of mind with her environment and Nun ship and private secrets. At last, apparently unable to overcome her emotion, she thinks of the peace that is attainable in the grave as a way to escape the vanity of love and ephemeral and vanishing human affairs. The unanticipated trials that await future lovers became a concern of the poet. Pope may have re-created his love life as he was said to have been involved with two women, Lady Mary Wontley Montague and Martha Blunt a conflictive and deep psychological experience that may have informed this poem.

The Poetry of William Butler Yeats (1865-1939)

Poem No. (1) An Irish Airman foresees His Death

The Irish man in the poem is an imaginary soldier fighting in the First World War, it was a poem dedicated to Robert Gregory who was an active, talented and

brilliant soldier. The poet expresses his personal, emotional feeling about the futility of man's engagement in wars, the vanity of human life, as well as the inevitability of death.

The poet probes the troubled mind and dilemma in which an English soldier found himself while engaged in the First World War. He does not see himself surviving the war even as he flies the war plane high above his and enemy regiment, he found himself engaged in self re-examination, self-pity, self critique and concludes very early in the poem that he will not survive the war.

I know that I shall meet my fate  
Some where among the clouds above.

His location as a soldier, air regiment during the war was not a barrier to death nor was it a guarantee for victory in the war. He confesses that he had no particular reason for getting involved in the war as he insists "those that, I guard I do not love". William butler Yeats sees as mere folly and stupidity for man to fight and kill his fellow human beings in war as the art of warfare itself is not a sign of love neither for the defenseless nor of hatred or patriotism to fight in wars. It is also not possible to predict the end of any war, the same way wars are never profitable, just that war has becomes a burden "cross" that we must bear.

#### Poem No. (2): The Second Coming

The poet discusses the impact of the world war, particularly the Irish rebellion and Russian revolution. The poem refers to the every two thousand years period as full circle of history. Yeats is of the opinion that every complete two thousand years is full of historical epoch the end of a historical circle births beginning of another new circle of history and experience. The poet is concerned with the diminishing value of the contemporary man. He recalls the imminent arrival of the antichrists who will arrive to make history as predicted in the holy bible. He touches at the social political and economic problems that humanity of the present century will experience- all of which will define his complexities new government of the anti-Christ. The poet explains

A shape with Lion body and the head of a man  
A gaze blank and pitiless as the sun  
Is among its slow thighs, while all about it...  
The darkness drops again, but now I know  
The twenty centuries of stony sleep.

#### Poem No. (3): "Sailing to Byzantium"

Byzantium was the political capital of Byzantine Empire, the city now referred to as Istanbul. But, the poet does not merely mean the physical city but about the poet's attempt to escape from the natural political world, perhaps to paradise. It



could be Yeats's conception of the necessity of birth and death in which humanity is entrapped.

He merges the political Byzantium with an imaginary or fictive space. Very imagistic, the Cathedral at Byzantium, St. Sophia where saints are laid to rest. The poet's interest is in the changeless immortal where songs of Angels thrive compared to the singing birds in trees in our physical landscapes. He insists:

Those dying generations –at their song  
The salmon-falls... whatever is begotten,  
Born and dies caught in that sensual music all neglect  
Monuments of unaging intellect

The poem looks like an extended piece of metaphor wrapped around imagery to a puzzling house of thought to bridge the metaphysical with actual landscapes. The poet creates a relationship between the mortal body and immortality of the soul, the latter sings to redefined and give life to the body, tattered material over the ages. As the material body gets old and diminishes, the soul gets ready to vacate its tattered house in readiness to sail to paradise, a Byzantium. In this state the human body, the poet seems to argue loses its radiance, harmony and essential wholeness qualities Yeats states:

An aged man is but a paltry thing  
A tattered coat upon a stick, unless...  
For every tatter in its mortal dress  
Nor is there singing school but studying  
Monuments of its own magnificence  
And therefore I have sailed to the seas and come  
To the holy city of Byzantium  
O sages standing in God's holy fire  
As in gold mosaic of a wall.

Considering the last lines of the extract from Yeats poem, the poet is ready to leave this world to where he hopes to meet the saints who will admit him into his desired holy city, Byzantium. And, once admitted into immortality, the poet hopes to live in a state of absolute joy and undying... "the artifice of eternity", afterwards, the poet's soul will join the trail of heavenly choristers "set upon a golden bough to sing" and praise the "Lords and ladies of Byzantium". The poet is unpretentious about the final inevitable state of every man and anticipation of the soul's divine responsibility when he quits the natural world.

Poem No. (4): "When You Are Old"

William Butler Yeats suggests poetry as a necessary therapy for the aged who may be interested in recalling the true picture of a life time spent. Poetry to Yeats is a form of diary that may be revisited or consulted perhaps for a reevaluation of the individual's activities on earth; "when you are old and grey and full of sleep".

For a necessary therapy that poetry offers, the poet assures "...take soft look your eyes had once, and of their shadow wry deep". Through poetry, that provides the avenue for self reassessment, one's imagination earlier activities, failures, sorrow, joy and pilgrimage so far, the "moments of glad grace", "false" or "true", "sorrows of your changing face" of "the pilgrim soul in you". Yeats believes that apart from the material body which is less significant, a mere material, bearer of the soul; the soul is itself on a journey which ends in old age, a period that the pilgrimage of the soul ends and he quits the carriage body, leaving the material body to return to nature decomposed as the weak changing material begins to decompose the moment it gets old and full of sleep, eyes become weak, and face changes, love depreciates, the glows grow dim. Those are the features of ageing, ending of the pilgrim.

#### Poem No. (5): In Memory of Major Robert Gregory

Major Robert Gregory to whom Yeats dedicates his poem was Yeat's patron and collaborator with the former in the revival of the Irish letters. The poet comes to terms with himself and the reality of life, preoccupied with thoughts. Of his companions of his youth, but most of those he thought of were all dead, one of the deceased is the subject of this poem "All are in my thoughts tonight being dead". The poet recalls the youthful experiences of life as circles where friends are made, forgotten, the affection, quarrels, but emphasizes "For all that come into my mind are dead". The first among his friends' deceased friends he recalls, is Lionel Johnson, admirably schooled and lettered in Greeks and Latin learning, graceful and courteous. He recalls:

Lionel John comes the first to mind  
That loved his learning better than mankind  
Through courteous to the worst much falling he  
Brooded upon sanctity  
Till all his Greek and Latin learning seemed  
A long blast upon the horn that brought  
A little nearer to his thought  
A measureless consummation that he dreamed.

The poet's thought made a shot at another deceased but important friend of the poet, John Synge "comes next", a passionate and well traveled man. The horseman who is well known at "race courses", George Pollexfen, "a muscular youth well known to mayo men", sluggish but "outrageous star". Going through the impressive photographs or his great companion their breathless faces stare at the poet, particularly Sidney's "my dear friends son". William Butler Yeats relates the experiences of a horse and racer to man on the course of life, the jumping, dangling, falling, rising, winning and loses and eventual death of the racer that signifies the end of the race and racecourse. He aligns departed souls to

the image seen in his “picture book”, “minds out ran the horses feet”. The soldier, scholar and horseman, and “painter had been horn” but all were consumed by the combustible world. Yeats reconciles the images the image of fire to world’s inflammability, the whole essence of which is to deprive the poet of his childhood friends and great companions who all made their marks in their chosen trades.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare the treatment of the theme of death in the poetry of William Blake, Alexander Pope and William Butler Yeats treated in this unit (one poem for a poet).

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare the treatment of the theme of death in the poetry of William Blake, Alexander Pope and William Butler Yeats treated in this unit (one poem for a poet).

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed William Blake’s collection of poetry titled *Songs of Innocence*; the *Marriage of Heaven and Hell*, to see a world in a grain of sand, Alexander Pope’s *Rape of the Lock*, elegy to the memory of an unfortunate Lady and Eloisa and Abelard as well as William Butler Yeats an Irish Airman foresees His Death, the Second Coming, *Sailing to Byzantium*, *When You are Old* and *In Memory of Major Robert Gregory*.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- the poet’s themes in each of the poems under William Blake’s collection, *Songs of Innocence*
- the poet’s feeling in the *Marriage of Heaven*
- the focus of the poet in to see a world in a grain of sand
- the relevant of history in Alexander Pope’s *Rape of the Lock*
- the poet’s treatment of the theme of love in *Elegy to the memory of an unfortunate lady*
- about love and courtship in *Eloisa and Abelard*

- William Butler Yeats's treatment of the temporal nature of life in "An Irish Airman Foresees his Death"
- the universal theme discussed in "the Second Coming"
- about spiritual travel in "Sailing to Byzantium"
- the value of life in "When You are Old"
- appraisal of "In Memory of Major Robert Gregory"
- In the fifth unit of this Module, you will be introduced to how you will be a critical/successful reader of English Poetry through the 'Mathematical' Language of English Poetry.

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the following questions.

1. Reveal the overriding theme of innocence in William Blake's "Songs of Innocence".
2. Discuss history in Alexander Pope's "Rape of the Lock"
3. What is the focus of William Butler Yeats in "an Irish Airman foresees His Death"?
4. Compare William Butler Yeats's "Sailing to Byzantium" with the poem "in memory of Major Robert Gregory".

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Artkin, K. (2000). *English Literature in Brief*. London:Heam Publishers.
- Becklyn, T. (1985). *The Poetry of William Blake and William Butler Yeats*. London: Heam.
- Berkley, T. (1986). *The Sociology of English Literature*. Great Britain: Penguin.
- Bright, B. (2001). *Philosophy of English Women's Writing*. London
- Christopher Isherwood (1970). Ed. *Great English Verses*. England: Dell Edition.
- David, B. (1968). *Hidden Chapters in English Literature 1649-1939*. Middlesex Essex England: Penguin Books.
- Esau, I. (2006). *Writing the English Way*. Jos: Cleanbooks.
- Kenney, X. J. and Giola Dana (2007). *An Introduction to Poetry*. Boston: Pearson Longman.
- Rainey, L. M. (2008). Ed *Modernism*. Singapore: Blackwell Publishing.
- Robert, K. (2001). *Going through England-English Literature in Perspective*. London: Oxford University Press.
- William, F. (1967). *English and Literature*. London: University Press
- Willy, W. (2004). *English Literature- A View of England*. New Jersey: Eaglewood Cliffs.

Wu, D. (2007). Romanticism – An Anthology. United Kingdom Blackwell Publishing.

## UNIT 5: POETRY IN DEPTH: THE ‘MATHEMATICAL’ LANGUAGE OF ENGLISH POETRY

### CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
  - 3.1 Understanding poetry
  - 3.2 Meaning and Intention in poetry
  - 3.3 Style and Poetry
  - 3.4 Tones reveal the Matter
  - 3.5 Connotation as Suggestive
  - 3.6 Imagery
  - 3.7 Figures of Speech
  - 3.8 Sound as meaning in Poetry
  - 3.9 Rhythm
  - 3.10 Symbol
  - 3.11 Style: Diction
  - 3.12 Poetic translation
  - 3.13 The Sonnet
    - 3.13.1 The Petrarch an sonnet
    - 3.13.2 The Shakespearean sonnet
  - 3.14. Forms of Poetry
  - 3.15. Evaluating Poetry.
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References /further reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This unit completes the module, with an indepth discussion of how best you can approach, study and evaluate English poetry successfully using the ‘Mathematical’ language of English poetry. Therefore, in our critical ‘casebook’ method. In this unit, we have treated: how you can understand poetry, meaning and intention in poetry, poetic translation, style, tones, imagery, figuratives, poetry and forms, sounds, sonnet, rhythm, symbol, saying and suggesting, diction, sounds as meaning and evaluation. A study of this unit will help you do a critical evaluation of poetry or approach a new poem focused and correctly too. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain to a friend of yours how he/she can conveniently penetrate a poem he/she is seeing the first time.
- discuss the meaning and intention in poetry.
- explain the concept of style in poetry.
- Assess symbol in poetry
- identify what the tone of a poem suggests.
- reveal the imaginary in poetry.
- discover the relevance of sound to poetry.
- compose a poem with rhythm
- evaluate any of the English poetry in this unit.
- identify two types of sonnet
- argue in favour of poetic translation
- review the concept of saying and suggesting in poetry
- differentiate between closed and open forms of poetry
- outline the difference between rhythm poetry and symbol

## 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1 Understanding Poetry

When you come in contact with a poem for the first time, your mind reacts immediately and sometimes forms impressions, which are built up gradually in your mind. And as you read, you come in contact with words that connects or associate your mind with something and such connectives forces your mind to build impressions about the phrase, word a line colon or letter, an alphabet, it could even be a dot or a mere space. Whatever it is must never be overlooked or read in isolation of other words or things that make up the poem if you must be able to give the correct impression and at last do adequate judgment of the poem. As your emotion or conscience is triggered into action, you must not let it get cold so as to read the poem again and do not go into hasty analysis, prejudiced impressions or judgment .As you read the poem the second time you should take

note of some strange or unfamiliar words so as to make them familiar. Poetry, you should not forget is unlike the loose novel genre, a poet may borrow concepts or words from other languages, you are not familiar with it could be Greeks, Latin or French as often seen in most English poems. Simply leave your mind bare to be influenced by the poem so that you can understand the path of the poet.

It is necessary that you understand the poem before you can think of any judgment, you cannot assess or evaluate what you do not know. And to know the poem you should keep your mind open as you read the poem sympathetically.

It is when this is achieved that you as the reader can function as a critic of a poem, and to function adequately you should make the concern of the poem clear in your analysis. The poet's attitude should be revealed in your own opinion that you have formed to give value to the themes of the poem. You may then embark on a third reading of the poem in a more slower and careful manner. You will then find out that you will be able to read the poem in a more lucid and floody manner compared to the initial, slow and unmusical pace with which you approach the poem. You will then gain a more understanding of the poem. With your mature experience of the poem, you will be able to make a general and believable statement about the poem or form a better, wiser and considered opinion of the poem.

### 3.2 Meaning and Intention in Poetry

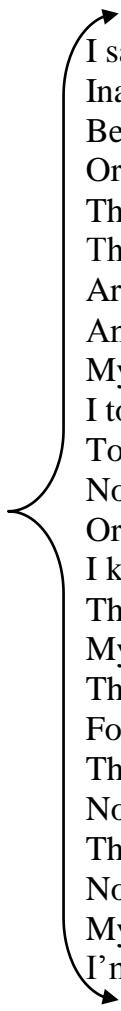
After understanding the theme of the poem, which are often the main and sub themes, you may then undertake a more careful line-by-line examination of the themes of the poem that connects the readers to the poet's mind through his poem. You can then measure your statement/observation of the verse against the very poem. With such development, you can take care of the poet's own judgment of every line and verse of the poem. You must be sure that no unnecessary detail is given a prominence in the poem. You must guide yourself against prejudiced and reckless judgment. A strict sense of proportion will give a desired balance in evaluating a poem. To achieve this, each verse of the poem must be judged in relation to the whole poem while trying to discover the meaning of a poem. In trying to discover the meaning of a poem you must not allow prejudice to interfere with the meaning of the poem. Also, you must bring your power of imagination to the business of discovering all about a poem. It is when the meaning of a poem has been discovered in full that you will then know that you are working in empathy with the poet. There can be no good criticism of a poem without the critic first understanding the themes/perception of the poet. There can be no further criticism until you sustain what the poet is saying and why he is saying it and tell us if he is successful in his effort or not. A critic should be able to tell us if a poem has a universal or general appeal or restricted. Theme may be said to have a universal appeal if it affects all men but restricted if it's appeal is only private. Although, poems are often praised if they have

universal application, but restricted or universal, its treatment of themes and imaginative appeal are important.

Example of poems with universal appeal and the restricted, which we have treated in this module, can be cited William Butler Yeats's "An Irish Airman foresees his death" or "Sailing to Byzantium" may at first look restricted but a deeper reading of the poems reveal their universal 'applicability considering their treatment of the subject of death by the 20<sup>th</sup> century poets. Also Alexander Pope's "Rape of the Lock" that deals with the eighteenth century man's manner and customs may initially sound restricted, but the poet deals with man's universal ideas of human motives, fooleries, action and characters and this make the poem appeals to humanity of all age. Some poems may be both universal and restricted in appeal. Among the poems treated in this unit, from Restoration to present, we may say that William Wordsworth's "I traveled among unknown men" has a restricted appeal. Below are two groups of extracts from different poems; the first (A) denotes universal appeal while the second, (B) represents poetry with restricted appeal.

Fig: 2

Poem (A) Ted Hughes's (1930-1998) Hawk Roosting.



I sat in the top of the wood, my eyes closed  
Inaction, no falsifying dream  
Between my hooked head and hooked feet  
Or in sleep rehearse perfect kills and eat  
The convenience of the high trees!  
The air's buoyance and the sun's ray  
Are of advantage to me;  
And the earth's face upward for my inspection  
My feet are locked upon the rough bark  
I took the whole of creation  
To produce my foot, my each feather  
Now I hold creation in my foot  
Or fly up, and revolve it all slowly –  
I kill where I please because it is all mine  
There is no sophistry in my body:  
My manners are tearing off heads –  
The allotment of death  
For one path of my flight is direct  
Though the bones of the living  
No arguments assert my right:  
The sun is behind me  
Nothing has changed since I began  
My eye has permitted no change  
I'm going to keep things like this

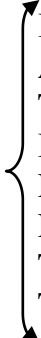
Commentary on Poem (A)



The Hawk in the poem, a symbol of the 20th century political leader, a monarch or military leader says his cannibalistic and oppressive characteristics are no “falsifying dream” He is cruel, savagery and dictatorial. The Hawk, a human specie with oppressive motive, blood thirsty gladiator in the use of weapon and violence. Considering the thematic focus of the poem, it readily gives itself away as having universal applicability.

Fig: 3

Poem (B) Emily Dickinson’s,(1830-1886) I’m Nobody! Who are you?



I’ m Nobody! Who are you?  
 Are you -----Nobody--- Too?  
 Then theirs is a pair if us  
 Don’t tell they ‘d advertise---you now  
 How dreary-----to be somebody  
 How public -----like a Frog\_\_\_\_\_  
 To tell ones name\_\_\_\_\_ the livelong June  
 To an admiring Body!

Commentary on Poem (B)

The poem expresses personal opinion about the essence of being; He prefers to be a nobody. He is not interested in being famous, self advertised fame may be worrisome. The general concern of the poem reveals a restricted appeal. The theme of the poem shows a restricted appeal. But Ted Hughe’s poem has universal appeal, considering its thematic preoccupation Apart from the task of determining the universality of and restricted nature of any poem, determining the artistic merit of a poem can be done by investigating the poet’s use of Irony, symbolism, descriptive narrative, and so on that combines to make up the nature of the theme, relevant to the poems and themes deal with life? Does the poem affect your life? if it does, how?

### 3.3 Style and Poetry

There seems to be no great deal about style. This aspect is more demanding than decreasing the aspect of meaning in poetry. To be able to appreciate style, one needs to take note of novel ideas while reading just as Longinus rightly expressed “threat judgment of style is the last and ripest fruit of experiences” style in poetry should seen as the practical and the functional aspect of poetry. A critic only

needs to harmonise the task into the means by which he accomplishes it. You can be able to discuss the style of a poem if you are able to answer the following questions .Does the poet's expression conforms with the goal he has set for himself .The above question can be further expressed in simpler fashion as follows

- (a) What is the poem saying?
- (b) What is his reason for saying it?
- (c) Does the way he says or expresses it help or hinder his aim of saying it?

When these questions are answered creatively, you will be able to discuss the poet's style and arrive at meaningful and convincing judgment of a poem.

### 3.4 Tones reveal the Matter.

It is possible to infer the poet's attitude from his tone. As it is in the tone of the voice, style shows the tone of a poet which may be harsh, or friendly, persuasive and may portray indifference hostility, satisfaction, playful humility, disrespect. A poets tone may reveal his feeling towards himself about the subject or focus of the poem, its theme. It means the tone of a poet portrays his general attitude as may be revealed when we read the poem. When you read a poem, its subject of discussion provokes general feeling in you.

### 3.5 Connotation as Suggestive

Additional meanings are often suggested when you read a poem, in relation to its contextual usage of words. For instance, William Buttler Yeats in his poem, sailing to Byzantium" has used the word" Byzantium" not just to refer to the political physical city of Byzantium, now named Istanbul. He has used the word; Byzantium" to mean paradise, the use of word in poetry is often different from the norm, denotative, dictionary meaning and word order. Connotative words are meaningful but suggestive to give a poem a hidden but creative value.

### 3.6 Imagery

Poetry speaks in imagery, as it conveys experience in vivid, picture, Images /imagery is the use of words to create sensory experiences, that may be produced, sensational experience like visual imaginary, sight/seeing, auditory imaginary that relate to touch and tactile imaginary indication of roughness or smoothness. Whatever may be the form of the imagery that a poet may adopt, is usually present, the real image that is conveyed or suggested/ Poetic image may be based on any of the five senses.

### 3.7 Figures of Speech

A poem often speaks in figurative language. This depends on the poet's choice of a particular figurative and the purpose for which the poet has chosen to use it as well as what he intends to achieve by using a particular figurative. Students of English literature should be familiar with numerous figurative and be well 'schooled' in the ability to detect and underline or identify such usage in poetry. Some common figures of speech that a poet may use to enrich his craft are, simile, metaphor, litotes antithesis, oxymoron, Apostrophe, hyperbole, personification, synecdoche, metonymy and symbol. They are numerous and are like the oil in the wheel of progress of poet's poetic craft.

### 3.8 Sound as meaning in poetry.

In poetry, sound is not the same thing as noise, because when poets combine the use of consonant, vowels and rhythms to produce sound, the poet will be happy that by producing meaning from such combination and combination of words communication is not just achieved, but the aesthetic essence of poetry is realized. Sometimes the sound that a particular poem gives may be mere onomatopoeic mimicry, such sounds may sometime not give any immediate clear meaning, yet the main rhythmical meaning it has gives some musical effects or qualities, thus the poet becomes satisfied that he has realized a form of therapy or script therapy.

We may recall a practical example of how sound functions as meaning in poetry. In October 2004, I had barely spent a forth night with a Ghanaian friend in Valeta, Malta when he got invitation to visit his North African friend, Ahmed. We had to travel to Obare to celebrate his friend's promotion to the rank of a Major in the Libyan military. A day we went with our host to his irrigation farm, I was introduced to the Egyptian labourers in the farm as a writer and poet. The Arab tribesmen excited recited a beautiful, rhythmical Ghazal Arab form of poetry and tasked me to recite a poem in my native Nigerian Yoruba language. I did render a short rhyme verse in my Ilaje – Yoruba variant dialect of coastal Ondo State praising Igodo, an enchantingly beautiful mermaid that myth says married Oranmaken, a coastal Ilaje ancestor who earlier held her hostage. In my chant, I had repeated "Igodo, Oranmaken", "Igodo Oranmaken", forming a beautiful rhyme. The natives, though, had no idea of my verse, but were clapping, swinging and repeating the rhyme as each urged the other person to chant on. They ended the repetition of the key words with "Ghazal astma kois, ghazal astma kois" in appraisal of a wonderful rhyme from a friend. The native Arabs have been won over by the sense of rhimed sound in my native poem. Like music, it gives them pleasure much as they could get from the native Arab Ghazal poetry. On that basis, we may say as important as it may be, meaning is of no consequence in poetry as any nonsense but lyrical poem can be pleasurable. The rhyme effect of sound in poetry has been expressed by the founder of the literary movement called *lettrisme*. The French poet, Isidore Isou states that poetry can be written in words and letters /xy//xyl//prpalidryl//iznglotrpylopwi/. A combination of denotation and connotation make letterist poem emotionally satisfying.

The Arab natives must have been impressed by the smooth, easy flowing and floodly nature of the verse that sounds to them like a music. It then means that humanity derives pleasure from rhyme, especially when a verse comes up naturally to give pleasure. Poetry should be lyrical to give pleasure like songs, affect the soul.

### 3.9. Rhythm

In poetry, Rhythm has a powerful effect. There is usually a series of reverence in poetry to achieve a rhythmical effect. A verse may be organized by a poet to achieve rhyme without necessarily repeating words or lines of the verse. Sometimes, the first word, line of a verse may be repeated by a poet to create rhythmical effect. We may consider the examples of the following English poetry below.

Bat ter my heart, three-personed God, for you  
 As yet but knock breathe shine and seek to mend  
 That I may rise and stand o'er throw me and bend  
 Your force to break, blow, burn and make me new

Also consider below the opening lines from Thomas Gray's "Elegy"

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day  
 The lowing herd wind slowly o'er the lea  
 The plowman home ward plods his weary way  
 And leaves the world to darkness and to me

And lines from Coleridge's Christabel

There is not wind enough to twirl  
 The one red leaf, the last of its clan  
 That dances as often as dance it can,  
 Hanging so light and hanging so high  
 On the top-most twig what looks up at the sky

We can see the poets repetitive use of words to achieve stresses and pauses (rhyme effects) in the lines of the poem powerfully. In poetry, stresses and unstressed syllables apart from the song-like effects they give re-inforce meaning and gives effects to the way a poet communicates his ideas

A rhythm is often produced by a series of recurrences. In poetry, different recurrent sounds are possible as in recurrence of stresses and pauses in poetry. Stresses and pauses are part of poetry. The accent/stress with a little or more breath and emphasis with a louder/higher in pitch or more prolonged in duration than other syllables is the stressed syllable. The slack/unstressed syllable takes less breath, weak force and, or less emphasis.

### 3.10 Symbol

Symbols are party of the language of poetry. Symbols are ensigns, representations, often a visible emblem, identity or mark that suggests. The flag of a nation, for instance is an emblematic representation of the nation so also is the passport of a nation that gives away its carrier or bearer's country of origin. But, in poetry, symbols do not have a long established or conventional meaning. In poetry, symbols are often interpreted in and association with the reader's own experience of reading and the poet's direction as a guide. The reader's ability to identify and interpret a poem provides a concrete and valuable entrance into the poet's world. Such entrance if, discovered reduces the poem from it's 'complex height' to an interesting lose prose. Thus, the reader finds such a poem lucid, communicative and expressive.

### 3.11 Style: Diction

Every poet has a specific way or pattern of writing. A reader should strife to be familiar with everything in a poem, the word or line: that strikes your mind in a poem may be the poet's. own pattern or style of expression. The carriages and language of expression, whether simple or difficult, style of punctuations or emblematic as in the poetry of George Herbert or any other poet to achieve a height, or emotional tension of the poem to or the total absence of punctuation, ellipsis, even a mere space in poetry may be the poet's own choice of expression to achieve a poetic leisure and emotional obligation. Poet may chose a style to achieve its fitness to further or create a revolt against a preceding age. Diction must be judged against the background or purpose. For instance poetry, after the Restoration was the Augustan, Gothic, Romantic, Age, the Victorian, twentieth century and the contemporary period up to the present. Every age is valued for its stylistic experimentation and poetic purpose and or imagism.

### 3.12 Poetic Translation

Some poems are translated from their original country home into the English language. In such poems, readers are often confronted with investigating what gets lost, understated, and overstated and or exaggerated in the process of translating the poem from foreign language into the people's national language. This task follows after the reader identifies a poem as translated or the nativity/original language in which a poem has been crafted. The practice of translating a poem is as old as the art of poetry, so its not a novel development. These could be the reason it is important for a reader or analyst of a translated poem to believe that reading a poem translated is looking for what gets lost in translation. This is because most translators may save a part of their originals of the great poems in foreign languages to create a gap in the translation process. In most cases, where the translator of a poem could not find a suitable lexical item to replace a word, words, concepts or phrase, they may add or create a poem of their own to replace what is lost. In this case the translator may decide to use the denotations he values and depart from the original. Therefore, the currency of the contemporary practice of practicing translation poetry in world literature may have its own difficulties, yet we do not have to overlook the aesthetics of imagining and reasoning and or philosophizing by demystifying a foreign (translated) poetry as a recipient of foreign reader culture. The English writer, Ezra Pound translates the song of a Chinese peasant in *The Classic Anthology Defined by Confucius*:

Yaller bird, let my corn alone,  
Yaller bird, let my crawps alone,  
These folks here won't let me eat,  
I wanna go back whaar I can meet  
the folks I used to know at home,  
I got a home an' I wanna gotgoin:

Also, the Chinese Classical poetry, Lipo's "Drinking Alone". Originally written in Chinese characters enjoys phonetic transcription and indeed, striving hard to be literal familiar with and understand the poetry of other translation into English languages (translated poetry) will enhance our sense of language and cultures of other lands. To explore the poetry of other cultures will broaden our vision of humanity, human achievement in poetic translation and strengthen our sense of words. English may hold one of the great traditions of poetry in the world considering her culture of poetry and literature of over six centuries of literary culture evident in the efforts of some English literary exponents which includes Geoffrey Chaucer, William Shakespeare, John Milton, Alexander Pope, William Keats, John Keats, William Butler Yeats among others. Still to rely only on the poetry of English is to know only a fraction of world poetry. This is because English is the first language of about seven percent of world populace of over 400 million people, English is spoken from London to San Francisco, Vancouver to Nassau, and Cape Town to Sydney.

We will appreciate the needful beauty of reading the perspectives of foreign poets/poems in translation if we look at for instance, Chinese literature that has the oldest and uninterrupted literary tradition in the world. Poetry, an important

part of the Chinese literature spans over 3400 years. And more than a billion people speak one of the Chinese dialects while they all read the same written language.

### 3.13 The Sonnet

We wish to discuss some patterns of English poetry, paying specific attention to the Petrarchan and Shakespearean patterns of fourteen lines.

#### 3.13.1 The Petrarchan Sonnet

The Petrarchan Sonnet has a different design compared to the Shakespearean Sonnet. The former has a rhyme scheme that differentiates it from the Shakespearean Sonnet, though noticeable areas of relativity are number of lines and metre. William Wordsworth's Sonnet, "Milton" is an example of the Petrarchan form.

Fig 4

Petrarchan Sonnet	Milton, thou shouldst be living at this hour:	a
	England hath need of thee: she is a fen	b
	Of stagnant waters; altar, sword, and pen	b
	Fireside, the heroic wealth of hall and bower	a
	Have forfeited their ancient English dower,	a
	Of inward happiness. We are selfish men	b
	Oh! raise us up, return to us again;	b
	An give us manners, virtue, freedom, power	a
	Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart:	c
	Thou hadst a voice whose sound was like the sea	d
	Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;	d
	So didst thou travel on life's common way,	e
	In cheerful godliness; and yet thy heart	c
	The loveliest duties on herself did lay	e

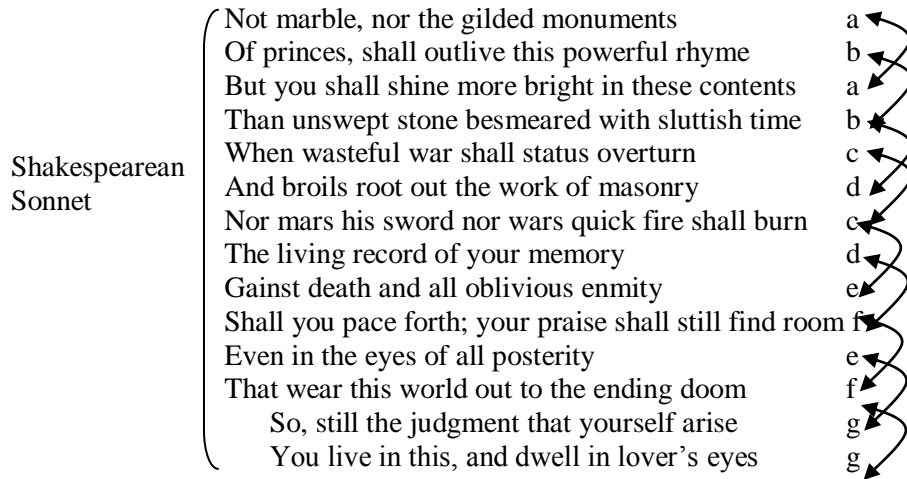
Rhyme scheme/abbaabbacddece/

#### 3.13.2 The Shakespearean Sonnet

Unlike in the Shakespearean Sonnet in which the turning point of the poem is sustained in the *Octave* or *Octet* (The first Eight lines) and the next sixth (*Sestet*) lines. The pause has its position changed frequently between *Octave* and *Sestet*, sometimes appearing in the middle of the ninth line or beginning of the tenth. The Octave has a rhyme scheme of /abbaabba/ to give and strengthen unity of tone to it's first Eight lines to help develop the themes of the poem. Other variants of the Sestet rime-scheme commonly found are /cdcdcd/ or /cdecde/ or any variation of these. The Miltonic sonnet introduces a change in the rime scheme of the Sestet to achieve a new rime-scheme/melody in the second half of his sonnets as in the Petrarchan.

Below is an example of Shakespearean Sonnet – Wiliam Shakespeare (1564 – 1616)

Fig. 5



Rhyme scheme /ababdcdefegg/

### 3.14 Forms of Poetry

Form is the general idea of a poem or its design or configuration of the parts of a poem. A poem, particularly English poem should have a form; lines of a poem may be of a particular length, hexameter, broom straws. The closed form of a poem follows a particular pattern pentameter” hexameter. Poet seeks to discover a novel and individual arrangement of words in every poem and does not use rhyme scheme or any basic meter, but sustains the reader’s attention in another aesthetic form with keen awareness that agrees with the poets thematic concern (an open form).

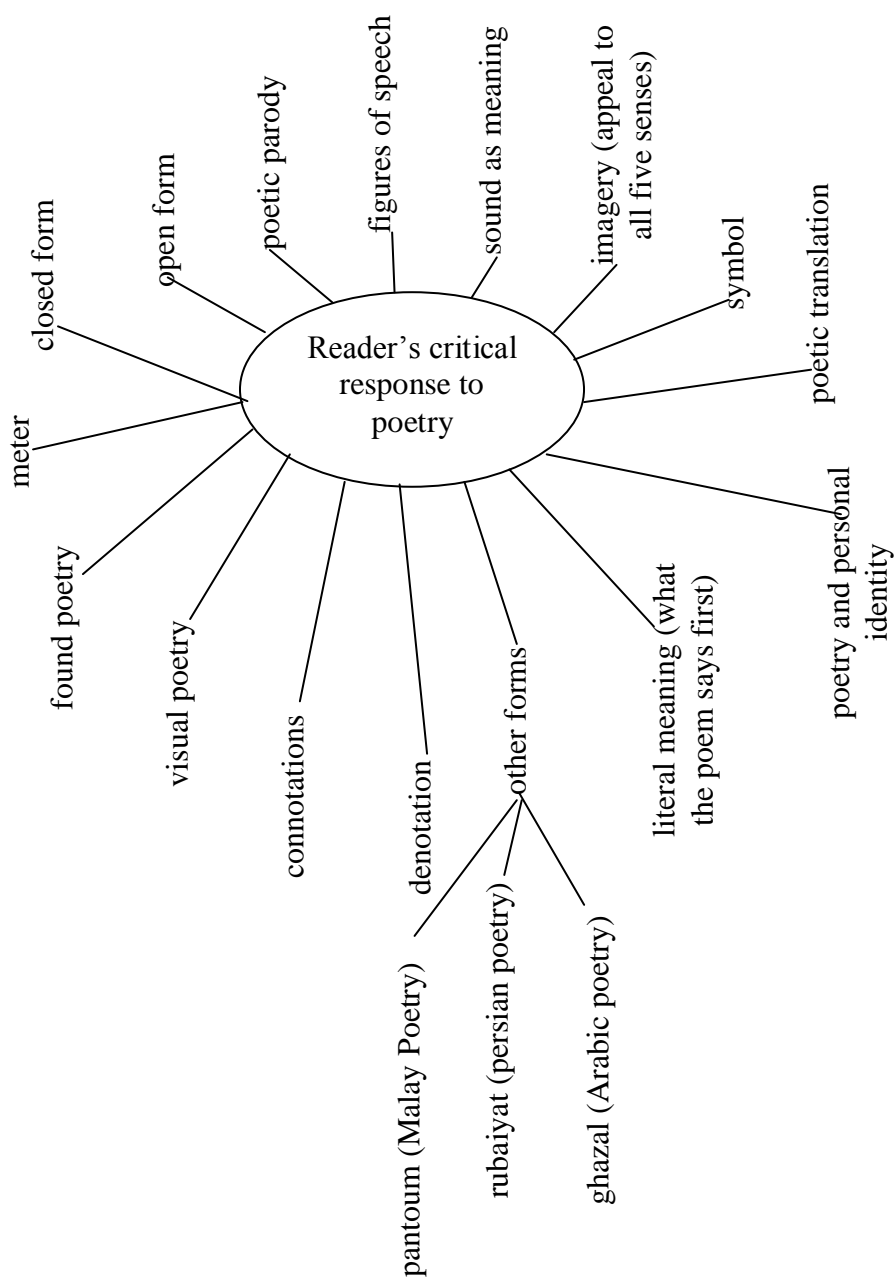
### 3.15 Evaluating Poetry

After you have made an attempt to understand the poem, its meaning, theme literary quality of expression, you should read the poem again for evaluation. You can then make your final impression or outcome of your findings about the poem clear to your reader in an objective manner and try to avoid any prejudice. Reveal the outcome of your survey of the poem clearly and in vigorous and individual, based on the aesthetic reality of the poem you are considering. The following stages may be considered as you go through the critical process:

- What is the meaning of this poem?
- What is the poet’s intention?
- Does his style conform with his intention?
- What is the poet’s impression on me?



Fig. 6: The ‘mathematical’ language of English poetry



## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

- (1a) Discuss meaning and intention in English poetry.
- (b) Differentiate between Petrarchan and Shakespearean Sonnet.
- (c) What seems ‘ Mathematical’ about the language of English Poetry?

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed meaning and intention in poetry, how best to approach a new poem, poetic translation, style and tones in poetry, imagery, figuratives, poetry and forms, sound in poetry, the sonnet, rhythm, symbol, saying and suggesting in poetry, diction, sound as meaning as well as general evaluation of poetry.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- meaning and intention in poetry
- how best to approach a new poetry
- poetic translation
- style and tones in poetry
- imagery
- figuratives
- poetry and its forms
- sound as meaning in poetry
- the sonnet
- rhythm
- symbol
- diction
- saying and suggesting in poetry
- general evaluation of poetry
- In the next unit (first unit of Module three), you will be introduced to the English Novel.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the following questions.

- 1) How will you react to a poem you come in contact with for the first time?
- 2) Choose and do a criticism of any English poetry of your choice, using the parameters provided in this unit.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/ FURTHER READING

- Beatty, Jeromr (1965). *Poetry from Statement of Meaning*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Benson, Lemon (2008). *Stylestician and the Poet*. Trenton: Africa World Press
- Kennedy, X. J. and Giola Dana (2007). *Introduction to Poetry*. Boston Pearson: Longman.
- Lawal, Adebayo Ed (1997). *Stylistics in Theory and Practice*. Ilorin: Paragon Books.
- Lukeman Johnson (2014). *Style and the Verse*. Ibadan: Macmillan.
- Oguntola, A. A. (1999). *English Poetry*. London: Longman.
- Olujide, T. M. (2002). Stylistics and Poetry in Sola Babatunde and Dele Adeyanju (eds) *Language, Meaning and Poetry-Papers in Honour of E.E Adegbija at 50*. Ilorin; Haytee Press.
- Oriola Stanley and Patrice, Ogbuehi (2010). Tayo Olafioye: A Discussion of Style in the Modern Nigerian Novel in *A.A.U: African Studies Review*. June Vol. 9.
- Samuel Samuel (2013). *Language and Style in Poetry*. Jos: Help Press.
- Smith, A.J.M (19). *English Poetry*. New York: Methuen.
- Taye, Caltwin (2004). *Style and the Stylestician*. New York. Catin Publishers.
- Thomas, Dylan (1957). *The Selected Poems of Dylan Thomas*. New York. Macmillan.
- Yankeon, Kofi (1987). *An Introduction to Literary Stylistics*. Nigeria: pacific Correspondence College and Press Ltd.

## MODULE 3 NARRATIVE DESIGN AND THE ENGLISH SOCIETY(1649 to Present)

- Unit 1 The English Novel
- Unit 2 Theme and Style in the English Novel (I)
- Unit 3 Theme and Style in the English Novel (II)
- Unit 4 Theme and Style in the English Novel (III)
- Unit 5 Theme and Style in the English Novel (IV)

### UNIT 1 THE ENGLISH NOVEL

#### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
  - 3.1 The English Novel
  - 3.2 Factors that gave Rise to the Novel
    - 3.2.1 Introduction of printing in England
    - 3.2.2 Increased interest in Reading
    - 3.2.3 Journalism became a Notable Profession
    - 3.2.4 Book Publishing as social Business in England
    - 3.2.5 Changes in the economy of the period
  - 3.3 Types of Novel
    - 3.3.1 Historical
    - 3.3.2 Picaresque
    - 3.3.3 Bildungsroman
    - 3.3.4 Epistolary
    - 3.3.5 Social/Sociological
    - 3.3.6 Magic/magical/marvelous Realism
    - 3.3.7 Political
    - 3.3.8 Psychological
    - 3.3.9 Autobiographical

- 3.3.10 Gothic
- 3.3.11 Novel of Ideas
- 3.3.12 Science fiction
- 3.3.13 Detective Novels
- 3.4 Elements of the Novel
  - 3.4.1 Plot
  - 3.4.2 Simple Plot
  - 3.4.3 Complex Plot
  - 3.4.4 Subject Matter
  - 3.4.5 Theme
  - 3.4.6 Characterization
    - 3.4.6.1 Flat or two Dimensional
    - 3.4.6.2 Rounded or Three Dimensional Characters
  - 3.4.7 Time and Space in the Novel
  - 3.4.8 Character's level of involvement
  - 3.4.9 Setting
  - 3.4.10 Language
  - 3.4.11 Point of view
    - 3.4.11.1 Eye of God or omniscient Point of view
    - 3.4.11.2 Multiple point of view
    - 3.4.11.3 Mixed point of view
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have designed and written this unit to introduce you to the Novel as a genre of English Literature; indicating the factors that gave rise to the growth and development of the novel as a literary genre. A thorough knowledge of the types of the Novel and its elements will aid your understanding of the nature of the English Novel and its narrative form creature and experience of the various writers. Such will also help you in the analysis or discussion of the English novels as distinct from the novel genre of other different geographical and historical experiences. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- define the Novel
- list and explain the factors that led to the rise of the Novel
- reproduce the types of the novel with examples
- discuss the elements of the novel

- differentiate between simple and complex plots
- give your own interpretation of subject matter
- choose a type of English novel from the given list in the unit and read.
- assess round and flat characters
- relate setting to an English novel
- classify language and point of view with any English novel
- match any of the point of view with an English novel
- write a novel using any experience you are familiar with
- determine the level of character's involvement in any English novel you are familiar with using either a scale or pyramid.
- explain the concept of level of character's involvement

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 The English Novel

The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners 2007 defines the Novel as “a long written story about imaginary or partly imaginary characters and events” The Collins English Dictionary, 2006, defines the novel as “an extended fictional work in prose dealing with characters, action, thought, etc. in the form of a story. The Oxford Dictionary (2000) defines the novel as a fictive prose narrative of considerable length in which characters and acts representative of real life of past and present time are portrayed in a plot of more or less complexity. But the Sierra Leonian literary critic, Austace Palmer says the novel is a coherent, unified fictitious prose narrative with a beginning, a middle and an end (Studies in the English Novel, 1986:1).

What differentiates the novel from any other work of prose fiction or narratives such as the short story, povest, novelette is the extended form of the novel compared to short stories like Earnest Hemmingway's *The Old man and the sea* (1952), Stanley Oriola's *Farewell to Democracy* (1994), Akachi Adimora Ezeigbo's *My Cousin Sammy* (2007).

The novel as we know it today is the creative work of man's imagination and it may be said to be the youngest of all the genres of literature, that is, drama poetry since it became popular in the Eighteenth century period of English literary history Although, the novel which form grew from early prose writing often described as the romance which was invented by the Greek and France in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries A.D as well as 17th century. The France Romance influenced the European writing for over two centuries as seen in Thomas Lodge's *Rosalinda* and Philip Sidney's *The Arcadia* (1581-1584), William Shakespeare's *As you like it*. Other writers before Shakespeare and Sidney which helped the origin of the English novel are Geoffrey Chaucer's (1328 -1400) *Canterbury Tales*, a verse in Narrative form. The legends of King Arthur, story of adventures by Mallory and John Ely's *Ephesus* (1579), Philip Sidney's *the arcadia* (1581- 1584),

Thomas Nash's *The unfortunate Traveler* (1594), Saavedra de Carvantes a France narrative (1547- 1616) and Don Quixote (1605) all helped the growth and development of the English Novel

However, with all the above literary efforts, it seems the real English novel had not come until Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Moll Flanders* (1719), Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740), *Clarissa* (1747-1748), Henry Fielding's *Shamela* (1741), Joseph Andrew (1742). Literary critics it appears were not united early over whom among the founding fathers of the English novel should be given the exalted or honoured crown of the first English novelist, but those recognized for being the first English novelists are Daniel Defore, Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding, who are recognized as the founding fathers of the English novel.

### 3.2 Factors that gave Rise to the English Novel

The following are the factors that gave rise to the Novel in the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

#### 3.2.1 Introduction of Printing in England

Printing technology began in England in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, as a result it became easier for diaries, short essays pamphlets, letter and book of various types to be printed and distributed to the English reading populace. With such great development, the prose narrative became very popular in England as people found it impressive and enterprising to document events and even write biographies, autobiographies, keep Diaries and write Journals. All of these increased interests in Reading.

#### 3.2.2 Increased Interest in Reading

The technological development and reformation of the 1500 flagged the interests of the public to the pleasure of reading. For instance, people read more of Christian hymnal books, the Holy bible, and religious pamphlets. Thus, reading which was the exclusive preserve of the middle class and educated few was extended to the other members of the populace; including women who were not in the business of reading and writing.

#### 3.2.3 Journalism became a notable profession.

With increased interests of the public in story telling reading and writing became avenue through which the social concern of the English society could be expressed. Religious, economic as well as political and educational issues found acceptable outlet of expression, thus keeping the English populace current in societal events, and development especially that of Scotland, and city of London

became important. *The Guardian* and *English Man* are some of the magazines of the period. Thus, Addison and Steel's periodical, *Tattler* and *Spectator* are well known. Among the people, Samuel Johnson and Daniel Defoe are notable writers who had worked as Journalists in the period before going into a more serious business of Novel writing.

#### 3.2.4 Book Publishing as Social Business in England

Book publishing became a social business in England as the combined interests of the English people in reading and writing flowered by the advent of printing, publishing houses emerged to cater for the needs of the evolving libraries, the reading populace, education, churches and the middle class members of the society as well as the growing population of England. The book industry boomed based on the commonality and popularity of the Novel genre

#### 3.2.5 Change in the economy of the period

The reading revolution can be explained based on the change in the reading taste of the middle class merchants who clamoured for a new kind of literature that is different from the old classical adventure, fable and stories of kings, and knights. Essentially, their preferred literary choice must tell modern or contemporary stories, adequately represent the social, economic, religious and political life of the middle class merchants to cater for their time of leisure. Such literature that will reflect the social intellectual revolution of the time, as well as the dominating philosophy of the 'moneyed' classes of the new economy order quite different from the old agricultural economy of feudal aristocracy became revolutionary.

### 3.3 Types of the Novel

The followings are types of the novel with examples.

#### 3.3.1 Historical Novel

This type of Novel uses events and characters from past experience to develop and make its narrative interesting. Its settings are usually taken from real life history. Examples are Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe*, (1819), Charles Dickens A Scott's *Tale of Two Cities*, (1859), Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958) and Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, (1869), Elaudah Equiano's *Travels*, (1789) Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946) Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia Shall be free* (1962), T. M. Aluko's *A State of our own* (1986).

#### 3.3.2 The Picaresque

This type of Novel uses rogues, beggars, rascals (1970) (1986) as characters, usually with rascally heroic figure or personae. The name, Picaresque is derived from the Spanish word type, "Piccaro". This type of Novel originated from Spain



in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. Examples are Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722), Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876), Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, (1749) and Ben Louis's *Meet them All* (1877).

### 3.3.3 Bildungsroman

This type of Novel takes its form from of a German term which means, "a Novel of education" it reveals every stage of growth of the Protagonist or hero in the novel, usually from childhood through adolescence to maturity. Examples of such Novels are George Eliot's *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), Charles Dicken's *Great Expectations* (1861) and Ngugi Wa Thiongio's *Weep Not Child* (1964) Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia shall be Free* (1962), Peter Abraham's *Mine Boy* (1946).

### 3.3.4 Epistolary

This type of narrative is told in the form of a letter or letters. The "Epistle" "Epistola" is the Latin word for letter. Examples are Samuel Richardsons *Pamela*, and *Clarissa* (1740) Mariama Ba's *So Long a Letter* (1980), Alice Walker's *Colour Purple*, (1982), and 'Lekan Oyegoke's *Broken Ladders* (2004) Lewis Benson's *Hope Redeemed* (2004), Stanley Oriola's *Letter to my Country Wife*, (2013) and Samuel Adetemi Ayese's *From the Eyeballs of Our Women* (2014).

### 3.3.5 Social/Sociological Novel

This type of Novel deals with the social economic conditions of a period, characters and events, the culture of the people and their general ways of life. Examples are *Things Fall Apart*, (1958) George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) Charles Dicken's *Oliver Twist*, (1883), *Hard Times*, (1854), John Steinbeck's *The Grape of Wrath* (1939), Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'urbervilles* (1891), Biessie Head's *A question of Power*, (1974), *The Collector of Treasures* (1977), *When Rain Clouds Gather*, (1969), George & Weedon Grossmith's *The Diary of a Nobody*, (1994), *The Strange Man* (1967) by Amu Djoletto, Seffi Attas's *Everything good will come* (2005), Ferdinand Oyono's *The old man and the medal*, (1961), *Houseboy* (1960), Chukwuemeka Ike's *Our children Are coming* (1990), Stella Ify Osammor's *The Triumph of the Water Lilly* (1996), Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* (1966), William Canton's *The African* (1970), Scot Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* (1993), FeEnimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans*, (1993), Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie's *Purple Hibiscus*, Hope Eghagha's *The Last of the Emperor* (2004), Camera Laye's *The African Child*, (1954), Jose Luadino Viera's *The Real Life of Domingo's Xavier* (1961).

### 3.3.6 Magic/Magical/Marvelous Realism

This type of Novel combines reality with fantasy, ordinary events and experiences, dreamlike state, myths, fairy tales, supernatural elements. The term often used to describe this type of Novel originated from similar term for prose fiction of some Latin American writers. Examples are Ben Okri's *The Famished Road*, (1991), Gabriel Garcia's, *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967), Salman Rushdie's *Midnight Children*, (1981) *Satanic Verses*, (1988), The First writer is a Nigerian, Colombian, and followed by Indian.

### 3.3.7 Political Novel

This type of novel deals with the science and art of government. It concerns itself with the strategies, systems of politics and politicking or governance, manoeuvres, use of crafty, and display of justice and injustice, as well as Machiavellian style of government and power play. Examples are Joseph Conrad's *Nostromo*, (1904) T. M Aluko's *A State of our own* (1986) *Chief the Honorable Minister* (1970), and Cyprian Ekwensi's *Beautiful feathers* (1963), Stanley Oriola's *Farewell to Democracy* (1994), George Orwell's *Animal farm* (1945) and Anthony Anierobi's *In us Lies the Fault* (2004), Chinua Achebe's *A Man of the People* (1966) and Peter Abraham's *A Wreath for Udoma* (1956). Wale Okediran's *Tenants of the House* (1980) and Kole Omotoso's *Just Before Dawn* (1988).

### 3.3.8 Psychological

This type of Novel probes the minds of the character rather than the environment of such character. It was made popular by Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Example is Marcel Beyer's *the karnau Tapes* (1997), Lemuel Tuan's *Eye Balls* (1994), Biran Leo's *Jewells* (1997) and Johnson Truth's *Left Hand* (2003).

### 3.3.9 Autobiographical

This is the type of Novels on the life history of its writer from childhood through adulthood, reading the writer social experience through maturity. Examples are Wole Soyinka's *Ake* (1981), Kenneth Kaunda's *Zambia shall be free*, (1962), Tayo Olafioye's *Grandma's sun*, (2000), Peter Abraham's *Tell Freedom* (1963) Michael Anthony's *The Year in San Fernando* (1965), Charles Dicken's *David Copperfield* (1999).

### 3.3.10 Gothic

This was popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. It concerns its self with sentimentality, combine crimes and activities of the time such as murder, rape, piracy kidnapping, sodomy and other corrupt abominable acts. The Gothics Novel,

usually with medieval setting of the dark age that is known for mysteries, secret undergrounds, unknown horrible chamber, terrible, fetish and ghost invested dark passages. It usually have plot that allows innocent heroine to suffer, torture etc. its actions are often crafted to involve fright, terror. Examples are Ann Radcliffe's. The mysteries of Udolpho (1794) and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* and James Joyce's *Dubliners*, (1993).

### 3.3.11 Novel of Ideals

The type of novel is based on ideals of its contents. Its themes often focus certain philosophies or ideologies. Examples of such novel are E. M. Foster's *A Passage to India* (1924), Ali Mazrui's *The Trial of Christopher Okigbo* (1975), Albert Camu's *The Fall, the Plague* (1957), Marcel Beyer's *The Kanau Tapes* (1957), Mary Shelley's *Frank's Frankenstein* (1787).

### 3.3.12 Science fiction

This types of novel explore science and scientific investigations and proof to unravel a mystery about planets, nature etc. or to execute a desire backed up by experience. It relies on the possibility of scientific probing to justify action and in actions. Examples are Joules Verne's *Journey to the Center of the earth* (1864) and *Short Man's the Glasses* (1942)

### 3.3.13 Detective Novels

Such novels often deals with the use of character to probe and unravel critical mysteries that surrounds, people a, nation or continent. An example is Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's *Sherlock Holmes* (1992).

## 3.4 Elements of the novel

Novelist uses language to communicate his intention or ideas to his readers through his characters with a combination of some elements, they are plot, setting, subject matter, theme, point of view and vision.

### 3.4.1 Plot

This is the organized sequence of events in the novel. The plot of a novel is not its story, but the lined up, chronological or arranged, organized order of the entire events or story that make up the novel. Plots are of various types, some are simple, or complex.

### 3.4.2 Simple Plot

The events in simple plot novel are usually in chronological or arranged order following the adventure of the hero or major character to its end. Examples are Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), Flora Nwapa's *Efuru* (1966) Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy* (1966), Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722).

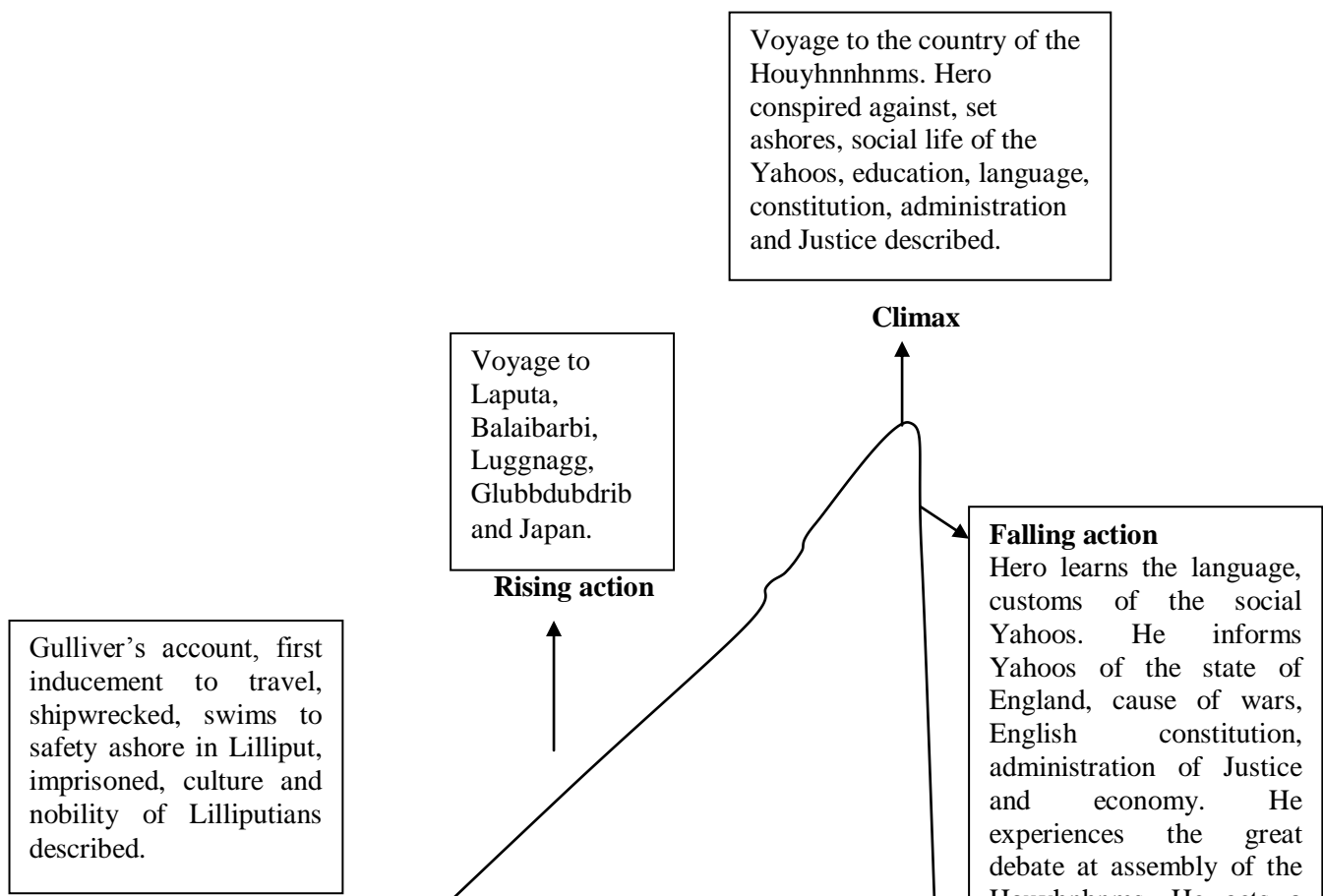
### 3.4.3 Complex Plot

In this types of plot, the author's order of arrangement do not often follow an easily traceable form at the reader may have to adopt the use of careful logic to reorganize the story for easy follow up as the incident that end the novel may beg in it the incident in the middle may even end it. The reader is given the task of rearranging or reorganizing the plot so as to piece together the different parts that may not be chronologically arranged. Examples are Ngugi Wa Thiongo's *Petals of Blood* (1977), *A Grain of Wheat* (1967), Ferdinand Oyono's *Houseboy* (1960), Benson Lukeman's *Cracy Revolt* (2009), Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* (1847) and Ayi Kwei Armah's *The Healers* (1978).

Plots of a story often develop in the following stages. They are:

- Expository – the writer introduces the characters and setting to begin the conflict
- The conflict moves/develops through the *rising action*
- The high point of the story is its *climax*
- The author explains the results of the climax through the *falling action*
- The conflict is resolved in its *resolution/dénouement*

Fig: 7 Stages in development of Plot of Swift's Gulliver's Travels



**Exposition**



Pirates seized Gulliver on his third voyage, philosophy, astronomy, method of suppressing insurrection revealed. Ancient history and academy introduced by his host.

---

**Resolution**

#### 3.4.4 Subject Matter

This is the immediate concern of the novelist in a novel. For example William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is concerned at the immediate level with how a group of school children scattered in the different parts of an island tried to make a home and survive, but other deeper concerns are the humanities of man to man and the disorganized form of the modern man's form of government. There is just a slight difference between the subject matter and the themes in a novel. The subject is all what the story is about is its subject.

Maniama Ba's *So Long a Letter* is about how Ramatoulaye survived the various ordeals after being abandoned by her husband, Mawdo Ba in a twenty-five years old marriage. in the novel, the novelist also discuss other religion social related experiences of a woman in Muslim society, including education, single parentage and the general treatment of women by the society as underdog.

#### 3.4.5 Theme

This is the sum total of the ideas in a novel, the ideas that the novel teaches about life as the general experience of life. Theme is deeper than subject matter. For example the theme of Earnest Hemingway's *Old man and the sea* is life as a place of continuous struggle for survival, George Orwell's *Animal Farm* is about political oppression, Elechi Amadi's *The Concubine* is about love and the limit of woman as a concubine, not as wife.

#### 3.4.6 Characterization

This is the most important element of the novel, characters are the fictive personae that carries and executes the events in a novel. They are often given the qualities of human beings and made to act like one in a given, created or fictive environment such that their behaviours appear real like that of the real you and I.

in a novel, characters can be flat or Rounded according to E.M. Forster, in his *Aspects of the Novel* (1927)

#### 3.4.6.1 Flat or two Dimensional Characters

They are often given a very simple portrayal and little is often known about them, there is limit to their growth. Often a little static, flat characters cannot be a major the same way all human beings cannot be heroic or equal in behaviour, social, economic status and so on. For example many of the characters Samuel Beth's *Biodun's Lokoso Boy* are minor, Lous Robinson, Stevenson's *Treasure Island*, a number of the characters are flat, not fully developed.

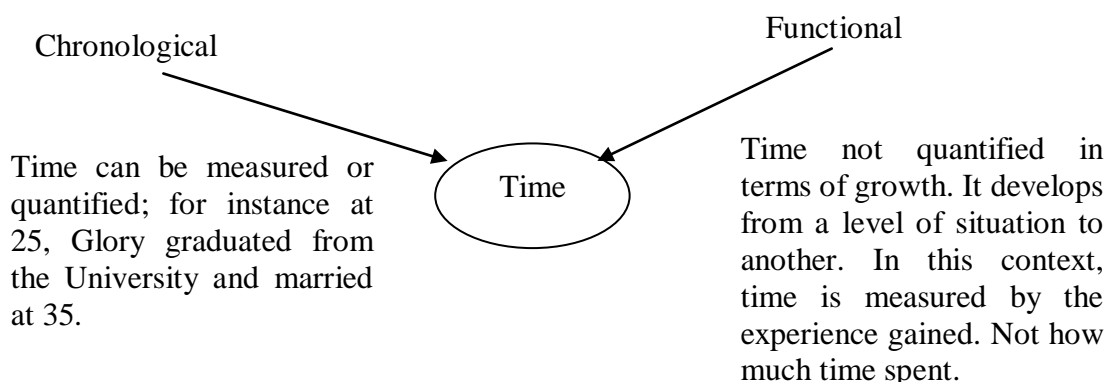
#### 3.4.6.2 Rounded or Three-dimension Characters

Such characters are complex and fully developed. They grow along through the tick and tins, circumstances created by the writer of the novel he may even see them from childhood till old age even till death. Examples are Okonkwo Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*.

#### 3.4.6 Time and Space in the Novel

The action in the novel passes through time periods. This is also a passage of time. It is through time and space that the events in the novel acquire its reality, concretes and correctness. Action in a novel is considered for human good when it transcend or passes through time, space (a period of time). Time in fiction can be used in two catergories; chronological and functional time.

Fig. 8 Action as time functional and chronological



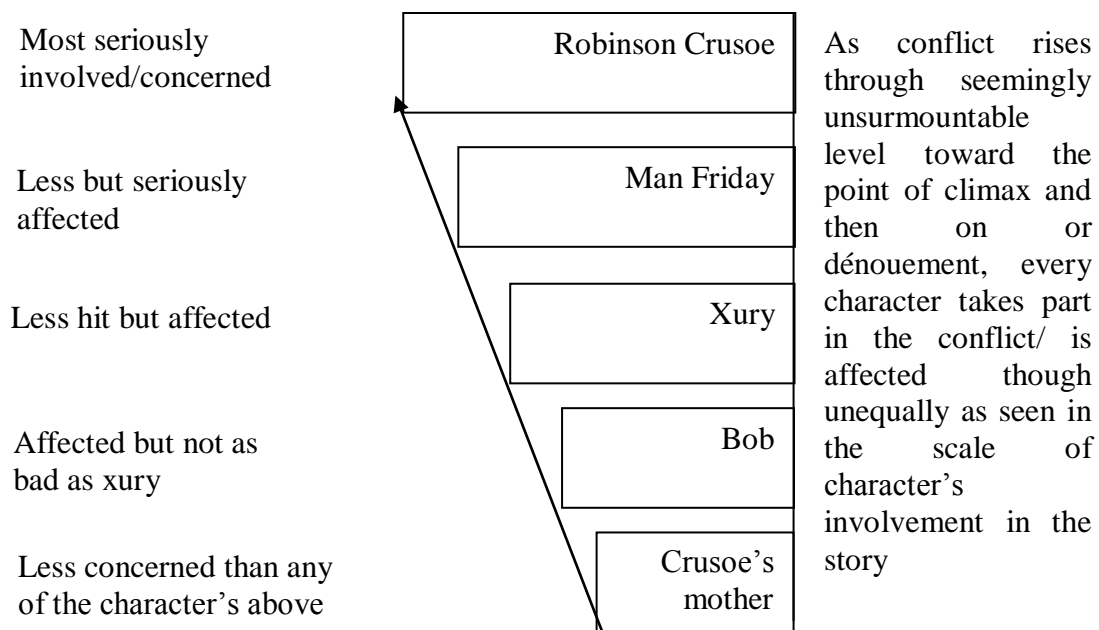
Adapted from Akachi Ezeigbo (1981)

#### 3.4.7 Character's level of involvement in the Novel

Characters in the novel genre are not often of equal level of involvement in the conflicts they generate in the novel. The character's level of participation,

endurance, performance and affectivity and general involvement in the crises, design and his strength of endurance in which the climaxing of the events in the novel goes a long way to determine his involvement. All characters, flat or rounded are naturally involved in any novel, no matter how minimal or minute the character's role, maybe we can construct a scale of character's level of involvement using Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*. The figure below explains further.

Fig. 9: Character's Scale of involvement in Daniel Dafoe's *Robinson Crusoe*



You can enlarge the character's scale of involvement to accommodate other characters to determine their level of involvement in the conflict of the story.

### 3.4.8 Setting

This is the physical environment, place or location in which the events in a novel takes place, only traditional narratives have no physical setting but fictive setting like "once upon a time, in the community of the fishes. It is the ability of the novelist to describe the setting convincingly that makes it real. For example Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* is set in the physical Umuofia, the Igbo speaking environment in the novel is described very vividly such that it looks

real. William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is set in an island, thus the island becomes a reflection of or represents our bigger, but real world.

### 3.4.9 Language

It is through language that literature is expressed, the novelist; put words in the mouth of the characters he has created and make them speak and perform some actions, but the use of language differentiate one character from another, father from a son, a king from his subjects and a politician, pastor like one and so on. It does not really matter if the characters in a novel are non-humans like the wind, trees or animals, the novelist's ability to use language, manipulate tones, use figurative language idioms, proverbs, humour and so on lends weight to the beauty of the novel. Here is an example of how language may be used by a novelist, using his character to convey his ideas as seen in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.

Consider the extract below, part of the speech given by Old Major, a character in George Orwell's *Animal farm*. You can also read the novel and study the use of language by the English novelist as well as how the writer make his characters convey his creative experience to readers and its general aesthetic effects.

Comrades, you have heard already about the strange dream that I had last night. But I will come to the dream later I have something else to say first. I do not think, comrades, that I shall be with you for many months longer, and before I die, I feel it my duty to pass on to you such wisdom as I have acquired, I have had a long life, I have had much time for thought as I lay alone in my stall, and I think I may say that I understand the nature of life on this earth as well as any animal now living. It is about this that I wish to speak to you.

Now, comrades, what is the nature of this life of ours? Let us face it: our lives are miserable, laborious, and short. We are born, we are given much food as will keep the breath in our bodies, and those of us who are capable of it as forced to work to the last storm of our strength; and the very insult that our usefulness has come to an end we are slaughtered with hideous cruelty. No animal in England is free. The life of an animal is misery and slavery; that is the plain truth. But is this simply part of the order of nature? Is it because this land of ours is so poor that it cannot afford a decent life to those who dwell upon it? No, comrades, a thousand times No/. The soil of England is fertile, its climate is good, and it is capable of affording food in abundance to an enormously greater number of animals than now inhabit it... Man is the only real enemy we have. Remove man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished forever.

Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk, he does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet he is lord of all the animals... and even the miserable lives we lead are not allowed to reach their natural span... is it not crystal clear, then, comrades, that all the evils of this life of ours spring from the tyranny of human beings? Only get rid of man, and the produce of our labour



would be our own. Almost overnight, we could become rich and free. What then must we do? Why, work night and day, body and soul, for the overthrow of the human race! That is my message to you, comrades; Rebellion! I do not know when that Rebellion will come, it might be in a week or in a hundred years, but I know, as surely as I see this straw beneath my feet, that sooner or later justice will be done. Fix your eyes on that, comrades, throughout the short remainder of your lives. Old Major cleared his throat and began to sing...

*Beasts of England, Beasts of England.  
Beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken to my joyful tidings  
Of the golden future time...*

*Beasts of England, Beasts of Ireland.  
Beasts of every land and clime,  
Hearken well and spread my tidings  
Of the golden future time.*

The singing of this song threw the animals into the wildest excitement. Almost before Major had reached the end, they had begun singing it for themselves. (p.3-8).

Fig: 10 Commentary on the extract: Character, Language Relativity, Connectivity and Creative Implication in Orwell's *Animal Farm*

George Orwell speaks through one of his main characters, Old Major. The character's long, persuasive and beautiful speech in the novel frequently refers to other animals as "Comrades", revealing a true sense of patriotism, wooing and drawing their attention even closer, uniting and preparing their minds for a non-existing dream he intends to narrate. He constantly reminds them all of their underdog positions in comparable with the notorious man who governs their affairs. The dreamer reminds them all of the brevity of life, consciously digressing and avoiding a direct reportage of man's evil to animals in a long speech coloured with puns, making the speech appear premeditated, well defined and chronological: Old Major's speech hides the genuine intention of his 'dream', exaggerates man's selfish and continuous toiling in the world as unfortunate and purposeless. He ridicules and stresses the uncultured habit and the evil geniuses in man as unworthy of emulation. The character wittingly damns humanity and dismisses him on ground of immorality, emphasizing his fraudulence and suggests indirectly a necessary rebellion that will free all animals from the "yoke" of man's unwarranted oppression. The writer also leans on the use of metaphor, contrasts, juxtaposition, pun, antithesis, aphorisms and metaphor in a colourful language to achieve creative aesthetics. The character concludes, reduces his speech to a song, "Beasts of England" to achieve precision, his vision permanence, picturesque and realistic.

### 3.4.10 Point of View

This is the way in which the novelist gets his story told through which he wins the reader's sympathy. It is the position through which events are observed in the novel. It is the way a writer presents his characters, actions, dialogue are presented to the reader in a prose fiction. The method of storytelling is an important element in the novel; some important point of view are discussed below.

#### 3.4.10.1 Eye of God or Omniscient Point of View

This is an old way of telling stories in which the author presents the story as everything, he knows the actions, events, characters and so on in the story. The omniscient narrator moves into and out of events, as he knows everything, events, movements of the story, time and space, he knows the private life, inner most thoughts, feelings emotions of the characters. As a result of such attributes, the storyteller is often called the "Eye of God". This is different from the editorial omniscience or objective/intrusive narrator who simply reports and comments on and evaluates the actions and motives of the characters. This technique has been used in Mathew *Truth's Half way to Hell* (1975) and Joseph Andrew's *Tom Jones* Ayi kwei Armah's *The Beautiful Ones Are Not Yet Born* (1968). The omniscient point of view also known as the third person point of view or narrative technique because the narrator often addresses characters in the first person using "he", "she".

#### 3.4.10.2 Multiple Point of View

Here a number of characters tell the story, revealing their views and judgment on a story such that the reader is at a vantage position to understand the story.

Examples of novels with this technique are Isidore Okpewho's *The Last Duty* (1976) and Akachi Adimora Ezeigbo's *The Last of the Strong Ones* (1996).

#### 3.4.10.3 Mixed Point of View

This style of storytelling is not common, it happens when there is an alternative of the omniscience or other point of view. Examples are Ngugi Wa Thiogio's *Petals of Blood* (1977) and Ayi kwei Armah's *Two Thousand Seasons* (1973) Steven Helen's *The Wrath of Love* (2000).

### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Differentiate between epistolary and sociological novels.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have defined the novel genre the factors that gave rise to the novel, types of the novel, its elements, time and space in the novel, relate the novel to setting, language, point of view.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- The definitions of the novel
- Factors that give rise to the novel
- Types of the novel
- Elements of the novel
- The meaning of character's involvement in a novel
- In the next unit, you will be introduced to the theme and style in the English Novel (1).

## 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

- 1) Define the novel genre
- 2) List five types of the novel with examples
- 3) Differentiate between historical and detective novels
- 4) What is meant by the setting of a novel, relate to an English novel

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Allen, Walter (1954). *The English Novel*. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc.

- Altenbernd Lynn & Leslie L. Lewis (1966). *A Handbook for the Study of Fiction*. London: Macmillan.
- Artkson, Gate (2004). *Reading English Novels across the Age*. Ibadan: Macmillan.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth & Tiffin, Helen (eds) (1989). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literature*. London: Routledge.
- Austen, Jane (1980). *Emma*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Bolanle, Emilly (2004). *Reflections in the English Novel*. Jos: Macmillan.
- Booth, Wayne (1961). *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bradford, Richard (ed) (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Conrad, Joseph (1983). *Heart of Darkness*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Damrosch, Leopold (1985). *Adventures in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Defoe, Daniel (1972). *Robinson Crusoe*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Eastman, Richard M, (1965). *A Guide to the Novels*. California: Chandler Publishing Co.
- Enright, D. J. & Earnest Dechickers (eds) (1982). *English Critical*. Texts: Delhi. Oxford University.
- Evans, Ifor (1982). *A Short History of English Literature*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Forster, E. M. (1949). *Aspects of the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth (1986). The Literary Evaluation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- Golding, William (1962). *Lord of the Flies*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Hall, Lawrence Sergent (1965). *A Grammar of Literary Criticism*. New York: The Macmillan.
- James, Henry (ed) (1986). *The Art of the Novel*. New York: Charles Scribener.
- Jefferson, Anns & David Robeyleds (1991). *Twentieth-century Literary Theory - A Reader*. London: Macmillan.
- Kettle, Arnold (1951). *An Introduction to the English Novel*. London: Hutchinson
- Lemon, Brook (2006). *A Companion to the English Novel*. London: Lens Prints.
- Lubbock, Percy (1921). *The Craft of Fiction*. London. Cape.
- Lubeng, Temp (1995). Theme and Style in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.
- Luka, George (1937). *The Historical Novel*. London. Merlin Press.
- Orwell, George (1982). *Animal Farm*. Lagos: Academy Press.
- Oyegoke, Lekan (ed) (1991). *Undergraduated Text in English Language and Literature*. Ibadan: Paperback Publishers.
- Palmer Eustace (1986). *Studies on the English Novel*. Ibadan. African Universities Press.
- Reaske, Christopher R. (1970). *The College Writer's Guide to the Study of Literature*. New York: Randow House.
- Rosenheimi, Edward W. (1960). *What Happens in English Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

## UNIT2: THEME AND STYLE IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL (1)

### CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Summary of Daniel Defoe's (1661-1731) *Robinson Crusoe*
  - 3.2 Theme
    - 3.2.1 In search of economic empowerment
    - 3.2.2. Industrious
    - 3.2.3 Christianity and gain of prayer
    - 3.2.4 Consequences of disobedience
    - 3.2.5 Suffering and endurance
  - 3.3 Style
    - 3.3.1 Language
    - 3.3.2 Detailed description
    - 3.3.3 Allusion
    - 3.3.4 Symbolism
    - 3.3.5 Extended narratives
  - 3.4 Summary of Jonathan Swift's (1667-1745) *Gulliver's Travel's*
  - 3.5 Theme
    - 3.5.1 The irony of life
    - 3.5.2 Knowledge is infinite
    - 3.5.3 Human/English law as corruption and charade
    - 3.5.4 Rationality
    - 3.5.5 Transformation
  - 3.6 Style
    - 3.6.1 Language
    - 3.6.2 Allegory
    - 3.6.3 Travelogue
    - 3.6.4 Mockery of the English

- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor –Marked Assignment (TMA)
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to introduce you to the selected works of two prominent English novelists Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels* both writers have used journalistic approach and satirical allegory to probe contemporary English life. Daniel Defoe and Jonathan Swift may be said to have secured a recognizable prominence in the craft of the novel genre. The former is one of the four founding fathers of the English novel others are Samuel Richardson (1689-1761), Henry Fielding (1707-1754) and Tobias Smollet (1721-1771). In this unit, we have introduced you to the literary experience of one of these founding fathers the most controversial one among them. Apart from Crusoe's *Robinson Crusoe*, we have also discussed the summary themes and styles of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travel's*. the perspective of the novelist will familiarize you with the writer's experiences of the English society. Below are the objectives of this unit:

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- summarise Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*
- compare the style of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* with Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*
- explain the themes in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*
- comment on Jonathan Swift's themes in *Gulliver's Travel's*
- outline the writer's themes in *Gulliver's Travel's*
- respond to the use of language of the writer in *Robinson Crusoe*
- assemble the themes in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travel's* with appropriate extracts from the novel
- match the themes in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe's* with suitable extract from the novel
- review the themes in Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travel's* and align with extracts from the novel
- quote and explain any interesting paragraph or lines from either of the English Novels discussed in this unit
- memorize a line from Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*
- rate the literary quality of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travel's*
- assess the language of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*
- create a novel from any interesting event in your country or community.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### Summary of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*

Daniel Defoe's, *Robinson Crusoe* is a strange and surprising adventure of his hero who decides to go to sea against his parent's advice. His father insists that if he obeys him, he will enjoy a life of ease and happiness, but Crusoe was blind to the evil consequences of his ambition even as his father reminds him of his elder brother who ignored his warnings not to go into the low country war where he died. Crusoe tried to lure his parents to approve his decision to travel abroad. He reports his parent's reaction:

Mother refused to move in to my father, yet as I have heard afterwards, she reported all the discourse to him and that my father, after shewing a great concern at it and to her with a sigh, "that boy might be happy if he would stay at home, but if he goes abroad he will be miserablist wretch that was ever born: I can give no consent to it"p.7

At last, he eloped to Hull where he met a friend, Bob with whom he went on London sea travel that became his first voyage on first September, 1651. As soon as their ship left the Humber, the wind blew frighteningly against it and he vowed to return home to his parents as a repentant prodigal afterward. At last the ship arrived at Yarmouth Roads where the ship blew contrary, yet they ignored the storm, left the Anchor even as a ship ahead of them wrecked in the storm. The captain of the ship warned Crusoe never to go any further after his trial voyage, describing him as the biblical Jonah in the ship of the Tarshish, and stressed that his ship ran into the terrible storm as a result of his presence in the ship. The captain vowed never to step into the same ship with the boy for a "thousand pounds". But, Robinson Crusoe again went on board on a vessel with a sea captain in a ship bound for the coast of Africa vulgarly called the "voyage to Guinea". He took ill frequently from excessive heat of the climate and fell into terrible misfortune. On the course towards the Canary Islands, the Turkish Rovers of Sallee overtook their ship, seized goods and took others including Crusoe as slave into Sallee of the Moors.

Apart from his two previous voyages to Guinea, Robinson Crusoe honoured the secret proposal of some of his Brazilian plantation merchant friends to travel to Guinea where they hope to buy Negroe slaves for sale and use in their plantations. The gain he hoped to make from the voyage won him over, so he went on board, they went through cape St. Augustino, steered towards the Isle Fernand de Noronha encountered a violent Tornado in 7 degrees 22mins Northern Latitude , they lost men to the storm. At last, a mountain like raging wave struck the ship, buried the crew, swept Robinson Crusoe against a piece of rock, left him senseless, swept him ashore an Island. He looked up to God, lonely; began to study and walk up and down on the Island lonely and depressed,

he navigated the terrain, relied on nature to survive; planted maize, hunted domesticated animals fowls, goats, a parrot he named Poll, made a canoe, Axe, shovel, spade, ladder, a shelter; relied absolutely on nature to survive before he met his first and only human companion Man Friday, in the uninhabited island where he lived for years. The Hogsheads of Bread, Box of sugar, Barrel of Flower, Cables, Razors, some Gold and Silver, and a few other things he retrieved from the floating wreckage of the ship were improvised with on the barren Island. Defoe's hero had lived in the uninhabited Island for twenty eight years before an English ship with crews in a state of mutiny arrived. He helped the Captain subdue the mutineers, got rescued, but his parent's had died when he arrived England.

### 3.2 Theme

Some of the themes in Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* are explained below:

#### 3.2.1 In search of Economic Empowerment

Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* replays the crazy desire for the class distinction in the Augustan age of England. People, generally in the period are disenchanted with the lower and middle classes of the economy, they all desire the enviable or respectable upper class position more valuable in the period. Defoe's hero, Robinson Crusoe, early in life, at the age of twelve does not like to be identified with the lower or middle class position, but the upper class of higher economy, to which great honour or prestige is attached. Defoe's hero wishes to improve his economic life, desperately. He resists any attempt to be identified with the middle class life and values and existence. The hero desires to go to sea where he thinks he will be able to make quick wealth or fortune cheaply. The hero exhibits the characteristics of young Middle English men and women who prefer to leave for overseas in search of greener pastures to avoid the less economically challenging English Life that offered the English citizens less fulfillment. Robinson Crusoe represents such class of people.

The novel reads:

...I would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea and my inclination to this led me so strongly against the will, nay the commands of my mother and other friends, that there seem'd to be something fatal in that propension of nature tending directly to the life of misery which was to befall me. My father a wise and grave man gave me serious and excellent counsel against what he foresaw was my design. He called me one morning into his chamber, where he was confined by the gout, and expostulated very warmly with me upon this subject. He ask'd me what reasons more than a mere wandering inclination I had



for leaving my father's house and my native country. He bids me observe it and that I should always find, that the calamities of life were shared among the upper and lower part of mankind but that the middle station had the fewest disaster and was not exposed to so many vicissitudes as the highest or lowest part of mankind; nay they were not subjected to so many distempers and uneasiness either in body or mind (PP..3-4)

The hero rebelled against his father's wise counsel not to be desperate to move from the middle to upper class of the English economy of the age. The novelists deliberately use his hero to reject the practices of and all that the middle class English value represents.

### 3.2.2 Industrious

Daniel Defoe takes his deviant hero, Robinson Crusoe through the misfortune of ship wreckage in an isolated desert island where situation demands that he must fashion a method to keep himself going in the isolated island. He had began to make, his environment habitable and profitable to him ever before he met with the cannibal Man Friday who is from uncivilized race of pagans. Crusoe farm, planted maize in the Island, and went on lone hunting expenditures, killing games and in the process, he caught his first non human companion, a parrot bird he named Poll, introduced to the world of communication, he was even domesticating animals, able to bake bread within his first two years in the Island took advantages of his environment by making a home out of the cave made a ladder with which he climbs hills, made an axe from a hardwood, carved wood into shovel and shaped, a gun suitable for hunting built, kitchen with rafters. He toiled night and day. Defoe explains

The next day in searching the wood I found a tree of hard wood, or like it which in the brazils they call the iron tree, for us exceeding hardness, of this with great labor and almost spooling my axe, cut a piece, and brought it home too with difficulty enough, for it was exceedingly heavy (p.73).

He had goat and dogs, wild, wood pigeons, and tortoise. He cooked the latter for food "the savoury and pleasant that ever I tasted in my life having had no flesh, but of goats and fowls since I arrived in this horrible place" (p.86) Defoe use his hero to teach industriousness which was a prevailing attitude of the English of the age of Augustan

### 3.2.3 Christianity and Gain of Prayer

Defoe reminds us of the moral and spiritual philosophy of Catholicism in Neo-Classical England of his time. His hero had overworked while trying to survive the difficult condition of his environment. Crusoe had “no rest all night, violent pains, in my head and feverish” (p.86). The novelist observes.

Very ill, frightened almost to death with  
The application of my condition, to be,  
Sick and no help, pray to God for the  
First time, and since the storm off of Hull,  
But scarce knew what I saw on why  
My through bring all confused (p.86).

While in the Island, he took ill, sweating dangerously with no food, could not stand erect, weak, he was thinking of the possibility of death, seeing his present predicament, with no help in view in a lonely island, Crusoe had to pray to God again and again. The hero's prayer had immediate and positive effect on him, he fell asleep through the night relieved and became refreshed after his prayer, he dreamt saw a man descend from a black cloud as bright as a flame such that Defoe's hero could not look at the man, obviously an angel, "his continence was most inexpressible dreadful impossible for word to describe, when he stopped upon the ground with his feet, thought the earth trembled, seeing all these things has not brought thee to repentance thou shall die" (p.78). That was the warning from the stranger.

Daniel Defoe reflects the power of prayer, particularly Christian catholic prayer of the English Augustan's age. The primary duties of the English Christians Missionary to spread the gospel of Jesus Christ, Christian based western philosophy is discussed in Defoe's novel. The novelist reject other forms of worship other than Catholicism that has the superior spiritual or divine connection to heavenly God and Angels. Thus, the reader is persuaded to accept the moral standard point of Christian believe that all are equal, hence the cannibal friend of Crouse, Man Friday is persuaded by the hero to see the moral implication of feeding on fellow human beings. With that, Defoe used his English hero to carry out the role of a Christian Missionary, soul winning to the black third world to justify Britain's colonial expansion and imperial consciousness. At another occasion, after Crusoe's ship left Yarmouth in deviant to the bad weather, after four or five days, they encountered a terrible storm that made them prayed to God, saying "lord, be merciful to us, we shall be all lost, we shall all be undone" (p.11)

#### 3.2.4 Consequences of Disobedience

After Crusoe's father refused to encourage him to go abroad, a day afterward, he sneaked away secretly to hull but the secret journey to hull coincided with a friends, Bob who was going by sea to London in his father's ship. He advised him to go with them at no cost. Immediately the ship sailed, a terrible wind blew on them, Crusoe regrets his first terrible sea experience, and vowed that if he survives the storm, he will go home to his father like a repentant prodigal and

will never venture into the sea “I would like a true repenting prodigal go home to my father” (p.8). But, contrary to the vow he made, as soon as the weather cleared they trivialized the risk, drank over it and he forgot the bad experience and vow he made to return home.

The sixth day, they arrived at Yarmouth roads where their ship anchored, briefly just as the ship from Newcastle also anchored at the common harbour to avoid the wind, but Crusoe sailed in the bad weather, but after some days, the wind blew very strong, Crusoe again expresses fright “indeed and now, I began to see terror and amazement in their faces even of the sea men themselves” (p.10-11)

The men fired gun for help and a ship rolled out boats to help them, but they had hardly made it Northward towards the shores of Winterton when they saw their ship sank. With this added experience, Crusoe had no power to make it back home to his parents, though regrets his deviance. He says “ I was overtaken by the judgment of Heaven for my wicked leaving my father’s House and abandoning my duty, all the good counsel of my parents” He again joined another ship that is Africa bound, a voyage to Guinea. With the bounties of money and material wealth that the voyage promised, he agreed to go with the ship’s captain, he was already a messmate “and companion of the ship’s captain he describe as “honest and plain-dealing man” (p.17)

The voyage was a mixture of success and loses for Crusoe, who took ill frequently in the journey as a result of violent heat of the climate. He found himself undergoing series of unusual but bitter experiences, among Negroes, savages, worsened by the mistreatment by nature. After his last voyage to Guinea, Crusoe became shipwrecked again, and he tried to swim ashore, the wave hauled him against a piece of rock, leaving him the only survival with the floating materials of his mates like caps and two shoes,. He was swept ashores with nothing to defend himself from possible wild beasts except a knife tobacco pipe and little tobacco in a box. He tried to improvise the few thing tools he got from cabin of the wrecked but floating Ship to start a life on the Island where he spent twenty-eight years.

### 3.2.5 Suffering and Endurance

Every account of Robinson Crusoe’s voyage, from the moment he left home, gave him pains and frights of various degrees as a result of bad weather. More painful was his travel to Yarmouth road, and then his encounter with the Negroes, the terrible and frightening encounter he and xury had while they were less than 150 miles South of Sallee beyond the Emperor of Morocco’s Dominican. They endured the gale of wind apprehension with the Moors and wild creatures, monstrous beasts, fearful sight of boars, encounter with savages around the Island of the Canaries and Cape Verde, Island. The Island they had strayed off to discover its inhabitants moved in the thousands or in large numbers for fear of attack by wild beasts.

### 3.3 Style

Explained below is the style of Defoe's creative strength and aesthetic relevance

### 3.3.1 Language

Daniel Defoe's language struggle to give the details of his impression about his environment, situation, even past thoughts and feelings. This is evident from the first page of the novel to the end. He tries to expand every minute fact he creates. Rather than consider this style as a problem; it aids and strengthens the reader's knowledge of the novel. It also bridges the likely gap between the readers of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and makes the novel real than mere fiction that it is. Such makes readers to enter into Defoe's world at the various levels of life experiences, including his non-human character like the parrot, Poll. For instance Crusoe woke from a deep sleep to the reality of his friend, Poll, Defoe's interactive discourse between Crusoe and the bird is given in the extract below.

But, as the voice continue to repeat  
Robin Crusoe! Robin Crusoe! at last I began  
to wake more perfectly and was did first  
dreadfully frightened, and started up in the  
utmost consternation. But no sooner were  
my Eyes open, but I saw my poll sitting on  
the top of the Hedge, and immediately knew  
that it was he that spoke to me, for just in such  
ben waning language. I had used to talk to him  
and teach him, and he had learned so perfectly.(p.143)

### 3.3.2 Detailed descriptions

There are many other instances of detailed descriptive use of language by Defoe in his novel. He also evokes details in a situation that his characters are closely identified with them and live through the experience in very realistic way.

He uses long sentences clothed in Anglo Saxon expression, this may partly be as a result of his experience as a journalist. Such sentences are often clumsy, too long, it was by a whisker that Defoe's story escapes being boring, but for his ability or mastery at weaving words together so beautifully skillful all through the story with the help of deliberately chosen adjectives and other forms of long winded expressions. Example of this begins with the novel.

I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family, thou' not of that Country, my father being a foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull: He got a good Estate by merchandise, and leaving off his Trade, lived afterward at York, from whence He had married my mother, whose Revelations were named Robinson, a very good Family in that country and from whom I was called Robinson kreutznear; but by the

Usual corruption of words in England, we are now  
called, they have call ourselves and Our name Crusoe,  
and so my companion always call'd me. P.1

### 3.3.3 Allusions

Daniel Defoe beautifies his story with the use of series of allusions; from classical to natural geographical and biblical allusions. Some of the natural allusion used in the novel are “shore”, “water”, “and Hills”, “sea” “island”, “wood”, “parrot” “tree” storn “corn”, “tiger” “lyon”, “wild pidgeon”, “strom”, “wild beasts” “weather”, “day and night” coast”“rocks”, “grove”. Some reference to the holy Bible are “God”, “dream”, “Angel “pray’d” Classical use of allusion is evident in these” emperor “Negroes” “carpe de verde” morocco “canaries” pico of teneriffe” moors” Gambia Senegal Greek, cape of Augustino, River Amazoms” Barbadoes” Geographical allusion used are 10 or 12 degrees of Northern Latitude” 22 degrees of longitude difference,” 11 degree North Latitude”

The generous spread of the allusion extracted from Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* suggests how comprehensive or detailed the novel is and the novelist’s ability to convey various issues of humanity and as it relates to the themes of and sustainability and appropriateness of his subject matter.

### 3.3.4 Use of symbolism

Daniel Defoe’s use of symbols has helped to concretize his various themes and make his style unique and discourse cinematographic. His first human companion in the island, man Friday was so named by Crusoe in accordance to the English tradition of naming a newly born baby according to actual day of birth. To Crusoe, he named the Cannibal “Man Friday” ‘because’ he was saved on a Friday to justify his rebirth from cannibal-happy-tribe to the rational and humane English people whom Crusoe represents. Naturally the savage; Man Friday” deserves to be renamed as a symbol of spiritual form of baptism, spiritual transformation being human eater race of cannibal to Christian bible believing race that England Crusoe stands for.

All of these confirm Britain’s racial superiority as leading human race in the world with the best attitudes to life, and with a language, the English language that should be a world class language, hence Crusoe quickly begins to educate man Friday, teach him how to pronounce some English words using the English accent. And gradually, he is acculturated and thought to embrace the new religion, Christianity. This also gives Defoe’s hero the role of a missionary who must take Christianity to the savage and civilize them accordingly. Defoe’s “poll” in the novel symbolizes freedom of expression.

### 3.3.5 Stylistic Strength of Extended Narrative

Defoe has the strength for extended story telling. This is seen in the vigorous and unwavering ways in which his story is woven together and connected without leaving the reader bored or wandering within it. The plausibility and racy nature of the story is the creative power of the story teller. He wastes no time before recalling and presenting the next event he feels he should tell his reader. For instance, as the reader is taken through the hero's (boy's) attempt to convince his parents to let him go abroad, hardly had one taken a breath when Crusoe meets his old friend, Bob and gets on board voyage, elopes innocently to London. There and then, the story rolls on with suspense in a flash as one watches a movie, the next page of experience opens, then another, and another, rolling over the other till he is shipwrecked in an isolated island. Even at that the story offers the reader no chance to rest as the events in the Defoe's Island is creatively designed to get one glued to the pages of the novel till he was finally rescued from the desert. Defoe's creative strength should be recognized as a style with the way the story rolls and tumbles over the other like racy waves prancing for the sea shore.

### 3.4 Summary of Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*

The novel discusses Jonathan Swift's central character, Gulliver, an accomplished medical practitioner who travels to Lilliput, his first induced voyage and ship wrecked, swims to safety on the shores of the country of the Lilliputian, where he is imprisoned and the Emperor's learned men came to teach the hero their language. Gulliver's pockets are searched and his sword and pistols seized from him. He is favoured by his mild disposition, freed on certain conditions. Mildendeo, the Metropolis of Lilliput and the Emperor's palace are described. Gulliver learns the laws, customs and manner of education of the society and the people's ways of living. The hero embarks on another dangerous voyage to Brobdingnag, seized by one of the natives and later taken to the king's court, he becomes familiar with the country, he returns to England, the hero made another voyage to Laputa, Balnibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbdubdurib and Japan. He is received in to Laputa. The humorous disposition of the Laputian is described, including their advancement in astronomy and modern philosophy. He leaves Laputa for Balnibarbi's metropolis, introduced to the great academy of Lagado, meets the professor of the academy. He is welcomed by the governor at Maldonada, and then the kingdom of the Luggnagg. At last, Gulliver travels to the land of the Houyhnhnms as captain of the Ship, his men conspired against him, set him ashore in an Island where the yahoos are lords in their unique language. He tells them about the state of England, the English administration and constitution. He is introduced to the uncommon virtue of the Houyhnhnm's education, politics, economy, culture and custom and their general happy life. He left for England, cultured, appreciates the realities of life, after he has passed through the stages of experience of his hosts. The hero emerged more disciplined and knowledgeable, and more rational. He explains: "I have given thee a faithful history of my travels for sixteen years.... "I could perhaps like others astonished thee with strange improbable tales: but I rather choose to release plain matter of

fact in the simplest manner and style, because my principal design was to inform and not to amuse thee” P. 413.

Thus, after so much experiences and a view of the practical side to life, Gulliver returns home a changed man, returns to his English society cultured and thoroughly “schooled” in rationalism or human reasoning.

### 3.5 Theme

The thematic preoccupation of the English writer in *Gulliver’s Travels* are explained below

#### 3.5.1 The Irony of Life

Jonathan Swift in his *Gulliver’s Travels* reveals the important theme of the irony of life. The central character in the novel travels away from home to gain more experience of and appreciate life and its realities unfortunately, the hero, Lemuel Gulliver is thrown overboard by his men he described as “buccaneers” whom he picked up in the West Indies after his initial shipwreck. In his further expenditure, he discovers the Yahoos and the Houyhnhnms. The heroes experience of the different nature of the creatures, he met with different attitudes, concepts and world view of life that even punctured and inferiorized the social life style of Gulliver’s own nation depicts the ironic view of life. With his intelligence and education, he soon found out he is not an embodiment of wisdom when he was caught at Lilliput, weak, he slept for hours, but woke up to find his arms and legs tied, his hair too was tied in the same manner. “I like wise felt several slender ligatures across my body, from my armpits, to my thighs. I could only look upwards, the sun began to grow hot and the light offended my eyes”. The great height of Gulliver could have been a threat to the Lilliputians, but he was subdued and caged and became a subject to their laws. The strange fellow who had held him prisoner addressed him in an unknown language, as he found himself under a new societal code of conduct quite different from that of the English society where he came from.

The Lilliputians are industrious “these people are most excellent mathematicians” (p.9) Intelligent warriors and they have great numbers of artisans , Carpenters, builders and engineers who are often put at work with immediacy and on the orders of the emperor, a respected patron of learning. The ironies of this event is that Gulliver who had taught he is from a country that has attained the height of development, knowledge science and ethics and as such bogus, soon found himself and his country, ironically a toddler in terms of the awareness of life, even with the shorter Lilliputians having overriding superior mental strength. At last, the hero realizes that it is mockery for the English to assume that England has attained her heights of greatness.

#### 3.5.2 Knowledge is Infinite

No nation or anyone is an embodiment of knowledge. Apart from the paltry experience to which the Lilliputians treated Gulliver, life circumstances pushed him further on voyage and he encountered the Houyhnhnms with different ideas

of life, different beliefs and consciousness as well as a more sophisticated method of learning. He learnt so much from the Houyhnhnms who taught him to imitate a more rational culture. The horses had to teach him their language and he marveled at their organizational ability. The more rational world of great culture and learning that recognizes the role of communication in the peaceful co-existence of any society is a way of life that taught him another aspect of living.

### 3.5.3 Human/English Law as Corruption and Charade

Jonathan Swift probes the English law of the Augustan age in the view of his adventurous hero, Gulliver's. The latter was stupefied to act by the response or reaction that confronted him, his English laws by the creatures. The hero confesses:

I then descended to the Courts of justice, over which the judges, those venerable sages and interpreters of the law, presided for determining the disputed rights and properties of men as well as for the punishment of vice and protection of innocence. I mentioned the prudent management of our treasury, the valour and achievement of our forces by sea and land(p.114)

What Gulliver thought was a brilliant and convincing exposition of the gracefulness of his humanity and patriotism of his English nationality was replied by the creatures with sound and mind-startling queries, doubts and objections. He was asked the type of business the English normally spend the first and teachable part of their lives, and what method was used to cultivate the mind and bodies of their young nobility as well as the qualification of those appointed lords in England. To further explain this theme, the Houyhnhnms reduce the humanity of the English law of the Augustan age to non-existence, but to them, what really exist is the walking corruption, needless conflicts and wars; it appears English do not have idea of management, and ethics, only breed vice to further set the nation backward. Thus, England is not qualified nor has she any credential to present before other developing nations over which she assumes lordship both in the form of imperialism, or missionary.

### 3.5.4 Rationality

In the land of the Houyhnhnms, Swift proves there is a great deal of new knowledge that supersedes that of man that can be learnt. The chief horse warns the lower Horses against the maltreatment of Horse, and this is contrary to what is in vogue in the human world, the English of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The Horses realize that with passion among Horses, the society will not need soldiers who will have to settle minor disputes in the field of battle.

### 3.5.5 Transformation



In the sixteen years of the hero's travels, he passed through various experiences some pleasant and some terrible, yet he learnt a great deal of lessons. The moral advantage of his travels have imparted favourably on his life such that he emerged a more rational man than he had been. For instance, when Gulliver arrived home and his wife embraced him, it did not appear if he really enjoyed the embrace of his wife as he prefer the more humane and disciplined world of the Houyhnhnms that transformed him to a better English man. Swift's hero recalls:

I freely confess that all the little knowledge, I have, of any value was acquired by the lectures I received from my master, and from hearing, the discourses of him and his friends, to which should be prouder to listen, than to dictate to the greatest and wisest assembly in Europe. I admired the strength, comeliness and speed of the inhabitants, and such a constellation of virtues in such amiable persons, produced in me the highest veneration (p.243)

The hero returned home a changed man, alert virtuous with the readiness to tackle social vices in England, now that he has a clearer perception of human nature.

### 3.6 Style.

We have discussed the style of the novelist below.

#### 3.6.1 Language

The novels language combines satire and dark humour to reveal human follies. Gulliver's experience, his subjectivity in the hand of the Lilliputians, though generate a fair amount of wisdom, is humorous likewise the heroes experiences with the Horses in the country of the Houyhnhnms. The whole experience of the novel exhude laughter.

#### 3.6.2 Allegorical nature of the novel.

Jonathan Swift employed non-human characters in addition to human characters like the Horses, Lilliputians as well as Houyhnhnms to approach human problems particularly English problems of his time from a practical point of view, raising great moral question, that concerns his age to achieving a better society.

#### 3.6.3 Travelogue

Jonathan Swift uses travelogue as a platform to express the social concern to review the state of England of the Augustan period, the hero, Gulliver had to travel out of his society and to appreciate the value and meaning of life after he had been thrown overboard by his fellow men whom he described as 'Rogue'

and “buccaneers”. He picked them up in the West Indies after he had been shipwrecked. His aim to discover the unknown led him to a strange environment with similar social and political setting where he meets the yahoos and later the Houyhnhnms after the men he was to give medical attention betrayed him in the actualization of the ironic idiocy of life.

#### 3.6.4 Mockery of the English

The entire novel is an open mockery of the English social institutions, the laws especially, religion as well as economy and politics, military defense and intelligence that was considered to be the best anywhere in the world. But, the Horses and Houyhnhnms literally pulled down the English structure and everything that defines her status and prestige with a deep probe of the manner in which the English make their laws, execute justice and run the society generally, particularly the need less for war if peace is ever attainable in the English state and social political environment. All the questionings thoroughly embarrassed Gulliver who afterward sees himself naked and insecure in a society or state that pride herself over the need to continually build a ‘battlement of peace’ to maintain peace with her neighbours; a civilized English setting that ignores the Court of Law to settle disputes in the field of battle, ignore religious and moral ethics to appoint Judges and give justice based on the educational qualifications or certificates of the man who gives justice.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Compare the use of humour in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the:

- Summary of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, themes in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, styles in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- the summary of Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*
- themes in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*
- styles in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*

- in the next unit you will be introduced to the theme and style in the English novel (II)

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

Read and answer the questions below:

- Compare the use of language in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*
- Summaries Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*
- List and discuss themes of the writer in *Gulliver's Travels*
- Explain two themes from Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe*.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Allen, Walter (1954). *The English Novel*. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc.
- Altenbernd Lynn & Leslie L. Lewis (1966). *A Handbook for the Study of Fiction*. London: Macmillan.
- Artkson, Gate (2004). *Reading English Novels across the Age*. Ibadan: Macmillan.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth & Tiffin, Helen (eds) (1989). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literature*. London: Routledge.
- Austen, Jane (1980). *Emma*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Bolanle, Emilly (2004). *Reflections in the English Novel*. Jos: Macmillan.
- Booth, Wayne (1961). *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bradford, Richard (ed) (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Conrad, Joseph (1983). *Heart of Darkness*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Damrosch, Leopold (1985). *Adventures in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Defoe, Daniel (1972). *Robinson Crusoe*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Eastman, Richard M, (1965). *A Guide to the Novels*. California: Chandler Publishing Co.
- Enright, D. J. & Earnest Dechickers (eds) (1982). *English Critical*. Texts: Delhi. Oxford University.
- Evans, Ifor (1982). *A Short History of English Literature*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Forster, E. M. (1949). *Aspects of the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth (1986). The Literary Evaluation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- Goldings, William (1962). *Lord of the Flies*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Hall, Lawrence Sergent (1965). *A Grammar of Literary Criticism*. New York: The Macmillan.

- James, Henry (ed) (1986). *The Art of the Novel*. New York: Charles Scribener.
- Jefferson, Anns & David Robeyleds (1991). *Twentieth-century Literary Theory - A Reader*. London: Macmillan.
- Kettle, Arnold (1951). *An Introduction to the English Novel*. London: Hutchinson
- Lemon, Brook (2006). *A Companion to the English Novel*. London: Lens Prints.
- Lubbock, Percy (1921). *The Craft of Fiction*. London. Cape.
- Lubeng, Temp (1995). Theme and Style in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.
- Luka, George (1937). *The Historical Novel*. London. Merlin Press.
- Orwell, George (1982). *Animal Farm*. Lagos: Academy Press.
- Oyegoke, Lekan (ed) (1991). *Undergraduated Text in English Language and Literature*. Ibadan: Paperback Publishers.
- Palmer Eustace (1986). *Studies on the English Novel*. Ibadan. African Universities Press.
- Reaske, Christopher R. (1970). *The College Writer's Guide to the Study of Literature*. New York: Randow House.
- Rosenheimi, Edward W. (1960). *What Happens in English Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

## UNIT 3 THEME AND STYLE IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL (II).

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Summary of Robert Louis Stevenson's (1850 – 1894) *Treasure Island*
  - 3.2 Theme
    - 3.2.1 Life as Adventure
    - 3.2.2 Human Greed
    - 3.2.3 Nemesis
    - 3.2.4 Mockery of English Patriotism
  - 3.3 Style
    - 3.3.1 Language
    - 3.3.2 Symbolism
    - 3.3.3 Narrative Technique
  - 3.4 Summary of Jane Austen's (1775 – 1817) *Emma*
  - 3.5 Theme
    - 3.5.1 Chronological Nature of Life
    - 3.5.2 Woman, Marriage and Wealth in England
    - 3.5.3 Money and Materialism
    - 3.5.4 Love and Marriage, a Choice and Conditional
  - 3.6 Style
    - 3.6.1 Irony of Situation
    - 3.6.2 Misplaced/Misconstrued or Retrospective Irony
    - 3.6.3 Literary Irony
    - 3.6.4 Indirect Reference

### 3.6.5 Omniscience

4.0 Conclusion

5.0 Summary

6.0 Tutor-marked Assignment

7.0 References/Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to introduce you to the selected novels of the Victorian age. Should occasion demand that you discuss any of the nineteenth century novels in the future, you will find Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma* as relevant companion to the challenge. We have discussed the summary, theme and style in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- judge the main theme in Jane Austen's *Emma*.
- summarize Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- compare the styles in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*
- discuss a character in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- explain the themes in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*
- outline the themes in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- react to the use of language of the writer in *Treasure Island*
- assemble the themes in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* with appropriate extracts from the novel
- review Jane Austen's *Emma*
- describe Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- quote and explain any interesting paragraph or lines from either of the English novels discussed in this unit
- memorize a line from Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and state its relevance to a theme in this unit
- reproduce a line from Jane Austen's *Emma*.
- rate the literary quality of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*
- assess Jane Austen's *Emma*
- create a novel from any interesting event in your country or community
- justify the theme in Jane Austen's *Emma*
- support the novelist's style in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Summary of Robert Louis Stevenson's Treasure Island

Jimmy Hawkins, whose parents owe Benbow Inn narrates the story of the novel but continued by Dr David Livesey towards the end of the novel. Jimmy discovered the map of the treasure Island from one of the pirates, Billy Bone who had disguised as Captain into the Inn, until his co-pirates came to beat him and a blind pirate arrived the Inn to give the ill-tempered Billy Bone a black spot, left him unconscious but later died. The boy took the map of the treasure Island from Billy's "sea chest", gave it to Dr David Livesey, the family's medical Doctor, the latter showed it to Mr John, Trelawney and they planned a voyage to the treasure Island. But, the men who were employed on board the Hispaniola for the voyage were mostly experienced pirates who belong to the group of the Old John Flint, a deceased pirate and owner of the treasure Island map. He lost the map to Billy Bone who also lost it to Black Dog. Billy Bone confesses "I was old flint's first officer and I'm the only one that knows the place. The map he gave it to me when he was dying" (p. 8).

The voyagers had hardly set off for the treasure Island when Jimmy (Jim) Hawkins eavesdropped the pirate's decision to kill all the men on board and take over the treasure. When they arrived the treasure Island, conflicts and gunfight dominated the treasure hunt, some pirates died, while a few others marooned in the Island, some of the men patriots also died. Also, Ben Gunn who had been marooned in the island for three years when he was trying to escape from John Flint was discovered. Long John Silver escaped with a bag of money when the ship arrived in South America, the first Port of call of the Hispaniola. The boy jimmy Hawkins Dr David Livesey and John Trelawney survived the voyage, returned to England. The English novelist fictionalized the activities of sea pirates in the English society of his time.

#### 3.2 Theme

Some of the themes of the novel are explained below

##### 3.2.1 Life as Adventure

Robert Louis Stevenson's novel portrays humans or the individual as an adventurous animal. The voyage and the treasure hunt exposes the nature of life. The ship's officer, Mr. Trelawney presents a letter to Dr. David Livesey, the desire to go on voyage rules their heart than the intention to amass wealth "... having the treasures is the glory of the sea that is drawing me. So now Dr livesey, come quickly. Do not waste a moment (p. 23).

##### 3.2.2 Human Greed

The novelist depicts the horrible activities of pirates in England of the Victorian period using treasure voyage for selfish and greedy reasons. The problem of piracy was a major problem of England of the Nineteenth century thus, our English novelist revisits this societal menace, with the intention to correct it. The voyagers had not arrived in the Island when greed and selfishness split them into different factions, with different end intention to get the treasure and kill other on board immediately they arrive the shores of the treasure Island. From the days of John Flint, man's greed had hunted the treasure, and this reveals the age long human greed to amassing wealth. For instance, the ill tempered Billy Bones was beaten to coma when Pew, a corporate, but blind pirate gave him the "Blackspot" a mark of rejection, mockery and rejection often presented by English pirates of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century to a disloyal pirate. Some of the pirates who were determined to have the treasure all to themselves lost their lives in the process without gaining the treasure, Ben Jamin Gunn (Ben Gun) was marooned in the treasure Island for three years.

### 3.2.3 Nemesis (Retribution)

The natural law of reattribute justice played itself out in the novel. John Flint lost the map of the treasure to Billy Bone who also lost it to Black Dog, Billy Bone confesses "I was old Flint's first officer and I'm the only one that knows the place. The map, he gave it to me when he was dying (p. 8) when other pirates invaded Benbow Inn so that they could seize the sea chest in which Billy kept the stolen Map to the treasure Island, he was left unconscious, and died afterward when Pew, a blind pirate gave him the Black spot. James Hawkins the boy of Eighteen retrieved the map of the treasure Island from Billy's sea chest and gave it to Dr. Livesey, their family Doctor. Even when a voyage was planned, James Hawkins eavesdropped the plans of the pirates on board to kill other men, ironically, almost all the pirates died, some marooned, and less than ten out of the twenty six men survived the voyage.

### 3.2.4 Mockery of English Patriotism.

The ship, Hispaniola had the flag of England fully hoisted on its mast. This was the crew's way to indicate their patriotism to England. That the pirates had the English flag flown on their ship indicates how the English pay lip service to patriotism in an era dominated by greedy pirates in Victorian England.

## 3.3 Style

Our assessment of the novelist's style is given below.

### 3.3.1 Language

The novelist narrate the story from the point of view of child's innocence, using the naive voice but the encyclopedia experience of the boy in simple and focused expression. The specificity of the detail lavished on the activities of the pirates through the telling ability of Jim, who assumes the nineteenth century's representative quality, with a combination of the seriousness of the event, hidden under humour, the child-like perspective employed by the narrator makes the novel assessable, bring the reader closer to its detailed event. The child narrative perspective changed only when David Livesey took over the narration towards the end of the novel.

### 3.3.2 Symbolism

Robert Louis Stevenson uses symbolism generously in the novel, especially in character naming that mostly use figurative like onomatopoeia and allusion, hidden metaphors to depict the type of characters. For instance "John Flint," "Captain Black Dog", "Billy Bones, Benjamin Gunns (Ben Gunn), George Merry, Long John Silver, in the writer's character naming, he either choose part of a character's name from the bible and pick the other from nature or anything such that each name of pirate sounds with fright to give readers the quick genius to be able to locate and identify the possible group a character belongs, (pirate or a patriot). As listed above, Flint kills insects and it's not good for human eyes or health, his other name, John is picked from the Holy Bible, Dog, barks and bites, and Bones is something that is very hard, tough, Gunn kills and Merry taken from the word, 'merrying is a sign of being unseriousness or triviality. Many of such names created by the genius of the novelist quickly give away the nature of the character and the class of the society where they belong. Likewise other names of the non-pirates in the novel, the reader would normally greet with warmth reception .James Hawkins, Dr David Livesey, Captain Alexander Smollet and Mr John Trelawney, Hispaniola, the ship symbolizes of the human world with all its imperfections and men of diverse characters.

### 3.3.1 Narrative Technique

The novelist employed the first person narrative technique, although, Dr Livesey came in briefly as a second narrator. The brief absence of James Hawkins created suspense. The first person narrative is restrictive but the eye of God narrator sees into the world of all characters and the events. He is involved in the story as he narrates the account of events with precision.

## 3.4 Summary of Jane Austen's *Emma*

The novel discusses a circle of people in a provincial town, Highbury. We are taken through the mind of the novels heroine, Emma Woodhouse. We see the



novel further through the wedding of three couples, Emma, Mr. Knightley, Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax; Harriet Smith and Robert Martin. The novel tells the story of Emma's psychological experience of a troubled mind. Emma, the heroine serves as a connecting link between the familiar social experiences happening around her. She manipulates the characters around her to her advantages: her indulgent father, Mrs. Weston and her husband, Emma's governess as well as Mr. George Knightley, a neighboring land owner, Emma's sister, Isabella and her husband, John, Mr. Knightley's brother, Mr. and Mrs. Bates, Mr. and Mrs. Cole. Emma decides to marry the Harriet Smith, the unintelligent, but pretty lady for Mr. Elton, the Vicar. Emma connects them against the warning of Mr. Knightley. She convinced Harriet to reject the proposal of marriage she got from Robert Martins, a tenant farmer. Mr. Knightley feels the duo are good to be couples in education and social stays and criticizes Emma for interfering and predicts that Mr. Elton will not marry Harriet, who is of low social status. Emma believes she has successfully done her best to bring Elton and Harriet together.

Emma questions him about Mr. Dixon, her suspicion about Mr. Dixon increases when an unknown admirer sends Jane Fairfax a piano, but Mrs. Knightley is suspected as the sender by Mrs. Weston, and that he might marry Miss Fairfax, but this displeases Emma. Frank Churchill criticizes Jane Fairfax to Emma who reveals her suspicion about Mr Dixon she feels guilty for having gossiped. Frank Churchill encourages Emma's suspicion and tells Miss Fairfax. He suggests that a ball be held in Highbury, plans are made, but postponed as Mrs Churchill is ill. Emma thinks he is about proposing to her. She conceives the idea that he should marry Harriet.

Mr. Elton returns with this bride, Mr knightly says he does not intend to marry Jane Fairfax. Frank Churchill listens to Emma, Mr Elton refuses to dance with Harriet Smith and Mr knightly saves her of the embarrassment at last, Mr knightly concludes that Jane Fairfax and Frank Churchill have secret understanding and that the latter merely double dates by giving attention to Emma Mrs Elton forces Mr Knightley to invite everyone to his house. At a picnic party, at Box Hill, Emma is rude to Miss Bates, later news of the death of Frank Churchill from visiting Highbury, Weston receives a letter that he has been secretly engaged to Jane Fairfax right from Weymouth before the duo came to Highbury. Harriet feels bad when she realises that Emma had led her into an unrealistic love, Emma realizes she herself loves Mr knightly. Emma gives reasons why she turns Harriet away from Robert Martin. At the Weston's party, Mr John knightley informs Emma of Mr Elton's interest in her, but Emma dismisses his impression, describing Mr Elton's suspected advances as ridiculous, pretentious and unrealistic. While returning home alone with Mr Elton from the party, the latter declares his love for Emma but his dislike for Harriet Emma vowed never to match make again, but still believed she was correct to make Harriet reject Robert Martins love proposal. Emma tells Harriet the truth but could not convince her. Against admiring Mr Elton.

Jane Fairfax, an orphaned granddaughter of Mrs Bates who was brought up by a Colonel and Mrs Campbell with their own daughter, now Mrs Dixon visits the Bateses. Her excellence at the piano and singing is admired by Emma but refuses to be her friend against Knightley's thought. Miss Fairfax cold and unfriendly disposition puts Emma off, Mr Knightley admires the equal social and educational rank of the Women, though Miss Fairfax is poor while Emma is rich, but Emma speculates Miss Jane Fairfax affair with Mr Dixon, the Campbell's son-in-law.

News spreads that Mr Elton is married to a rich lady he met at a Bath. Harriet's shock is interrupted by her agitation at meeting Robert Martin and his sisters who invites her to meet them. Emma visits Harriet. It became news in Highbury of Mr Weston's son first marriage, Frank Churchill. His letters are loved but meetings have been called off. He arrives at last, Emma admires his glazing appearance, Emma gets convinced that they are suitable for each other. He visits his father's friend, including Jane Fairfax he met months earlier Emma and Jane Fairfax are reconciled. Mr Knightley plans to live at Harriet field to keep Emma's father in close contact with his daughter. Mr Knightley announces that Harriet and Robert Martin met and are getting married in London, and Emma is believed, finds a good match at last. Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax return. Mr Woodhouse agreed to the idea of Emma's marriage, and all the three couples married after the other.

### 3.3 Theme

Some of the themes in Jane Austen's *Emma* are discussed below.

#### 3.5.1 Chronological Nature of Life

Jane Austen presents the human society as naturally sequential in nature. The everyday experience of the relationship evoked in the novel *Emma* buys a commodious circular table to accommodate visitors at the different levels of their social engagements, interests of the same time. It is expected to take those who are for dinner parties, and card and picnic parties. The Table seats various social degree of men/people in the society, from the most to the less important guests, this arrangement again invokes life as chronological.

The order of visit are friends then the newly married women visits and leads in dinner, and dance floor. This arrangement invokes the nature of life in the Romantic age, the orderly or sequential order of life.

#### 3.5.2 Woman, Marriage and Wealth in England

The major aim of women as presented in the novel is to get married to a preferred man, of social and economic respectability or value in the society to be comfortable and gain social respectability among the members of her family and friends. The other impressive aspect of this theme is to do everything to remain attractive to her husband, and whatever will lead woman contrary is what she

must avoid, thus, Jane Austen explains in her letter to her niece, Fanny to marry a man of high social status and wealth in the society. She should also give birth to a few children to avoid being worn out early in life, before the age of thirty. She legislates against women's early marriage and parental role so as to keep her virility, figure or posture, emotion and above all her beauty impressive. From the treatment of women in the Jane Austen's *Emma*, women of her period were not any way better than servants, they had their pace dictated, few were ever educated, and the lesser form of employment were reserved for them of the lower class, such as nurse, dancer, actress, or shop keepers. Women are ill housed, ill feel, ill paid, they equalled slaves.

The profession that are prestigious like law, medical doctor, and best employments are not for women, but how can they be found in such work environment when less women were educated than men?. For instance, Mrs. Elton tells Fairfax her duties are to take care of the children when they leave the care of nurses, she teaches the children the necessary three R's, reading, writing and Arithmetic and the girls music, painting and sewing and the French or any other language she knows. Younger women were treated like old women, sit at home syndrome

Jane Austen's *Emma* unfolds the type of treatment women were given in her days such as doing house chore, Emma, hates getting married. But Isabella married Mr. John Knightly to satisfy the society, Emma prefers a single spinster who is healthy to a poor married woman who do not know luxury, she does not like the idea of putting a woman on her toes in the name of getting married to satisfy societal dictates. In the novel, Emma represents a very radical view of a few daring women of the age of Jane Austen who could come out boldly and tell the oppressive and demanding gender conscious society that an end, yes! Unconditional end must be put to women's misuse and abuses. Jane Austen using her famous character, Emma to reflect the voice of women in her society.

### 3.5.3 Money and Materialism

Jane Austen puts her character in a way that they are all conscious of their positions and what they should or should not do, where they should or should not be. Social class is viewed and measured with money and material wealth in the novel, Emma and her father are not recognized as land owners in Highbury like Mr. Knightley ...Emma's father also do not have a land or so rich or if he is a title owner in Highbury, but Mrs. Weston is moderately rich, he married a lady from a wealthy family, Mr. and Mrs. Churchill do not have any title but very rich, Frank Churchill is living with them, takes their name, survives at their instance. Mr. Knightly is the elder son of a rich land owner, thus he inherited the Estate of Donwell abbey, House Farms Estate and money of the deceased. Mr. and Mrs. Bates are not wealthy, do not have rank and are socially inferior. Jane is the daughter of an army officer, Mr. Elton is the younger son of the army officer but became a clergy man so as to upgrade or improve his economic status Robert Martin is a farmer who rents house and land from Mr. Knightley's estate. Jane Austen tried

to position every character to be fit into a particular recognizable social structure of the society.

#### 3.5.4 Love and Marriage, a Choice and Conditional

Only a few married couples exist in Emma, Mr. John Knightly Isabella made a home, she respects and honours her husband very dutifully, she addresses him as “my love”. Emma in the novel also desires a husband but not the common types without a recognizably appreciable social standing and wealth in the society. Emma and Mrs. Weston are in deep relationship for eight years; but Emma’s relationship with Mr. knightly is from childhood. Without ideal love, there can never be marriage, but a realizable marriage can exist where there is love between people of equal rank, intelligence, education and sociability, Mr. knightly and Emma fit into this condition.

### 3.6 Style

#### 3.6.1 Irony of Situation

This happens when what is happening means one thing to the person concerned and something else to another watching from a distant. Emma is at the centre of the event who knows what is going on Mr. Elton is interested in Emma and not the other way round or as she thinks. Emma’s statements underline the double irony in the novel, “I thought I could not be declared”. The expression is corrected when Mr. John knightly warns her that she is encouraging Mr. Elton. “Mr. Elton and I are very good friends and nothing more”, an irony of situation. Mr. knightly is jealous of frank Churchill whereas, Emma loves him, Emma is jealous of Harriest smith, without being aware that Mr. knightly loves her.

#### 3.6.2 Use of Misplaced/Miscounted Retrospective Irony

When we look back at the events in the story, we discover that Emma feels Mr. Frank Churchill will declare his love for her, but we know that facts are misplaced. We know about this when we read the letter that he was ready to tell her about his engagement to Jane Fairfax. We soon know about the planned engagement and reflection her discussion of Jane Fairflex’s strange acts, the boat disaster and how Mr Dixon regrets that he was not at the scene to make discoveries arising from the disaster.

### 3.6.3 Literary Irony

The irony of *Emma* by Jane Austen is a distinction between romantic literature and real life situation. Emma's style reveals this situation. Jane Fairfax has been saved from being dashed into the sea by Mr Dixon Emma concluded hastily that she is in love with him because Frank Churchill is handsome and writes a beautiful letter. She made up her mind that they are bound to marry even when she had not met him. The proposed wedding was given the romantic standard of the romantic literature.

### 3.6.4 Indirect Reference

Harriet describes how he meets with Martins at Ford's shop "she had set out from Mrs. Goddard's half an hour again-Martin and her brother. Jane Fairfax also uses indirect narrative, just as Mrs. Elton's at the Strawberry party at Downbell Abbey, discussing the pleasure of exhaustive snatches a favourite English fruit conversational nature of the use of language. Emma believes that the way one uses language matters in one's social and corporate relationships, and determines one's level of rejection and acceptability in the society. Austen uses Emma to playfully reveal the nature of Mr. Weston and his lifestyle "everybody said Mr. Weston would never marry again". Though the free use of language, we know that Mr. Weston is a widower of many years who seems comfortable with her present status as he gets busy with his business and gets comfortable among his friends. She said everything in a very organized and thoroughly conversational form with a sense of brevity. The type of conversation Austen gives to a reader is determined by their social setting and the creative expectation and experience/responsibility that the writer gives to such a character. for example, Jane Fairfax's may be said to be terse, miss Bate's uncontrollable, and Mr. Woodhouse's monologue, some of the conversation are embellished with or hidden under the umbrella of humour one of such is Harriet's speculation about Mr. Elton's charade in which she made curious allusion to planetary body "Neptune" and natural allusions like shark or mermaid? All in rhetoric in *Emma*.

### 3.6.5 Omniscience

The omniscient point of view begins Austen's *Emma* with consciousness of moral and directional standards, seeing through all the characters, the private emotions actions; thoughts, looking inward into the mind of Emma, the heroine, and going in and out of each character's mind, including Mrs. Weston's thought of learning the Woodhouses and Mr. Knightley's initial suspicion of Frank Churchill and Jane Fairfax. Here is an example of conversational irony in the novel

...She found her altogether very engaging – not inconveniently shy, Not unwilling to talk –and yet so far From pushing, showing no proper and becoming a deference, seeming So pleasantly grateful for being

admitted to Hartfield, and so artlessly impressed by the Appearance of every thing in so superior a style to what she had been used, that she must have good sense and deserve Encouragement. Encouragement should be given. Those soft blue Eyes and all those natural graces should not be wasted on the inferior Society of Highbury and its connections the acquaintance she had already formed were unworthy of her. The Friends from whom she had just Parted; though very good sort of people Must be doing her harm (p. 85).

The above reference of Harriet is from Emma's mind, but Austen deplores the use of irony here to expose Emma's thought of Harriet's conduct.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain what interests you in either Robert Louis Robinson Steveson's *Treasure Island* or Jane Austen's *Emma*.

#### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the Summary of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*, themes in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*, style in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*.

#### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt:

- The summary of Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*.
- Themes in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and Jane Austen's *Emma*.
- Style in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.
- In the next unit, you will be introduced to the theme and style in the English Novel (iii)

#### 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

- Summarize Robert Louis Stevenson's *Treasure Island*.
- Explain two of the themes in Jane Austen's *Emma*.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Abetria, A. (2008). *A Handbook for the Study of English Literature*. London: Penguin.
- Abu, A. (2004). *English Literature and Literary Age*. London: Macmillan.
- Artking, C. (2005). *English Literature Revisited*. London: Eaglewoods
- Ashkelon, T. (2000). *The English Writers in Victorian Age*. Trinidad: Miami Publishers
- Bookers, K. M. (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London I
- Carroll, E. (2003). *Writing of English Literature from Restoration to Augustan*. Springfield: Learning Field Publishers.
- Con, B. (2001). *A Short History of English Literature*. California: Chandler Publishing Company.
- Damrosch, L. et al (1982). *Adventure in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers
- Eagleton, T. (1983). *Literary Theory: An Introduction*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota.
- George. B. (2003). *Victorian and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century*. Berkshire: Cox and Wyman.
- Hall, L.S. (1965). *A Grammer of Literary Criticism*. New York: The Macmillan.
- Hornby, A.A. (1995). *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary of Current English* (5th edition) London: Oxford University Press.
- Johnson, V. (2012). *English Literature and the Age of Revolution*. London: Macmillan.
- Mead. G. (2011). *The Restoration Age (1789-1832)*. London: The English University Press.
- Philip, B.C. (2014). *Revisiting the Ages in English Literature*. Ibadan: Oxford University Press.
- Reid, B. (2002). *Three Writers of the Augustan Age, (1789-1832)*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Incorporated.
- Todorov, T. (1992). *Introduction to Poetics*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- Victor, W. (1967). *The Sociology of English Literature*. London: Eaglewoods.

## UNIT 4 THEME AND STYLE IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL (III)

### CONTENT

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Summary of Joseph Conrad's (1857-1924) Heart of Darkness
  - 3.2 Themes
    - 3.2.1 Imperialism
    - 3.2.2 Deception/Crafty nature of imperialism
    - 3.2.3 Race and racial prejudice
    - 3.2.4 Exploitation
    - 3.2.4 Gender discrimination
  - 3.3 Style
    - 3.3.1 Invective and discriminatory use of language
    - 3.3.2 Symbol and symbolism
    - 3.3.3 Allusion
    - 3.3.4 Language
  - 3.4 Summary of Thomas Hardy's (1840 – 1928) Mayor of Casterbridge
  - 3.5 Theme
    - 3.3.1 Sin and repentance
    - 3.3.2 Deception
    - 3.3.3 Crime and punishment
    - 3.3.4 Vanity of life
  - 3.6 Style
    - 3.6.1 Language



- 4.0 Conclusions
- 5.0 Summaries
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignments
- 7.0 Reference/ Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have written and designed this unit to introduce you to some English novels of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. In this case, we have discussed the summary, themes and style in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*. You will not doubt find the writer's creative response to the 20<sup>th</sup> century events of the English society useful as you move ahead in your studies and the society. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

- summarise Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- compare the themes in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- name what constitute the style in Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- design your own themes from Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- match a theme in this unit with an extract from Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- memorise the themes in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- review Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- assemble the themes in order of artistic merit either in *Mayor of Casterbridge* or *Heart of Darkness*
- outline the style of the novelist in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- extend the style of the novelist in Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- defend the title of the novel *Heart of Darkness*
- restate the theme in either of the novels discussed in this unit with at least a line extraction from the novel
- appraise the artistic quality of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*
- judge the creative merit of Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*
- assess the creative worth of Joseph Conrad and Thomas Hardy in *Heart of Darkness* and *Mayor of Casterbridge* respectively
- justify the title of the novel, *Mayor of Casterbridge*

### 3.1 The Summary of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*

The novel begins with a description of nature, including the Thames which connects Europe and Africa. The novelist states:

The Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing, the sea and sky were welded together without a joint (p. 65)

In the novel, the Director of Companies, Captain, and host is much respected. The ship is abandoned in the shores, Marlow tells the story, recalls how the Romans brought light to the 'dark' part of the world, not as colonist but conquerors. He tells his listeners how he had come in contact with colonization, the picture of a long coiling river and how he intend to trade with the natives, he studies the map of the river, the mouth of which he arrived after a month, observes a group of black people walking up and down, "looks like they are dying". Marlow meets the Chief Accountant, who tells him he will meet Mr. Kurtz who is in charge of the trading posts in the Ivory country. Marlow embarks on a "200 mile trek into the interior", goes through the path, dwellings. His white companion is ill. Marlow is disgusted by his experience, the greed and brutal exploitation of the natives by the Ivory traders. At a Company Station, he hears about Mr. Kurtz who is at the station in the Ivory country. He takes a long trek into the interior to join the steam boat at the Central Station, he discovers that his boat is wrecked. Marlow completes the repair and sets off the dismissed Mr. Kurtz's assistant who is ill. Close to his destination, the boat is attacked by tribesmen and the helmsman is killed. At the inner station, a young Russian sailor tells Marlow of Kurtz's excellence and how he dominates the natives. Kurtz and general barbarity of the natives is exposed with heads displayed on stakes. Marlow attempts to return Kurtz back to the river, but he has been into the very heart of things, consumed, while dying, he speaks of the horror of things, sends two packages through Marlow to deliver to the society for the suppression of savage customs and his girlfriend.

### 3.2 Theme

Some of the themes discussed in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are explained below.

#### 3.2.1 Imperialism

The English novelist takes readers back to the days of imperialism in which the Thames, River Nile and other adjoining African waterways were used as escape routes to fulfill the English mission of exploration. The English is fully prepared for imperial mission in Africa, hence the *Nellie* is delicately anchored on the Nile with crew members of diverse professional callings; Accountant, manager and experienced administrators all for the purpose of exploration, the Nile is

portrayed in the Novel as aiding the crime of English imperialism through the waterways. The novel reads:

The Thames stretched before us like the beginning of an interminable waterway. In the offing, the sea and the sky were welded together (p. 65)

The narrator reminds us that the primary duty of the Captain is beyond the river, but within the brooding gloom, in the heart of darkness, his real destination, burdened with the responsibility to personify the English and link the Thames with African rivers and then the “gloom to the West” through the waterways leading to the uttermost end of the earth (p. 66).

### 3.2.2 Deception/crafty nature of imperialism

Conrad reveals the crafty nature of Western imperial psychology of domination, which is visible in the category of men and the ships which bare impressive names, the names that “like the jewels... flanks full of treasures and thus pass out of the gigantic tale of the Erebus and Terror bound on other conquests” (p. 67).

Such imperial expenditures have been undertaken by men in charge, captains, admirals and commissioned generals of East India fleets, they are the “hunters of gold or pursuers of fame”, they all had gone out on that stream bearing the sword and often the touch” (p. 67). Imperial structure is very strongly expressed in Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*.

### 3.2.3 Race and Racial Prejudice

The theme is obvious in Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness*, even from the title of the novel “Darkness” connotes colour prejudice and hatred for the black race, the very Western objection to the Blacks colour, perhaps subjugates its owner and drives him to inhabit the discomfiting remote end of the world, “peopled banks of the rivers” spread out in the tranquil dignity of the waterway, leading to the uttermost ends of the earth, that houses the miserable black colour but recedes from Western civilization and all kinds of God driven Western advancement. Racial hypothesis, we may say is the main focus of *Heart of Darkness*, even considering the invective descriptions and addresses with which blacks and the environment is labeled or addressed in the novel, “savagery”, “detestable”, “sulky”, “niggers”, “incomprehensible”, “mysterious”, “naked”, “a wilderness like a needle in a bundle of hay”, cold in a cold fog; tempests, disease, exile and death sulking in the air, in the water, in the bush. They must have been dying like flies here (p. 68).

All the descriptions hidden in words and phrases denote hatred, unwanted, people whose ways are strange to civilization and may never experience it except to be left and forgotten in their disease invested environment. Thus, the West believe they are superior to any race of the world and must therefore, be left to dominate them.

### 3.2.4 Exploitation

It is not for nothing that the West embark on imperial conquest and domination; but with the aim to amass wealth by exploiting foreign economy of nations subject to them. For instance, in Guinea Africa, they were attracted by the Ivory in the “Wild Jungle” and the intention to trade with the blacks. For instance, the station manager and his Uncle discuss how they could make use of the trading field to their advantage “since anything can be done in this country”, employing savage or inhuman solution to improve themselves as well as their country economically. Thus, the novel reveals that to take advantage of Congo, Africa economically is a “continental concern”, hence the eagerness with which to develop the “company business” is a keen desire especially, considering that “the word Ivory rings in the air” makes it imperative “to tear treasure out of the bowels of the earth, with no more moral purpose” (p. 99) to hunt every nook and cranny of the Ivory continent for heaps of deposit of Ivory all suggest Europe’s exploitative tendency of the Congo. Conrad confirms “those people were not colonists but conquerors, taking everything by brute force”.

### 3.2.5 Gender Discrimination

Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* gets the male gender deeply involved in his narrative from the beginning to end, be it Europe executors of God’s will for the “savage” or “black things” in the dark “God forsaken jungle” of the Congo or blacks who were brainwashed into helping Europe carry out the search for Ivory and conduct the various trades that will create wealth in Africa to help develop Europe, men were freely mentioned and used in the various positions in the novel; though they got their own share of Europe’s derogatory reference to the Black colour and the disease invested environments such as “nigger”, “mysteries”, and savages. But, women were rendered ‘invisible’ or almost totally excluded in the mentioning for any serious roles in the novel, except for the one or two occasions that they were mentioned in the passing. One of such few instances is “knitting old woman with the cat obtruded herself upon my memory” (p. 142). “Set the women at work”, Marlow relates that “Kurtz mentioned a girl”, “Marlow spies the apparition of a gorgeous woman, “tried, the women”, a few more are the occasions in which women girl were sparsely mentioned in the novel. Such deliberate artistic ‘invisibility’ or female exclusion in the novel is better grouped as a form of discrimination as they were not even given any serious treatment in the novel. Other occasions in which women are mentioned are “in truth, women lived in world of their own”.

## 3.3 Style

The following are the style observed in the novel.

### 3.3.1 Invective and Discriminatory Use of Language

Joseph Conrad uses reductive discriminatory and invective language consciously in *Heart of Darkness*. Such words as “black thing”, “nigger mysteries”, “this has been one of the dark places of the earth”, “midst of incomprehensible”, “a place of darkness”, “old nigger”, “unknown”, “edge of a colossal jungle”, “so dark green”, “God-forsaken wilderness”, “horror-struck”, “bewitched”, “imperfect manners”, “impenetrable forest”, “heart of darkness”, “cannibals”, “white man’s grave”, “savages”, “satanic litany”, “barren darkness”. The novelist consciously used selected words that dehumanizes the black race and demean the black race and everything that the colour, “Black” represents. The reason is to lend weight to the theme of race and racial prejudice which is central to the discourse of the novel.

### 3.3.2 Symbols and Symbolism

The idea of “darkness” dread and evil colour of the black skin, the black race, and uncouth, uncivilized nature of the Africa continent. The map is also an important symbol that guides Europeans into the jungle of Africa for exploration of unravel the mysteries lying on the geography of the unknown land or little known corners of the globe. Such expressions indicate the evil effects of colonialism.

### 3.3.3 Allusion

We observed the generous use of allusions in the novel, examples of natural, classical, and geography and geographical related allusions used in the novel that makes the novel sound like a school of oceanography are “current”, “tide”, “sea ‘waterways’”, “seas”, “sun”, “sky”, “earth”, “river”, “congo basin”, “maps”, “latitude”, “lakes”, “Indian ocean”, “China”, “Eldorado”, “Empire”, “Mars”, “Jupiter”. These referents have been used to justify the thematic concern of the novel.

### 3.3.4 Language

The writer’s choice of word is deliberately rendered in a simple and familiar style, perhaps to justify the African setting of the Novel, hence the relativity of such words and expressions helps readers easy comprehension of its ideas, especially as we realize that the novel is about the popular theme of imperialism. Its language is enriched with use of figuratives like metaphor and simile, “though such are not generous in use in the novel, instances of the indirect comparisons in the novel are, “Thames stretched before us like the beginning of the interminable waterway” (simile) (p.65) “... a military camp lost in a wilderness like a needle in a bundle of hay” (simile) (p. 69).

### 3.2 Summary of Thomas Hardy's Mayor of Casterbridge

The novel discusses Michael Henchard, a temperamental hay – trusser and his wife Susan at Casterbridge. At a fair, he takes too much of fumity mixed with rum, sells his wife and daughter Elizabeth-Jane for five guinea to a sailor Mr. Newson. When the effect of the alcohol leaves him, he became sober, regrets and vows to abstain from alcohol for twenty one years. Afterwards he became the Mayor of Casterbridge. At last Susan Henchard, now Susan Newson and Elizabeth Jane sought Michael Henchard the latter is believed to be related by marriage. But Michael Henchard takes on Donald Fanfare who is desirous of helping him in his business. Mr Newson is believed to have died in a Shipwreck, Susan and Michael remarried and lived together as husband and wife, Susan died, left behind a wish for Elizabeth-Jane. Lucetta, the former lover of Henchard now in healthy inheritance took advantage of their past relationship to blackmail her into a promise of marriage, but madam Cuxsom wade into Lucetta's dilemma by revealing Henchard's sale of his wife and daughter at the fair with Donald Fanfare. Enthroned as the Mayor of Casterbridge, Henchard became aggrieved with envy and planned to overturn Donald's material success. This led to his eventual fall and bankruptcy. Donald buy over his property and business and employed Michael. Henchard, who engages Donald in a pre-planned duel which ends in his regret, pregnant Lucetta dies of the shock in the Skimmington ride. At last, the true paternity of Elizabeth-Jane is revealed, Henchard dies miserably.

### 3.3 Themes

Thomas Hardy discusses the following themes in his novel.

#### 3.3.1 Sin and Repentance

Michael Henchard auctioned his wife for five guineas at a fair after the in take of mother Cuxson's fumity which had been mixed with rum. Later, he realized his stupidity and inhumanity goes into the church, repents and vowed never to drink alcohol for the next twenty one years of his life, he confesses, he honoured his decision gets more serious with his business became successful and his life changed from a mere hay trusser to a wealthy merchant, rose to become a magistrate, church warden and the Mayor of Casterbridge.

#### 3.3.2 Deception

After Elizabeth Jane and Susan returned and are re-united with Michael Henchard, the latter's wife kept the true paternity of her daughter, Elizabeth-Jane secret, and when she dies, she left death bed wish for her daughter and warned that the letter should not be opened until Elizabeth-Jane gets married.

#### 3.3.3 Crime and punishment

Michel Henchard may have sold his wife, Susan and daughter, Elizabeth-Jane after taking too much of rum and later repented at the church, but he reaped the consequences of his action in ways he never expected, apart from losing the paternity of his daughter, Elizabeth-Jane, he also missed marrying Lucetta and more ridiculously, he spent the latter part of his life as a nobody, left Casterbridge much the same way he came. The novel reads:

Henchard formed at this moment much the same picture as he had presented when entering Casterbridge for the first time nearly a quarter of a century before, except to be sure that the serious addition to his years had considerably lessened the spring of his stride that his state of hopelessness had weakened him and imparted to his shoulders, as weighted by the basket, a perceptible bend (p.366)

Henchard's punishment was both physical and spiritual. His former lover, Lucetta becomes the victim of Henchard's inflection. Her past came to a full view through the skimmington ride that killed her in pregnancy. Some of the issues contained in the letter are she should not be buried in consecrated ground, no sexton should be asked to toll the bell, nobody should see her corpse, no mourners are allowed behind the deceased at the funeral; flowers must not be planted on her grave and no man must remember her. The deceased meant to keep these entire secret, even long after her death, but for the curiosity of Michael Henchard who was too impatient to keep the sealed envelope containing the letter, hence he opened it and exposed the secret.

### 3.3.4 Vanity of Life

Michael Henchard began as a nobody in Casterbridge. He was a hay trusser, but a reckless drunkard, but rose to become a successful Corn merchant and then the mayor of Casterbridge, struggled to over turn Donald who became the new Mayor. He sold his wife and children but the five guineas did not have any significant improvement on his life instead, he became bankrupt, ended humiliated, his wife, Susan died, lost the paternity of Elizabeth Jane. He left Casterbridge empty the same way he began as a struggler.

## 3.6 Style

The style of the Novelist is discussed below

### 3.6.1 Language

Hardy's descriptive power in the novel alludes to Biblical, classical and contemporary allusions. References are made to Roman architectural design. And when it became apparent to the hero that he had misbehaved, he turned to the Holy Bible and the church, became a warden. The novelist attempts a detailed

explanation of most events in a version that gradually leads the reader in to the world of the characters, the writer's experience.

## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

React to the literary success or otherwise of Joseph Conrad's representation of colonialism in *Heart of Darkness*.

### 5.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have discussed the Summary of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, themes in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*, style in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.

### 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, you have learnt

- The summary of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.
- Theme in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.
- Style in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.
- In the next unit, you will be introduced to the theme and style in the English Novel (iv)

### 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

- Summarise Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.
- Mention and explain the themes in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.
- Summarise Thomas Hardy's *Mayor of Casterbridge*.

## REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Allen, Walter (1954). *The English Novel*. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc.  
Alternbernd Lynn & Leslie L. Lewis (1966). *A Handbook for the Study of Fiction*. London: Macmillan.



- Artkson, Gate (2004). *Reading English Novels across the Age*. Ibadan: Macmillan.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth & Tiffin, Helen (eds) (1989). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literature*. London: Routledge.
- Austen, Jane (1980). *Emma*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Bolanle, Emilly (2004). *Reflections in the English Novel*. Jos: Macmillan.
- Booth, Wayne (1961). *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bradford, Richard (ed) (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Conrad, Joseph (1983). *Heart of Darkness*. Great Britain: Oxford University Press.
- Damrosch, Leopold (1985). *Adventures in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Eastman, Richard M, (1965). *A Guide to the Novels*. California: Chandler Publishing Co.
- Enright, D. J. & Earnest Dechickers (eds) (1982). *English Critical*. Texts: Delhi. Oxford University.
- Evans, Ifor (1982). *A Short History of English Literature*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Forster, E. M. (1949). *Aspects of the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth (1986). The Literary Evaluation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- Goldings, William (1962). *Lord of the Flies*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Hall, Lawrence Sergent (1965). *A Grammar of Literary Criticism*. New York: The Macmillan.
- James, Henry (ed) (1986). *The Art of the Novel*. New York: Charles Scribener.
- Jefferson, Anns & David Robeyleds (1991). *Twentieth-century Literary Theory - A Reader*. London: Macmillan.
- Kettle, Arnold (1951). *An Introduction to the English Novel*. London: Hutchinson
- Lemon, Brook (2006). *A Companion to the English Novel*. London: Lens Prints.
- Lubbock, Percy (1921). *The Craft of Fiction*. London. Cape.
- Lubeng, Temp (1995). Theme and Style in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.
- Luka, George (1937). *The Historical Novel*. London. Merlin Press.
- Orwell, George (1982). *Animal Farm*. Lagos: Academy Press.
- Oyegoke, Lekan (ed) (1991). *Undergraduate Text in English Language and Literature*. Ibadan: Paperback Publishers.
- Palmer Eustace (1986). *Studies on the English Novel*. Ibadan. African University Press.
- Reaske, Christopher R. (1970). *The College Writer's Guide to the Study of Literature*. New York: Randow House.
- Rosenheimi, Edward W. (1960). *What Happens in English Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

## UNIT 5 THEME AND STYLE IN THE ENGLISH NOVEL (IV)

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main content
  - 3.1 Summary of William Golding's (1911 – 1993) *Lord of the Flies*
  - 3.2 Theme
    - 3.2.1 displacement effects of war
    - 3.2.2 In search of ideal democratic government
    - 3.2.3 Man's survival Instinct
    - 3.2.4 Man's return to savagery
    - 3.2.5 Ubiquitous nature of evil
  - 3.3 Style
    - 3.3.1 Language allegorical and conversational
    - 3.3.2 Narrative Technique
      - 3.3.2.1 Symbolism
      - 3.3.2.2 Imagery
  - 3.4 Summary of George Orwell's (1903 – 1950) *Animal Farm*
  - 3.5 Theme
    - 3.5.1 Abuse of power
    - 3.5.2 Doubts over the true spirit of animalism
    - 3.5.3 Rebellion
    - 3.5.4 Anger/effects of a change
    - 3.5.5 Patriotism and hardwork

3.6	Style
	3.6.1 Language and humour
	3.6.2 Use of songs and speeches.
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

We have also written and designed this unit to complete our discussion of the summary, theme and style in the English Novel. In this case, we have selected William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm* as our representative novels for the present. Below are the objectives of this unit.

## 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- summarise William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- compare the styles in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.
- outline the themes in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- react to the writer's use of language in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- assemble the themes in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.
- match the theme in William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* with suitable extracts from the primary text.
- review George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.
- quote and explain any interesting line or paragraph from either William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* or George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.
- memorize a line from George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and state its relevance to any of the themes in this unit
- rate the literary quality of either George Orwell's *Animal Farm* or William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- create a novel from any event in your community or country.

### 3.1 Summary of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*

The novel narrates the story of a group of English school boys who were evacuated to safety when their country was in war. Their Aeroplane crashed into an Island, Choral Island. The boys set up a social institution and duties that are

necessary for their survival, constructed shelter, gathered fruits, hunting and make fire that will send a pillar of smoke to alert people of their presence in the island. In the process of trying to formalize the institution they set up, using the shell or “couch thing” as their voice, democratic institution and human rationality, the boys fall into savagery, the “couch thing” is destroyed, lawlessness and murderous impulse set in among the boys who began to hunt the other. Jack Merridew and his gang hunt down Ralph, the symbol of rationality and morality. The boys lapsed deeper into bestiality as they are separated from adult and rational society. At last the hunters led by Jack, do not only hunt animals but hunt other boys after Jack violently took over the control of the island, pursued Ralph all over the Island. The civilized boys ignore their civilized behaviours and give in to full violence. The novel reads

And there again, shrill and inevitable, was the violation sweeping across the island. At that sound he shield like a horse among the creepers and ran once more till he was painting. He flung himself down by some ferns. The trees or the charge? P.241.

At last, a rescue force emerged on the Island, a British Naval officer who had come to rescue them scolded them for not putting up a good behaviour. The officer pointed his gun at the boys, he is also engaged in violence as he also has violent will as his hidden part.

### 3.2 Some of the Themes Identified in the Novel are:

#### 3.2.1 Displacement effect of war

A group of English school boys were evacuated from the different parts of England in the time of war but their plane crashed on a tropical Island. The boys found themselves individually isolated on the Island. They later found out it was necessary for them to get united from the ashes of the displaced effect of the war of their country. Apart from physical separation from England, their loved ones and parents, they have also been emotionally destabilized, and all these separated parts of them must be brought together for them to create or return to ideal human society that will be free of war and conflict. But the boys could not return to or successfully create an ideal democratically vibrant society as they had thought since they have been affected by their crises ridden English society, hence they exhibit the social vices, cruelty, pride, jealousy, insecurity, anarchy, over ambitiousness, that threatens the unity of the English society. The boys in coral island found themselves receding more into the vices they inherited from their English country of origin with impurity. Even the rational behavior of Ralph in the novel could not overcome the beast in him; the novel reads

He jumped down from the terrace. The island was thick over his Black shoes and the heat hot him. He became

conscious of the weight of clothes, kicked his shoes off fiercely and ripped off each stocking with its elastic garter in a single movement.

Then he leapt back on the terrace, pulled off his shirts, and stood there among the skull-like cocoa-nuts with green shadows from the palms and the forests sliding over his skin. He undid the snake-clasp of his belt lugged off his shorts and pants, and stood there naked, looking at the dazzling beach and the water (P.15)

Also, all through the boy's stay on the island, Ralph Piggy, Samnerick, the Littlums, Jack all played the devil, especially from the moment they failed to set up a meaningful democratic political setting, and then slipped into more chaotic condition after they destroyed the Conch thing or shell, a symbol of unity and authority that would have united them all and return their disintegrated existence to its rational self.

### 3.2.2 In Search of Ideal Democratic Government

William Golding, may have ridiculed the English political institution, democracy for which they are held in high esteem all over the world. With the return of man, the boys to the innocent beginning of the world, the Garden of Eden, Coral Island to start a new form of existence, the boys thought of a new need to recognize their existence by forming laws to govern their coral island "country" under an ideal democratic setting.

But, beautiful as it sounds the ideal was destroyed by selfish ambitions and individualistic attitudes of the boys. Their main and very first challenge was leadership tussle on the island in their process of trying to set up a sedentary life, already ruled by the inordinate desire to govern, Ralph interrupts:

"Shut up" said Ralph absently. He lifted the conch seems to me we ought to have a chief to decide  
Things "A chief /A chief?"  
"I ought to be chief" said Jack with simple arrogance  
"because I'm chief chorister and head boy. I can sing sharp"  
Another buzz  
Well then, said Jack "I \_\_\_\_\_"  
He hesitated the dark boy, Roger, stirred at last and spoke up  
"Lets have a vote"  
"Yes"!  
"Vote for chief"!  
"Let's vote \_\_\_\_" (P.29)

Ironically, what would have been an intelligence vote was marred by disagreement but were still able to choose hunters, choir and so on among

themselves into the various departments of state. Even with the effort the new political setting could not live above grudge, suspicion, conflicts, power play and intrigues till the democratic institution was set on fire, peace was never restored in the “faltering nation” called coral island till a naval officer came to rescue the situation, but not the dead like Simon, Jack, the victims of the “small savages” (P. 247). Certainly, we hope that Golding has not presented the intervention of the adult to present him as a more rational being of course not, as he has a short gun, (the instrument of violence) to rescue the school boys from “darkness” (P. 243).

### 3.2.3 Man's Survival Instinct

The boys tried to adapt to their harsh Coral island environment, the weather condition, the night, morning, afternoon, the hunters to establish human presence on the island by the fire made by the fire made by Jack and also communicate the need for urgent rescue. They have understand their new found country home and made some fine discoveries such as that the forest is an island inhabited by beasts. A form of unity was important to them, hence the ‘couch thing’, or ‘shell’ was improvised to call others, it also became a symbol of authority to call others, and a symbol of voicing authority and by which discipline can be maintained. They also tried to overcome the fear that they feel about their new ‘country’, by dismissing the presence of beasts, continuing to hunt for game in the island, Ralph and Roger also brought back the outcome of their investigation on the island and dispel the image of the beast and dead pilot, they were also ready to overpower and kill any weaker creature. Gradually, in their daily existence, the group recognizes that all should be brave to conquer the fear of the unknown that has persistently torment them on the island. It was in their strong instinct to survive that there emerge the assurance that they will be rescued.

### 3.2.4 Man's Return to Savagery

William Golding seems to predict what will soon befall mankind should he continues to pride himself over conflicts and wars, as he has used his popular English novel to remind us of the implications of the first and second world wars to the English and the entire human society. He warns that man must look back to correct his errors of the past, errors that relate to economic mismanagement, miscarriage of justice, incivility, prejudices, chaos and violence, otherwise the modern man might lapse into savagery and when it happens this will lead to death and destruction of his world and every institution he claims to govern. In coral island the English boys from rational or civilized setting fall apart from orderliness, become chaotic and savagery as the beast in them takes over their affair. Every symbol of rationality they have, including the one they laboured for were destroyed; including Piggy's glass. He was a symbol of rational sense, hope and novel ideals was murdered by Rogger and Jack, thus an end came to his brilliant abuse to the group, and he being their source of intelligence.

### 3.2.5 The Ubiquitous Nature of Evil

The English society that was at war was what led to the hurried rescue of the school boys who were later dropped in an island they discovered as Coral island. Golding tells his reader that's since mans society is prone to evil; it could be possible to experience none or less evil in non-human settlement like the Coral Island. But, Golding's suggestion/hypothesis that the modern man may be less prone to chaos and violence when he is evacuated from his weapons of war, technology and violence breeding society fails. The moment man sets his feet in the (Coral) Garden of Eden, evil will manifests as he is a replica of the devil and he has every capacity to breed evil. Thus, it is not surprising that the innocent school boys in the island conceived evil and actualize it to its maximum. Almost every stage of the life of the boys on Coral Island, they found themselves manifesting evil toward one another. The evil that took over England where they were air lifted into the Island overtook and destroyed them

### 3.3 Style

The Expression of Style in Golding's *Lord of the Flies* is discussed below

#### 3.3.1 Language allegorical and conversational

The allegorical fable which may be read as direct as the story of children in an isolated but who were constrained to fashion out a living so as to survive or, it can also be read as the novelist's attempt to mirror the human world, and not just the English society of the age of Golding. The language of the novel is simple, written in short simple sentences with the coloration of metaphors and simile. The use of the language of a child may be deliberate so that the novelist can actualize the child/children characters explored and their interactive world in the novel. The child-like language used are mostly conversational. Examples from the novel are given below.

“Ralph turned to him  
“You're no good on a job like this”  
“All the same \_\_\_\_”  
“We don't want you, “said jack, flatly” (P.32)

Also is

Ralph and Piggy lay in the sand, gazing at the fire and why flicking pebbles into it's smokeless heart  
“that branch is gone”  
“Where's Samnerick?”  
“We ought to get more wood. We're out of green branches (p. 191)  
Similarly in (p.207)  
Ralph moved suddenly in the dark, but then he heard Eric working at his mouth.  
“What's the matter?”

“Jus a tooth loose”  
Piggy drew up his legs  
“You all right, Piggy?”

There are other similarly used sentences in the novel, Golding must have done this to get properly fixed into his world of children and also get his readers wooed in the precision, and clear use of language in the allegory.

The novelist uses simple language, the language of conversation mostly in the novel is the language of a child. He employed this technique to fit into the world of children, attitudes, beliefs and inner conflicts, and motives of the novelist’s aesthetics and various use of symbols, metaphors and similes. We have the following examples from the novel.

“This’ll be a real hunt! Who’ll come?  
Ralph moved impatiently  
“These spears are made of wood. Don’t be silly”  
Jack sneered at him  
“Frightened?”  
“Course I’m frightened. Who wouldn’t be?  
He turned to the twins, yearning but hopeless  
“I suppose you aren’t pulling our legs?”  
The reply was too emphatic for anyone to doubt them  
Piggy looks the conch. P. 125.

### 3.3.2 Narrative Technique

The novels third-person narrative techniques (omniscience) gives to the writer the freedom into the private life of each character and also conduct himself in a manner often described as “editorial omniscience”. Here is an example; Golding already reports the action of Ralph even before it was carried out in the novel  
He dived in the sand of Piggy’s feet and lay there laughing.

“Piggy”

Piggy grinned reluctantly, pleased despite himself at even this much recognition.

“So Long as you don’t tell the others...”

Ralph giggled into the sand. The expression of pain and concentration returned to Piggy’s face.

“Half a sec”

He hastened back into the forest. Ralph stood up and trotted along to the right (p. 17).

The technique gives us a clear and remarkable insight into novel, its events and other characteristics.

### 3.3.3.1 Symbolism



William Golding makes use of symbols, some of which are restricted while some have universal applicability. The head of the pig refers to the “lord of the flies”, and may be said to symbolize the Biblical Beelzebub, the devil, a symbol which was given a detailed attention in the novel.

### 3.3.3.2 Imagery

The imagery of heat is widely portrayed in various parts of the novel, as it affects the boys and the entire environment, the heat of the atomic bomb and fire power of the various weapons used in the war. Also is the imagery of the fire on the mountain and the eventual setting of the Island on fire by the boys and how it affected them. The man made fire and explosives symbolise man’s deviant depletion of the ozone layer to generate severe heats on man’s only home, the Earth. The dancing butterfly in the novel ridicules the suffering of the boys, and by extension the futility of human institutions and all the desires of the homo-sapien including the peace and freedom that he is incapable of or never destined to be able to provide for himself or attain in a world of sorrow, crises and death.

## 3.5 Summary of George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*

Old Major (Wellington beauty) had sent words round all the animal in the farm that he had a strange dream which he will tell the animal in the big barn immediately Mr. Jones retires to bed at night. Mr. Jones was too drunken to secure the pop-poles. All the animals including the three dogs, Blue bell, Jessie, Pincher, Cat, the Pigs, clover, Boxer, Horses, Muriel, White goat, Benjamin the donkey and other animals were in the meeting, birds too perched in the pen eagerly waiting to hearing directly from the speaker dreamer.

The host dreamer was satisfied with the attendance, cleared his throat and began a long, persuasive speech coloured with what appears like the speaker’s attempt to give a vivid picture of the human world particularly the nature of man, his cruelty, wickedness and inhumanity to animals formed the themes of the long and colourful speech of Old Major. The animal’s attention were drawn to the depravity, enslavement they suffered. The long persuasive speech include how animals were overworked and ill-housed, and killed. The novel declares:

Man is the only creature that consumes without producing. He does not give milk. He does not lay eggs, he is too weak to pull the plough, he cannot run fast enough to catch rabbits. Yet, he is lord of all animals. P. 4

Old major ends his long and frightening speech by encouraging the animals to nurse and carry out rebellion against Mr. Jones and his men, a necessary revolt that will give all animals the freedom they deserve and place them above the

human race. According to the animals, man does not have any virtue worth emulating by the animals, therefore, animal Republic was important after a defeat of the tyrannical man, “beasts of England” a song and wild excitement that woke up Mr Jones, but the shot from his gun put an end to the meeting of the animals who all fled. Three nights after the meeting, Old Major died and other animals continued the spirit of revolution that was invented by the deceased. The shot from Mr. Jones further confirmed man’s reckless inhumanity and the urgent need for the true spirit of animalism, looking up to the hope of a revolution that will humanize them and put an end to man’s ‘politicking’ and tyrannical government over the animals “liberty is worth more than ribbons”. But after the animals attained a measure of freedom, gradually, they lapsed in to suspicion, jealousy distrust, hatred and abuse of power, most of the questionable cultures they had accused Mr. Jones and his men of became a common recurrence among the animals, this began from the moment Mr. Jones deteriorated, could no longer control the animals who had acquired freedom.

The animals made draconian laws to cater for the acquired freedom, and animal culture and Republic that earned them a new anthem different from “Beasts of England” seven commandments, Manor farm, renamed “Animal Farm” open antagonisms, propaganda, wars, violent conflicts, accusation and counter-accusations ruined the new Animal Republic throwing the citizens into a dilemma of whether to continue with their new found freedom or return to man. As a result, the new society progressed in snail-speed pace. Indeed, the satire in fable form is about all revolutions, especially the Russian Lenin revolution and the conscious reaction of the masses everywhere to the abuses of political power, and revolts against Machiavellian will and characteristics immanent in contemporary political leadership.

### 3.5 Theme

Themes discussed in Orwell’s *Animal Farm* are discussed below.

#### 3.5.1 Abuse of Power

At first, all the animals in Manor farm ,especially Old Major believe that they were being maltreated, overworked and underfed Old Major who lied of a dream which though he never narrated to the animals, in a long speech that outlined and redefined man in relation to his conscious and excessive show of power to burden the animals, initiated a revolt against humanity so as to be free from his yoke. But the abuse of power the animals loathed continued even after animals broke away from the parasitical man. The independent animal Republic under Snow ball and Napoleon was worst as animals starved, Napoleon drove away Snowball from the kingdom, announced that the project of the Windmill he had opposed when Snowball was around be resuscitated. Apart from the above, Napoleon without any previous discussion with the other animals began trade, relations with man, in this case, Mr. Pilkington, Frederick and wiper. Napoleon

harassed and forced Snowball out of the farm, used propaganda to intimidate and secure the animals respect even long after Snowball had been forced on exile.

### 3.5.2 Doubts over the true spirit of animalism

The teachings of old major provoked, but encouraged the animals to think of a need to be united against man's vices. Thus, animals held secret meetings for weeks in the barn after Mr. Jones was asleep and "expounded the principles of animalism" they were still preoccupied with the dilemma and thought of what will likely befall the animals, should they rebel and break away. The doubt made them remarked and asked questions referring to Mr. Jones as "master" indicating a divided loyalty as the future of the animals was doubtful. The fear and uncertainties raised are, "Mr. Jones feeds us, if he were gone, we should starve to death" others questioned why should we care what happens after we are dead? If this rebellion is to happen any way what differences does it make whether we work for it or not? The pigs were quick to tell the animals that the suspicion, fear, and dilemma was against the spirit of animalism and conviction that will free the animals from human slavery and oppression.

### 3.5.3 Rebellion

From the moment Old Major invited all the animals and birds in Manor farm and fed them with evils of man and a dream he never had the chance to narrate till he died, he had clearly initiated and encouraged the animals in to a rebellion. He ensured that he emphasized the need for the freedom of the animals, while also stressed the evils of humanity, especially against the animals such that afterwards, the animals were conscious of a rebellion. It was in that spirit that they took over the farm, initiated the changes they considered necessary to earn them full independence. Old Major ended his thought. Provoking speech with a song "Beasts of England" so to make his speech permanent with his listeners. Undeserved honour and cheap popularity. The fierce-looking Napoleon led the animals after the death of Old Major, he heads and deputizes in the farm. When the animals drove away man from the farm, Napoleon decorated himself with the medal of order of the green banner after the battle of the Windmill. He also received other awards he never merited.

### 3.5.4 Anger and Effects of a Change

The animals could no longer endure the situation they found themselves, especially after they became aware that it was possible for them to be free from the firm grip and control of man. Mr. Jones's became disheartened after losing money in a law suit, he drank more than was good for him, abandoned his duties, and his men were dishonest. The field had over grown, fed mosses with bread crumbs soaked in beer, could not remember to roof the building, left his primary duties which comprises a regular feeding of the animals and security of the farm,

apparently down cast only read newspapers. Thus the animals could no longer endure hunger the evening of the following day, one of the cows broke the door of the store- shed, with his horn, animals began to help themselves with food from the bins. This angered Mr. Jones's men who whipped the animals, but the latter butted and kicked, the men including Mr. Jones's fled the farm which was taken over by the animals.

### 3.5.5 Patriotism and Handwork

After the animals dethrone Mr. Jones's and took over the farm, they found out that it became continually difficult for them to maintain discipline and patriotism to their commandments as distrust, and various abuses now set in the new society of the animals: though, "Manor farm" had been renamed "Animal Farm" and a new anthem put in place; but the animals soon realized that ability to manage fellow animals under existing rules required patience, discipline and true patriotism for which humanity was earlier criticized. When Snowball commanded the animals "comrades, let us make it a point of honour to get in the harvest more quickly than Mr. Jones and his men could do" three cows who had been uneasy set up a loud lowing as they had not been milked for twenty four hours. The milk that all the animals had harvested "had" disappeared. The animal also discovered that most of the designs in the farm could be better handled by man, thus making the animals to have difficult time working successfully. The more food the animals had to eat, the more work they do, the more pleasure they had, the more difficulties they experienced.

## 3.6 Styles

The famous English novelist has presented the relationships between the Bourgeoisies and Proletariats in various deliberate styles. We have discussed some of them below.

### 3.6.1 Language and Humour

The political allegorical table hide under the umbrella of humor to mock man's political activities his economy mismanagement and dissatisfaction. The language of the novel has been clearly chosen to give detailed attention but without any complex rendering of the themes. Almost every page releases dark humor such that hardly can a reader notice the seriousness of the writer's discourse yet the assessable language of description has not reduced simplicity to the bare bone. Below is the example of the writer' use of language clothed in humour:

By late summer the news of what had happened on animal farm had spread across half the country. Everyday Snowball and Napoleon sent out flights of Pigeons whose instructions were to mingle with the animals on neighbouring

farm, tell them the story of the rebellion, and teach them the tune of “Beasts of England” p.25.

### 3.6.2 Use of Songs and Speeches

George Orwell’s style of the use of the long speech of Old Major marked by allusions, Simile, Metaphor, anecdotes and repetitive use of “comrades” appears special and deliberate.

Old Major’s speech is marked by precision, though no dream was really mentioned, yet the dream was implied by the narrator which the writer gives the power of eloquence, beauty, and communicative; instructive; lucidity and commanding subtlety, yet militant. The writer deliberately end the speech with a song beast of England to make every content or themes of Old Major cajoling speech permanent in the mind of the animals such that the more they recall the song, the more they remember the task of rebellion a head of them since songs are often permanent in the memory hence the writer passes the message of possible revolt through song. The aesthetic effect of the use of song to initiate a revolt and as the animal’s anthem adds colour and beauty to the language of George Orwell. Even long after the animal s broke away from man, they hardly see any reason to be subjected to his control again.

#### SELF ASSESSMENT EXCERISE

What is your impression of William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*?

### 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have summarised William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*, George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*, discussed the themes in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*. We have also identified and discussed styles in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.

### 5.0 Summary

In this unit, you have learnt

- The Summary of William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.
- Theme in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.
- Style in William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies* and George Orwell’s *Animal Farm*.

### 6.0 TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

1. Summarise William Golding’s *Lord of the Flies*.

2. List and explain the themes in George Orwell's *Animal Farm*.
3. Explain George Orwell's style in *Animal Farm*.
4. What is your impression of the writer's style in *Lord of the Flies*?

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Aliyu, Mike (2000). *Themes and Style in Defoe's Robinson Crusoe's and Swift's Gulliver's Travels*. Lagos: Pen.
- Allen, Walter (1954). *The English Novel*. London: Penguin.
- Allen, Walter (1954). *The English Novel*. New York. E. P. Dutton & Co. Inc.
- Alternbernd Lynn & Leslie L. Lewis (1966). *A Handbook for the Study of Fiction*. London: Macmillan.
- Artkson, Gate (2004). *Reading English Novels a cross the Age*. Ibadan: Macmillan.
- Ashcroft, Bill, Griffiths, Gareth & Tiffin, Helen (eds) (1989). *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-colonial Literature*. London: Routledge.
- Akhen, Jane (1980). *Emma*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.
- Bolanle, Emilly (2004). *Reflections in the English Novel*. Jos: Macmillan.
- Booth, Wayne (1961). *The Rhetoric of Fiction*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Bradford, Richard (ed) (1996). *Introducing Literary Studies*. London: Prentice Hall.
- Damrosch, Leopold (1985). *Adventures in English Literature*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich Publishers.
- Eastman, Richard M, (1965). *A Guide to the Novels*. California: Chandler Publishing Co.
- Enright, D. J. & Earnest Dechickers (eds) (1982). *English Critical*. Texts: Delhi. Oxford University.
- Evans, Ifor (1982). *A Short History of English Literature*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Forster, E. M. (1949). *Aspects of the Novel*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth (1986). The Literary Evaluation of George Orwell's *Animal Farm* and William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*.
- Hall, Lawrence Sergent (1965). *A Grammar of Literary Criticism*. New York: The Macmillan.
- James, Henry (ed) (1986). *The Art of the Novel*. New York: Charles Scribener.
- Jefferson, Anns & David Robeyleds (1991). *Twentieth-century Literary Theory - A Reader*. London: Macmillan.
- Kettle, Arnold (1951). *An Introduction to the English Novel*. London: Hutchinson
- Lemon, Brook (2006). *A Companion to the English Novel*. London: Lens Prints.
- Lubbock, Percy (1921). *The Craft of Fiction*. London. Cape.
- Lubeng, Temp (1995). Theme and Style in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* and Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*.
- Luka, George (1937). *The Historical Novel*. London. Merlin Press.
- Oyegoke, Lekan (ed) (1991). *Undergraduate Text in English Language and Literature*. Ibadan: Paperback Publishers.

- Palmer Eustace (1986). *Studies on the English Novel*. Ibadan. African Universities Press.
- Reaske, Christopher R. (1970). *The College Writer's Guide to the Study of Literature*. New York: Random House.
- Rosenheim, Edward W. (1960). *What Happens in English Literature*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Stephen, Rock (2004). *A Short History of the English Novel*. London: Thames and Hudson.
- Watt, Ian (1957). *The Rise of the Novel*. London: Chatto and Windus.

UNIT 16 – MARKING GUIDE  
ENG 216 – SURVEY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE II  
(Restoration to Present)

TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMA)

Module 1, Unit 1 – History of English Literature (I) (1649-1789)

- 1)
  - (a) Answer should include why the age was named Restoration, and a cursory mention of a few writers of the period like John Dryden, William Congreve, and Wycherley, to mention a few.
  - (b) Answer should include other names given to the age, under whose reigns, and a mention of a few specific writers like Jonathan Swift, Alexander Pope, Addison Steele. The philosophies of the Restoration and Neo-classical should be mentioned.
- 2) Major differences between the age of Restoration and Neo-classical (Augustan) are required. Such should include date variations (i.e. Restoration (1649 – 1713), and Augustan, (1713 – 1739), Major Revolution, Conflicts, Internal and External in the age should be mentioned. Also nature of the socio-economic, political and literary developments should be mentioned.
- 3)
  - (a) The list may include, Thomas Hobbes *Leviathan*, Andrew Marvell’s “An Horation Ode, Upon Cromwell’s Return from Ireland”, John Milton’s “Parade Lost”, John Buyan’s “Ther Pilgrim’s Progress”. John Dryden’s *Mack Flecknoe* (Restoration). Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*, Jonathan Swifts *Gulliver’s Travels*, Samuel Richardson’s *Pamela*, Alexander Pope’s “Rape of the Luck”, Oliver Goldsmith’s *She Stoops to Conquer* (Neo-classical and Augustan).
  - (b) For instance, some themes in Thomas Hobbe’s *Leviathan* includes – strength, power defines any government’s success, particularly the English government, attempt to prevent the outbreak of Revolution, control of the English citizenry (The Restoration). Themes in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* includes overambitiousness, deviance, in search of wealth, the power of prayer, etc.



Module 1, Unit 2 – History of English Literature (II) (1789-1900)

- 1) Important facts that differentiate the Romantic Age from the Victorian should include, the various Revolution of the Ages as well as their forms of literatures and periods
- 2) Answer may include Samuel Taylor Coleridge's "Lyrical Ballads", William Blake's "Songs of Innocence and Experience", William Wordsworth's "The Prelude", John Keat's "Ode On a Grecian Urn", and Percy Bysshe Shelley's "Adonais" (The Romantic), as well as Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations*, Thomas Carlyle's *On Heroes*, Elizabeth Gaskell's *North and South*, Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights*, George Eliot's (Mary Evans) *Silas Marner*, Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge*, to mention a few of (the Victorian).
- 3) The Examinee is required to outline some of the themes in a particular work of the Romantic and Victorian. In John Keat's "Ode on a Grecian Urn". For instance, we have themes of beauty, eternal nature of the works of Arts, legendery, innocence, historical artifacts. (Romantic), some themes in Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* are Sin and Repentance, crime and punishment, vanity of life, to mention a few (Victorian).

Module 1, Unit 3 – History of English Literature (III) (1900 to Present)

- 1) The Examinee is required to select a text for an age and do a comparison of the writers focus thematically as a writer's view represents the epoch or age in which he exists or writes. Such discussion should be clearly convincing on the prevailing ideology of such an age and as represented in the text.

Module 1, Unit 4 – Theme and Style in English Drama (I)

- 1)
  - (a) The definition of drama is required in the Examinee's own word.
  - (b) A precise definition of plot is required here with the aid of a text.
- 2) The summary of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* that is required may include the discrimination between the middle and class members of the society, characteristics of the age as represented in the text such as Industrial Revolution, scientific and technological development, improved literature and social culture of the period.
- 3) The theme of class status in George Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man* should include as evidenced in the Victorian society, and as it affects major characters like Raina Petkoff, Catherine Petkoff, Sergeant Sergius Saranoff, Captain Bluntschli and Louka.

## Module 1, Unit 5 – Theme and Style in English Drama (II)

- 1) The Examinee is required to state the themes in the play and then explain some of the themes are economic hardship, social unrest, hatred for foreigners, survival instinct, unemployment, complacency, police corruption and brutality.
- 2) A discussion of the style in Richard Sheridan's *The Rivals* should include, nature of the play as a comedy of manners, use of surprise and suspense, paired characters to achieve comedy, wealth and materialism as source of humour.
- 3) The achievement of language and style in Howard Brenton should include mixed nature of the language, as evidenced in the play i.e. (London's Street language and the Standard British English).

Module 2, Unit 1 – Nostalgia and the Poetry of John Milton (1608-1674)

- 1) The themes in John Milton's "Paradise Lost" should begin with the expression of the universal nature of its subject. Other themes may include suffering, fate, deception, pain, the mythical conflict between God and Satan, vagabond, to mention a few.
- 2) A discussion of the themes of John Milton's "When I consider how my light is spent" is required, answer may include, the transient nature of life, death is a blessing to humanity, a view of man and eternity after death, humanity is accountable to the creator.
- 3) The two poems should be compared by the Examinee who should be specific on the different titles, thematic concerns, as well as styles.

## Module 2, Unit 2 – Reminiscences: The Poetry of John Keats (1795-1821)

- 1) A detailed discussion of the temporal nature of life with its busy activities, and man in comparison with the tomb and dead state should be emphasized.
- 2) This requires the poet's speculation in the poem with the characteristics of the human living body and how the body assumes a new characteristic when a man dies.
- 3) All the qualities of the Urn revealed in the Keat's poem such as indestructibility, lasting beauty, its historicism should reflect in the answer of the Examinee.

Module 2, Unit 3 – Poetry and Nature: A Discussion of the Poetry of William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

- 1) The treatment of the poem should include: the social problems of the Romantic and Victorian. Some of them are materialism, man's distance from nature and natural environment, the essence of nature, the perishables and others.
- 2) The Examinee should include in his/her answer such facts from the poem: images of the sky, cloud, its magnificence, and so on.
- 3) The reminiscences into the William Wordsworth's "The Discharged Soldier" should include the soldiers' history, apparent physical description, as well as the emotional state of the soldier enquirer who just arrived the town.

Module 2, Unit 4 – Other Prominent English Poets: William Blake, (1757-1827)  
Alexander Pope (1688-1744) and William Butler Yeats  
(1865-1939)

- 1) The poet's emphasis on his theme of innocence in the selected poems under a poem by that title should be discussed while not ignoring other themes in the poem.
- 2) Answer should include its original purpose which was to commemorate a real life event in Neo-classical Catholic families, and why Pope reduced the quarrels between the families to a work of poetry.
- 3) The themes of the poem are required. Some of them are death, pain, futility of war.
- 4) The sharp distinctions between the poems should be expressed, even as they discuss death as their main subject.



Module 2, Unit 5 – Poetry in Depth: The ‘Mathematical’ language of English  
Poetry

- 1) Answer should include reader’s ability to connect or associate one’s mind to the new poem, readiness to interpret everything, including rhyme and symbols because they are all part of the meaning of the poem. The poem may be read at least thrice.
- 2) The Examinee is required to chose any English poem and use the parameters provided in this unit to discuss and criticize such a poem, some of the parameters are meaning and intention in poetry, style, imagery, rhythm, symbol, to menton a few.

### Module 3, Unit 1 – The English Novel

- 1) A definition of the novel genre is required from the Examinee.
- 2) The Examiner requests for the *five* types of the novel with examples.
- 3) The Examinee is asked to differentiate between the stated types of novel genre clearly ignoring any area of convergence between the two.
- 4) The setting of the novel should be discussed with specific reference to any English novel of the Examinee's choice.

Module 3, Unit 2 – Theme and Style in the English Novel (I)

- 1)
  - (a) The Examinees summary of the novel should include his parent's efforts to prevent him from going abroad, as well as the stages of his travels which comprises, Voyage to London, the Coast of Africa, Guinea, his enslavement, and his experience in the barren Island he was pushed off to after a shipwreck as well as his eventual rescue. Quotations from the novel will be helpful.
  - (b) Answer should include the writer's language, detailed descriptions, allusions, use of symbols, extended narrative, use of humour and exaggeration.
- 2)
  - (a) The summary that is required here will include, his encounter with the Lilliputian, after he was thrown overboard, and in his subsequent voyage to Brobdingnag, Laputa, Barlynibarbi, Luggnagg, Glubbubdubdib and Japan up to his eventual return to England more experienced and knowledgeable.
  - (b) Whichever the Examinee considers interesting in the writer's style should be given in detail, however, he could chose from use of allegory by the novelist, how the writer uses travelogue and irony.

Module 3, Unit 3 – Theme and Style in the English Novel (II)

- 1)
  - (a) The summary of the novel must be with precision yet contain traceable facts of the novel, i.e. from the beginning at Benbow Inn, Reference to the origin of the map of the Iresource Island and treasure, how the voyage was planned and the return back to England.
  - (b) The novel's style is required from the point of view of how the novelist mixed humour with or hide humour under the serious issue of piracy and the craze for materialism in the English culture of Victorian England.
- 2) The Examinee should reveal the theme of the search for money and materialism and how characters use them to achieve selfish ends.

Module 3, Unit 4 – Theme and Style in the English Novel (III)

- 1) The summary of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* should reveal the explorers relationship with the Africans and their environment.
- 2) Themes in the novel should be listed and a brief explanation given. The themes include imperialism, race and racial prejudice, exploitation, gender discrimination and the discriminatory use of language.
- 3) The summary of Thomas Hardy's *The Mayor of Casterbridge* should be precise but revealing about the novel.

### Module 3, Unit 5 – Theme and Style in the English Novel (IV)

- 1) The summary of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* that is required should be comprehensive on the bestial manifestations of the boys in Choral Island to truly represent the contemporary man.
- 2) A list and explanation of the themes in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* may include abuse of power, rebellion, anger, patriotism and hardwork.
- 3) The question requires the writer's style in *Animal Farm*; this may include the writer's use of dark humour, songs and speeches.
- 4) The question asked for William Golding's stylistic experiment in *Lord of the Flies*. Answer should include the writer's nature of language, symbolism and imagery.