

UNIT – I

POETRY

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1.0 Aims and Objectives

- To explicate the poems and identify the thought flow of the poet.
- Create awareness of cultures.
- To foster an aesthetic sensitivity.
- To provide Exposure to and familiarization with poetic terminology and devices.
- To develop the skills necessary to engage with a poem's components and come to an understanding of the theme of that poem.
- To initiate the students to think in terms of romanticism, mysticism, patriotism, etc.

Detailed Study

1.1 Walt Whitman

A General estimate of Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman is the herald of Modernism in American poetry. He belongs to the transitional period America was passing through in the second half of the nineteenth century. The great American bard was born on 31st may 1819 on a small farm at West Hills on Long Island. The inhabitants of Long Island were both English and Dutch and Whitman had both the English and Dutch blood in his veins. His father was a carpenter, a farmer and a free thinker. He was a radical with sound democratic convictions. The Whitmans came from a solid Puritan stock. From his mother's side, the Van Velsors, Walt inherited Quaker ideas and the idea that in each person there is a light and everyone should pay heed to one's conscience. His mother's family was a mixture of Welsh and Dutch.

Walt Whitman's Quakerism was inherited from his mother's family. His use of "thee" and "thou" for you is the result of the influence of Quakerism. As a child Walt Whitman lived on the farm in Long Island and Brooklyn. From Brooklyn New York was only a ferry drive away. After a ten-year sojourn in Brooklyn, the family again moved to Long Island. For Five years Whitman went to Public Schools. After a short spell of apprenticeship to a doctor he was apprenticed to the printing trade with a weekly news paper called the "Long Island Patriot". At the age of twelve he started contributing sentimental pieces to the paper.

The first versions of *Leaves of Grass* were self-published in 1855 and poorly received. Several poems featured graphic depictions of the human body, enumerated in Whitman's innovative "cataloguing" style, which contrasted with the reserved Victorian ethic of the period. Despite its revolutionary content and structure, subsequent editions of the book were well received by the reading public. By 1865 Walt Whitman was world-famous, and *Leaves of Grass* had been accepted by publishing houses in America. Whitman did not invent American transcendentalism, but he had become its most famous exponent and was also associated with American mysticism. In the twentieth century,

young writers namely Hart Crane, William Carlos Williams, Allen Ginsberg, and Jack Kerouac rediscovered Whitman and reinterpreted his literary manifesto for a new audience. Over the next few years, Whitman continued to work on his poetry, and in 1871 a number of works were published. Also in 1871, Whitman published *Passage to India*, which praised the completion of the Suez Canal, the laying of the Atlantic cable, and the finishing of the transcontinental railroad. In 1873, Whitman suffered a stroke. Walt Whitman died on 26th March 1892.

1.1.1 Crossing Brooklyn Ferry

I

Flood-tide below me! I see you face to face!
Clouds of the west - sun there half an hour high - I see you also face to face.

Crowds of men and women attired in the usual costumes, how curious you are to me!
On the ferry-boats the hundreds and hundreds that cross, returning home, are
more curious to me than you suppose,
And you that shall cross from shore to shore years hence are more to me, and
more in my meditations, than you might suppose.

II

The impalpable sustenance of me from all things at all hours of the day, The simple,
compact, well-joined scheme, myself disintegrated, everyone disintegrated yet part of
the scheme,
The similitudes of the past and those of the future,
The glories strung like beads on my smallest sights and hearings, on the walk in
the street and the passage over the river,
The current rushing so swiftly and swimming with me far away,
The others that are to follow me, the ties between me and them,
The certainty of others, the life, love, sight, hearing of others.

Others will enter the gates of the ferry and cross from shore to shore,
Others will watch the run of the flood-tide,
Others will see the shipping of Manhattan north and west, and the heights of
Brooklyn to the south and east,
Others will see the islands large and small;
Fifty years hence, others will see them as they cross, the sun half and hour high,
A hundred years hence, or ever so many hundred years hence, others will see them,
Will enjoy the sunset, the pouring-in of the flood-tide, the falling-back to the
sea of the ebb-tide.

III

It avails not, time nor place - distance avails not,
I am with you, you men and women of a generation, or ever so many generations
hence,

Just as you feel when you look on the river and sky, so I felt,
Just as any of you is one of a living crowd, I was one of a crowd,
Just as you are refreshed by the gladness of the river and the bright flow,
 I was refreshed,
Just as you stand and lean on the rail, yet hurry with the swift current,
 I stood yet was hurried,
Just as you look on the numberless masts of ships and the thick-stemmed pipes
 of steamboats, I looked.

I too many and many a time crossed the river of old,
Watched the Twelfth-month seagulls, saw them high in the air floating with
 motionless wings, oscillating their bodies,
Saw how the glistening yellow lit up parts of their bodies and left the rest
 in strong shadow,
Saw the slow-wheeling circles and the gradual edging toward the south,
Saw the reflection of the summer sky in the water,
Had my eyes dazzled by the shimmering track of beams,
Looked at the fine centrifugal spokes of light round the the shape of my head
 in the sunlit water,
Looked on the haze on the hills southward and south-westward,
Looked on the vapour as it flew in fleeces tinged with violet,
Looked toward the lower bay to notice the vessels arriving,
Saw their approach, saw aboard those that were near me,
Saw the white sails of schooners and sloops, saw the ships at anchor,
The sailors at work in the rigging or out astride the spars,
The round masts, the swinging motion of the hulls, the slender serpentine pennants,
The large and small steamers in motion, the pilots in their pilot-houses,
The white wake left by the passage, the quick tremulous whirl of the wheels,
The flags of all nations, the falling of them at sunset,
The scallop-edged waves in the twilight, the ladled cups, the frolicsome crests
 and glistening,
The stretch afar growing dimmer and dimmer, the gray walls of the granite
 storehouses by the docks,
On the river the shadowy group, the big steam-tug closely flanked on each side
by the barges, the hay-boat, the belated lighter,
On the neighboring shore the fires from the foundry chimneys burning high and
 glaringly into the night,
Casting their flicker of black contrasted with wild red and yellow light over
 the tops of houses, and down into the clefts of streets.

IV

These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me,
Others the same - others who look back on me because I looked forward to them,
(The time will come, though I stop here today, and tonight.)

V

What is it then between us?
What is the count of the scores or hundreds of years between us?

Whatever it is, it avails not - distance avails not, and place avails not,
I too lived, Brooklyn of ample hills was mine,
I too walked the streets of Manhattan island, and bathed in the waters around it,
I too felt the curious abrupt questionings stir within me,
In the day among crowds of people sometimes they came upon me,
In my walks home late at night or as I lay in my bed they came upon me,
I too had been struck from the float forever held in solution,
I too had received identity by my body,
That I was I knew was of my body, and what I should be I knew I should be of my body.

VI

It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
The best I had done seemed to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre?
Nor is it you alone who know what it is to be evil,
I am he who knew what it was to be evil,
I too knitted the old knot of contrariety,
Blabbed, blushed, resented, lied, stole, grudged,
Had guile, anger, lust, hot wishes I dared not speak,
Was wayward, vain, greedy, shallow, sly, cowardly, malignant,
The wolf, the snake, the hog, not wanting in me,
The cheating look, the frivolous word, the adulterous wish, not wanting,
Refusals, hates, postponements, meanness, laziness, none of these wanting,
Was one with the rest, the days and haps of the rest,
Was called by my highest name by clear loud voices of young men as they saw me
 approaching or passing,
Felt their arms on my neck as I stood, or the negligent leaning of their flesh
 against me as I sat,
Saw many I loved in the street or ferry-boat or public assembly, yet never
 told them a word,
Lived the same life with the rest, the same old laughing, gnawing, sleeping,
Played the part that still looks back on the actor or actress,
The same old role, the role that is what we make it, as great as we like,
Or as small as we like, or both great and small.

VII

Closer yet I approach you,
What thought you have of me now, I had as much of you - I laid in my stores
 in advance,
I considered long and seriously of you before you were born.

Who was to know what should come home to me?
Who knows but I am enjoying this?
Who knows, for all the distance, but I am as good as looking at you now, for
all you cannot see me?

VIII

Ah, what can ever be more stately and admirable to me than mast-hemmed
Manhattan?
River and sunset and scallop-edged waves of flood-tide?
The seagulls oscillating their bodies, the hay-boat in the twilight, and the
belated lighter?
What gods can exceed these that clasp me by the hand, and with voices I love
call me promptly and loudly by my nighest name as I approach?
What is more subtle than this which ties me to the woman or man that looks in
my face?
Which fuses me into you now, and pours my meaning into you?

We understand then do we not?
What I promised without mentioning it, have you not accepted?
What the study could not teach - what the preaching could not accomplish is
accomplished, is it not?

IX

Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
Frolic on, crested and scallop-edged waves!
Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and
women generations after me!
Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!
Stand up, tall masts of Mannahatta! stand up, beautiful hills of Brooklyn!
Throb, baffled and curious brain! throw out questions and answers!
Suspend here and everywhere, eternal float of solution!
Gaze, loving and thirsting eyes, in the house or street or public assembly!
Sound out, voices of young men! loudly and musically call me by my nighest name!
Live, old life! play the part that looks back on the actor or actress!
Play the old role, the role that is great or small according as one makes it!
Consider, you who peruse me, whether I may not in unknown ways be looking
upon you;
Be firm, rail over the river, to support those who lean idly, yet haste with the
hasting current;
Fly on, sea-birds! fly sideways, or wheel in large circles high in the air;
Receive the summer sky, you water, and faithfully hold it till all downcast eyes
have time to take it from you!
Diverge, fine spokes of light, from the shape of my head, or any one's head, in
the sunlit water!
Come on, ships from the lower bay! pass up or down, white-sailed schooners,

sloops, lighters!
Flaunt away, flags of all nations! be duly lowered at sunset!
Burn high your fires, foundry chimneys! cast black shadows at nightfall! cast
red and yellow light over the tops of the houses!
Appearances, now or henceforth, indicate what you are,
You necessary film, continue to envelop the soul,
About my body for me, and your body for you, be hung our divinest aromas,
Thrive, cities - bring your freight, bring your shows, ample and sufficient rivers,
Expand, being than which none else is perhaps more spiritual,
Keep your places, objects than which none else is more lasting.

You have waited, you always wait, you dumb, beautiful ministers,
We receive you with free sense at last, and are insatiate henceforward,
Not you any more shall be able to foil us, or withhold yourselves from us,
We use you, and do not cast you aside - we plant you permanently within us,
We fathom you not - we love you - there is perfection in you also,
You furnish your parts toward eternity,
Great or small, you furnish your parts toward the soul.

1.1.2 Summary of the Poem

This poem first appeared in the 1865 edition and after modifications it reappeared in the 1881 edition. There isn't much formal structure in the poem. It is a long poem with nine sections. Manhattan and Brooklyn are two of the five districts of New York. Brooklyn is separated from Manhattan by the east river which could be crossed by ferry. Since Walt Whitman spent the best part of his life in New York he often crossed the river by ferry to go to Manhattan and Brooklyn. He would often be up in the pilot house where he could have an unobstructed view of the waters. In the first section Whitman invokes nature and the multitudes. Crossing on the ferry is an experience where he meets multitudes of people. There is much variety in them, yet on the ferry everyone enjoys a similar experience. There is unity among all in the fact that they are undertaking a journey by it. It also scatters them far and wide. It also, in this para, Whitman employs the metaphor of the flood tide to say that all of us are born into the sea of mankind. We journey between life and death. It is all a part of the divine scheme. The ferry moves on, from a point of land, through water, to another point of land. Land and water thus form part of the symbolic pattern of the poem. Land symbolizes the physical and water symbolizes the spiritual. The circular flow from the physical to the spiritual connotes the dual nature of the universe.

“The simple, compact, well-joined scheme, myself disintegrated, everyone disintegrated yet part of the scheme.”

The poet identifies himself with humanity. The poet becomes one with the reader in his endeavor to present universal identity as a certainty. The difference wrought by time and space are set aside as unreal. We are all one in the journey yet we are disintegrated. Men may come and go but humanity will continue. The third section of the

poem is set in December, the coldest month of the year. Whitman exploits the image of the seagulls to create the effect in the stanzas. He has watched the familiar sights of the seagulls, arrival and departure of big ships, fishermen, sailors, the scallop coastline, docks, smoking foundary chimneys etc., like all the others who have travelled in the ferry. Many more generations will continue to do so in the future.

“These and all else were to me the same as they are to you,
I loved well those cities, loved well the stately and rapid river,
The men and women I saw were all near to me,
Others the same - others who look back on me because I looked forward to them,”

He loves mankind and nature. He identifies himself with the multitudes that throng the streets of Brooklyn and Manhattan. He has had similar experiences like his countrymen. In the beginning of the sixth section, Whitman indulges in Philosophical musings.

“It is not upon you alone the dark patches fall,
The dark threw its patches down upon me also,
The best I had done seemed to me blank and suspicious,
My great thoughts as I supposed them, were they not in reality meagre?”

He has felt guile, anger, lust, greed, cowardice, etc like everyone around him. He continues his process of identifying himself with humanity in the ensuing sections also. In the eighth section he returns to the image of the seagulls. In this section he drives his message home. Life in the world is a spiritual voyage. The cycle of life and death continues.

“Flow on, river! flow with the flood-tide, and ebb with the ebb-tide!
Frolic on, crested and scallop-edged waves!
Gorgeous clouds of the sunset! drench with your splendor me, or the men and
women generations after me!
Cross from shore to shore, countless crowds of passengers!”

He discovers that everyone one of us is a voyager in this world. We are all individuals yet paradoxically we are one in nature’s plan. His request to mankind to cross the river is symbolic of the “samsara” concept in Hinduism. In the concluding sections he reinvoles all the previous images to derive the identity of experience and the soul among all men. The ferry is a symbolic link between the past, present and future. It unifies mankind in its entirety. Thus the poem seeks to determine the relationship of human beings to one another across time and space.

1.2 Emily Dickinson

Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830. She was achieved fame after her death and today she is acclaimed to be on par with poets like Walt Whitman. She in her family home at Amherst almost throughout her entire life. She studied English

classical literature, Latin and read the *Aeneid* over several years, and was taught in other subjects including religion, history, mathematics and geology. Soon Emily began to attend Mary Lyon's Mount Holyoke Female Seminary and stayed there for almost a year and she did not return to the school. Then she left home on short trips to visit her relatives in Boston, Cambridge, and Connecticut. For most of the time, she lived the life of a recluse. At home, Emily Dickinson saw sickness and death too often. This is reflected in her poetry. We find that most of her poems centre around death. She died on May 15, 1886. she lived in obscurity but death has brought her much fame and she is one among the best American poets.

1.2.1 I felt a Funeral in my Brain

I felt a Funeral in my Brain,
And Mourners to and fro
Kept treading __ treading __ till it seemed
That sense was breaking through ____

And when they all were seated,
A Service, like a Drum ____
Kept beating ____ beating____ till I thought
My Mind was going numb ____

And then I heard them lift a Box
And creak across my soul
With those same Boots of Lead, again,
Then Space____ began to toll,

As all the Heavens were a Bell,
And Being, but an Ear,
And I, and silence, some strange Race
Wrecked, Solitary, here ____

And then a Plank in reason broke,
And I dropped down, and down ____
And hit a World, at every plunge,
And Finished knowing ____ then__

1.2.2 Summary of the poem

In **I felt a Funeral in my Brain** Emily Dickinson evokes the sad experience of a funeral from the point of view of a dead person. She brings before our mind's eye the pall bearers, and mourners who keep moving in the room where the lifeless body lies. Every one is trying to have a last glimpse of the dead person before the burial. The whole experience is oppressing and the image of death pervades everything. The funeral is used as a metaphor to describe loss of sanity by the speaker. "I felt a Funeral in my Brain" may also be interpreted as a poem that describes the speaker's descent into

madness. The speaker experiences the loss of self into the confusion of unconscious, and the reader experiences the speaker's descending madness and the awe most of us feel about becoming crazy. The poet is the person who feels the funeral taking place in a cold and sordid manner. The mourners are symbolic of the pain that is oppressing the speaker to an extent where sense seems to break away giving place to insanity. The first, second and third stanzas mark the process of the passage from one stage to another i.e. life to death and sanity to insanity. Stanzas four and five mark the speaker's entry into another world, if the world of solitary silence. The poet sees herself as "wrecked, solitary". There is no one else to share the loss. The self will have shattered into pieces or chaos.

Her alienation and inability to communicate are indicated by her being enveloped in silence. She falls past "worlds," which may stand for her past; she is losing her connections to reality. Her descent is described as "plunges," suggesting the speed and force of her fall into psychological chaos. The last word of the poem, "then--," does not finish or end her experience but leaves it opening the door for the horror of madness

1.2.3 Because I could not stop for Death

Because I could not stop for Death,
He kindly stopped for me;
The carriage held but just ourselves
And Immortality.

We slowly drove, he knew no haste,
And I had put away
My labor, and my leisure too,
For his civility.

We passed the school, where children strove
At recess, in the ring;
We passed the fields of gazing grain,
We passed the setting sun.

Or rather, be passed us;
The dews grew quivering and chill,
For only gossamer my gown,
My tippet only tulle.

We paused before house that seemed
A swelling of the ground;
The roof was scarcely visible,
The cornice but a mound.

Since then 'tis centuries, and yet each
Feels shorter than the day

I first surmised the horses' heads
Were toward eternity.

1.2.4 Summary of the poem

“Because I Could Not Stop for Death” reveals Emily Dickinson’s calm acceptance of death. It is surprising that she presents the experience of death not as frightening but as that of receiving a gentleman caller. In the first Stanza the poet describes the journey to the grave. The journey begins when ‘Death’ comes calling at her door step like a gentleman caller in a carriage. Immortality is also a passenger in the carriage. The trip continues in the second Stanza where the carriage moves along at an easy and unhurried pace. This is perhaps a suggestion that death has arrived in the form of a disease that takes its own time to kill. Then, in the third Stanza, they pass through ripe fields, school grounds and the setting sun. Here, Emily seems to be reviewing the stages of her life: childhood (school), maturity (the ripe, hence, “gazing” grain), and the descent into death (the setting sun)—as she passes to the other side. She experiences a chill during the journey because she is not warmly dressed. In fact, her garments are more appropriate for a wedding, representing a new beginning, than for a funeral, representing an end. Her description of the grave as her “house” indicates how comfortable she feels about death. There after centuries pass, so pleasant is her new life that time seems to stand still, feeling “shorter than a Day”. The overall theme of the poem is that death is not to be feared since it is a natural part of the endless cycle of nature. Her view of death may also reflect her personality and religious beliefs. On the one hand, as a spinster, she was somewhat reclusive and introspective, tending to dwell on loneliness and death. On the other hand, as a Christian and a Bible reader, she was optimistic about her ultimate fate and appeared to see death as a friend.

1.2.5 After great pain a formal feeling comes

After great pain a formal feeling comes--
The nerves sit ceremonious like tombs;
The stiff Heart questions--was it He that bore?
And yesterday--or centuries before?

The feet, mechanical, go round
A wooden way
Of ground, or air, or ought,
Regardless grown,
A quartz contentment, like a stone.

This is the hour of lead
Remembered if outlived,
As freezing persons recollect the snow--
First chill, then stupor, then the letting go.

1.2.6 Summary of the poem

The narrator states that a formal feeling sets in after one experiences great pain. The experience leaves the "Nerves" taut with exhaustion and the nerves seem to be immobile like solemn and ceremonious, Tombs." The heart questions whether it ever really endured such pain and whether it was really so recent. The heart is unsure of the time when the pain was endured. However the feet continue to plod along the routine work mechanically. It seems as if the feet are wooden without feeling whether it is treading the ground or air and the heart remains in a state of stony contentment. This, the speaker says, is "the Hour of Lead," and if the person experiencing it survives this Hour, he or she will remember it in the same way that "Freezing persons" remember the snow: "First--Chill--then Stupor--then the letting go--."

1.2.7 This is my letter to the world

This is my letter to the world,
That never wrote to me,--
The simple news that Nature told,
With tender majesty.
Her message is committed
To hands I cannot see;
For love of her, sweet countrymen,
Judge tenderly of me!

1.2.8 Summary of the Poem

This poem is different from the earlier two poems because it does not centre around death. The poem "This is my letter to the world" is a letter addressed to the world. The world could mean the reading public or the entire human race. The speaker feels sad because the world never wrote to her. Like an unrequited lover the speaker writes a letter to the world. This can be interpreted as a metaphor for the experience of the poet as an artist who is lonely and misunderstood by the society. The poet feels sad that her unique talents

and creative vision have not been appreciated by the people. Her letter and words are inspired by nature's 'tender majesty' and she conveys nature's secret message to her. The poet says the message delivered by mother nature(Her) has been given to her for safe keeping(Committed) and letter is a legacy which the poet will leave to the 'hands' of the future generations, whom she cannot see. The poem ends on a pleading note where the poet calls readers "Sweet — countrymen," for a compassionate understanding of her "letter to the world." The speaker (poet) makes this appeal in the name of nature itself, as it is nature who is the inspiration behind her works.

1.2.9 The soul selects her own society

The soul selects her own society,
Then shuts the door;
On her divine majority
Obtrude no more.

Unmoved, she notes the chariot's pausing
At her low gate;
Unmoved, an emperor is kneeling
Upon her mat.

I've known her from an ample nation
Choose one;
Then close the valves of her attention
Like stone.

1.2.10 Summary of the Poem

This poem by Emily Dickinson deals with the quality of the soul. According to critics the soul selects its own exclusive friends. However it may also mean search of the inner self. Once the inner self is realized the soul will shut off all others. It can mean the selection of a companion or the selection of the mind over the body. However once the soul, makes a selection ,it is final. The poem can have multiple interpretations .So the soul's selection may also be God or solitude in the case of a poet. The use of 'divine Majority' suggests god. In the second stanza, the poet says, that the selection is final and the soul does not swerve even FC:\WINDOWS\hinhem.scrif richmen or even emperors crave for its attention. This is suggestive of celibacy and solitude. The soul does not turn away from its service to god. The reference to 'mat' is suggestive of the rush mat in the church. From the ample variety available in the world the soul makes a single choice and shuts off all others. The 'valves' are metaphorical doors that are shut once the choice is made.

Emily Dickinson's focused skills come up with metaphor and imagery such as: divine Majority, chariots, emperor, mat, ample nation, and stony valves of attention. She continually surprises the reader with her vivid and unexpected series of images, each of which furthers the somber mood of the poem.

1.3 Robert Frost

The poet was born on 26th March, 1874. Frost's parents were of Scottish and English descent and he lived in California and San Francisco during his early years. Frost's father was a teacher, and later he became the editor of the *San Francisco Evening Bulletin*. The poet lived in close association with rural life during his early days and moved to the city later. So he frequently uses themes from rural life in New England in his poems. Most of his poems centre around complex, social and philosophical themes. He ranks one among the best American poets and was honoured for receiving four Pulitzer Prizes. His first poem, "My Butterfly: An Elegy" was published in the November 8, 1894 edition of the *New York Independent*. He married Elinor Miriam White, and attended Harvard University for two years. Frost's grandfather purchased a farm for the young couple in Derry, New Hampshire, and Frost worked on the farm for nine years and wrote many of the poems that later became famous. His attempts at farming were not successful and Frost returned to education as an English teacher at Pinkerton Academy from 1906 to 1911, then at the New Hampshire Normal School. In 1912, Frost sailed with his family to Great Britain, and his first book of poetry, *A Boy's Will*, was published the next year. In England he got the acquaintance of all the leading poets of the time. When the first world war began Frost returned to America in 1915 and resumed his vocation as a teacher and poet. He died a little more than two years later, in Boston, on January 29, 1963.

1.3.1 "Mending Wall"

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.
I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line
And set the wall between us once again.

We keep the wall between us as we go.
To each the boulders that have fallen to each.
And some are loaves and some so nearly balls
We have to use a spell to make them balance:

"Stay where you are until our backs are turned!"
We wear our fingers rough with handling them.

Oh, just another kind of out-door game,
One on a side. It comes to little more:
There where it is we do not need the wall:
He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.

He only says, "Good fences make good neighbours."
Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder
If I could put a notion in his head:
"Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it
Where there are cows? But here there are no cows.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know
What I was walling in or walling out,
And to whom I was like to give offence.
Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That wants it down." I could say "Elves" to him,
But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather
He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.

He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."

1.3.2 Poem Summary

In "The Mending Wall" Robert Frost makes use of the image of a wall to drive home the lesson that people unnecessarily create boundaries around themselves. The wall separating the farm of two neighbours is introduced as a primary symbol in the poem. Frost begins the poem by stating that there is something in nature that does not like wall. So it swells the ground beneath and manages to disintegrate the wall to such an extent that even two men can pass abreast through the opening.

The poet is sure that the destruction of walls is not the work of rabbit hunters. The force that destroys the wall is unnameable. There is a mystery about who or what doesn't like a wall. No one has seen the holes being made but at springtime there are big holes in the wall. The narrator and his neighbour meet on a specified date and rebuild the wall. Rebuilding the wall is a labourious task. The stones are uneven in size and shape and they

have to balance them delicately. They are tired by the time the wall is rebuilt. The speaker reinforces the idea that these breaks created by nature are more mysterious than those made by the hunters. This action cannot be observed, though the effects are consistent year after year.

The speaker (poet) does not like a wall. He keeps rebuilding it only to please his neighbour. Very humourously Frost says:

“He is all pine and I am apple orchard.
My apple trees will never get across
And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.”

Both of them have different crops in their orchard. The pine cones will not walk up and eat the apples or vice versa. Yet his neighbour insists on building walls saying that good fences make good neighbours. The separation between them is also emphasized in the fact that they walk on opposite sides of the wall and as they are each responsible for replacing the stones that have fallen on each one's side. While they are performing this act together, they do not actually assist each other.

Frost's tone becomes playful in the lines, when he says that farmers often use fences to keep their livestock separated. Such a fence is unnecessary because they have only pine and apple trees, not cows or cattle. Again, the speaker considers trying to provoke his neighbor with practical objections, but he never makes this statement out loud.

In the concluding sections, Frost becomes philosophical and speculates abstractly. He wants to know what they are “walling in” and “walling out.” The double function of a wall is addressed, for not only are outsiders prevented from entry, but insiders are trapped inside. The speaker considers the possibility that walls “give offence” as he himself seems to be slightly offended, but he never reaches a conclusion about what it is within himself that is either walled in or walled out. Nor does he say that he himself doesn't love a wall, only that “something” doesn't. He muses that “Elves” might have destroyed their wall. In the speaker's eyes the neighbour resembles a savage, an old stonage man armed with a stone. He implies that the neighbour is also using the stones as weapons; he is “armed.” In a sense, then, the fence becomes a weapon, even if its purpose is primarily defense. The speaker then moves from thoughts of the Stone Age to thoughts of the Dark Ages, where darkness functions as a symbol for a lack of insight that is understood as progress. His darkness is more than physical darkness provided by the shade. There is also emotional darkness in his refusal to leave the wall unmended. Frost concludes saying that his neighbour will not change his ideas, nor will he give up the practices set forth by his father. Like a savage the man keeps repeating “Good fences make good neighbors”.

1.3.3 The Death of the Hired Man

Mary sat musing on the lamp-flame at the table
Waiting for Warren. When she heard his step,

She ran on tip-toe down the darkened passage
To meet him in the doorway with the news
And put him on his guard. 'Silas is back.'
She pushed him outward with her through the door
And shut it after her. "Be kind," she said.
She took the market things from Warren's arms
And set them on the porch, then drew him down
To sit beside her on the wooden steps.

'When was I ever anything but kind to him?
But I'll not have the fellow back,' he said.
'I told him so last haying, didn't I?
"If he left then," I said, "that ended it."
What good is he? Who else will harbor him
At his age for the little he can do?
What help he is there's no depending on.
Off he goes always when I need him most.
'He thinks he ought to earn a little pay,
Enough at least to buy tobacco with,
won't have to beg and be beholden."
"All right," I say "I can't afford to pay
Any fixed wages, though I wish I could."
"Someone else can."
"Then someone else will have to.
I shouldn't mind his bettering himself
If that was what it was. You can be certain,
When he begins like that, there's someone at him
Trying to coax him off with pocket-money, --
In haying time, when any help is scarce.
In winter he comes back to us. I'm done.'

'Shh I not so loud: he'll hear you,' Mary said.

'I want him to: he'll have to soon or late.'

'He's worn out. He's asleep beside the stove.
When I came up from Rowe's I found him here,
Huddled against the barn-door fast asleep,
A miserable sight, and frightening, too-
You needn't smile -- I didn't recognize him-
I wasn't looking for him- and he's changed.
Wait till you see.'

'Where did you say he'd been?

'He didn't say. I dragged him to the house,

And gave him tea and tried to make him smoke.
I tried to make him talk about his travels.
Nothing would do: he just kept nodding off.'

'What did he say? Did he say anything?'

'But little.'
'Anything? Mary, confess
He said he'd come to ditch the meadow for me.'

'Warren!'

'But did he? I just want to know.'

'Of course he did. What would you have him say?
Surely you wouldn't grudge the poor old man
Some humble way to save his self-respect.
He added, if you really care to know,
He meant to dear the upper pasture, too.
That sounds like something you have heard before?
Warren, I wish you could have heard the way
He jumbled everything. I stopped to look
Two or three times -- he made me feel so queer--
To see if he was talking in his sleep.
He ran on Harold Wilson -- you remember -
The boy you had in haying four years since.
He's finished school, and teaching in his college.
Silas declares you'll have to get him back.
He says they two will make a team for work:
Between them they will lay this farm as smooth!
The way he mixed that in with other things.
He thinks young Wilson a likely lad, though daft
On education -- you know how they fought
All through July under the blazing sun,
Silas up on the cart to build the load,
Harold along beside to pitch it on.'

'Yes, I took care to keep well out of earshot.'

'Well, those days trouble Silas like a dream.
You wouldn't think they would. How some things linger!
Harold's young college boy's assurance piqued him.
After so many years he still keeps finding
Good arguments he sees he might have used.
I sympathize. I know just how it feels
To think of the right thing to say too late.'

Harold's associated in his mind with Latin.
He asked me what I thought of Harold's saying
He studied Latin like the violin
Because he liked it -- that an argument!
He said he couldn't make the boy believe
He could find water with a hazel prong--
Which showed how much good school had ever done
him. He wanted to go over that. 'But most of all
He thinks if he could have another chance
To teach him how to build a load of hay --'

'I know, that's Silas' one accomplishment.
He bundles every forkful in its place,
And tags and numbers it for future reference,
So he can find and easily dislodge it
In the unloading. Silas does that well.
He takes it out in bunches like big birds' nests.
You never see him standing on the hay
He's trying to lift, straining to lift himself.'

'He thinks if he could teach him that, he'd be
Some good perhaps to someone in the world.
He hates to see a boy the fool of books.
Poor Silas, so concerned for other folk,
And nothing to look backward to with pride,
And nothing to look forward to with hope,
So now and never any different.'

Part of a moon was filling down the west,
Dragging the whole sky with it to the hills.
Its light poured softly in her lap. She saw
And spread her apron to it. She put out her hand
Among the harp-like morning-glory strings,
Taut with the dew from garden bed to eaves,
As if she played unheard the tenderness
That wrought on him beside her in the night.
'Warren,' she said, 'he has come home to die:
You needn't be afraid he'll leave you this time.'

'Home,' he mocked gently.

'Yes, what else but home?
It all depends on what you mean by home.
Of course he's nothing to us, any more
than was the hound that came a stranger to us
Out of the woods, worn out upon the trail.'

'Home is the place where, when you have to go there,
They have to take you in.'

'I should have called it
Something you somehow haven't to deserve.'

Warren leaned out and took a step or two,
Picked up a little stick, and brought it back
And broke it in his hand and tossed it by.
'Silas has better claim on' us, you think,
Than on his brother? Thirteen little miles
As the road winds would bring him to his door.
Silas has walked that far no doubt to-day.
Why didn't he go there? His brother's rich,
A somebody- director in the bank.'

'He never told us that.'

'We know it though.'

'I think his brother ought to help, of course.
I'll see to that if there is need. He ought of right
To take him in, and might be willing to--
He may be better than appearances.
But have some pity on Silas. Do you think
If he'd had any pride in claiming kin
Or anything he looked for from his brother,
He'd keep so still about him all this time?'

'I wonder what's between them.'

'I can tell you.
Silas is what he is -- we wouldn't mind him--
But just the kind that kinsfolk can't abide.
He never did a thing so very bad.
He don't know why he isn't quite as good
As anyone. He won't be made ashamed
To please his brother, worthless though he is.'

'I can't think Silas ever hurt anyone.'

'No, but he hurt my heart the way he lay
And rolled his old head on that sharp-edged chair-back.
He wouldn't let me put him on the lounge.
You must go in and see what you can do.'

I made the bed up for him there to-night.
You'll be surprised at him -- how much he's broken.
His working days are done; I'm sure of it.'

'T'd not be in a hurry to say that.'

'I haven't been. Go, look, see for yourself.
But, Warren, please remember how it is:
He' come to help you ditch the meadow.
He has a plan, You mustn't laugh at him.
He may not speak of it, and then he may.
I'll sit and see if that small sailing cloud
Will hit or miss the moon.'

It hit the moon.

Then there were three there, making a dim row,
The moon, the little silver cloud, and she.
Warren returned-- too soon, it seemed to her,
Slipped to her side, caught up her hand and waited.

'Warren?' she questioned.

'Dead,' was all he answered.

The Death of the Hired Man

1.3.4 Poem Summary

Frost presents a confrontation between two people in this lengthy poem. The first stanza functions as an introduction to the situation. It presents two people named Warren and Mary with conflicting ideas. We are able to infer that a man named "Silas is back". We gather that Warren will be upset with this information, though Mary is more patient. Frost is also able to vary the rhythm of this stanza by including two short emphatic sentences among the longer ones: "Silas is back" and "Be kind, she said." There is alliteration, or repetition of initial consonant sounds, in "Mary sat musing" and "Waiting for Warren. When" Frost presents the picture of normal family where a wife welcomes her husband on his return home. In this situation we find that Mary, the wife asks her husband Warren to be kind to someone called Silas.

In the next section, Warren rebukes Mary by listing out all the good he had done for Silas. In the ensuing lines we know that Silas is an old man who was hired to help Warren during hay making. Silas had abandoned work during that time inspite of Warren's warning only to return now at winter. Mary speaks up for him and argues with her husband stating that Silas is a poor old man who doesn't want to beg. So warren must hire him. But Warren says he does not have money for wasteful endeavours. Mary says

that it was a pitiful sight to see him out in the freezing cold, so she had invited him in. During the argument, Mary says that Silas had agreed to ditch the meadow for her. Warren wants to know where Silas had been. Mary tells him that Silas is too miserable and weak and kept sleeping even through tea. The fact that he was unable to wake up to drink tea or smoke foreshadows the end of the poem, when he will permanently be unable to wake up.

Warren is cynical and states that Silas is incapable of ditching the meadow or any other task. Even after Mary provides more detail about her conversation with Silas, Warren remains unsympathetic. He tells Mary that Silas makes promises and he can ask keep to protect his dignity; he promises to work because he doesn't want to beg. But, Mary replies that Silas met Harold Wilson, the boy who helped Warren make hay before Silas arrived and had promised to do a lot of work in his company if Warren hired him also.

There is a reference to Silas's past that troubles him "like a dream"; his memory is like a nightmare. There is a narration of events between Silas and Harold and their animosity. Harold is represented by Latin and a violin, his Knowledge doesn't help him much in the farm. Silas says it is difficult to teach him to "find water with a hazel prong." The conflict between Silas and Harold Wilson also relates to Silas's dignity and feelings of self-worth. We are able to understand that Silas does not like to see a boy making a fool of himself with books. Warren comments on Silas's inept methods of haying. Mary seems to share Silas's attitude that formal education is somewhat useless, for she refers to Harold as a "fool of books." She believes that if Silas can transmit his knowledge to someone else, he will not believe he has lived in vain.

In the next section, the attention shifts from the couple to nature around them. There is a change in tone of the poem. The gentle moon is casting its silvery light on Mary. The surroundings are totally peaceful. Mary notices that the stems of the morning glories resemble the strings of a harp, a simile that is extended when Mary touches them "As if she played unheard." Frost is using these details in order to emphasize Mary's character; as a gentle person, she interprets her surroundings with gentleness. The ensuing stanzas reveal the peak of their argument. Mary takes up the stand for Silas and tells Warren that he should accept Silas because the old man has come home to die. At the mention of 'Home' Warren gets angry and says that home is a place where one should be welcomed, but he is not ready to welcome Silas. So their home is not a place for Silas to return with the expectation to be welcomed. Their conversation also reveals that Silas is having a brother who is living in good means in the neighbourhood. So Warren tells Mary that Silas should go to his brother. Warren breaks a stick and tosses it aside. His nonchalance is revealed in the act. He has no pity for Silas. Mary continues to urge Warren to treat Silas with sympathy. She insists that he is too weak to do any work, but she does not want to make Silas feel useless. Mary asks Warren to go in and see Silas once and then decide to keep him or send him out. She concludes her argument with a statement that she will watch the cloud sail past or hit the moon. In the concluding section, we are presented with Silas's death. The cloud has "hit the moon". When Warren returns, his attitude is more compassionate and he just says 'dead' to convey the news of

Silas' death. Thus the poem ends on an abrupt pathetic note. We are made to infer that Silas considered Warren and Mary's residence his home. Which might have made him to come back to gather grace before his death.

1.3.5 Home Burial

From *North of Boston*, 1914.

HE saw her from the bottom of the stairs
Before she saw him. She was starting down,
Looking back over her shoulder at some fear.
She took a doubtful step and then undid it
To raise herself and look again. He spoke
Advancing toward her: "What is it you see
From up there always—for I want to know."
She turned and sank upon her skirts at that,
And her face changed from terrified to dull.
He said to gain time: "What is it you see,"
Mounting until she cowered under him.
"I will find out now—you must tell me, dear."
She, in her place, refused him any help
With the least stiffening of her neck and silence.
She let him look, sure that he wouldn't see,
Blind creature; and a while he didn't see.
But at last he murmured, "Oh," and again, "Oh."

"What is it—what?" she said.

"Just that I see."

"You don't," she challenged. "Tell me what it is."

"The wonder is I didn't see at once.
I never noticed it from here before.
I must be wonted to it—that's the reason.
The little graveyard where my people are!
So small the window frames the whole of it.
Not so much larger than a bedroom, is it?
There are three stones of slate and one of marble,
Broad-shouldered little slabs there in the sunlight
On the sidehill. We haven't to mind those.
But I understand: it is not the stones,
But the child's mound——"

"Don't, don't, don't, don't," she cried.

She withdrew shrinking from beneath his arm

That rested on the banister, and slid downstairs;
And turned on him with such a daunting look,
He said twice over before he knew himself:
“Can’t a man speak of his own child he’s lost?”

“Not you! Oh, where’s my hat? Oh, I don’t need it!
I must get out of here. I must get air.
I don’t know rightly whether any man can.”

“Amy! Don’t go to someone else this time.
Listen to me. I won’t come down the stairs.”
He sat and fixed his chin between his fists.
“There’s something I should like to ask you, dear.”

“You don’t know how to ask it.”

“Help me, then.”
Her fingers moved the latch for all reply.

“My words are nearly always an offence.
I don’t know how to speak of anything
So as to please you. But I might be taught
I should suppose. I can’t say I see how.
A man must partly give up being a man
With women-folk. We could have some arrangement
By which I’d bind myself to keep hands off
Anything special you’re a-mind to name.
Though I don’t like such things ’twixt those that love.
Two that don’t love can’t live together without them.
But two that do can’t live together with them.”
She moved the latch a little. “Don’t—don’t go.
Don’t carry it to someone else this time.
Tell me about it if it’s something human.
Let me into your grief. I’m not so much
Unlike other folks as your standing there
Apart would make me out. Give me my chance.
I do think, though, you overdo it a little.
What was it brought you up to think it the thing
To take your mother-loss of a first child
So inconsolably—in the face of love.
You’d think his memory might be satisfied——”

“There you go sneering now!”

“I’m not, I’m not!
You make me angry. I’ll come down to you.

God, what a woman! And it's come to this,
A man can't speak of his own child that's dead."

"You can't because you don't know how.
If you had any feelings, you that dug
With your own hand—how could you?—his little grave;
I saw you from that very window there,
Making the gravel leap and leap in air,
Leap up, like that, like that, and land so lightly
And roll back down the mound beside the hole.
I thought, Who is that man? I didn't know you.
And I crept down the stairs and up the stairs
To look again, and still your spade kept lifting.
Then you came in. I heard your rumbling voice
Out in the kitchen, and I don't know why,
But I went near to see with my own eyes.
You could sit there with the stains on your shoes
Of the fresh earth from your own baby's grave
And talk about your everyday concerns.
You had stood the spade up against the wall
Outside there in the entry, for I saw it."

"I shall laugh the worst laugh I ever laughed.
I'm cursed. God, if I don't believe I'm cursed."

"I can repeat the very words you were saying.
'Three foggy mornings and one rainy day
Will rot the best birch fence a man can build.'
Think of it, talk like that at such a time!
What had how long it takes a birch to rot
To do with what was in the darkened parlour.
You couldn't care! The nearest friends can go
With anyone to death, comes so far short
They might as well not try to go at all.
No, from the time when one is sick to death,
One is alone, and he dies more alone.
Friends make pretence of following to the grave,
But before one is in it, their minds are turned
And making the best of their way back to life
And living people, and things they understand.
But the world's evil. I won't have grief so
If I can change it. Oh, I won't, I won't!"

"There, you have said it all and you feel better.
You won't go now. You're crying. Close the door.
The heart's gone out of it: why keep it up.

Amy! There's someone coming down the road!"

"You—oh, you think the talk is all. I must go—
Somewhere out of this house. How can I make you——"

"If—you—do!" She was opening the door wider.
Where do you mean to go? First tell me that.
I'll follow and bring you back by force. I will!—"

1.3.6 Summary of the Poem

The poem "Home Burial" by Frost presents an emotionally charged dialogue between a bereaved couple. They have lost a baby in the past and the wife (Amy) is in deep sorrow. She spends her time gazing out of the window into the open land and the husband is irritated by her obsession. One evening, he returns home to find her gazing out and gets irritated. He walks up to her telling that today he will find out what it is that draws her attention. We are able to understand that their relationship is strained because she says even if he looks, he will not be able to understand what the object of her attention is

The ensuing lines reveal that the husband looks out of the window and states that :

"The little graveyard where my people are!
So small the window frames the whole of it".

He is not able to guess why she should be obsessed with the sight of the small family graveyard. In return she says that he is hard hearted and gets ready to leave the house . He does not understand what it is he does that offends her so much. He tries to stop her.

"Amy! Don't go to someone else this time.
Listen to me. I won't come down the stairs."

The husband does not relish the idea that his wife seeks out a third person to share her grief over the loss of their child. He feels he has every right to demand that she should talk with him to release her sorrow. They continue to argue as he requests her not to go and she repeatedly tells him that he is incapable of consoling her because he has no feeling for the loss. At last she says that she cannot believe that any man would be so insensitive like him so as to dig his own child's grave. She resents him deeply for his composure, and feels that it is hard-heartedness. She vents some of her anger and frustration, and he receives it, but the distance between them remains. She opens the door to leave, as he calls after her. The poem ends with the statement:

"Where do you mean to go? First tell me that.
I'll follow and bring you back by force. I will!—"

Thus the poem ends with a note of determination of the husband to bring Amy back even if she were to leave him.

1.4 Poems for Non Detailed Study

Ezra Pound

Ezra Weston Loomis Pound was born on 30th October. He was an American expatriate poet, critic and a major figure in the modernist movement. Ezra Pound was born in Hailey, Idaho, United States, to Homer Loomis and Isabel Weston Pound. He studied for two years at the University of Pennsylvania, then transferred to Hamilton College in 1905. He then returned to Penn, to receive an M.A. in Romance philology in 1906. During his stay in Penn, he got the friendship of William Carlos Williams and Hilda Doolittle (HD). For some time, Pound taught at Wabash College in Crawfordsville, Indiana, and left as the result of a minor scandal.

In 1908, he travelled to Europe and settled in London after spending several months in Venice. His early poetry was influenced by the pre-Raphaelites and other 19th century poets and medieval Romance literature, as well as much neo-Romantic and occult/mystical philosophy. He believed that William Butler Yeats was the greatest living poet and was deeply interested in Yeats's occult beliefs. He was influenced by Yeats to such an extent that during the first world war, Pound and Yeats lived together at Stone Cottage in England, studying Japanese. In 1914, Pound married Dorothy Shakespear, an artist, and the daughter of Olivia Shakespear, a novelist and former lover of W.B. Yeats. Pound was the forerunner of Imagism and he also contributed to a movement called Vorticism, led by Wyndham Lewis. These movements led him to become familiar with the works of James Joyce, Wyndham Lewis, William Carlos Williams, H.D., Jacob Epstein, Richard Aldington, Marianne Moore, Rabindranath Tagore, Robert Frost, Rebecca West and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. T.S. Eliot was a good friend of Pound and he undertook the task of editing "The Wasteland".

In 1915, Pound published *Cathay*, a small volume of poems and began the work on "The Cantos". His "*Homage to Sextus Propertius*" was published in 1919 and "*Hugh Selwyn Mauberley*" followed in 1920. Then Pound moved to Paris, where he moved among a circle of artists, musicians, and writers who were revolutionizing the whole world of modern art. Chief among them were Marcel Duchamp, Tristan Tzara, Fernand Leger, Basil Bunting and Ernest Hemingway. Pound went to Italy in 1924 and returned to America in 1939. By 1941 he was back in Italy but was constantly contributing scholarly articles to the American public. He wrote continuously for several newspapers. He delivered several lectures about cultural issues on Italian radio. Pound believed that economic freedom was a prerequisite for a free country. Inevitably, he touched upon political matters. However in 1943 Pound was indicted for treason by the United States government. On 10th July, 1943, the Allied forces landed in Sicily and rapidly began to overrun the southern part of Italy.

Pound played a significant role in cultural and propaganda activities in the new republic, which lasted till the spring of 1945. He was arrested by Italian partisans, on 2nd May, 1945 and soon released. The next day he reported to the American Forces and was

incarcerated in a United States detention camp. In captivity he continued his composition of “The Cantos” and he was brought to the United States and charged for treason. Since he was suffering from a nervous breakdown he was found to be unfit for a trial. He was hospitalised for twelve years. Following his release, Pound returned to Italy, where he remained until his death in 1972.

1.4.1 Ballad of the Goodly Fere

In “Ballad of the Goodly Fere, Pound delivers an answer to those who made blasphemes against Christ in a Turkish Café at Soho. In this poem, Ezra Pound presents a clear picture of Christ. The poem is narrated by Simon Zelots, one of Christ’s disciples. The historical perspective adds to the flavour of the poem. Pound has exploited the dramatic monologue to create the effect. Simon Zelots elaborates the vigour and masculinity of Christ in the stanzas.

The narrator reveals his personal feelings and attitudes regarding Christ. According to him Christ was a kind hearted man who had boundless love for mankind. His love extended to animals also. When Christ’s disciples were arrested and ill-treated by the Roman Soldiers, Christ pleaded in vain for their deliverance and freedom. He begged the soldiers to leave them off unharmed. Simon talks about the Last Supper and the entry of Christ into Jerusalem. When Christ entered in triumph, even the scribes and Pharisees were not able to arrest him. In the stanzas, we find that Pound deliberately uses archaic words to create the atmosphere of the poem.

Simon nostalgically remembers the numerous acts of Christ’s benevolence. He has healed the sick, raised the dead, and calmed the storm. Simon was present to witness the angry clap of thunder and lightning during the crucifixion of Christ. Christ was not afraid to go to the gallows. He took up all suffering with patience for the benefit of mankind. He did not display any sign of sorrow. We see the triumph of Christ when he rose from the dead after crucifixion.

1.5 E. E. Cummings

Edward Estlin Cummings, born in 1894 was a poet, prose writer, essayist, lecturer, and playwright. Cummings grew up in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where his father was a sociology professor at Harvard and a clergyman. From an early age, Cummings demonstrated a strong interest in poetry. He attended Harvard from 1911 to 1915, studying literature and writing daily. He eventually joined the editorial board of the *Harvard Monthly*, a college literary magazine, where he worked with his close friends S. Foster Damon and John Dos Passos. In his senior year he became fascinated with avant-garde art, modernism, and cubism, an interest reflected in his graduation dissertation, “The New Art.” In this paper, Cummings extolled modernism as practiced by Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound, Amy Lowell, and Pablo Picasso. He also began incorporating elements of these styles into his own poetry and paintings.

In 1917 his poems appeared in the anthology “*Eight Harvard Poets*”. During the world war he offered his service as an ambulance driver. E. E. Cummings died in 1962. During his stay in Paris Cummings spent four months in an internment camp in Normandy on suspicion of treason. The experience he got during that period was used by him in his prose work entitled “*The Enormous Room*”. During the 1920s and 1930s Cummings kept shuttling between Paris and New York.

Cummings was Politically liberal and had leftist leanings. He visited the Soviet Union in 1931 in order to find out how the system of government subsidy for art functioned there. All his travel experiences are recorded in “*Eimi*” published in 1933. He continued to write prolifically and received the Shelley Memorial Award for poetry in 1944, the Charles Eliot Norton Professorship at Harvard for the academic year 1952-53, and the Bollingen Prize for Poetry in 1958. All of Cummings's poetry attest his never-ending search for fresh metaphors and new means of expression through creative placement of words, new word constructions, and unusual punctuation and capitalization. He originally intended to publish his first collection as *Tulips & Chimneys*, but was forced to publish the poems from the original manuscript as three separate volumes: *Tulips and Chimneys* (1923), *XLI Poems* (1925), and *&* (1925). The “tulips” of the first volume are free-verse lyric poems that present a nostalgic glance at his childhood. *The Enormous Room, which is* is a novel on his experiences in the French internment camp is widely considered a classic of World War I literature. The collection *No Thanks*, was written in 1935 in response to his trip to the Soviet Union, treats the theme of artistic freedom in an especially powerful manner. The “Chimneys” is a sonnet sequence that identifies the hypocrisy, narrow-mindedness, and stagnation Cummings saw in the society around him. The sequence includes the well-known poem “The Cambridge ladies” Cummings reached the height of his popularity during the 1940s and 1950s, giving poetry readings to college audiences across the United States until his death in 1962.

1.5.1 The Cambridge Ladies

In “The Cambridge Ladies Cummings attacks the life style of the society. Cambridge is a part of Boston. The Harvard University is located in Cambridge. In the poem Cummins pokes fun at the ladies in Cambridge. He says that they are ‘un beautiful’ and are in possession of ‘furnished souls’. It is satirical because he says their souls are also furnished like bed rooms and drawing rooms in apartments. Their attitudes and life style are set, so he equates them to inanimate objects.

Cummings States that the Cambridge Ladies have not enriched their knowledge level by means of university education. In contrary they give more importance to physical pleasure and cheap sensuality. For them education serves the purpose of a means to attract the attention of others. They are all socially pretentious and too narrow minded. The Cambridge ladies have very comfortable minds because they accept only preconceived notions. They do not welcome new ideas. There is irony when he says “they are the blessed daughters of Protestant church”. They believe in Long fellow who is

no longer alive. Even their love for literature is pretentious. They are neither interested in spiritual or intellectual life.

The Cambridge ladies create an impression of being interested in many things but in truth their interest is shallow. They knit dresses for the downtrodden and take part in charitable deeds, but they do not care who the recipient is. It may be the poor of their country or the Polish soldiers. Humorously, Cummings comments that while their hands are busy knitting wool, their mouth keeps knitting gossips. The Cambridge Ladies are scandal mongers. In conclusion Cummings says that children may get attracted to the rattle of the candy seller but even if the moon rattles above the Cambridge do not care for anything.

This poem reveals the hypocrisy of people who confine themselves to a limited sphere of knowledge and a confined group of peers. Rather than looking towards the outside world and into the unknown, these women commit themselves to spreading rumors, being “loyal” Christians, and being socially adept. The Cambridge ladies forget to see and understand the individual beauties in life such as the moon. Everything they believe is internalized by their social doctrines; they leave no room for change or for new ideals. Therefore, they are unable to associate with the serenity of nature or with a world separate from themselves. Because they are assigned to a societal doctrine in which they have no control. They no longer concern themselves over problems and “do not care” about anything at all. They are conceited. The poet’s tone is filled with sarcasm and irony to show the contradiction between the Cambridge ladies’ actions and beliefs.

1.5.2 Somewhere I have never traveled

The poem “Somewhere I have never travelled, gladly beyond” was published by Cummings in 1931 in his poetry collection entitled, ViVa. Like all his other poems, he has not given a title to the poem. So the first line is taken by the editors as the title. The central theme of the poem is Love. Critics, acclaim this poem as the best out of Cummings’s love poems.

The poem describes the profound feelings of love that the speaker has for his lady love. He wonders at the mysterious power the woman has over him. In the ensuing lines the speaker extols the power her love has over him. She seems to have transformed him. The opening lines of the poem indicate that the poet is going to describe a new journey which is beyond experience. He follows the age old tradition of describing his lady love’s eyes. He describes how her love blossoms as if petal by petal. Without her love, he will close him up like clenched fingers.

He reaches the height of romantic fancy when he says that he would die if she were ever to wish it. He moves on to say that there is nothing more fragile in this world than her. The lover compares his lady love to a delicate rose. If not handled properly the love would wither. The speaker in the poem may not be Cummings himself, though the intensity of emotions expressed in the poem leads one to believe that the poet is describing his own experiences because when he published “somewhere I have never

travelled, gladly beyond," he had been married to Anne Barton for two years. So she might have been the source of the poem's inspiration. However this inspiration must have been short-lived, for they were divorced a year later, in 1932. We are able to determine that the poet is discussing metaphysical concepts, abstract ideas that cannot be experienced by one's physical senses.

1.6 Sylvia Plath

Sylvia Plath was born in Boston, Massachusetts, on 27th October , 1932. Her mother, Aurelia Schober, was a master's student at Boston University when she met Plath's father, Otto Plath, who was her professor. They were married in January of 1932. Otto taught both German and biology. In 1940, when Sylvia was eight years old, her father died as a result of complications from diabetes. He had been a strict father, and both his authoritarian attitudes and his death drastically defined her relationships and her poems—most notably in her elegaic and infamous poem, "Daddy."

Since childhood she kept a journal and published her poems in regional magazines and newspapers. Her first national publication was in the *Christian Science Monitor* in 1950, just after graduating from high school. In 1950, Plath matriculated at Smith College. She was an exceptional student, and despite a deep depression she went through in 1953 and a subsequent suicide attempt, she managed to graduate in 1955. Plath then moved to England on a Fulbright Scholarship. In early 1956, she attended a party and met the English poet, Ted Hughes. Shortly thereafter, Plath and Hughes were married, on 16th June, 1956.

Plath returned to Massachusetts in 1957, and began studying with Robert Lowell. Her first collection of poems, *Colossus*, was published in 1960 in England. In 1962, Ted Hughes left Plath for Assia Gutmann Wevill. That winter, in a deep depression, Plath wrote most of the poems that would comprise her most famous book, *Ariel*. In 1963, Plath published a semi-autobiographical novel, *The Bell Jar*, under the pseudonym of Victoria Lucas. Then, on February 11, 1963, during one of the worst English winters on record, Plath wrote a note to her downstairs neighbor instructing him to call the doctor, then she committed suicide using her gas oven .

Plath's poetry is often associated with the Confessional movement, and compared to poets such as her teacher, Robert Lowell, and fellow student Anne Sexton. Often, her work is singled out for the intense coupling of its violent or disturbed imagery and its playful use of alliteration and rhyme. Although only *Colossus* was published while she was alive, Plath was a prolific poet, and in addition to *Ariel*, Hughes published three other volumes of her work posthumously, including *The Collected Poems*, which was the recipient of the 1982 Pulitzer Prize. She was the first poet to win a Pulitzer Prize after death.

1.6.1 Brief Summary of the poem

“Daddy” is one of the most highly anthologized poems of Plath's. The poem is brutal, but it is about mourning, loss, and about what happens when that grief is blocked. (This poem's essence lies in her not believing her father is dead, and since she never went to his funeral, or even visited his grave as a child, the father is a strange limbo, a zombie figure.) In 1959 she visited her father's grave and was tempted, oddly as she says, to dig him up & prove to herself that he's really dead.

In the poem, she just wants to be with her father. From this poem the feminist movement of the 60s took Plath as one of their own.; In the poem "Daddy", Sylvia Plath says that there are women who, due to early conditioning and circumstances, find themselves incapable of dealing with oppressive and overbearing men. Such women are always feeling helpless and forlorn. For some women, the struggle is never resolved and for others it takes almost a lifetime. Those who are lucky will get a reprieve somehow or the other. The speaker in this poem is Sylvia Plath. The poem describes her feelings of oppression and her battle to come to grips with the issues of this power imbalance. The poem also conjures the struggle that many women face in a male dominated society.

The conflict of this poem is male authority and control against the right of a female to be herself, to make choices, and be free of male domination. Plath's was facing conflicts in her relationship with her father and it continued throughout her life with her husband. The intensity of this conflict is well evident as she uses examples that cannot be ignored. The atrocities of NAZI' Germany are used as symbols to describe of the horrors of male domination. The constant and crippling manipulation of the male, as he introduces oppression and hopelessness into the lives of his women, is equated with the twentieth century's worst period. Words such as Luftwaffe, panzerman, and Mein Kampf look are used to describe her father and husband as well as all forms of male domination. The frequent use of the word black throughout the poem conveys a feeling of gloom and suffocation. Like many women in society, we know that Plath felt oppressed and stifled throughout her life by her use of the simile "I have lived like a shoe for thirty years poor and white, barely able to breath or Achoo. "The use of similes and metaphors such as "Chuffing me off like a Jew. A Jew to Dachau, Auschwitz, Belson." clearly shows the feelings of anguished hopelessness and the agony she must have felt.

The universality of this poem is guaranteed as there will always be women who feel the same torture that is described. In the verses. Strong images are conveyed throughout the poem. The words "marble- heavy, a bag full of God" conveys the ever present authority of her father and the heaviness it weighed on her throughout her life. She says men are like vampires who draw away the life blood of women and make them forget their own individuality. The tone of this poem shows the poet's embittered feelings. It also reminds us of a sobbing child because of the child like repetition of 'daddy'. The line "Daddy, daddy, you bastard" reveals her anger. From childhood she has been suffering in fear. Visiting his grave she states "I've had to kill you" and "Daddy, you can lie back

now. By the end of the poem Plath has reached resolution. It is a beautiful poem that clearly shows that she has climbed from total domination by a male to freedom. In addition to the anger and violence, 'Daddy' is also pervaded by a strong sense of loss and trauma. The repeated 'You do not do' of the first sentence suggests a speaker that is still battling a truth she only recently has been forced to accept.

1.7 Wallace Stevens

Wallace Stevens was born on 2nd October, 1879 and is regarded as a great American Modernist Poet. He was born in Reading, Pennsylvania, and spent most of his life working for an insurance company in Connecticut. His poem, "The Emperor of Ice Cream," has been anthologized numerous times. Stevens attended Harvard as a non-degree special student, and later moved to New York City to work as a journalist. He then attended New York Law School, graduating in 1903. On a trip back to Reading in 1904 Stevens met Elsie Viola Racheland married her in 1909 after a long courtship. After working for several New York law firms from 1904 to 1907, Stevens was hired on January 13, 1908 as a lawyer for the American Bonding Company.

By 1914 he had become the vice-president of the New York Office of the Equitable Surety Company of St. Louis, Missouri. He then joined the home office of Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company and left New York City to live in Hartford, where he remained the rest of his life. By 1934, he had been named vice president of the company. After he won the Pulitzer Prize in 1955, he was offered a faculty position at Harvard, but declined it since it meant that he should give up his vice presidency of The Hartford.

Stevens's first book of poetry, *Harmonium*, was published in 1923. He produced two more major books of poetry during the 1920s and 1930s and three more in the 1940s. In Stevens, "imagination" is not equivalent to consciousness, or "reality" to the world as it exists outside our minds. Reality is the product of the imagination as it shapes the world. Because it is constantly changing as we attempt to find imaginatively satisfying ways to perceive the world, reality is an activity, not a static object. We approach reality with a piecemeal understanding, putting together parts of the world in an attempt to make it seem coherent. To make sense of the world is to construct a worldview through an active exercise of the imagination. This is no dry philosophical activity, but a passionate engagement in finding order and meaning. He received the National Book Award in 1951 and 1955. In his book "*Opus Posthumous*", Stevens writes "After one has abandoned a belief in god, poetry is that essence which takes its place as life's redemption." But as the poet attempts to find a fiction to replace the lost gods, he immediately encounters a problem: a direct knowledge of reality is not possible. He died on 2nd August 1955.

1.7.1 The Emperor of Ice Cream Brief summary

In this poem Stevens presents us with a stark, realistic picture of life. He does not spin a web of imagination or fantasy. He is of the view that the world today revolves around sensual pleasures." The Emperor of Ice Cream signifies Physical satisfaction". All the people in his verses, such as : the roller of cigars, wenches, flower boys represent physical pleasure. In the second stanza Stevens draws death into the picture in order to create a contrast with physical pleasure. He presents the picture of the death of a slattern. The woman's body will be buried soon along with her house. The people who have gathered there to pay homage to her are cheap prostitutes and a man. There is no truth in their tears.

Stevens describes the physical surroundings of the slattern's house. The dressing table is made of cheap wood and it does not have any glass knobs. A badly embroidered sheet revealed that she was poor. Through the poem it is obvious that Stevens wants us to know that death is the real emperor. Death is the supreme Lord who overrules all our sensual pleasures. Not understanding this people are in pursuit of cheap physical pleasures.

1.7.2 The Idea of Order at Key West

Brief Summary of the poem

Written in 1934, "The Idea of Order at Key West" is one of the most difficult poems by Wallace Stevens. Yet, it stands as one of Stevens' most anthologized poems, and Critics call the poem his best work. Though widely read, the poem has no authoritative interpretation. Several critics have diverse interpretations of the poem. The poem is complex but the plot is simple. One of the great ironies of "The Idea of Order at Key West," is that for a complex poem, its plot is rather simple. An unnamed speaker is walking along the beach of Key West and hears a woman singing a song. The song enchants the speaker, and as the woman is singing, he begins to muse on the beauty of her song and its relationship to his own life, particularly his ideas on reality and imagination. The music seems to move in mimic motion like waves of the sea.

The song has a transforming significance only for its hearer, who hears a new, "amassing harmony" as much beyond the song as beyond the sea. For the critic, the singer's voice makes "the sky acutest at its vanishing" and measures "to the hour its solitude." Her measures open intercourse between nature and "ourselves," mastering and portioning out the darkness of inner and outer seas—but only in the "meta-phoric" speech of the critic who "interprets" and outlines the connection between artifice and sea, form and nature, music and death.

Finally, after listening and thinking, the speaker experiences a kind of epiphany, a moment of insight. While few would question these basic facts of the poem, there is lot of debate around what Stevens thinks of the song and what kind of epiphany he experiences. While the poem remains too complex to be easily paraphrased we can say the poem dramatizes important conflicts for Stevens: imagination and reality, presence and absence, order and chaos, nature and civilization, the mind and the body. We don't see

the singer or actually hear what it is the woman is singing we experience the transformation that the speaker undergoes.. The woman's song transforms the speaker's experience of walking along the beach, and, when he returns to the town, he discovers that his perception of Key West has also been altered. Some critics say that the poem is an example of Stevens championing the creative process. Recent critics believe that the poem is about the need for poetry and the need for art. Thus, the emphasis of the poem is not so much on the song itself but on what the song does to the listener.

1.8 Edwin Arlington Robinson

Edwin Arlington Robinson was born on 22nd December 1869 at Head Tide, Maine, to Edward Robinson, a timber merchant and civic leader, and Mary Elizabeth. He grew up at Gardiner, which provided the model for a series of poems that he wrote throughout his career. While his oldest brother, Herman, was destined to manage the family fortune and his middle brother (Dean) to become a doctor, Robinson was free to turn to poetry. He began writing regularly at the age of eleven and in high school attended meetings of the town's poetry society as its youngest member. But while Robinson was willing to be taught the rudiments of the various poetry forms, one of his contemporaries recalled that it was very difficult to influence him. This strength of purpose marked his character throughout his life.

Robinson attended Harvard from 1891 to 1893 despite his father's doubts about the value of a higher education. During the early 1890s the family's fortunes began to decline, triggering a series of tragedies that influenced Robinson's life and poetry. In 1892 his father died, and the panic of 1893 and the lingering aftermath slowly bankrupted the family over the next seven years. Robinson's brother Dean became addicted to morphine and returned home in failing health. Robinson was forced to leave Harvard because of the family's financial difficulties and his mother's failing health. She died in 1896 of "black diphtheria," and because no mortician would handle the body, the brothers had to lay out their mother, dig the grave, and bury her. During this time Robinson wrote the poems that were later published in 1896 as "*The Torrent and the Night Before*" and in 1897 as "*The Children of the Night*". Since Robinson was very poor his friends financed the publications.

Robinson's poems are noted for mastery of conventional forms, be it the sonnet, the quatrain, or the eight-line stanza. The characters of works like "Richard Cory," "Luke Havergal," "Aaron Stark," and "John Everedown" are faced with failure and tragedy, but Robinson, as Louise Bogan noted, "with the sympathy of a brother in misfortune, notes their failures and degradations without losing sight of their peculiar courage" Robinson first met Emma Shepherd, the great love of his life, while taking dancing lessons in 1887, and in her he found a companion he could talk to and who encouraged his poetry. Although he loved her, he believed he could either write poetry or raise a family but not do both. He introduced Emma to Herman, who married her in 1890. It was not a happy marriage, strained by financial difficulties and Herman's drinking. Robinson's love for Emma during this difficult time resulted in his leaving Gardiner for New York City in 1897. In 1899 his brother Dean died, possibly of an intentional drug overdose. As

executor of their mother's estate, Herman had agreed to support Robinson with a monthly stipend that allowed him to barely get by, but he was left penniless when the family fortune finally vanished in 1901.

For the next quarter-century Robinson chose to live in poverty and write his poetry, relying on scraps of temporary work and charity from friends. In 1902 he published "*Captain Craig*," again with the help of friends. He received some good reviews for "*The Torrent*", but several critics ignored or disliked "*The Children of the Night*" and "*Captain Craig*". As a result, Robinson fell into a depression, neglecting his poetry, drifting from job to job and drinking heavily.

In 1905 President Theodore Roosevelt's son Kermit had read "*The Children of the Night*" and encouraged his father to read it as well. Roosevelt liked the book and arranged a job for Robinson at the New York Customs House. The president arranged for republishing "*The Children of the Night*". Robinson's job at the customs house was deliberately structured to enable him to do as little work as possible and to devote his time to poetry. But, ironically, Robinson found the poetry he created during this time to be second-rate. "The stuff that I have been writing of late," he wrote to a friend, "has been so bad that I have been ashamed of it and of myself. I shall do better pretty soon. The major magazines remained closed to him despite Roosevelt's patronage, and when the president left the White House in 1909, Robinson quit the customs house after being ordered to do his job, keep regular hours, and wear a uniform.

Back in Gardiner living with a friend, Robinson set to work full time, revising old poems and writing new ones. In 1909 he also published "*The Town down the River*", which he dedicated to Roosevelt. In 1911 Robinson began spending his winters at the homes of New York friends and his summers at the MacDowell Colony in Peterborough, New Hampshire. He gave up alcohol. During this time, he tried playwriting; but his play "*Van Zorn*" (1914) was unsuccessfully produced, and "*The Porcupine*" (1915) never made it to the stage.

In late 1916 Robinson received a measure of financial security through a monthly stipend from an anonymous source. *The Man against the Sky* published in 1916 brought him some fame. In 1917 *Merlin* was published, followed by *Lancelot* in 1920 and *Tristram* in 1927. In 1919, on his fiftieth birthday, Robinson was the cover subject of the *New York Times Review of Books*, and he was praised by Lowell, Vachel Lindsay, and Edgar Lee Masters, among others. In 1921, his *Collected Poems* was awarded the first Pulitzer Prize for poetry. He was awarded a second Pulitzer Prize in 1924 for *The Man Who Died Twice*. Aided by a push from the Literary Guild and critical notices by Mark Van Doren, *Tristram* (1927) became a bestseller, earning Robinson his third Pulitzer. Now Robinson was financially independent, and the success exhilarated him. After years of self-denial, he surprised friends by the attention he paid to his clothes and the generosity he paid to others in need. In what he called a protest against Prohibition, he began drinking again. Robinson published regularly for the rest of his life, mostly long verse narratives, including *Avon's Harvest* (1921); *Roman Bartholow* (1925); *Dionysus in Doubt* (1925); *Cavender's House* (1929); *Matthias at the Door* (1931); a collection of

shorter poems, *Nicodemus* (1932); *Talifer* (1933); and *Amaranth* (1934). Robinson was the first major American poet of the twentieth century, unique in that he devoted his life to poetry and willingly paid the price in poverty and obscurity.

For the first twenty years of Robinson's writing career, he had difficulty in getting published and attracting an audience. He published his first two volumes privately and the publication of the third was secretly guaranteed by friends. He did receive positive reviews from the beginning, however, and with the publication of *The Man Against the Sky* in 1916 his reputation was secure. For the rest of his life he was widely regarded as "America's foremost poet,". He won three Pulitzer Prizes for his volumes published in 1921, 1924 and 1927. Robinson is a "people poet," writing almost exclusively about individuals or individual relationships rather than on more common themes of the nineteenth century. He exhibits a curious mixture of irony and compassion toward his subjects--most of whom are failures--that allows him to be called a romantic existentialist. He is a true precursor to the modernist movement in poetry. He was one of America's greatest practitioners of the sonnet and the dramatic monologue. Robinson died on 6th April, 1935.

1.8.1 THE MASTER

Brief summary of the poem

The poem extols the fame and glory of a person whose identity the poet wishes to keep hidden. The opening stanza says that a name that had often been used with ridicule has suddenly become revered on account of the fame and glory achieved by that person. All the gentlemen who jeered the name will be forgotten in due course but this person will be remembered. He came when there was mankind was endangered and people were roaming about with sore hearts. He made an estimate of us and reconciled himself to our nature.

As a master he was so mild and kind, yet he was untamable. We on the other hand who are vain and incapable of proper judgment doubted him at every step. We doubted even his benevolent smile and derided him. Whereas, He, being a master understood our ignorance and served us without expecting anything in return. The master was aware that we would be ashamed of our behaviour in the end. Very patiently he bore all our jeers and kept teaching us patiently like we would, school children. With much forbearance the master waited for us to give up our jibes, taunts, and enlighten ourselves. The master did not ask us anything. Yet we, being ill tempered flung rude words at his face.

In the ensuing lines the poet present us with clues for who the master is. The face of the master is neither too old nor too young, but he was ancient at birth. He was the saddest king (king of jews) on earth. With a brief smile he accepted a crown of thorns. He had grandeur, love, patience, and the flaming urge to do good to mankind.

The master has washed away our sins. But we who are yet sinful try to fly too high with waxen wings(Icarian Wings).We yearn for glory and fame. On seeing the humility of the master we have now left our pride behind and become humble. We are

now able to understand what is humility and sublimity. With this knowledge we flourish at the point closer to earth (Perigee). All of us now accept that there is only one Master (Titan) at a time. The Master is none other than Jesus Christ.

1.8.2 KARMA

Brief summary of the poem

The poem is brief consisting of just fourteen lines. The poem begins with a note of Christmas season. A man who is dressed up as Santa Claus requests for a token from the passers by. There is a reference to The Old Testament, Genesis, where God said "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. Though created by God mankind is not perfect. We have our own flaws, while Christ is the epitome of perfection.

Coming upon the 'freezing Santa Claus' the narrator begins to ponder. He thinks of mankind, our collective and individual sins, miseries, sorrows and the instances where he wrecked the life of others. Finally he decides on a compromise and finds a dime as penitence and as a response to the magnanimity of Jesus who died for men. This poem is classed one among Robinson's philosophical poems. The poem finds a place in several anthologies and readers have come up with various interpretations.

1.9 HART CRANE

Harold Hart Crane was born on 21st July, 1899 in Garrettsville, Ohio. Hart Crane's father, Clarence, was a successful businessman who had made his fortune in the candy business with chocolate bars. During childhood Crane witnessed frequent fights between his parents and finally they broke up. Soon thereafter Crane dropped out of high school left for New York. Between 1917 and 1924 he moved back and forth between New York and Cleveland, working as an advertising copywriter or in his father's factory. From Crane's letters, it appears that New York was where he felt most at home, and much of his poetry is set there and he was greatly inspired by T.S. Eliot.

Crane wrote poetry that was often traditional in form and archaic in language. Crane was often condemned by critics as being beyond comprehension. In 1920s, some literary magazines published some of Crane's lyrics, gaining him fame. His '*White Buildings*' was first published in 1926. It contains most of Crane's lyrics. Crane was often criticized for being gay. However, poems such as "Repose of Rivers" makes it clear that he felt a sense of alienation. Crane's 'The Bridge' was published in 1930 but it received poor reviews. Crane often fell into drinking bouts and also got himself involved in heterosexual affairs with Peggy Cowley, the wife of his friend Malcolm Cowley. He wrote "The Broken Tower," one of his last published poems, as a result of the affair. His continuous feeling of failures led him to renew homosexual activity despite his relationship with Cowley. Just before noon on 27th April, 1932, on a steamship passage back to New York from Mexico right after he was beaten up for making sexual advances to a male crewmember, he committed suicide by jumping into the Gulf of Mexico. Although he had been drinking heavily and left no suicide note, witnesses believed

Crane's intentions to be suicidal, as several reported that he exclaimed "Goodbye, everybody!" before throwing himself overboard.

Crane was the favorite poet of the great American playwright, Tennessee Williams. Robert Lowell called him the Shelley of his age. Literary scholar R.W.B. Lewis wrote about Crane as "one of the dozen-odd major poets in American history." Crane's epic poem, *The Bridge*, was read on national television during the celebration of the Brooklyn Bridge. *The Collected Poems of Hart Crane* was published after his death and *The Complete Poems and Selected Letters and Prose of Hart Crane* in 1966.

1.9.1 Voyages

A brief summary of the poem

"Voyages," is often condemned by critics as an erotic poem written while Crane was falling in love with Emil Opffer, a Danish merchant marineman. He was a successor to Walt Whitman and found spiritual transcendence in homoerotic desire. The poem commences with the image of sea urchins fighting each other on the scallops of the surf on the shore. They fight for the conquest of sea shucks. They are gaily digging and scattering weeds baked by the sun. The sun glistens like thunder on the waters. The narrator is sure that the sea urchins will hear him talking about them. He calls the children to frisk with their dog on the shore. At the same time he warns them not to cross the limits and go deep. It is dangerous because the sea is cruel. In the second section the poet indulges in conceits. He describes the endless waters and compares it to the wink of eternity. Then he describes the sea and its bent horizon during moon tide. This might be a reference to youth. The sea, he says seems to be laughing at the inflections of pure love. The tides resemble Poinsettia meadows. The sea encompasses everything. It can envelope sleep, death, desire in an instant. The narrator invokes the seasons, minstrel galleons of carib fire (Star fish in the caribbean sea) to bequeath us to our earthly shore until we have knowledge of paradise.

In the third section the poet says that light retrieves various landscapes from the sea. This might be a reference to setting in of adulthood and gaining knowledge and wisdom due to various travails and experiences. The poet wanders various shores and the 'sea lifts', even reliquary hands. The poet then brings in the imagery of star kissing star and wave on a wave and tells that even if death were to come it does not presume carnage. We will be wise not to fear death. Things seem to be happening again and again in a routine but there has been a single change from one dawn to another. The poet finally calls forth "permit me voyage, love into your hands". The concluding lines seem to make an inversion of the line of thought created earlier. One might interpret that the poet wants a divine force to permit voyage into eternal boundless happiness. Another interpretation might be that he wants the extended hands of his lady love.

In the poem 'Voyages' Crane has reached mastery of the lyric. Inspired by his passionate love for sailor Emil Opffer he has brought forth an adoration of the sea in six

sections. He has presented the restless, resplendent wave and tide, to mark the shifts in his own life. In five-line stanzas composed in classic iambic pentameter, he mimics turbulence. Moving lightly in stanza one he begins with a child's sensations—the feel of surf, sand, and shell—before proposing a paradox in line 16: “The bottom of the sea is cruel.” This tension between the power to delight and the power to kill relieves the poem of mere nature worship and invests it with a mystic synthesis of positive and negative energies. It is believed that the joyful consummation indicated at the concluding lines was written for his lover Emil Opffer.

1.10 Let Us Sum Up

The poems selected for detailed and non-detailed study presents the pageant of American poets. This collection will motivate the students to think of various themes, imagery, ploy of metaphors and different styles of versification. They will be able to develop analytical skills to explicate poems.

1.11 Lesson End Activities

1. Comment on the theme of death in Emily Dickinson's Poems.
2. “Good fences make good neighbours” – Explain with reference to Robert Frost's “Mending Wall”
3. Comment on Whitman's “well-joined scheme, myself disintegrated, everyone disintegrated yet part of the scheme” with reference to the poem “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”.
4. Compare and contrast the theme of death in Frost's “Home Burial” and “The Death of a Hired Man”.
5. Comment on Whitman's use of imagery in “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”.
6. Write a note on the satirical element in Cummings's “The Cambridge Ladies”.
7. Comment on the autobiographical element in Sylvia Plath's “Daddy”
8. Attempt a critical appreciation of Stevens's “The Emperor of Ice Cream”.
9. Comment on the image of Christ suggested in Ezra Pound's “Ballad of the goodly Fere (Friar)” and E.A. Robinson's “The Master”.
10. Comment on the Erotic element in Cummings's “Somewhere I have never traveled” and Harte Crane's “Voyages”.
11. Attempt an estimate of the major themes in American poetry with reference to the poets prescribed for study.
12. Comment on the style of versification of American poets with reference to the poems prescribed for detailed study.

1.12 Points for Discussion

1. Discuss the various literary devices used by the American Poets prescribed for your study.
2. ‘Life and death as major themes’ : Discuss with reference to the poems prescribed for your study.

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UNIT – II

DRAMA

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2.0 Aims and Objectives

- Initiate critical examination of plots.

- Inculcate skills to analyze dialogue sequences.
- Introduce students to the art of comparing and contrasting characters and situations.
- Develop skills to analyze scenery.
- Teach students to trace the reflection of society from the characters presented.

Detailed study

2.1 The Emperor Jones-Eugene O' Neill

Eugene O' Neill

Eugene O' Neill was born on 6th October ,1888 in a New York hotel. He was the third son of James O'Neill a the famous actor. From childhood Eugene did not have a stable life as he often accompanied his father on his long acting tours. This led Eugene to feel insecure and this insecurity is reflected in his works. His education was also conducted in a frequently changing background. Eugene attende various Catholic and non sectarian boarding schools from 1896 to 1902.For four years he studied in thru Betts Academy at Stamford. Then he went to Princeton. In 1909 Eugene secretly married Kathleen Jenkins and they were divorced in 1912 because of opposition from her parents.Eugene left for an expedition to Honduras in search of gold. During the trip he was exposed to Central America. This exposure was exploited by Eugene in his "Emperor Jones" and "The Fountain".

Next he took up a sixty –five day voyage to Beunos Aires and got rich experience from taking up various employment. He looked after mules on a cattle steamer that went to Durban and back. After a period of destitution in Beunos Aires he became a seaman on a British Ship sailing to New York. He picked up occasional employment and in December 1912 he had rest at at the Gaylord Farm Sanatorium on account of Tuberculosis. His stay in the sanatorium led him to reflect and concentrate on play writng. He wrote several one act plays such as " Bound East for Cardiff" ," Before Breakfast" in 1916,"Fog" ,"The Siniper", In the Zone", Square Player" and " The long Voyage Home" in 1917, "The Rope ' in 1918, "The Dreamy Kid" in 1919, and "Exorcism" in 1920. Eugene's writing carrer had gathered momentum and his "Beyond the Horizon" got the first Pulitzer prize in 1920. In 1920 he got the second Pulitzer prize for the play" Anna Christie".In the next year he wrote "The First Man" and "The Hairy Ape".Soon several plays such as " All God's Chillun Got Wings", "Desire Under the Elms", " The Great God Brown", "Mourning Becomes Electra", " Emperor Jones"and Iceman Commeth " followed.Eugene O'Neill won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1936.Striken with Parkinson's Disease and he died on 27th November,1953.

2.1.1 Summary of the Plot

"The Emperor Jones" is a powerful play which enumerates the life and experiences of Brutus Jones, a Negro. Jones had a humble beginning. He is a criminal

who was sentenced to life imprisonment in the U.S.A. for murder of a man called Jeff. Consumed by a fit of anger Jones had murdered the prison guard and escaped from jail. After his escape he sought refuge in an island in the West Indies. Though a criminal Jones was intelligent, shrewd and self-confident. With his capabilities he became the Emperor of the island within a span of two years. Jones was clever enough to fool the natives of the island in an efficient manner. It so happened that once a native called Lem fired at Jones from point blank range. But miraculously Jones did not die. He exploited the incident by spreading a rumour that he had a charmed life and he could be killed only by a silver bullet. To add truth to the story he got a silver bullet and carried it with him in order to kill himself if anything untoward happened. Jones knew that the natives would never get enough to make a silver bullet. This background information is provided to us in the play through a conversation between Jones and Smithers.

Smithers is a White trader who poses to be a friend of Jones but in actuality he is Jones's jealous enemy. Jones has been exploiting the natives by crooked means. He is not benevolent like a real Emperor but he is aware that the natives would revolt against him. He plans to run away through the Great Forest to the sea coast and leave for Martinique in case of a revolt. He has stowed away enough money to lead a comfortable life. Jones is thorough in his plans to an extent that he has familiarized himself with the forest and hidden food also. Very soon there is a revolt and all his courtiers, ministers, generals and attendants have deserted him. Soon the faint beating of the Tom-Tom is heard. It means the natives are casting spells and working up their courage to through a war dance. He plans to run away and is noon. He realizes that it will be nightfall by the time he reaches the edge of the forest and by morning he will reach the coast.

Leaving everything behind to Smithers he walks out in his fine clothes and a Panama hat. As per his plan he reaches the edge of the plain where the Great forest begins and feels tired and hungry. The sound of the Tom-Tom is louder and insistent. When he searches for the white stone under which he had hidden food he finds it gone. He realizes that someone has stolen the food and placed many white stones to puzzle him. He is confused and afraid and feels as if shapeless things are ensuing from the trees around him. Terror strikes him and the sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more loud and seems to be nearing him. Terrified he takes a shot at the spirits and then realizes that it was a mistake to shoot because he has given away his hiding place. Immediately he runs into the forest. The moon rises at night and Jones is very tired and hungry. He begins to hallucinate in fear and sees Jeff, whose throat he had cut with a razor. He fires the revolver again in panic and Jeff disappears. The sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more insistent and loud. It is about eleven O'clock at night and Jones is still in the Great forest and his soul is tortured. He throws off his fine Scarlet Emperor's clothing and looks like a primitive. Though terrified of the devils in the forest he is not afraid because he is a member of the Baptist church. He prays to God for protection. Just then he sees the prison guard whom he killed on duty. The guard seems to be leading convicts to work on the road and he motions to Jones to join the group and lashes him with a whip. Angered Jones fires the revolver again and the sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more louder.

Running with much effort Jones reaches clear space at three O'clock in the morning. Once again he prays to God. He is now tired, afraid, hungry, dirty and confused and miserable. He wants to lie down and rest. Suddenly he sees two negroes clad only in loin cloth who sway forward and backwards and let out a wail. They are galley slaves. Feeling hypnotized Jones begins to wail like them. Now he too is dressed only in loin cloth and is identical to the natives. The sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more loud and insistent and it seems to be nearing him. At five O'clock the next morning Jones reaches a gigantic tree at the edge of a river. The wail of chained slaves is heard. There is a rough stone altar in the open space and Jones kneels on it and prays. Then a witch doctor appears dancing and casts a spell. Jones watches him hypnotised and joins the incantation. The doctor reaches the river and a crocodile comes out of it and fastens its eyes upon Jones. The doctor urges Jones to go to the crocodile for he must be sacrificed to the evil forces. The sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more loud.

It is now dawn and Smithers is seen in the open place with Lem, the tribal chief. They have come there in search of Jones, to have their revenge with a silver bullet. Soldiers search the forest and return with Jones's dead body. The Emperor has been killed with a silver bullet. He was an Emperor in death. Smithers comments that he died in style.

2.1.2 Scene wise Summary of the play

SCENE I

The scene is set in the grand palace of Emperor Jones. The walls are high ceilinged and the palace situated on high ground. The Emperor's throne is grand in its solitary stature. It is noon time and an old woman sneaks into the palace. At that time Henry Smithers, a London trader comes in. He is dressed in worn riding clothes, puttees, spurs, a white cork helmet and a cartridge belt with an automatic revolver. He surprises the woman and holds her captive and she appeals to him not to tell Emperor Jones. She tells him that all the natives have gone up hill leaving her behind. Smithers has a mean smile at this news because he knows very soon they will beat the Tom-Tom and attack the Emperor. Jones enters at this moment. He is a tall, powerfully built middle-aged Negro. His features exude confidence and he is dressed in grand clothes. Jones is angry because some one has whistled and woken him up. Smithers says that he whistled to wake him because he has news for him (Emperor). Smithers tells Jones that all his ministers and attendants have run away to drink rum and talk big in the town. They mock each other and Jones reminds Smithers to behave because he is the Emperor now.

Their ensuing conversation tells us that Jones is a criminal who was sentenced to life imprisonment in the U.S.A. for murder of a man called Jeff. Consumed by a fit of anger Jones had murdered the prison guard and escaped from jail. After his escape he sought refuge in an island in the West Indies. Though a criminal Jones was intelligent, shrewd and self-confident. With his capabilities he became the Emperor of the island within a span of two years. Jones was clever enough to fool the natives of the island in an

efficient manner. It so happened that once a native called Lem fired at Jones from point blank range. But miraculously Jones did not die. He exploited the incident by spreading a rumour that he had a charmed life and he could be killed only by a silver bullet. To add truth to the story he got a silver bullet and carried it with him in order to kill himself if anything untoward happened. Jones knew that the natives would never get enough to make a silver bullet. This background information is provided to us in the play through a conversation between Jones and Smithers. Smithers is a White trader who poses to be a friend of Jones but in actuality he is Jones's jealous enemy. Jones has been exploiting the natives by crooked means. As a trader Smithers does some stealing but Jones is blindly robbing the natives. Jones boasts that he has been the Emperor since two years not because of luck but because of his brains. Smithers warns the Emperor telling him that the guards are not on duty and Lem is a powerful bloodthirsty enemy but Jones takes it lightly. He is aware that the natives would revolt against him. He plans to run away through the Great Forest to the sea coast and leave for Martinique in case of a revolt. He has stowed away enough money to lead a comfortable life. Jones is thorough in his plans to an extent that he has familiarized himself with the forest and hidden food also. Meanwhile the sound of the Tom-Tom is heard. Jones is confident and he tells Smithers that none of the nigger charms will affect him because he is a member of the Baptist church. Leaving everything behind to Smithers he walks out in his fine clothes and a Panama hat. The sound of the Tom-Tom is heard and Jones walks out of the palace in style and Smithers admires him.

SCENE II

Jones is now at the outskirts of the forest and the night is settling in. He continues to walk at a rapid pace for some time and removes his shoes to check if he's got blisters on his feet. Then Jones sits down wearily listening to the distant sound of the Tom-Tom. He stands up to look across the plain to have a look if his enemies were following him. He is afraid and hunger tortures him. So he begins to look for the food he had hidden under a white stone. To his dismay Jones finds that the food is gone. Someone had stolen it and placed lot of white stones in the vicinity and he gets confused. The sound of the Tom-Tom has increased in rapidity. As he turns, little formless fears creep of the forest's deep blackness. They are black and shapeless and only their eyes can be seen. Trying to find his way Jones realizes that he is not able to identify the trees which he had known very well. This terrifies him. To ward them off he fires a shot and realizes his mistake. Now Jones is worried because his enemies would hear the shot and find out where he was.

SCENE III

Jones has now gone further into the forest and the moon has risen. There is silence but for the sound of the Tom-Tom. Then Jones hears the sound of some one playing dice. Soon he sees Jeff whom he had murdered. First Jones believes that Jeff is not dead and speaks to the form then remembers that Jeff was really dead and this could be his ghost. He shudders and fires a shot at the figure and immediately Jeff disappears. The

sound of the Tom-Tom becomes louder and more rapid. Filled with fear Jones starts running blindly into the underbush.

SCENE IV

The moon is high up and Jones is tired of running in the forest. Feeling suffocated he teats off his coat, loosens his spurs and throws them away. Listening to the sound of the Tom-Tom he fears that his enemies are nearing him. He is terrified by the thought of being caught and killed by the niggers but he musters courage by recollecting that he was a member of the Baptist Church. He thinks that as a Christian he is civilized and better than an ignorant black nigger. Jones feels that his fear and tiredness is due to hunger and it is causing him to hallucinate also. So he prays to God to save him from such ghostly illusions. Soon Jones has another illusion. He sees a prison guard leading a band of convicts to work. The guard seems to be leading convicts to work on the road and he motions to Jones to join the group and lashes him with a whip. Angered Jones fires the revolver again and the sound of the Tom-Tom becomes more louder. Overcome by fear Jones rushes into the forest. This scene reveals that Jones' Psyche has been affected.

SCENE V

In the forest there is a large circular clearing which is enclosed by gigantic trunks of trees. In the center there is a big dead tree stump. Jones sits on the stump and he is tensed. He begins to moan "Oh Lawd, Lawd!" repenting for his past sins. He confesses his sins one by one. He says he killed Jeff because he cheated in the game of dice. The he killed the guard because the man whipped him. He adds that he has cheated the people after becoming the emperor. Jones then invokes God to have mercy on him. He prays that he must not see ghostly sights any more. He removes his shoes and tells to himself "Look at you now. Emperor you'se gittin ,mighty low." While he is thus occupied, a crowd of people silently enter the clearing. Soon Jones sees the White Auctioneer, the slaves and the white onlookers. They come to stand around the stump and the auction begins. The Auctioneer touché Jones on the shoulder and commands him to stand on the stump. He then points to Jones and says that the planters can see this slave, who is strong and will make a good field hand, though he is middle aged. The planters raise their fingers and make their bids. Filled with anger that he is being sold, Jones fires the revolver again and everything disappears. Only blackness remains and the sound of the Tom-Tom becomes louder. At the end of this scene Jones is almost mad with fear.

SCENE VI

Jones is crying and moaning and he does not know what to do. All the bullets have been fired except the silver bullet that he had saved for emergency. On reaching a clearing he flings himself to the ground. Jones is now almost naked, wearing only a loin cloth. All his Emperor paraphernalia is gone. He sees two rows of Negro slaves dressed in just a

loin cloth. First they seem to be silent, but soon they begin to sway and moan in a low melancholy tone. The sound increases slowly as if guided by the sound of the Tom-Tom in the distance. Gradually it becomes a loud wail of despair. Terror overtakes Jones and he too begins to sway and is filled with despair and desolation. Soon the forms disappear and only darkness is left behind. Jones begins to run and his voice seems to recede. This scene indicates that Jones is heading for a psychological breakdown.

SCENE VII

There is a gigantic tree by the edge of a big river and there is a structure of rocks that looks like an altar. Reaching this place Jones kneels down with devotion before the altar and mutters "What— what is I doin'?" "What is _ dis place?". Trembling with fear he begins to pray to God for protection. Then he crawls from the altar, too close to the ground. Suddenly a Congo witch doctor reaches the clearing carrying a bone rattle and a charmed stick. He begins to cast a spell and keeps dancing. The sound of the Tom-Tom seems to grow louder influenced by his dance. Jones looks at him and sits in a half-kneeling, half-squatting position as if paralysed. Soon Jones is hypnotized by the dance and the chant of the spell and takes part in the incantation swaying his body in tune. Finally the dance ends with a howl of despair. The witch doctor points his wand to the sacred tree, to the river beyond, to the altar and finally to Jones with a ferocious command. Jones realizes that he is being ordered to offer himself as a sacrifice to appease the God and as a symbol of repentance. He begins to moan in despair "Mercy, Lawd! Mercy!". A crocodile emerges from the river in response to the witch doctor's incantations. The witch doctor commands Jones to offer himself to the monster with furious exultation. The Tom-Tom beats madly. Jones cries out in a fierce, exhausted voice: "Lawd, save me! Lawd Jesus hear my prayer!" In answer to his prayer he remembers the silver bullet. He takes out the revolver shooting defiantly, "De silver bullet. You don't git me yet." He fires at the crocodile's eyes. Immediately everything disappears and only the sound of the Tom-Tom is heard.

SCENE VIII

The day has dawned and the loud beat of the Tom-Tom is heard quite near. Lem enters the forest with a squad of soldiers and Smithers. He is wearing a cartridge belt and has a revolver. All his soldiers are armed. Lem is sure that he will catch his enemy. Smithers tells him that they should hunt for Jones in the forest. Then a sound of snapping twigs emerges from the forest and the soldiers jump to their feet. Lem remains sitting listening with rapt attention. Suddenly he makes a quick signal and his soldiers enter the forest at different points. Soon reports of several shots reverberate through the forest followed by savage, exultant yells. The beating of the Tom-Tom ceases abruptly. Lem looks at Smithers with a grin stating that Jones has been caught and he is dead. In reply to Smithers's query about how he was sure of Jones's death, Lem replies that his men had used a silver bullet. Lem tells Smithers that they had moulded silver bullets to kill Jones. Soon soldiers emerge from the forest carrying Jones's limp body. It is

evident that he is dead. Smithers comments mockingly : “ Well, they did for yer right enough Jonesey, me lad. Dead as a bloater, where’s yer ‘igh an’ mighty airs now, yer bloomin ‘Majesty? Then with a smile he says” Silver bullets. Gawd blimey, but you died in the ‘eight o’ style any ‘ow.” Then the body of Jones is carried out by Lem’s men. Smithers exclaims : “stupid idiots, the lot of them. Blasted niggers”. Though evil Jones was definitely a much better man than the Negroes who killed him. Thus the play ends on a tragic note.

Characters

2.1.3 Emperor Jones

Emperor Jones is the tragic hero of the play. He is intelligent, crafty, proud, self-confident and far-sighted. Jones had had a sordid past on account of his decadent behaviour. He was convicted for murder of Jeff. While serving his sentence consumed by a fit of anger Jones had murdered the prison guard and escaped from jail. After his escape he sought refuge in an island in the West Indies. Though a criminal Jones was intelligent, shrewd and self-confident. With his capabilities he became the Emperor of the island within a span of two years. Jones was clever enough to fool the natives of the island in an efficient manner. It so happened that once a native called Lem fired at Jones from point blank range. But miraculously Jones did not die. He exploited the incident by spreading a rumour that he had a charmed life and he could be killed only by a silver bullet. To add truth to the story he got a silver bullet and carried it with him in order to kill himself if anything untoward happened. Jones knew that the natives would never get enough to make a silver bullet. This background information is provided to us in the play through a conversation between Jones and Smithers. Jones is intelligent and shrewd and he knows that the people would soon revolt. So he plans to run away through the Great Forest to the sea coast and leave for Martinique in case of a revolt. He has stowed away enough money to lead a comfortable life. Jones is thorough in his plans to an extent that he has familiarized himself with the forest and hidden food also. When the natives revolt against him Jones is first confident that he can make his escape to Martinique. As an emperor he has acquired the veneer of western civilization, but failed to control his animal instincts and impulses which came to the surface frequently. The hallucinations that Jones sees are a result of his confusion, fear and greed. Jung calls this the ‘collective unconscious’. Jeff, the prison guard, the slaves, auctioneer and the witch doctor are all the products of his confused Psyche and unconscious. At the end of each illusion he fires the revolver and the hallucination comes to an end. The Doctor, altar and the crocodile are all the externalization of his racial collective conscious. Though he apes the western civilization he is still a Negro at heart. Before his end he is dressed in a loin cloth like his fellow Negroes. All the trappings of an Emperor is lost. The sound of the Tom-Tom reaches into his very soul and scares the wits out of him. He is killed by a silver bullet that the natives have made for him. Pride is his tragic flaw.

2.1.4 Smithers

Smithers is a white trader and a friend of Jones. He poses to be a friend of Jones but in actuality he is Jones's jealous enemy. Smithers and Jones often indulge in long talks and Jones tries to berate him. Smithers reminds Jones that as a trader he robs people to some extent, whereas Jones being an Emperor robs them blind. Jones is the biggest sinner according to Smithers. We find that when Jones makes his escape he leaves everything behind to Smithers who greedily examines the treasures. Smithers is mean enough that he joins Lem's party to hunt down Jones. In the end when Jones is dead he comments mockingly: "Well, they did for yer right enough Jonesey, me lad. Dead as a bloater, where's yer 'igh an' mighty airs now, yer bloomin 'Majesty? Then with a smile he says" Silver bullets. Gawd blimey, but you died in the 'eight o' style any 'ow."

2.1.5 Lem

Lem is the chief of the Negroes. He has a deep dislike for Jones because Jones exploits his people. Once he went to the extent of shooting Jones at point blank range, but luckily Jones escapes. Jones is clever enough to exploit the situation and say that he led a charmed life and only a silver bullet can kill him. We find that Lem is foolish enough to believe it because in the end of the play we see that he has armed his men with Silver bullets. Though he has not done any criminal activity, he is not fit to be a chief because he is not intelligent enough. That is why in the last scene Smithers exclaims: "stupid idiots, the lot of them. Blasted niggers".

2.1.6 Significance of the Title

There is much significance in the title "The Emperor Jones". The fact that O'Neill uses 'The' before Emperor suggests that Jones is an Emperor with certain distinct individual characteristics. He is both a type and an individual. He is not an ordinary Emperor but a run away criminal and a symbol of primordial which is existent in everyone. He is superior to the Trader Smithers and the Negroes. That is why he dies in style.

The title of the play is also a good instance of O'Neill's use of irony. The Emperor's full name is Brutus Jones, which implies the brute in man. Thus Jones is a symbol of everyman. It is indeed ironical that a brute should be the king. He dresses in gaudy colours like red which is symbolic of the savage in him. Through the six scenes in the forest we see that Jones has lost his identity of 'The Emperor' and during the end he is a Negro clad in just a loin cloth. Thus we see both physical and spiritual regression in him for he has lost confidence in himself and indulges in savage incantations with the witch doctor. He has lost his Christian soul. It is ironical that pride which gave him much confidence in the beginning leads to his fall in the end. So pride is his tragic flaw.

2.1.7 Expressionism in The Emperor Jones

“The Emperor Jones” is the first play in which O’Neill has used the expressionistic technique. Expressionism is a technique where the dramatist depicts inner reality of his characters. The soul and psyche of the personages are laid bare and the emphasis shifts from the external to the internal. Yet there is total harmony with regard to time and action between the shift of focus on the inner reality and the external surroundings. The thought processes of the character’s sub conscious is probed deeply. In an expressionistic play the scenes often alternate between fantasy and reality. All these characteristics are evident in ‘The Emperor Jones’.

When the play is observed we are able to note that six scenes are used by Eugene O’Neill to lay Jones’s soul bare to his readers/viewers. In the great forest Jones is found confessing his sins and crying out in desperation. His collective conscious and sub conscious, conjure up for him imaginary fears and shapes. The scenes are filled with with soul dissection. Jones keeps shifting between reality and hallucinations. The fearsome sound of the tom-Tom is successfully employed by O’Neill to intensify the conflict. As the play reaches the climax we see that the sound of the Tom-Tom also reaches higher intensity and when Jones dies the beating of the Tom-Tom stops. Thus the Tom-Tom effect is remarkable.

Another feature of an expressionistic play is that the number of characters is cut down and the focus is on one character. This feature is well evident in ‘The Emperor Jones’ for most of the play consists of Jones’s monologues and there are very few characters. Another characteristic of an expressionistic play is the use of symbols. O’Neill makes use of symbols to render inner psychological reality. Brutus Jones, the dark forest and the Tom-Tom are excellent symbols.

2.1.8 Symbols in The Emperor Jones

Symbolism is the use of any part of a play where a character, incident, setting, language, etc. to suggest an idea or ideas not conveyed by the surface story. The use of symbols enables the dramatist to enclose vast meaning and profound themes. O’Neill has used a network of symbols in ‘The Emperor Jones’.

2.1.9 Brutus Jones

He is the symbol of the brute in *Everyman*. It is indeed ironical that a brute should be the king. He dresses in gaudy colours like red which is symbolic of the savage in him.

2.1.10 The dark dense forest

The dark dense forest is a symbol of man's ignorance and sin. *Everyman* has some amount of darkness in the soul. The Great forest is exploited by the dramatist to present the dark thoughts and formless fears in man's mind.

2.1.11 The Time

The time span used by O'Neill is symbolic in the sense that the trials and tribulations faced by Jones takes place in the darkness under the dim light of the moon. The retribution takes place at dawn. So night is a symbol of regression and dawn, a symbol for retribution.

2.1.12 The Silver Bullet

The silver bullet is a symbol of materialism. Due to influence of Western culture, Jones forgets that he is a Negro and apes the westerners in dress and manners. This leads him to lie about the silver bullet. He fibs to save his life as well as to elevate him above the level of fellow Negroes. In the end he is killed by a silver bullet.

2.1.13 The Tom-Tom

The Tom-Tom symbolizes the all pervading and inescapable primitive instinct. The intensity increases as the play reaches its climax. The primitive in Jones responds to the beat of the Tom-Tom. Once the retribution is over the beating is stopped. This symbolizes that the Tom-Tom is also a force that punishes evil.

Drama Non –Detailed

2.2 A Street Car named Desire- Tennessee Williams

Tennessee Williams is one of the best modern playwrights, who earned lot of money and fame. He is named along with Eugene O'Neill and Arthur Miller as one of the three leading American dramatists of the 20th century. *The Glass Menagerie* was Tennessee Williams' first successful play. Three years later his, *A Streetcar Named Desire* captured the Critics' Circle Award and the Pulitzer Prize. As a young man he achieved great success. However he liked his plays, but hated being a celebrity. Tennessee Williams was born in Mississippi in 1911. From childhood he and his sister were groomed with refinement and good manners of Southern Gentry.

After high school, Williams went to the University of Missouri to study journalism but he was forced by his father to work at a shoe company because he got low grades. Yet he continued to write in his free time. In due course he left the job and enrolled himself in a play writing course at Washington University in St. Louis. He also started to read widely from the Russian Chekhov, to Hart Crane. He soon discovered how to make dialogue reveal character. From plays by Ibsen, the Norwegian dramatist, Williams learned the art of creating truth on the stage. Williams owed his fascination with uninhibited sexuality partly to D. H. Lawrence. He also studied the works of the master Swedish playwright August Strindberg for insights into dramatizing inner psychological strife. Williams' prolific reading gave his own writing a boost. Tom finished his formal schooling at the University of Iowa and in 1938 he adopted the name "Tennessee."

With his pen and pad he roamed the United States. He wrote stories, poems, even a first play that flopped in Boston. Eventually, he landed a job in California writing screenplays for MGM but he did not relish converting others' stories into movies. He wanted to do originals. While in Hollywood, he wrote a movie script entitled *The Gentleman Caller*. When MGM rejected it, Williams quit his job, transformed the script into a play, and called it *The Glass Menagerie*. The play opened on Broadway in March, 1945, and altered Williams' life. After moving to Mexico, he turned wrote *A Streetcar Named Desire*-which reached Broadway in December, 1947. It turned out to be a masterpiece. In both *Streetcar*, and *The Glass Menagerie*, he shaped the story from his own experiences. Williams' Blanche is a combination of both his mother and sister Rose.

Williams continued to bring out plays almost every season for thirty-five years. According to critics, though, after the 1940's Williams never again reached the heights of *Menagerie* and *Streetcar* he reused material and seemed continually preoccupied with the same themes and with characters trapped in their own private versions of hell. Although many later plays lacked freshness, there were hits and have joined the ranks of the finest American plays. His *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* won drama prizes in 1955, and *Night of the Iguana* earned honors in 1961.

Some of Williams' plays caused great sensation because they deal with homosexuality and incest. People flocked to Williams movies to see stars like Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton and Paul Newman. In the film of *A Streetcar Named Desire*. During his last years Williams kept writing, but one play after the other failed. To ease his pain, Williams turned to drink and drugs. He died in a New York hotel room in 1983. Williams left behind an impressive collection of work. His plays continue to move people by their richness, intensity of feeling, and timelessness. He often transformed private experience into public drama. In doing so, he gave us glimpses into a world most of us have never seen before.

A Street Car Named Desire

2.2.1 A SHORT SUMMARY of the PLOT

Blanche DuBois is arriving in Elysian Fields to visit her sister Stella and brother-in-law Stanley Kowalski. Her presence there is like that of a delicate white moth flitting about on a heap of garbage in a dump yard. She does not fit into the surroundings. Refinement and good breeding is reflected in all that she says and does, at least until her mask is stripped away bit by bit. Blanche teaches English at a high school in Laurel, Mississippi. She is in need of a place to stay while recovering from a nervous breakdown. Stella agrees to accommodate Blanche, at least for a while, but she cautions Blanche that the apartment is tiny and that Stanley isn't the sort of man Blanche may be used to. He's rough and undignified. But Stella loves him despite his crude manners.

After arriving, Blanche reveals that Belle Reve, their old family plantation in Laurel, has been lost to creditors. Blanche blames her sister for leaving home years ago while she was forced to stay on and watch all the residents of Belle Reve die one by one. The loss of Belle Reve troubles Stanley and he accuses Blanche of having sold the plantation to buy furs and jewels. When Blanche denies his accusations Stanley ransacks her belongings looking for a bill of sale. He tears open a packet of letters and poems written by Blanche's husband, who committed suicide years ago. Stella tries in vain to protect Blanche from Stanley's anger.

That night Blanche and Stella go to the movies while Stanley and his friends play poker and drink. When they return, Blanche is introduced to Mitch, whom she charms easily and begins to flirt with him. Upset that the poker game has been interrupted, Stanley explodes in a drunken rage. With much violence he tosses a radio out the window and his pregnant wife. His friends drag him into the shower while, Stella and Blanche escape upstairs to a friend's apartment.

Dripping wet, Stanley goes into the street and keeps calling out for Stella like an animal calling for its mate. She comes down and allows herself to be carried off to bed. Later Mitch returns and apologizes to Blanche for Stanley's coarse behavior. Blanche is disgusted by Stanley's behaviour and wants to leave but has nowhere else to go. She contrives a story about a rich friend named Shep Huntleigh who might give her refuge and asks Stella to come with her. However, Stella refuses vows her love for Stanley regardless of how brutally he may treat her.

Mitch, is a lonesome man in search of a wife. So he begins to date Blanche. But Stanley has learned that Blanche was an infamous whore in Laurel. He confronts Blanche with that information and she denies it. Yet soon after the incident when Blanche flirts with a newsboy, we realize that she might have loose morals. When Mitch talks of marriage Blanche reveals the tragic story of her earlier marriage to Allan, who turned out to be a homosexual. When Blanche rejected him, Allan committed suicide. So now she is unable to forget the sight of his bloody corpse or the sound of the fatal gunshot. Extremely moved, by her narration Mitch embraces Blanche. Meanwhile,

Stanley learns that Blanche has been fired from her teaching job in Laurel because she seduced one of her students. In addition, she was told to leave Laurel because night after night she entertained soldiers from a nearby army base.

Stella is preparing a birthday party for her sister and Stanley tells her and Mitch about Blanche's past. Stella is shocked to hear this but she asks Stanley to be gentle with Blanche. But Stanley presents Blanche a one way bus ticket to Laurel as her birthday present. Stella scolds Stanley for giving her such a cruel birthday present. Stella feels labor pains suddenly and Stanley rushes her to the hospital.

Mitch visits Blanche and tells her what Stanley has said. He seems to be agitated. She requests him for understanding by confessing that she had been intimate with men in order to fill her emptiness after Allan's suicide. Her tale arouses sexual in Mitch and he wants sex that she has been dispensing to others. He tries to assault her, but she repels him by shouting "Fire!" out the window.

Arriving late that night Stanley returns to find Blanche dressed in fine traveling clothes. She informs Stanley that Shep Huntleigh has invited her on a cruise and that Mitch had apologized for not coming to her birthday party. Stanley bluntly calls her a liar. He wants to prove that he will not be fooled by her pack of lies. He tries to seduce her and she tries to stop him with a bottle, but too weak to resist, she collapses at his feet. Stanley picks her up, and carries her off to be raped.

Weeks later Stella is packing Blanche's belongings. Blanche believes that she is being taken to the country for a rest, but in truth, she is being committed to a mental hospital. Stella doesn't know if she's doing the right thing but she has to do that in order to preserve her marriage. However, Stella has decided to dismiss the story of the rape as just another of Blanche's fibs.

While dressing, Blanche keeps talking about the cruises and romantic adventures with Shep Huntleigh. Shortly, Stella leads Blanche out to meet the doctor and nurse from the hospital. Blanche tries to dodge them and the nurse begins to overpower her with a straitjacket and the doctor intervenes. He talks kindly to Blanche, as though he is the gentleman caller she's been expecting. Calmed by the doctor's gentleness, Blanche takes his arm and walks to the waiting ambulance.

Themes

2.2.2 Loneliness

Loneliness is a curse and Blanche suffers from it. Bereft after her husband's suicide, she becomes a prostitute to fill her emptiness. She molests young boys and has constructed a web of pretense to delude herself and others that she is charming and sociable. She invents tales about her gentleman friend Shep Huntleigh. He is real enough to comfort Blanche and to keep hope alive that someday she will be rescued from loneliness. The pain of loneliness brings Blanche and Mitch together. Blanche prefers

men of another type but rather than being a lonely spinster for the rest of her life, she is willing to put up with Mitch. Mitch, too, hopes to find a woman to replace his mother, who will soon die.

2.2.3 REALITY VS ILLUSION

The conflict between Stanley and Blanche are symbolic of illusion versus reality. To Stanley reality is what we can touch and see. Stanley feels right at home in reality among real people, are natural and say what they think and feel. Since a human is an animal, according to Stanley he ought to act like one. To put on airs, to deny one's instincts, to hide one's feelings-those are dishonest acts. Whereas Blanche rejects reality in favor of illusion because reality has treated her unkindly. Too much truthfulness destroyed her marriage therefore she takes refuge in dreams and illusions. She says what ought to be true, not what is true. Stanley can't tolerate idealists like Blanche. What she calls "magic" Stanley calls "lies." Losing her way altogether at the end of the play, Blanche can no longer distinguish illusion from reality. So she goes to an asylum, the only place where that distinction doesn't make any difference.

2.2.4 SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Sexual violence and conflict between males and female characters is well evident throughout the play. On one side we have Blanche, who lures the newspaper boy into her arms, but thinks the better of it, and frees him after only one kiss. She wins Mitch's affection but claims "high ideals" to keep him at a distance. When Mitch discovers that he has been cheated he attempts to rape her. Blanche wards off the attack like a practiced warrior. Stanley is unconquerable and sees right through Blanche's sexual pretenses. At the end he rapes Blanche proving that in sexual combat, he is the winner and still champion.

2.2.5 Scene Summaries

SCENE ONE

The play commences with a loving pen portrayal of New Orleans. Stanley Kowalski appears on stage first, walking with his friend Mitch. He is a big man carrying a package of bloody meat, which he gives to his wife Stella, standing on the first floor landing. Stanley tells Stella that he's on his way to bowl and she, his faithful mate, follows him to the alley.

Shortly after Stella leaves, Blanche DuBois, carrying a suitcase walks down Elysian Fields. Her gestures and her clothing tell that she is a stranger to the parts. She is dressed as though she is going to be headed for a summer tea party in the garden district instead of searching for the two-story building occupied by the Kowalskis. When she speaks-to ask directions from Eunice Hubbell, the Kowalskis' upstairs neighbour we can

note that Blanche is used to more refined surroundings. Despite Blanche's doubts that Stella really lives in such a place, Eunice assures her that she's found the right address. When Blanche discloses she is Stella's sister, Eunice escorts Blanche into the apartment. Eunice wants to chat, but Blanche asks to be left alone, claiming to be tired from her trip. As she leaves, Eunice offers to tell Stella of Blanche's arrival. We get the feeling that Blanche is a worn-out traveler from Mississippi where she teaches school and owns her family's ancestral home, Belle Reve, a large plantation with a mansion. As soon as Eunice goes out, Blanche, is upset and nervous about something, and finding whiskey in a closet she quickly swallows half a glassful. Then she mutters to herself, "I've got to keep hold of myself!"

When Stella returns Blanche chatters at a feverish pace. As she speaks, she reveals her unsettled emotional state. In just a brief dialogue with her sister, Blanche expresses affection, shock, modesty, concern for Stella, vanity, resentment, and uncertainty about herself. While almost every sentence reveals another dimension of Blanche's inner turbulence, the dialogue also illustrates the relationship between the sisters. Blanche explains that she has suffered a nervous breakdown and has therefore taken a leave from her teaching job. Blanche then comments on Stella's messy apartment and reproaches Stella for gaining so much weight not knowing that Stella is pregnant.

Stella apologizes for the size of her apartment and starts to prepare Blanche for meeting Stanley and his friends. They're not exactly the type of men Blanche is accustomed to. Blanche finally turns the conversation to news of home and announces that Belle Reve their ancestral home has been lost. Before Stella can ask why, Blanche launches into a passionate and morbid apology which assigns blame for the loss on a parade of sickness and death that marched through the family. Every death had to be paid for with a little piece of Belle Reve, and gradually the place just slipped away through Blanche's fingers. More shocked than angry, Stella says nothing. Blanche thinks that Stella doubts the story and cruelly lashes out at her sister. Stanley, Steve and Mitch, return from bowling and plan a poker game for the following evening. We are able to make out from the dialogues that Stanley and Blanche don't get along.

SCENE TWO

The Kowalskis are celebrating poker night and Stella plans to take Blanche on the town to get her out of the house while Stanley and his friends drink. While Blanche soaks in the tub Stella urges Stanley to be kind to Blanche. Stanley ignores Stella's pleas. He wants to know more about the loss of Belle Reve. He can't understand that the place is just-gone! He wants to see a bill of sale or papers of some kind to confirm Blanche's story. Stanley suspects that Blanche used the money from Belle Reve to deck herself in furs and jewels and costly dresses. Stella tells him that the furs are cheap and the jewelry is fake, but Stanley refuses to let the matter at rest. Stella is caught in the middle between her husband and sister. Blanche comes out of the bathroom and talks cheerfully with Stanley. She plays the role of a coquette, flaunting her helplessness and fishing for compliments. But he is wise to her flirtations. She is not impressed with his brutishness.

He wants to know the truth about Belle Reve. She tells him that while she may fib a little, she wouldn't lie about something as important as Belle Reve. She'll show the papers to Stanley if he wants to see them. Impatient for the papers, Stanley grabs for them inside Blanche's trunk. What he finds is a packet of love letters and poems written by Blanche's late husband, Allan. Blanche refers to her husband as a "boy." Because they married young and Allan died before he reached manhood. Finally, she hands Stanley a pack of legal documents related to the history of Belle Reve. Stanley believes the papers and tells that he is doing it for Stella's welfare, especially now that she's going to have a baby. On hearing the news of Stella's baby she rushes out to find Stella and to tell her that she and Stanley have settled their differences. Blanche brags that she conquered Stanley with wit and a bit of flirting.

SCENE THREE

When Blanche and Stella return from their night out Stanley and Mitch are playing a poker. Stanley seems to be losing and he lashes out at Mitch for wanting to go home. He also snaps at Blanche, whacks Stella on the thigh, and orders the two women to leave them alone. When Mitch drops out of the game, Blanche seizes the chance to talk with him. She knows how to charm him and her wiles work on Mitch. He is won over instantly and is hypnotized by her charm. Blanche clicks on the radio and we hear a good waltz. Caught up in the music, Blanche dances gracefully and Mitch imitates her awkwardly. Stanley, walks into the room in rage, grabs the radio and throws it out the window. Then he strikes Stella. His friends drag him to the shower to sober him up. Meanwhile, Blanche, distraught and frightened, has organized a hasty escape upstairs to Eunice's with Stella in tow.

Soon Stanley emerges dripping and sheds in tears, for his baby and Stella. Half dressed, he goes outside to the front pavement and howls again and again, "Stella! Stella!" Eunice warns him to leave her alone, but after sometime Stella comes out the door and slips down the stairs to Stanley. The two embrace. Stanley then lifts her and carries her into the dark flat. Blanche seems shaken by Stanley's outburst and Mitch returns tries to comfort her. Together, they smoke a cigarette and Blanche thanks Mitch for his kindness.

SCENE FOUR

The next morning Blanche expresses dismay over the previous night's events but Stella has forgiven Stanley. Stella admits to her sister that she likes Stanley's brutish manner. Blanche says Stanley is a mad man and asks her to leave him immediately. Blanche urges Stella to come away with her. She proposes opening a shop of some kind with money provided by Shep Huntleigh, a rich acquaintance. For Stella most of life's anxieties and troubles are trivial when compared to "things that happen between a man and a woman in the dark." Stella calls it love, but Blanche terms it "brutal desire". After Blanche finishes, Stanley reveals that he'd overheard the whole conversation.

SCENE FIVE

To keep her hope alive, or at least to keep up the pretense of hope, Blanche composes a letter to Shep Huntleigh, informing him that she intends to make room in her crowded social life to visit him in Dallas. While Blanche reads a piece of the letter to Stella, Steve and Eunice are involved in an argument. Later they make up like Stella and Stanley. Suddenly Stanley startles Blanche by mentioning that a man named Shaw from Laurel claims to have met a woman named Blanche at Hotel Flamingo, a place frequented by the town's lowlife. Stanley stops short of calling Blanche a whore, but he strongly implies that Blanche is something more than just an English teacher. Blanche denies it, but she seems to be nervous. Then Blanche sets about asking Stella's advice about how she should treat her date Mitch. In the absence of Stella and Stanley, Blanche tries to make advances at a high school boy who comes to collect paper. She even kisses him. Soon Mitch arrives with a bouquet of roses for her.

SCENE SIX

It's two a.m., and Blanche and Mitch are returning from an evening out. The streets are empty. Even the streetcars have stopped. Blanche teases Mitch, asking if the "Desire" is still running. Blanche and Mitch are not made for each other, but Mitch is a man, and that's what Blanche wants. Blanche asks Mitch, "Will you sleep with me tonight?" in French, and he does not understand that she is making a fool of him. Blanche realizes that Mitch must not believe Shaw's story when Stanley tells him about it. So to win Mitch's sympathy, Blanche relates the story of her marriage. It's a tragic tale of love, homosexuality, and violence. Mitch is deeply affected by the story.

SCENE SEVEN

Four months later, Stella is preparing up for Blanche's birthday celebration when Stanley comes home elated. He tells Stella that a supply man driving through Laurel had told him the truth about Blanche. She was nothing short of a prostitute. Stella refuses to believe, but Stanley insists that Blanche had been told to leave town for being a hotel whore and for seducing one of the seventeen-year-old boys in her class. Stella urges Stanley to be kind to Blanche, who needs understanding because of her tragic marriage. But Stanley doesn't relent, and he's already informed Mitch about Blanche's sordid past. Stanley claims that he felt obliged to warn Mitch that Blanche is a fraud. Blanche's marriage to Mitch is now out of the question. To add to the injury, Stanley has bought Blanche a one-way bus ticket back to Laurel. Emerging from the bathroom, Blanche sees distress on Stella's face, but Stella won't disclose the reason. That task belongs to Stanley.

SCENE EIGHT

Mitch doesn't attend the birthday dinner. Blanche tries vainly to keep up her spirits and tells a joke. Stella laughs weakly, but Stanley remains stone-faced. As he reaches across the table for another chop, Stella calls him a "pig." She orders him to wash

his greasy face and fingers and to help her clear the table. Stanley berates Stella. After Stanley stalks out, Blanche tries to phone Mitch . To bring the party to an end, Stanley presents Blanche with a birthday gift. Blanche is surprised and filled with anguish when she sees that it is a bus ticket to Laurel. Stella's labor begins, and Stanley rushes her to the hospital.

SCENE NINE

Later that evening Blanche is drinking alone and a shabby Mitch arrives and Blanche quickly hides the bottle. Mitch accuses her for deceit. Blanche tries to defend against Mitch's charges by lying that she befriended strangers to forget her grief. She begins to repeat confusing fragments of conversations from her past. The opposite of death, she says, is desire. Mitch declares that he wants Blanche to give what she's denied him all summer-her body. She protests that she would do so only if he'll marry her. Disgusted, Mitch says that Blanche isn't clean enough to bring into the same house as his mother. He advances, intent on raping her. To scare him off Blanche rushes to the window shouting, "Fire! Fire! Fire!" and Mitch runs off.

SCENE TEN

Blanche is talking aloud to herself about a moonlight swim in a rock quarry and Stanley comes in. She asks about Stella. Since the baby is not yet born Stanley will stay at home that night. Blanche becomes wary and alarmed at the thought of being alone in the apartment with him. He asks about her fine attire and she explains that Shep Huntleigh has invited her on a Caribbean yacht cruise. They continue to talk and Blanche senses danger. Stanley retreats to the bathroom to don his special silk pajamas and comes out bare-chested, and grinning. It is evident he wants Blanche and approaches her cautiously. Blanche has smashed a bottle on the table edge and uses the jagged top to defend herself . When she swings at him, he catches her wrist and forces her to drop the weapon. She collapses at his feet. Then he picks up her limp form and carries her into the bedroom.

SCENE ELEVEN

Blanche, has told Stella about the rape and she refuses to believe Blanche. At the start of this scene Stella tells Eunice, "I couldn't believe her story and go on living with Stanley and Eunice concurs: "Don't ever believe it. Life has got to go on. No matter what happens, you've got to keep on going." Stella has arranged a "rest" for Blanche at an insane asylum in the country. Blanche has confused her trip to the country with the cruise on Shep's yacht, Blanche is preparing her wardrobe. Stella is feeling remorseful about having committed Blanche to an asylum and when the time comes for Blanche to be taken away, Stella cries out in despair.

When Blanche sees that the doctor is not Shep Huntleigh, she returns to the apartment, pretending to have forgotten something. The matron follows and prepares a straitjacket for Blanche .Distressed, Blanche begins to hear voices as reverberating

echoes. The doctor speaks kindly and Blanche responds with relief and takes his arm. While being escorted to the waiting car, she tells the doctor, "Whoever you are-I have always depended on the kindness of strangers." Stella is distraught and Stanley comes to her aid.

CHARACTERS

2.2.6 BLANCHE DUBOIS

Blanche is an English teacher, who has lost her job. She wasn't fired for poor teaching skills because superintendent's letter said Blanche was "morally unfit for her position" because she seduced one of the seventeen-year-old boys in her class. Blanche's sexual exploits so outraged the citizens of Laurel, Mississippi, that they practically threw her out of town. These facts about Blanche are revealed in late in the play. At first, she seems to be a high-strung, but refined, woman who has come to New Orleans to pay her sister a visit. However as the play unfolds, Blanche's past is revealed bit by bit. At the end she is undone, fit only for an asylum. Even in defeat she maintains ladylike dignity even after being raped.

Blanche arouses both compassion and disapproval simultaneously. She is often regarded as a symbol of a decaying way of life. She came to Elysian Fields seeking love and help, but she found hostility and rejection. She has been scarred by her husband's suicide and by the loss of her ancestral home. She has reached a stage of life when she can no longer depend on her good looks to attract a man. To compensate for loneliness and despair, she creates illusions and clings to the manners and speech of dying Southern gentility. Pretending is like second skin to her and she says that deception is half of a lady's charm. She calls it "magic." Unfortunately, though, she is caught in a situation with Stanley Kowalski, who not only abhors her superior airs, but seems bent on destroying her.

Blanche may be a tragic victim but she is an immoral woman who deserves what she gets. Blanche tells so many lies that she herself can't remember them all. Some lies may be harmless, but others are destructive because, Mitch is crushed by her untruthfulness. Towards the end of the play before being raped by Stanley we see Blanche as an advocate of civilized values. She speaks up for the nobility of humanity, for its achievements in the arts, for progress made by civilization. It seems to shock the readers that such words ensue from the mouth of an ex-Prostitute.

2.2.7 STANLEY KOWALSKI

Stanley is an ill mannered, lusty man. He speaks plainly and doesn't hide his feelings, and he hates affectations of any kind. He is intent on destroying Blanche. He is

a sturdy man of Polish descent, who likes to drink, play poker, and bowl. His greatest pleasure is sex. He also has a violent streak and often strikes Stella and hurls things out of the window and rapes Blanche in the end. He has humour, wit, frankness and down to earth yet he is a man who can go to extremes. Stanley's efforts to ruin Blanche reveals the other dimensions of his personality. Blanche not only interferes with his sex life, she attempts to lure Stella away from him. So his hatred of Blanche is quick and unrelenting..

Stanley is a man who is used to having his wishes obeyed. So when Blanche tries to pretend like the gentry and go against his wishes he dislikes her. When he learns that she was not part of gentry but a common whore he wants to tear her mask of pretence and bring her down.

2.2.8 STELLA KOWALSKI

Both Stella and Blanche grew up together at Belle Reve. After the sisters reached adulthood Stella left for New Orleans, where she met and married Stanley. She's a gentle woman of about twenty-five, level-headed and affectionate. Sex and bowling are the only interests she shares with her husband. When he plays poker, she goes to the movies. She accepts his tantrums, his abuses, and his coarse manners. Stella seems to have the patience of a saint. When Blanche insults her, Stella often listens unperturbed, as though she is insensitive. As Blanche berates her little sister, an unconscious hostility may be building inside Stella, something that may have begun years ago when the sisters were young. At the end of the play, when Stella commits Blanche to an asylum, you might regard Stella's action as her ultimate expression of antagonism toward her older sister.

Stella sends Blanche away for her own good. Though a good lady she prefers to believe that Blanche is insane rather than face the truth about Stanley. Stella chooses to sacrifice her sister rather than destroying her marriage by accusing Stanley of raping Blanche. Stella has learned a useful lesson from her older sister-how to deceive oneself to avoid coping with painful reality.

2.2.9 HAROLD MITCHELL ("MITCH")

When Blanche meets Mitch, she is ready to accept him though she might have preferred someone rich like the legendary Shep Huntleigh. However she settles for Mitch, a good-hearted and honest fellow, but also a rather dull and self-conscious one. He has awkward manners and stumbling speech and lacks intellect, money, wit, or looks. Blanche is attracted by his courtesy. He is the first person to treat her like a lady since her arrival in New Orleans. Second, he is an unmarried man and his sense of propriety makes him stand out like a prince among the other men in Stanley's poker-playing crowd of slobs,. He also happens to be lonely and is looking for someone to love. Mitch is enraptured by Blanche the moment he sees her. She is clearly more refined, charming and intelligent than the women he's used to and his mother would approve. We rarely hear Mitch speak without mentioning his mother. He believes that Blanche would be a good substitute for his mother. Blanche dominates Mitch, practically leading him around on a leash. He couldn't even kiss her without permission.

But when Mitch hears the truth about Blanche, he is filled with grief and shock. Yet in the end he makes undue advances at Blanche and tells her that she cannot be taken in the place of his mother.

2.2.10 EUNICE HUBBELL

The Hubbells own the building where the Kowalskis rent the first-floor apartment. Eunice and her husband live upstairs. Eunice interferes with the daily lives of Stella and Stanley. She is a nosy neighbour. She gives refuge to Stella whenever Stanley hits her. The sounds that come from the Hubbells' apartment add to the jungle-like ambience of Elysian Fields and reveal that fighting and lovemaking are not restricted to the street floor of the building. Eunice's comment to Stella about the rape of Blanche illustrates how Eunice, whose instincts are generally tender, has come to terms with the unspeakable vulgarity around her: "Don't ever believe it. Life has got to go on. No matter what happens, you've got to keep on going."

2.2.11 STEVE HUBBELL

Steve is one of Stanley's poker and drinking companions. Like Stanley, he is crass and inelegant. He fights with his wife Eunice, throws dishes at her, and later, comes crawling back to her apologetically.

2.2.12 PABLO GONZALES

Pablo is the fourth member of Stanley's card-playing gang. Like the others, he is slovenly in mind and body.

2.2.13 PAPER COLLECTOR

When he comes to collect for the newspaper he gets a kiss from Blanche instead of his fee. Blanche's encounter with the boy calls to mind two other boys in her experience: her young husband and the student in her English class whom she seduced.

2.2.14 NURSE AND DOCTOR

They come to accompany Blanche to the asylum. The nurse, or matron, is ready to stuff Blanche into a straitjacket when the doctor, recognizing that a gentle hand is needed, steps in. Blanche rewards the doctor with thanks.

2.3 Let Us Sum Up

The two plays selected for detailed and non-detailed study are remarkable pieces in American Drama. Both "A Street Car Named Desire" and "The Emperor Jones" had played very successfully in the theaters in America. "The Emperor Jones" initiates the students to get a clear understanding of the expressionistic technique used in literature. It also makes the student get an awareness of concepts such as collective conscious and

sub-conscious and how psychological breakdown can be depicted in different genres. “A Street Car Named Desire” depicts the decadence existent in the modern society.

2.4 Lesson End Activity

1. Comment on the aptness of the title “The Emperor Jones”.
2. Sketch the character of Brutus Jones as a Tragic hero.
3. Explain O’Neill’s use of symbolism in “The Emperor Jones”.
4. “The Emperor Jones ” is an expressionistic play-Justify.
5. Comment on the theme of conflict between good and evil ,sin and retribution in “The Emperor Jones”.
6. Trace the conflict between Stanley and Blanche.
7. In what ways are Stanley and Blanche symbolic figures?
8. Regardless of her past, why is Blanche a generally sympathetic figure? Explain.
9. How does each character contribute to Blanche's breakdown?
10. Comment on the themes in “A Street Car Named Desire”.

2.5 Points for Discussion

1. ‘Reality Vs Illusion’ : Discuss with reference to the play, The Emperor Jones by O’ Neill.
2. Justify the title of Tennessee Williams’ A Street Car Named Desire.

2.6 References

1. “The Emperor Jones”- Dr.Ragukul Tilak,Rama Brothers,1994
2. A Street Car named Desire- Dr.Ragukul Tilak,Rama Brothers,1996
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UNIT – III

PROSE

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3.0 Aims and Objectives

- To enable the student spell out the characteristic features of the structure of the language.
- Initiate the use of powerful vocabulary and appropriate phrases and idioms in meaningful situations.
- Motivate the students to be able to explain and illustrate events.
- Teach narration techniques to elaborate the features of one’s culture in words with clarity, brevity and lucidity.
- Motivate reading comprehension by selecting works containing complicated word clusters.

DETAILED PROSE

Self –Reliance-Emerson

3.1 About the Author

Life and Background

Ralph Waldo Emerson was born on May 25, 1803, to the Reverend William and Ruth Haskins Emerson. His father, was a pastor of the First Unitarian Church of

Boston, chaplain of the Massachusetts Senate. He was the editor of a *Monthly Anthology*, a literary review. Following his father's death in 1811, the family was left in a state of near-poverty, and Emerson was raised by his mother and an aunt whose acute, critical intelligence had a lifelong influence on him.

Emerson entered Harvard College on a scholarship in 1817, and during collegiate holidays he taught at school. After graduating from college, Emerson moved to Boston to teach at his brother William's School for Young Ladies and began to experiment with fiction and verse. In 1825, after quitting the ladies school, he entered Harvard Divinity School; one year later, he received his master's degree, which qualified him to preach. He began to suffer from symptoms of tuberculosis, and in the fall of 1827 he went to Georgia and Florida in hopes of improving his health. He returned in late December to Boston, where he preached occasionally. He met Ellen Tucker, a seventeen-year-old poet in Concord, who also suffered from tuberculosis. They were married in September 1829, and were very happy in the marriage, but, unfortunately, both ill with tuberculosis; in 1831, after less than two years of marriage, Ellen died. He resigned his pastorate and on Christmas Day, 1832, he left for Europe even though he was so ill that many of his friends thought he would not survive the rigors of the winter voyage. While in Europe, he met many of the leading thinkers of his time, including the economist and philosopher John Stuart Mill; Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Wordsworth; and Thomas Carlyle etc. After his return from Europe in the fall of 1833, Emerson began a career as a public lecturer. One of his first lectures, "The Uses of Natural History," attempted to humanize science by explaining that "the whole of Nature is a metaphor or image of the human mind," an observation that he would often repeat. Other lectures were on diverse subjects such as Italy, biography, English literature, the philosophy of history, and human culture.

In September 1834, Emerson moved to Concord, Massachusetts, and married Lydia Jackson of Plymouth. Emerson's first book, *Nature*, was published anonymously in 1836. However, "The American Scholar," the Phi Beta Kappa address that Emerson presented at Harvard in 1837, was very popular and, when printed, sold well. In 1836, Emerson joined the Transcendental Club, which included Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and Alcott. In 1840, he helped launch *The Dial*, a journal of literature, philosophy, and religion that focused on transcendentalist views and in due course became its editor. After the first two years, he succeeded Fuller as its editor.

In 1841, Emerson published the first volume of his *Essays*, a carefully constructed collection of some of his best-remembered writings, including "Self-Reliance" and "The Over-Soul." A second series of *Essays* in 1844 would firmly establish his reputation as an authentic American voice.

Tragedy struck the Emerson family in January 1842 when Emerson's son, Waldo, died of scarlet fever. Emerson would later write "Threnody," an elegy expressing his grief for Waldo; the poem was included in his collection *Poems* (1846). Ellen, Edith, and Edward Waldo, his other children, survived to adulthood.

In 1847, Emerson again traveled abroad, lecturing in England with success. A collection called *Addresses and Lectures* appeared in 1849, and *Representative Men* was published in 1850.

Emerson's later works were never so highly esteemed as his writings previous to 1850. However, he continued to lead an active intellectual and social life. He made many lecture appearances in all parts of the country, and he continued writing and publishing. During the 1850s, he vigorously supported the antislavery movement. When the American Civil War broke out, he supported the Northern cause and was deeply affected by the horrors of war. As he grew older, Emerson's health and mental acuity began to decline rapidly. In 1872, after his Concord home was badly damaged by fire, his friend Russell Lowell and others raised \$17,000 to repair the house and send him on vacation. The trauma speeded up his intellectual decline. Emerson died of pneumonia on April 27, 1882, and, announcing his death, Concord's church bells rang 79 times.

"Self-Reliance"

3.2 Introduction to the Essay

Self Reliance was published in first 1841 in *Essays* and then in the 1847 revised edition of *Essays*. Throughout his life, Emerson kept detailed journals of his thoughts and actions, and he depended upon them as a source for many of his essays. It is so in the case of "Self-Reliance" also. In self-reliance Emerson has drawn from his journal entries dating back to 1832. In addition to his journals, Emerson drew materials from various lectures he delivered between 1836 and 1839.

The essay begins with three epigraphs: a Latin line, meaning "Do not seek outside yourself"; a six-line stanza from Beaumont and Fletcher's *Honest Man's Fortune*; and a four-line stanza that Emerson himself wrote. Emerson dropped his stanza from the revised edition of the essay, but modern editors have restored it. All three epigraphs revolve around the necessity of relying on oneself for knowledge and guidance.

The essay can be divided into three major divisions:

- i) the importance of self-reliance (paragraphs 1-17),
- ii) self-reliance and the individual (paragraphs 18-32), and
- iii) self-reliance and society (paragraphs 33-50).

3.3 Summary of Emerson's views on "Self Reliance" as a quality

Emerson commences his self reliance with the statement that he happened to read the verses of an eminent painter. They were original and not conventional. Irrespective of the subject the soul always hears an admonition in such lines. Genius he says is "To believe your own thought ,to believe that what is true for in your private heart is true for all men,_ that is genius". He quotes Moses,Plato and Milton's names and says that they did not say what men thought but what they thought. Man must learn to detect the spark of genius within himself. He says if we do not give expression to that spark in us a stranger may speak the very same thoughts with good sense and we will have to eat our own thoughts from someone else's mouth. Emerson says that there is a time in everyone's life where we crave for originality and believe that we must toil to reap rewards. Man must put his heart into the work he is doing. When one is doing his duty with total involvement genius will spark in his mind. Otherwise genius deserts him. Emerson exhorts people to have trust in themselves.We have to accept God's plan for us.Even great men have accepted the place divine providence has found for them. We should not flee our society like cowards." And we are now men and must accept in the highest mind the same transcendent destiny : and not minors and invalids in a protected corner,not cowards fleeing before a revolution,but guides,redeemers,and benefactors,obeying the almighty effort,and advancing on chaos and the dark".

Emerson says all humans carry pretty faces when we are children. Infancy does not continue forever in us .God has designed youth ,puberty and manhood with its own charm. One babe will transform four or five adults into children when they play with it.Youth is very bold in expressing its ideas but adulthood is always jailed by consciousness.We hear many voices in solitude but they are forgotten when we enter the world. "Society is a joint-stock company in which the members agree,for the better securing of his bread to each shareholder...". Emerson says that 'conformity' is a virtue in society while "self reliance" I is an evil. He says integrity of the mind is most sacred.We must obey the law of nature.He says" I am ashamed to think how easily we capitulate to badges and names,to large societies and dead institutions". Even in a place where malice and vanity poses as Philanthropy we must be bold to speak the 'rude truth'.Truth is always more handsome than affectation of love.Emerson says philanthropy which is mislaid is a folly. Men do charitable deeds by mere routine like paying a fine for being absent at parade. He wishes to be 'genuine and equal' rather than be 'glittering and unsteady'. He is more concerned about what he must do rather than what other people may think . " ... you will always find those who think they know what is your duty better than you know it". When we live for the eyes of the world it blurs our character. Emerson states that most men have bound their eyes with a handkerchief and attached themselves to some community or opinion.This conformity

casts a shadow on all their activities. On the other hand if we are non conformists the world punishes us. Yet Emerson says “It is easy enough for a firm man who knows the world to brook the rage of the cultivated classes”. Emerson lashes out on cowards and saying there is no use in carrying a head on the shoulder. If we lack individuality it is like dragging about our own corpse. We should state the truth, that comes to our mind and not worry about being misunderstood.

Great men like Pythagoras, Socrates, Jesus, Martin Luther, Copernicus, Galileo and Newton were also misunderstood in the beginning. No man can conceal or violate his nature. It will be reflected in his day to day actions. He compares man's life to the sailing of a big ship. When viewed from a distance the zig zag track is seen. In order to make headway, the ship must tack, or move in a zigzag line that eventually leads to an identifiable end. In the same way, an individual's apparently contradictory acts or decisions show consistency when that person's life is examined in its entirety and not in haphazard segments. We must “scorn appearances” and do what is right or necessary, regardless of others' opinions or criticisms.

Similarly our genuine actions will speak for itself. We must scorn appearances and the right thing for the moment. He says honour has its own tradition and pedigree. Emerson states the conformity and consistency is drawing to a close in the present society. It takes lot of time for great men to be born with the divine spark of genius. It has taken ages for the world to have people like Caesar, Christ, Hermit Antony, Fox, Wesley etc. So he states” let a man then know his worth and keep things under his feet. Let him not peep or steal, or skulk up and down with the air of a charity-body, a bastard, or an interloper in the world which exists for him”. Emerson takes the story of the sot who was treated as a duke to tell us that we people are also in the world like the drunken sot. Only rarely do we wake up and exercise true reason. Sycophancy rules the world today.

3.4 The Importance of Self-Reliance.

Emerson commences his essay on self reliance by asserting the importance of thinking for oneself rather than blindly accepting other people's views. He states “To believe that what is true in your private heart is true for all men—that is genius.” The person who ignores personal intuition and, instead, chooses to rely on others' opinions lacks the creative power necessary for healthy individualism. This absence of conviction results in the acceptance of the secondhand thoughts.

Emerson wants us to learn “Trust thyself,” as a motto. To rely on others' judgments is cowardice. A person with self-esteem, on the other hand, exhibits originality and is childlike—unspoiled by selfish needs—yet mature. It is to this adventure of self-trust that Emerson invites us: We are to be guides and adventurers, destined to participate in an act of creation modeled on the classical myth of bringing order out of chaos. Emerson feels that children provide models of self-reliant behavior because they are too young to be cynical, hesitant, or hypocritical. He

draws an analogy between boys and the idealized individual: Both are masters of self-reliance because they apply their own standards to all they see, and because their loyalties cannot be corrupted. This contrasts with the attitude of cautious adults, who, are concerned with reputation, approval, and the opinion of others.

Emerson then focuses his attention on the importance of an individual's resisting pressure to conform to external norms, including those of society, which defeats self-reliance in its members. The process of "maturing" becomes a process of conforming. Commenting on the objection that devotedly following one's inner voice is wrong because the intuition may be evil, he states, it is better to be true to an evil nature than to behave "correctly" because of society's demands or conventions.

The non-conformist in Emerson rejects many of society's moral sentiments. For example, he claims that an abolitionist should worry more about his or her own family and community at home than about "blacks a thousand miles off,". He also criticizes people who give money to the poor. He refuses to support morality through donations to organizations rather than directly to individuals.

Emerson says it is better to live truly and obscurely than to have one's goodness extolled in public. It makes no difference to him whether his actions are praised or ignored. The important thing is to act independently. There is a difference between enjoying solitude and being a social hermit. Outlining his reasons for objecting to conformity, Emerson asserts that succumbing to popular opinion wastes a person's life. Those around us will never get to know our real personality. Conformity corrupts our lives and our every day actions. The followers of public opinion are recognized as hypocrites even by the awkwardness and falsity of their facial expressions.

Emerson states that there are two enemies against the ideal individual. They are society's disapproval or scorn, and the individual's own sense of consistency. Although the scorn of "the cultivated classes" is unpleasant, it is, according to Emerson, relatively easy to ignore because it tends to be polite. However, the outrage of the masses is to be reckoned with.

Using the metaphor of a corpse Emerson lashes against the individual who is afraid of contradiction. Maturing involves the evolution of ideas, which is the spring of creativity. It is most important to review constantly and to reevaluate past decisions and opinions., If necessity demands we must give up our old ideas like the biblical Joseph who fled from a seducer by leaving his coat in her hands. Citing cultures that traditionally frown on inconsistency, Emerson points out that history's greatest thinkers were branded as outcasts for their original ideas—and scorned as such by their peers. Notable among them is Jesus Christ.

What appears to be inconsistency is often a misunderstanding based on distortion or perspective. Emerson develops this idea by comparing the progress of a person's thoughts to a ship sailing against the wind: In order to make headway, the ship must tack, or move in a zigzag line that eventually leads to an identifiable end. In the same way, an individual's apparently contradictory acts or decisions show consistency when that person's life is examined in its entirety and not in haphazard segments. We must "scorn appearances" and do what is right or necessary, regardless of others' opinions or criticisms.

"A true man," "belongs to no other time or place, but is the centre of all things. Where he is, there is nature." Nature is not only those objects around us, but also our individual natures. And these individual natures allow the great thinker—the ideal individual—to battle for conformity and consistency.

3.5 Self-Reliance and the Individual.

The second section of "Self-Reliance" offers suggestions for the individual who wants to achieve the quality of self-reliance. Emerson states "Let a man then know his worth, and keep things under his feet." Material objects, especially those that are imposing—Emerson takes the examples of magnificent buildings and heroic works of art, including costly books that often make people inferior. This is wrong because humans should determine an object's worth, not vice versa. Emerson illustrates this point by relating a fable of a drunkard who is brought in off the street and treated like a royal personage; the unthinking man is like the sot living only half awake, until he comes to his senses by exercising reason and discovers that he is actually a prince.

One cause for our not exercising reason is the uncritical manner in which we read. Complaining that we often enjoy reading about the adventures of famous people while ignoring or devaluing books about ordinary righteousness and virtue. Emerson wants to know why people view the acts of well-known individuals as more important than that of ordinary citizens. He condemns European monarchies for the, exaggerated respect accorded to them.

Combined with the inferiority that an individual can feel when confronted by conformity, consistency, and commonality, Emerson wonders how people can remain confident in their abilities. The answer is provided by "that source, at once the essence of genius, of virtue, and of life, which we call Spontaneity or Instinct." The wisdom that springs from spontaneous instinct is Intuition, or inner knowledge. All other knowledge is like tuition. It can be compared to secondhand beliefs received from others instead of a uniquely individual response that was sparked by the source itself. This notion of Intuition is closely related to a main idea of transcendentalism: An all-encompassing "soul" animates the universe and is the

source of all wisdom and inspiration. Direct knowledge, or intuition, is gained as a gift from this overwhelming source.

Emerson next introduces us to a contrasting idea to the portrait he has drawn of the intuitive individual: the characteristics and behavior of the “thoughtless man,” who cannot see the depth of truth being used by the self-reliant, intuitive person. Thoughtless people cannot understand self-reliant individuals’ seeming inconsistencies because thoughtless people are too worried about being consistent. This is the demand of a cultivated society. Transcendence is gained only through intuitive knowledge. Describing this transcendent quality is difficult, because words are not sufficient for explaining such an abstract state of mind. “And now at last the highest truth of this subject remains unsaid; probably cannot be said; for all that we say is the far-off remembering of the intuition.” This type of understanding does not come from any teacher it reaches us deeper than any kind of emotion, such as hope, gratitude, or even joy.

Attempting to relate transcendence to what he has been saying about self-reliance, Emerson focuses on the important process of eternally evolving for the better. The self-reliant individual is not beholden to society: Although society may remain stagnant, the individual keeps on changing constantly growing more virtuous and noble. This person gains something that others in society do not: namely, the knowledge, by extension, the power of the permeating spirit that animates all things, whether they are natural objects, plants, animals, trees or social activities.

In the concluding paragraphs of this section Emerson moves from analysis to offering suggestions on how we should act. Although everyone can become a model of a self-reliant individual for the improvement of society, he asserts that “we” the lazy, non-self-reliant individuals—are a “mob.” Too many people, he says, are led by suggestions, by desires, and by feelings of responsibility. Instead of practicing independent self-reliance, we give in to others’ demands. He urges us to place truth before politeness, value integrity more than comfort, and abandon hypocrisy in favor of honesty. Acknowledging that the self-reliant individual risks being misunderstood as merely selfish or self-indulgent, he vows that individuals who rigorously follow their consciences will be more “godlike” than individuals who follow society’s laws.

3.6 Self-Reliance and Society.

In the third section of “Self-Reliance,” Emerson considers the benefits of self-reliance to the society. His examination of society reveals the need for a morality of self-reliance, and he lashes at his contemporary Americans for being followers rather than original thinkers. Timidity of many young people, whose greatest fear is failure is condemned by Emerson. He feels that urban, educated youth succumb to timidity when compared to farm lads.

Then Emerson talks about four social arenas where self-reliant individuals are needed. They are religion, culture, arts, and society.

Religion, Emerson says, could benefit from self-reliance because self-reliance turns a person's mind from petty, self-centered desires to a benevolent wish for the common good. Religion's main problem is its fear of individual creativity. So it opts for the art of mimicry: "Everywhere I am hindered of meeting God in my brother, because he has shut his own temple doors, and recites fables merely of his brother's, or his brother's brother's God." Any religion can introduce new ideas and systems of thought to an individual, but religious creeds are dangerous because they substitute a set of ready answers for the independent thought required of the self-reliant person.

The person who travels "with the hope of finding greater than he knows . . . travels away from himself, and grows old even in youth among old things." The reference to youth reminds us that the self-reliant individual is childlike and original, whereas a person who travels for the wrong reasons creates nothing new and chooses instead to be surrounded by "old things."

Emerson says the urge to travel is the result of our educational system's failure. Because schools teach us only to imitate. Emerson argues He is that society does not necessarily improve from material changes. For example, advances in technology result in the loss of certain kinds of wisdom. The person who has a watch loses the ability to tell time by the sun's position in the sky, and improvements in transportation and war machinery are not accompanied by corresponding improvements in either the physical or mental stature of human beings. He takes the example of the wave to illustrate this point. A wave moves in and out from the shoreline, but the water that composes it does not; changes occur in society, but "society never advances."

The last two paragraphs of "Self-Reliance" are concerned with his views on property and fortune. Emerson criticizes reliance on property. Instead of admiring property, the cultivated man is ashamed of it, especially of property that is not acquired by honest work. Respect for property leads to a distortion of political life. Society is corrupted by people who regard government as primarily a protector of property rather than of persons. Finally, Emerson urges the individual to take risks boldly. He says no external event, irrespective of whether it is good or bad, will change the individual's basic self-regard. "Nothing can bring you peace but yourself. Nothing can bring you peace but the triumph of principles." Self-reliance is the triumph of a principle.

3.7 Glossary

Ne te quaesiveris extra: Latin, meaning "Do not seek outside yourself." In other words, "Look within."

Beaumont, Francis (d. 1616): An English dramatist, he co-authored all of his major works, including *The Maidens Ragedy* (1611), with John Fletcher.

Fletcher, John (1579-1625): An English dramatist best known for his collaboration with Francis Beaumont; Fletcher was the sole author of at least fifteen plays.

bantling: A baby.

Plato (c. 427-347 B.C.): A Greek philosopher, he formulated the philosophy of idealism, which holds that the concepts or ideas of things are more perfect—and, therefore, more real—than the material things themselves.

Milton, John (1608-74): The English poet renowned for his religious epic poem *Paradise Lost* (1667), which sought to “justify the ways of God to men.”

piquancy: Appealingly provocative.

the pit: In early theaters, the cheapest seats behind the orchestra, below the level of the stage.

Lethe: In Greek mythology, the river of forgetfulness that flows between the world of the living and the underworld of the dead.

Barbados: The easternmost island of the West Indies, Barbados was a British colony until it became independent in 1966; British legislation abolished slavery in the West Indies in 1833.

Bible-society: One of a number of societies organized for translating and distributing bibles.

blindman’s buff: A game in which a blindfolded player tries to catch and identify other players.

Joseph and the harlot: A reference to the biblical Joseph, who refused the advances of an Egyptian officer’s wife (the “harlot”); the woman then falsely accused him of rape, and Joseph was thrown in jail, where he received his gift of dream interpretation.

Pythagoras (sixth century B.C.): Greek philosopher; considered to be the first true mathematician.

Socrates (d. 399 B.C.): A Greek philosopher, he initiated a question-and-answer method of teaching—called the Socratic method—as a means of achieving self-knowledge; opponents of Socrates’ method felt that he was undermining the authority of the state by teaching youths to question received knowledge. He was brought to trial, convicted of corrupting youth, and condemned to die; he carried out the sentence by drinking poison.

Luther, Martin (1483-1546): A German theologian, Luther is credited with initiating the Protestant Reformation; he believed in the ability of educated lay people to form ethical and religious judgments based on their own interpretations of scripture.

Copernicus, Nicolaus (1473-1543): The Polish astronomer who theorized that the earth revolves around the sun.

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642): An Italian scientist, Galileo furthered the theories advanced by Copernicus through use of the telescope; his views were considered a threat to certain religious doctrines, and he was obliged to publicly retract some of his assertions.

Newton, Sir Isaac (1642-1727): English mathematician and scientist; Newton is chiefly remembered for formulating the law of gravity.

acrostic: A short poem in which the first, middle, or last letter of each line spells a word or phrase when read in sequence.

Alexandrian stanza: A palindrome; an arrangement of words that reads the same backwards or forward—for example, “If I had a hi-fi.”

Chatham, First Earl of (1708-78): More widely known as Willim Pitt the Elder, he supported the American colonists’ bid for independence in the British Parliament.

Spartan fife: Refers to the fife, a small flute, used in tandem with drums to provide cadence for marching soldiers.

Caesar, Gaius Julius (100-44 B.C.): A Roman general, statesman, and emperor, Caesar was given a mandate by the people to rule as dictator for life; he was stabbed to death by a group of republicans led by Brutus and Cassius.

Monachism of the Hermit Anthony: The construction of the abbeys of St. Anthony marked the beginning of Christian monasticism.

Reformation: A sixteenth-century movement in Europe to reform excesses and deficiencies in the Church, the Reformation eventually resulted in the separation of the Protestant churches from what then came to be known as the Roman Catholic Church.

Quakerism: Officially called the Society of Friends; a group of Christians originating in seventeenth-century England under George Fox. They hold that believers receive direct guidance from a divine inner light.

Fox, George (1624-91): The founder of the Society of Friends (1647), popularly called the Quakers, Fox preached equality between men and women, and pacifism. The Quaker doctrine of inner enlightenment is similar to transcendentalists' emphasis on intuitive knowledge.

Methodism: Founded by John Wesley (1703-91), Charles Wesley (1707-88), and others in England during the early 1700s, this Protestant religion emphasized doctrines of free grace and individual responsibility.

Clarkson, Thomas (1760-1846): A pioneer of the British antislavery movement.

Scipio Africanus the "Elder" (237-183 B.C.): Until Julius Caesar, he was the greatest Roman general, defeating the mighty Hannibal at Zama in 202 B.C.

Alfred (d. 899): Alfred was the king (871-99) of what was then called West Saxony, in the southwest portion of England.

Scanderbeg (d. 1468): Revolutionary leader and national hero of Albania.

Gustavus (1594-1632): Gustavus was the Swedish king responsible for making Sweden a major European power; after his troops marched through Germany, he became known as the "Lion of the North." During his reign, a short-lived Swedish colony—the only one in the Americas—was founded in what is now Delaware.

David (d. 962 B.C.): The second king of Judah and Israel, David is the reputed author of many of the Psalms; the most famous stories about David concern his success as a young shepherd boy over the great Philistine warrior Goliath, and his love for the king's son, Jonathan, who loved David with a love that "was wonderful, surpassing the love of women" (I Samuel 17:48; 11 Samuel 1:26-27).

Jeremiah: Hebrew prophet during the period 626 B.C. to the fall of Jerusalem in 586 B.C.; his texts are compiled in the Book of Jeremiah, also called Lamentations.

Paul (c. first century): Termed the Apostle to the Gentiles, Paul was a Hebrew who had Roman citizenship; while on the road to Damascus, he saw a vision of Christ and was converted to Christianity. His writings in the New Testament articulate the foundations for most Christian beliefs.

Judas Iscariot (d. 33): Judas Iscariot was one of the Twelve Apostles and the betrayer of Christ.

Thor: In Norse mythology, the god of thunder; he is commemorated in the name of the fifth day of the week, Thursday.

Woden: The Anglo-Saxon form of Odin, chief among the Norse and Germanic gods.

Saxon breasts: Part of the American construction of race in the 1800s was the development of the notion of a “Saxon” or “Anglo-Saxon” race, supposedly derived from the Teutonic conquerors of England following the Roman Empire; Americans who wished to maintain an elite class of descendants of northern European Protestants excluded Irish, eastern and southern Europeans, and people of color from the notion of “true” Americans.

antinomianism: Belief in the religious doctrine that promotes faith rather than adherence to moral laws.

Zoroaster (sixth century B.C.): The Persian prophet who founded a religious system that taught that life was a continual struggle between the forces of light and dark.

Locke, John (1632-1704): An English philosopher, Locke developed a theory of cognition that denied the existence of innate ideas and asserted that all thought is based on knowledge received from our senses. His works influenced American Puritan preacher Jonathan Edwards, who modified Puritan doctrine to allow for more play of reason and intellect, building a foundation for Unitarianism and, eventually, transcendentalism.

Lavoisier, Antoine Laurent (1743-94): French chemist; regarded as the founder of modern chemistry

Hutton, James (1726-97): A Scottish geologist, he advanced the hypothesis that geologic changes in the earth's surface occur slowly over long periods of time.

Bentham, Jeremy (1748-1832): British philosopher; recognized as the official founder of utilitarianism, which holds that the chief purpose of human social existence is to secure the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Fourier, Francois Marie (1772-1837): French social theorist.

Calvinism: A Christian theological perspective associated with the work of John Calvin (1509-64), who advocated the final authority of the Bible and salvation by grace alone.

Swedenborgism: The philosophical system derived by the Swedish philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772); emphasizes mystical insight and an idealistic vision of human nature.

pinfold: An enclosure for stray animals; to confine.

Thebes: An ancient city in Egypt, it was a major center of national life and culture at the time of the Pharaohs; many of its magnificent monuments had fallen into ruin by Emerson's time.

Palmyra: An ancient city in the Middle East, north of Damascus.

Doric: The earliest and simplest of Greek architecture, characterized by fluted pillars with plain, square tops.

Gothic: A European style of architecture noted for its pointed arches and flying buttresses.

Franklin, Benjamin (1706-90): An American scientist, inventor, diplomat, writer, and philosopher; one of the most important figures in the transformation of the American colonies into the United States of America.

Bacon, Francis (1561-1626): English essayist, statesman, and philosopher; he proposed a theory of scientific knowledge based on observation and experiment that came to be known as the inductive method.

Phidias (c. fifth century B.C.): A great Athenian sculptor, none of whose works survive.

Dante Alighieri (1265-1321): The Italian poet renowned for *The Divine Comedy*, completed in 1321.

Greenwich nautical almanac: Initiated in 1767, the *Nautical Almanac*, published by the Royal Greenwich Observatory in England, was indispensable to ship captains and navigators,

solstice: The two times of the year when the sun reaches its most northerly (summer) and southerly (winter) positions, with reference to the equator. These are the longest and shortest days, respectively, of the year.

equinox: The two times during the year when the sun crosses the celestial equator, and day and night are of equal length.

Stoic: One who approaches life rationally, indifferent to pleasure and emotional pain.

Plutarch (c. 46-120): Greek biographer; his *Parallel Lives* was a source for much of English literature, including several works by Shakespeare.

Phocion (402-318 B.C.): A ruler of Athens and a former pupil of Plato.

Anaxagoras (d. 428 B.C.): Greek philosopher; he believed that matter was composed of atoms.

Diogenes of Sinope (c. fourth century B.C.): Diogenes was the most famous of the Cynics, a group of Greek philosophers who considered virtue to be the only good and esteemed self-sufficiency.

Hudson, Henry (d. 1611): The English explorer who sailed up the river now bearing his name and established an English claim to it; he died after being set adrift by a mutinous crew in the Canadian bay that was later named for him.

Bering, Vitus (d. 1741): Danish explorer.

Parry, Sir William Edward (1790-1855): A pioneer explorer of the Arctic Ocean.

Franklin, Sir John (1786-1847): An Arctic explorer from England.

Napoleon I (1769-1821): The emperor of France from 1804 to 1814, Napoleon I is remembered as one of the greatest military strategists of all time.

bivouac: A camp without tents.

Las Casas, Emmanuel (1766-1842): French historian; best known for recording Napoleon's last conversations on the island of St. Helena.

Caliph Ali (d. 661): The fourth caliph—or leader—of the Muslim community, Caliph Ali's descendants are regarded as the true successors to the prophet Mohammed.

Whigs: Naming themselves after the British party of the common people (as opposed to the aristocratic Tories), the Whig party in the United States was active from 1834 to 1854.

The Philosophy of Composition

- Edgar Allen Poe

3.8 Introduction

Edgar Allen Poe was born on 19th January, 1809. He was the second child of actress Elizabeth Arnold Hopkins Poe and actor David Poe, Jr. Edgar Poe had an elder brother, William Henry Leonard Poe, and a younger sister, Rosalie Poe. His father abandoned their family in 1810. His mother died a year later from "consumption". He was brought up by foster parents John and Frances Allan of Richmond, Virginia. Poe's publishing career began humbly with an anonymous collection of poems called *Tamerlane and Other Poems* (1827), credited only "by a Bostonian". He soon moved to Baltimore to live with blood-relatives and switched his focus from poetry to prose. He would spend the next several years working for various literary journals and periodicals and moving between several cities, including Philadelphia and New York City, becoming known for his own style of literary criticism. He also married Virginia Clemm, his 13-year old cousin in 1835 and began making plans to produce his own journal, *The Penn*.

In January 1845, Poe published "The Raven" to instant success, but his wife died of tuberculosis only two years later. *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym* was published and widely reviewed in 1838. In the summer of 1839, Poe became assistant editor of *Burton's Gentleman's Magazine*. He published a large number of articles, stories, and reviews, enhancing the reputation as a trenchant critic that he had established at the *Southern Literary Messenger*. Also in 1839, the collection *Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque* was published in two volumes. Though not a financial success, it was a

milestone in the history of American literature, collecting such classic Poe tales as "The Fall of the House of Usher", "Berenice", "Ligeia" and "William Wilson". Poe left Burton's after about a year and found a position as assistant at Graham's Magazine. Poe died on 7th October, 1849 in Baltimore. The cause of his death has been attributed to alcohol, drugs, cholera, rabies, suicide, tuberculosis, heart disease, brain congestion and other agents. Edgar Allan Poe was an influential writer during his time. He is heralded as the best literary critic of his time. His Philosophy of composition was a new force in the history of American criticism. He has several critical essays to his credit. He was eulogized by Henry James and T.S. Eliot.

The Philosophy of Composition

The Philosophy of composition is chiefly concerned about how Poe composed his well acclaimed poem "The Raven". The poem describes a scholar's experiences on a stormy night. One night a wild storm is raging outside and a scholar is trying frantically to free himself from the haunting memories of his lost love. Her name is Lenore. At that time there is a tap on his window and the scholar thinks it is the ghost of his lady love. He opens the window and discovers that it is a raven and not a ghostly presence of his lady love. He lets the bird into his room and it perches on the head of a bust of Pallas Athena (chest level statue). The fact that the bird has perched on the bust inspires humour. Surprisingly the bird seems to have mastered one utterance "Nevermore" which it keeps repeating. To add humour to the situation the scholar kept posing questions to the bird. All the questions were of the nature where the answer would be "Nevermore". Finally he asks the bird if he would ever see his lost love Lenore. When the bird answers "Nevermore" he shrieks out in anguish and despair. The pain keeps wrenching his heart. He feels as if the bird's beak is impaled into his heart and he appeals "Take thy beak out from my heart". The raven replies "Nevermore". The scholar's soul is branded by the shadow cast by the bird and it will "Nevermore be lifted". Critics are of the opinion that "The Raven" centers around the human's thirst for self-torture because the scholar purposely asks questions which will invoke the answer "Nevermore". Sorrow is a luxury in which the scholar wants to indulge in. Poe has achieved a perfect blend of the supernatural and abnormal psyche in "The Raven".

3.9 Poe's Views on Plot

Stating his views on plot Pope says every plot must be elaborated in its denouement. He says "only with the denouement constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence or causation" the denouement according to Poe is connected to the overall effect of the work. He states that the heart or intellect is affected by numerous expressions of which a writer should choose the best one for the occasion. The writer should decide whether that expression or effect can best be created by incident or tone. So 'effect' is a combination of both tone and incident. There are several such combinations namely:

- Ordinary events plus peculiar tone
- Peculiar events plus ordinary tone

He says such combinations are ideal for a romantic tale. The formula of ordinary events plus ordinary tone which is a formula for the late 19th century realism is not favoured by Poe. He feels that despite heightening everything in such combination is accountable and within limits.

3.10 Poe's Views on Poetry

Poe is emphatic in stating that poets should explain to the readers how they compose their poems by writing articles in literary journals. Poets usually don't explain to the readers the method or scheme they followed for writing their poems. Poe tells us that their vanity might have prevented them from doing so or they might have felt that the object of their inspiration does not require any explanation. Yet he has decided to reveal to the readers how he composed "The Raven". Though romantic in his viewpoint, Poe makes a staunch attack on the romantic belief in inspiration. He believes that the poet is a deliberate creator who devises all his efforts to create the effect of every single poem. He states that 'the creative process is an interlocked series of conscious choice'. For possessing such an anti-romantic attitude he is clubbed with the modern writers. Commenting on the length of a poem Poe says it should not be very long or too short. It should definitely not be longer than what can be covered in one sitting because the mood of the reader and the effect created by the poet will be lost. He says what we call a lengthy poem is in fact a continuation of brief poems. For example "Paradise Lost". We find in Poe a blend of the romantic and anti-romantic because he says the province of poetry is "The Beautiful". He opines that poets must concentrate on beauty and it will give them intense pleasure. The intensity and elevation does not appeal to the intellect but to the soul. Commenting on tone Poe says melancholy is the best suited. He states "Beauty of whatever kind, in its supreme development, invariably excites the sensitive soul to tears. Melancholy is thus the most legitimate of all the poetical tones".

Next Poe shifts his attention on the central point or pivotal point on which the entire structure of the poem leans upon. According to him "Refrain" is the central point or pivot of the poem. The refrain is employed by poets universally and this assures the

intrinsic value of using the 'refrain'. Concentrating on the nature of the refrain Poe feels that it should be brief. A single word refrain he says will be best for a poem and that single word should close every stanza. Each stanza will have force if that single word (refrain) is sonorous and has a potential for protracted emphasis. Example 'Nevermore' in "The Raven".

Here the long 'O' is the most sonorous vowel with the consonant 'r' it is effective. Since the word 'Nevermore' cannot be spoken by a human being continuously he selected a bird to voice it. The bird uttering the word combined with the melancholic tone adds to the effect of the poem. Poe has chosen the raven, a bird that signifies ill omen to repeat the refrain 'Nevermore' at the conclusion of each stanza. Commenting on melancholic topics, Poe says 'Death' is the most melancholic of all. He feels that death of a very beautiful woman is definitely the most ideal topic for a poem and the person best suited to express maximum melancholic effect is the bereaved lover.

The next step in writing the poem is to relate the refrain to the lover's questions. The melancholic or somber effect is created when the lover keeps on posing questions that require "Nevermore" as the response. The lover (scholar) does not think that the bird's replies are of prophetic quality but he experiences a kind of pleasure in self torture. The repetition of "Nevermore" provides an opportunity to present the climax of bereavement. It is with this desperate sorrow that Poe begins to compose his poem.

3.11 Poe's Views on Versification

Commenting on the technique of versification Poe says that originality is the vital factor. He feels originality has been neglected for the past few centuries. Poe says that originality is not composed of impulse or intuition. Elaborating on "The Raven" he says the originality of the poem does not lie in the metre or rhythm. The first line of each stanza in "The Raven" contains eight feet, the second line seven and a half feet: the third eight feet, the fourth and fifth seven and a half feet and the last three and a half feet. The combination of these features into stanzas has made the rhythm and metre original. Such a combination has not been explored yet. The language used by Poe exudes pedantry.

The next step for the poet is to unite the lover and the bird on some plane and create intensity simultaneously. This is achieved by choosing the best 'locale'. As far as locale is concerned Poe prefers the lover's chamber to a wood. He feels the lover may regard the chamber a sacred place because his lady love might have visited him there several times. Everything in the room, including furniture contributes to the beauty and richness of the poem.

The most vital element in the poem is the bird's entry into the lover's chamber. The bird can enter in only through the window. A stormy night is apt for the purpose. The flapping of the bird's wings seems to sound like taps on the window. The lover's sorrow is in stark contrast with the atmosphere outside. The lover opens the door and lets the bird in. The bust of Pallas symbolizes the lover's scholarship. Drawing a picture of the final scene Poe states the scholar calls it a grim, ghastly ominous bird of yore which has burnt its way into the core of his bosom with its fiery eyes. Such a fanciful thought invokes awe

in the reader also. Thus the denouement is brought out directly. The height of self torture is terminated by “Nevermore”.

In conclusion Poe says two things are essential for an artistic creation. Primarily complexity or adoption and secondly some amount of suggestiveness and undercurrent. He does not support the transcendentalist view of artistic creation. Poe says they give importance only to the theme’s upper current.

3.12 To Sum Up

This lesson presents the students with master pieces of Philosophy extolled by pioneers in American Literature. Thus the students will be able to understand that all the three sections of Emerson’s essay concentrate on self-reliance as an ideal. Emerson calls self-reliance a virtue, and contrasts it with various modes of dependence. The lesson on Philosophy of Composition educates the budding literature postgraduates to get an idea of the components involved in composing poems.

3.13 Lesson End Activity

- 1) Emerson is a champion of self reliance- Elucidate .
- 2) Write a note on Emerson’s views on “Self-Reliance and Society”.
- 3) Elaborate Emerson’s views on “Self-Reliance and the individual”.
- 4) What is a refrain? Explain Poe’s views on refrain.
- 5) Comment on Poe’s views on versification.
- 6) Attempt an analysis of Poe as a critic.
- 7) Explain Poe’s stand on ‘effect’ and ‘denouement’.

3.14 Points for Discussion

1. ‘God can only be felt but can not be understood’ : Discuss this idea with reference to Self-Reliance by Emerson.
2. Discuss the components involved in composing poems.

3.15 References

1. Emerson Handbook- Carpenter Fredric Ires, Hendricks House, NY, 1957 Edgar
2. Allen Poe –A Critical Study –Edward H. Dacidsori, 1957

UNIT – IV

FOUR FICTION

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- 4.0 Aims and Objectives
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4.0 Aims and Objectives

- To make the students get a glimpse of American Fiction.
- To promote active and reflective reading.
- To induce the creative process.
- To create awareness of cultures.
- Enable students to make a formal analytical essay on the use of figurative language.
- Introduce students to the art of comparing and contrasting characters and situations.

THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

-Ernest Hemingway

4.1 Introduction

Ernest Hemingway was born in Oak Park, Illinois, in 1899. He was the son of a doctor and a music teacher. He began his career as a reporter for the *Kansas City Star*. At

eighteen, he volunteered to serve the Red Cross as an ambulance driver in World War I and was sent to Italy, where he was badly injured by shrapnel. The experiences that got during the war found expression in his "*A Farewell to Arms*". In 1921, Hemingway moved to Paris, where he served as a correspondent for the *Toronto Daily Star*. Here he moved with a group of American and English expatriate writers including F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, and Ford Madox Ford. In the early 1920s, Hemingway began to achieve fame as a chronicler of the disaffection felt by many American youth after World War I—a generation of youth whom Stein memorably dubbed the "Lost Generation." His novels *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) and *A Farewell to Arms* (1929) established him as a dominant literary voice of his time.

He wrote "For Whom the Bell Tolls (1940). In the 1930s, Hemingway lived in Key West, Florida, and later in Cuba, and his years of experience fishing the Gulf Stream and the Caribbean provided an essential background for the vivid descriptions of the fisherman's craft in *The Old Man and the Sea*, (published in 1952). It brought him great success. He committed suicide in 1961 in Ketchum, Idaho.

4.2 Summary of THE OLD MAN AND THE SEA

The *Old Man and the Sea* is the story of the struggle between an old, seasoned fisherman and a fish that happened to be the greatest catch of his life. For eighty-four days, Santiago, an old Cuban fisherman had been going to fish in the sea only to return empty handed again and again. He has a young assistant called Manolin. The boy's parents are of the view that that Santiago is an unlucky fisherman. So they force the boy to leave the old man and fish with a more prosperous fisherman. Even then the boy continues to care for the old man after returning from his fishing trip each night. He helps the old man to get his fishing equipment into his dilapidated hut. He also secures food for the old man and spends time discussing the latest developments in American baseball, especially the exploits of the old man's hero, Joe DiMaggio. During the meetings Santiago is confident that his unlucky season for eighty four days will soon come to an end. One night Santiago resolves to sail out farther than usual the following day.

On the eighty-fifth day of his fishing Santiago goes as decided, sailing his skiff far beyond the island's shallow coastal waters and ventures into the Gulf Stream. He prepares his lines and drops them. He keeps on waiting. At noon, a big marlin marlin, takes the bait that he has placed one hundred fathoms deep in the waters. The old man expertly hooks the fish, but he is not able to pull it. Soon the fish begins to tug the boat.

Santiago is not in a position to tie the line fast to the boat because he is afraid that the fish would snap the taut line. He bears the strain of the line with his shoulders, back, and hands, waiting ready to give slack if the marlin makes a swift run. The fish pulls the boat throughout the day, all through the night, and throughout another day, and through another night. It swims steadily northwest until at last it becomes very tired and swims east with the current. All Through the two days Santiago bears the constant pain from the strain of the fishing line. Each time the fish lunges, leaps, or makes a dash for

freedom, the cord cuts him badly. Although wounded and weary, the old man feels great admiration for the marlin. He considers the fish his brother in suffering, strength, and resolve.

On the third day the fish tires, and Santiago, who is bereft of sleep, full of ache, and nearly delirious, manages to pull the marlin in close enough to kill it by thrusting a harpoon. The marlin dies beside the skiff. This marlin is the largest Santiago has ever seen of its kind. He secures it to his boat, raises the small mast, and sets sail for home. While Santiago is excited about the price that the marlin will fetch for him at the market, he is also concerned that the people who will eat the fish are unworthy of its greatness.

As Santiago sails on with the fish, the marlin's blood leaves a trail in the water and attracts sharks. The first to attack them is a great mako shark, which Santiago manages to kill with the harpoon. In the struggle, the old man loses the harpoon and valuable rope. This leaves him vulnerable to the attack of other sharks. The old man continues to fight with the attacking sharks by stabbing them with a crude spear he makes by attaching a knife to an oar, and even hitting them with the boat's tiller. Although he kills several sharks in the process more and more keep appearing, and by the time night falls, Santiago's continued fight against them is useless. The sharks devour the marlin's precious meat, leaving only the skeleton, head, and tail intact. Santiago feels that it is wrong to have gone "out too far," and for sacrificing his great and worthy opponent. Finally he reaches home before daybreak. Too weak to move he stumbles back to his shack, and falls into a deep sleep.

The next morning, a crowd of amazed fishermen gather around the skeleton of the fish, which is still secured to the boat. They are not aware of the old man's struggle. Tourists who are at a nearby café look at the remains of the giant marlin and mistake it for a shark. Manolin, who has been worried about the old man's absence for two days, is moved to tears when he finds Santiago safe in his bed. The boy fetches the old man some coffee and the daily papers with the baseball scores, and watches him sleep. When the old man wakes, the two agree to fish together once more. The old man returns to sleep and dreams his usual dream of lions playing on the beaches of Africa.

4.3 Chapter Summaries

Day One

Santiago, an old fisherman, has gone into sea for eighty-four days without catching a fish. For the first forty days, a boy named Manolin has assisted him but Manolin's parents call Santiago unlucky and force him leave the old man. Manolin loves the old man and keeps him company though he fishes with other prosperous fishermen to please his parents. Santiago announces his plans to go "far out" in the sea the following day. Manolin and Santiago discuss baseball. Santiago is a huge admirer of "the great DiMaggio," whose father was a fisherman. After discussing with Santiago the greatest ballplayers and the greatest baseball managers, the boy declares that Santiago is the

greatest fisherman Finally, the boy leaves, and the old man goes to sleep. He dreams his sweet, recurring dream, of lions playing on the white beaches of Africa.

Day Two

The next morning, Manolin helps the old man to carry the fishing equipment to the old man's boat. Santiago has slept well and is confident about the day's prospects. He and Manolin part on the beach, wishing each other good luck.

The old man rows steadily away from shore, toward the deep waters of the Gulf Stream. Rowing farther and farther out, Santiago follows the seabird that is hunting for fish, using it as a guide. Soon, one of the old man's lines goes taut. He pulls up a big tuna, which, he keeps for a bait. Suddenly the projecting stick that marks the top of the hundred-fathom line dips sharply, Santiago is sure that the fish tugging on the line is of a considerable size, and he prays that it will take the bait. The marlin plays with the bait for a while, and when it does finally take the bait, it starts to move with it, pulling the boat. The old man gives a mighty pull, then another, but he gains nothing. The fish drags the skiff farther into the sea. No land at all is visible to Santiago now.

All day the fish pulls the boat and the struggle goes on all night, as the fish continues to pull the boat. The old man wishes he had the boy with him. The sun rises and the fish has not become tired. He pledges his love and respect to the fish, but he nevertheless promises that he will kill it before the day ends.

Day Three

The marlin continues its struggle and Santiago notices that his hand is bleeding from where the line has cut it. Santiago is angered and frustrated by the weakness of his own body. He eats to maintain his strength and as he eats, he feels a brotherly desire to feed the marlin too.

While waiting for the cramp in his hand to ease, Santiago looks across the vast waters and thinks himself to be completely alone. Suddenly, the fish leaps magnificently into the air, and Santiago sees that it is bigger than any he has ever seen. By noon, the old man's hand is uncramped, and though he claims he is not religious, he says ten Hail Marys and ten Our Fathers and promises that, if he catches the fish, he will make a pilgrimage to the Virgin of Cobre. As dusk approaches, Santiago's thoughts turn to baseball and its hero DiMaggio. He wonders if DiMaggio would stay with the marlin. To boost his confidence, the old man recalls the great all-night arm wrestling match he won as a young man.

The stars come out. Santiago considers the stars his friends, as he does the great marlin. He decides to "rest," which really just means putting down his hands and letting the line go across his back, instead of using his own strength to resist his opponent.

He has several dreams: a school of porpoises leaps from and returns to the ocean; he is back in his hut during a storm; and he again dreams of the lions on the beach in Africa.

Day Four

The fish jumps out of the water again and again, and Santiago is thrown into the bow of the skiff, facedown in his dolphin meat. The line feeds out fast, and the old man

brakes against it with his back and hands. His left hand, especially, is badly cut. Santiago wishes that the boy were with him to wet the coils of the line, which would lessen the friction. As the marlin continues to circle, Santiago adds enough pressure to the line to bring the fish closer and closer to the skiff. The old man thinks that the fish is killing him. Eventually, he pulls the fish onto its side by the boat and plunges his harpoon into it and as it dies its blood stains the waves.

The old man pulls the skiff up alongside the fish and fastens the fish to the side of the boat. He thinks about how much money he will be able to make from such a big fish.

Mako sharks smell the marlin's blood and tug at the marlin for meat. Later, a pair of shovel-nosed sharks arrive and Santiago makes a noise likened to the sound a man might make as nails are driven through his hands. The sharks attack, and Santiago fights them with a knife that he had lashed to an oar as a makeshift weapon.

Around midnight, more sharks arrive.. No meat is left on the marlin.

He feels he has gone out too far. When he reaches the harbor, all lights are out and no one is near. He notices the skeleton of the fish still tied to the skiff. He stumbles home and falls asleep.

Day Five

Early the next morning, Manolin sees the old and fetches him some coffee. Fishermen have gathered around Santiago's boat to see the carcass of the eighteen feet marlin. Manolin waits for the old man to wake up and when he, and Manolin talk warmly. Santiago says that the sharks beat him, and Manolin insists that he will work with the old man again, regardless of what his parents say. He reveals that there had been a search for Santiago involving the coast guard and planes. Santiago is happy to have someone to talk to, and after he and Manolin make plans, the old man sleeps again. Manolin leaves to find food and the newspapers for the old man. Manolin continues to watch over the old man as he sleeps and dreams of the lions.

4.4 Chief Characters in the Novel

Santiago

He is the old man mentioned in title of the novel. Santiago is a fisherman from Cuba. He has been having an extended run of bad luck in fishing for eighty four days. He has rich experience at sea, in spite of his expertise, he has been unable to catch a fish for eighty-four days. He is humble, yet exhibits a justified pride in his abilities. His knowledge of the sea and its creatures, and of his craft, cannot be compared with any other fisherman. His skill helps him preserve a sense of hope regardless of circumstances. Throughout his life, Santiago has been presented with contests to test his strength and endurance. The marlin with which he struggles for three days represents his greatest challenge. Paradoxically, although Santiago ultimately loses the fish, the marlin is also his greatest victory. Santiago and the fish can be considered as a symbol of Christ's struggle for the betterment of mankind. Santiago endures a long and grueling struggle with the marlin only to see his prize catch destroyed by sharks. Yet, the

destruction enables the old man to undergo a remarkable transformation. Even in defeat he seems to triumph. Santiago is an old man whose physical existence is almost over, but we are assured that Santiago's spirit will persist through Manolin, his assistant. Thus Santiago manages, the miraculous feat of prolonging his life after death through Manolin.

Santiago's commitment to sailing out farther than any other fisherman testifies his skill, spirit and pride. It also shows his determination to change his luck. Later, after the sharks have destroyed his prize marlin, Santiago chastises himself for his pride claiming that it has ruined both the marlin and him. Santiago's pride also enables him to achieve his most true and complete self. It helps him to earn the respect of the village fisherman and secures him the companionship of the boy. Santiago's pride is what enables him to endure, the struggle. Endurance is of chief importance in Hemingway's conception of the world, a world in which death and destruction, as part of the natural order of things and unavoidable. Hemingway seems to believe there are only two options: defeat or endurance until destruction; Santiago clearly chooses the latter. His determination is nearly Christ-like in proportion. For three days, he holds fast to the line that links him to the fish, even though it cuts deeply into his palms, causes a crippling cramp in his left hand, and ruins his back. This physical pain allows Santiago to cement a connection with the marlin that goes beyond the literal link of the line: his bodily aches tell him that the fish is a worthy opponent, and that he himself, because he is able to fight so hard, is a worthy fisherman. This connectedness to the world around him eventually elevates Santiago beyond what would otherwise be his defeat. Like Christ, to whom Santiago is compared at the end of the novel, the old man's physical suffering leads to a significant spiritual triumph.

The Marlin

It is the big fish that picks up the bait let down by Santiago. Santiago hooks the marlin, which measures eighteen feet, on the first afternoon of his fishing expedition. Because of the marlin's great size, Santiago is unable to pull the fish in. Both he and the fish become engaged in a kind of tug-of-war that tires Santiago. At the same time there is a bond between Santiago and the marlin because they are united in the struggle. The

fishing line serves as a symbol of the fraternal connection Santiago feels with the fish. When the captured marlin is later destroyed by sharks, Santiago feels destroyed as well. Like Santiago, the marlin is implicitly compared to Christ.

Manolin

He is an adolescent boy who assists Santiago in his fishing expeditions. The old man first took him out on a boat when he was merely five years old. Due to Santiago's continuous bad luck at sea for eighty four days Manolin's parents forced the boy to go out on a different fishing boat. Manolin, however, still cares deeply for the old man, to whom he continues to look as a mentor. His love for Santiago is unmistakable as the two discuss baseball and as the young boy recruits help from villagers to improve the old man's impoverished conditions. Manolin is present only in the beginning and at the end of the novel. Manolin demonstrates his love for Santiago openly. He makes sure that the old man has food, blankets, and can rest without being disturbed. Despite Hemingway's insistence that his characters were a real old man and a real boy, Manolin's purity and singleness of purpose elevate him to the level of a symbolic character. Manolin's actions are not influenced by worldliness. Instead, he is a companion who feels nothing but love and devotion. By the end of the book, however, the boy abandons his duty to his father, swearing that he will sail with the old man regardless of the consequences. In the end of the novel he stands, as a symbol of uncompromised love and fidelity. As the old man's apprentice, he also represents the life that will follow from death. His dedication to learning from the old man ensures that Santiago will live on.

Joe DiMaggio

DiMaggio does not take active part in the action but he plays a significant role in the novel. Santiago worships him as a model of strength and commitment, and his thoughts turn toward DiMaggio whenever he needs to reassure himself of his own strength. Despite a painful bone spur that might have crippled another player, DiMaggio went on to secure a successful career. He was a center fielder for the New York Yankees from 1936 to 1951, and is often considered the best all-around player at that position.

Perico

Perico does not have an active role in the story. He owns the bodega in Santiago's village. He serves an important role in the fisherman's life by providing him with newspapers that report the baseball scores. This act establishes him as a kind man who helps the aging Santiago.

Martin

Martin is the café owner in Santiago's village. He does not appear in the story. The reader learns about him through Manolin. Manolin often goes to Martin for Santiago's supper. As the old man says, Martin is a man of frequent kindness who deserves to be repaid.

4.5 Themes, Motifs & Symbols in the Novel

Themes

Struggle, Defeat & Death

From the beginning, Santiago is characterized as someone struggling against defeat. He has gone eighty-four days without catching a fish. But the old man refuses defeat at every turn. He resolves to sail out beyond the other fishermen to where the biggest fish is promised to be. He manages to hook the marlin, engages in a two-day fight, and he continues to ward off sharks from stealing his prey, even though he knows the battle is useless.

Because Santiago fights against the creatures of the sea, some critics view the tale as a tale of man's battle *against* the natural world. The novel is actually the story of man's place *within* nature. Both Santiago and the marlin display qualities of pride, honor, and bravery, and both are subject to the same eternal law. They must kill or be killed. The world is filled with predators, and no living thing can escape the inevitable struggle that will lead to its death. Santiago lives according to his own observation: "man is not made for defeat . . . man can be destroyed but not defeated." In Hemingway's portrait of the world, death is inevitable, but the best men (and animals) will nonetheless refuse to give in to its power. As per the law of nature, man and fish will struggle till the death of one and the hungry sharks will turn into waste the old man's prize catch.

Only through the effort to battle the inevitable that a man can prove himself to be above defeat. Man can prove this determination through the worthiness of the opponents he chooses to face. Santiago finds the marlin worthy of a fight, just as he once found "the great negro of Cienfuegos" worthy. His admiration for these opponents brings love and respect along with death. Their destruction becomes a point of honor and bravery that confirms Santiago's heroic qualities. Santiago, though destroyed at the end of the novel, is never defeated. Instead, he emerges as a hero.

Pride & Determination

Pride is Santiago's fatal flaw, and he is keenly aware of it. After the sharks have destroyed the marlin, the old man apologizes again and again to his worthy opponent. He has ruined them both, by sailing beyond the usual boundaries of fishermen. While it is certainly true that Santiago's eighty-four-day streak of bad luck is a blow to his pride as a masterful fisherman, he is determined to bear out his skills by sailing far into the gulf waters. Hemingway does not condemn his hero for being filled with pride. Santiago stands as proof that pride motivates men to greatness. Pride becomes the source of Santiago's greatest strength. Without pride, the battle would never have been fought.

Santiago's pride also motivates his desire to transcend the destructive forces of nature. Throughout the novel, no matter how woeful his circumstances become, the old man exhibits an undaunted determination to catch the marlin and bring it to shore. The old man meets every challenge with the same unwavering determination. He is willing to die in order to bring in the marlin, and he is willing to die in order to battle the feeding sharks. It is this conscious decision to act, to fight, to never give up that enables Santiago to avoid defeat though he returns without the trophy of his long battle. Hemingway seems

to suggest that victory is not a prerequisite for honor. Instead, glory depends upon one having the pride to see a struggle through to its end, regardless of the outcome. Even if the old man had returned with the marlin intact, his moment of glory, like the marlin's meat, would have been short-lived. The glory and honor of Santiago is a result of his determination and pride.

4.6 Symbols

The Marlin

The marlin symbolizes the ideal opponent in a world in which "everything kills everything else in some way or the other. Santiago feels genuinely lucky to find himself matched against a creature that brings out the best in him his strength and courage, his love and respect.

The Shovel-Nosed Sharks

The shovel-nosed sharks are symbols of the destructive laws. They attack the marlin thoughtlessly and gracelessly. As opponents for the old man, they stand in contrast to the marlin, which is worthy of Santiago's effort and strength. Because they are base predators, Santiago wins no glory from battling them.

The Lions on the Beach

Santiago dreams his pleasant dream of the lions at play on the beaches of Africa three times. The first time is the night before he departs on his three-day fishing expedition, the second occurs when he sleeps on the boat for a few hours in the middle of his struggle with the marlin, and the third takes place at the very end. They symbolize youth and suggest the circular nature of life. Additionally, because Santiago imagines the lions, fierce predators, playing, his dream suggests a harmony between the opposing forces life and death, love and hate, destruction and regeneration of nature.

The Scarlet Letter- Nathaniel Hawthorne

4.7 Nathaniel Hawthorne

He was an introvert, almost a recluse, this native son of Salem, Massachusetts. After graduating from Bowdoin College, he spent close to twelve years at home in his room, reading and learning his writer's craft. For subject matter, he turned not to life but to books and to his own family history. When he was a boy, his Puritan ancestors had haunted his imagination.

4.8 General Introduction to the novel

The novel begins with a lengthy description of how the novel was written. The narrator is the surveyor of the customhouse in Salem, Massachusetts. In the customhouse while searching among the rabble in the's attic, he discovered a number of documents.

Among them a manuscript that was bundled with a scarlet, gold-embroidered patch of cloth in the shape of an “A” attracted his attention. It was the work of a past surveyor, which told the story of people who lived more than two hundred years before the narrator’s time. When the narrator lost his customs post, he decided to write a fictional account of the events recorded in the manuscript and *The Scarlet Letter* is the result.

The story is set in seventeenth-century Boston, then a Puritan settlement. A young woman, (Hester Prynne), is led from the town prison with her infant daughter, (Pearl), in her arms to the town scaffold. A scarlet letter “A” is evident on her breast. A man in the crowd tells an old onlooker that Hester is being punished for adultery. Hester’s husband, a scholar much older than she, sent her ahead to America, but he never arrived in Boston. It was generally believed that he was lost at sea. While waiting for her husband, Hester had, had an affair, and given birth to a child. Since she does not reveal her lover’s identity she is punished. The scarlet letter is worn by Hester as a mark of punishment and public shaming, for sin and secrecy.

In truth the old onlooker is Hester’s missing husband. He is now practicing medicine and calls himself Roger Chillingworth. He settles in Boston, intent on revenge. He reveals his true identity to no one but Hester, whom he has sworn to secrecy. Several years pass. Hester supports herself by working as a seamstress, and Pearl grows into a willful, impish child. Shunned by the community, they live in a small cottage on the outskirts of Boston. Community officials try to take Pearl away from Hester, but, with the help of Arthur Dimmesdale, a young and eloquent minister, the mother and daughter manage to stay together. Dimmesdale, however, appears to be wasting away and suffers from a mysterious heart trouble, caused by psychological distress. Chillingworth attaches himself to the ailing minister and eventually moves in with him so that he can provide his patient with round-the-clock care. Chillingworth also suspects that there may be a connection between the minister’s torments and Hester’s secret, and he begins to test Dimmesdale to see what he can learn. One afternoon, while the minister sleeps, Chillingworth discovers a mark on the man’s breast (the details of which are suspense to the reader), which convinces him that his suspicions are correct.

Dimmesdale’s psychological disturbances increase, and he invents new tortures for himself. In the meantime, Hester’s charitable deeds and quiet humility have earned her some relief from the scorn of society. One night, when Pearl is about seven years old, she and her mother are returning home from a visit to a deathbed when they encounter Dimmesdale on top of the town scaffold, trying to punish himself for his sins. Hester and Pearl join him, and the three link hands. Dimmesdale refuses Pearl’s request that he acknowledge her publicly the next day, and a meteor marks a dull red “A” in the night sky. Hester can see that the minister’s condition is worsening, and she resolves to intervene. She goes to Chillingworth and asks him to stop adding to Dimmesdale’s self-torment. Chillingworth refuses.

Hester arranges an encounter with Dimmesdale in the forest because she is aware that Chillingworth has probably guessed that she plans to reveal his identity to Dimmesdale. The former lovers decide to flee to Europe, where they can live with Pearl

as a family. They will take a ship sailing from Boston in four days. Both feel a sense of release, and Hester removes her scarlet letter and lets down her hair. Pearl, playing nearby, does not recognize her mother without the letter. The day before the ship is to sail, the townspeople gather for a holiday and Dimmesdale preaches his most eloquent sermon ever. Meanwhile, Hester has learned that Chillingworth knows of their plan and has booked passage on the same ship. Dimmesdale, leaving the church after his sermon, sees Hester and Pearl standing before the town scaffold. He mounts the scaffold with his lover and his daughter, and confesses publicly, exposing a scarlet letter seared into the flesh of his chest. He falls dead, as Pearl kisses him.

Frustrated in his revenge, Chillingworth dies a year later. Hester and Pearl leave Boston, and no one knows what has happened to them. Many years later, Hester returns alone, still wearing *the scarlet letter*, to live in her old cottage and resume her charitable work. She receives letters from Pearl, who has married a European aristocrat and established a family of her own. When Hester dies, she is buried next to Dimmesdale. Both share a single tombstone, with a scarlet "A."

THE STORY

4.9 THE CUSTOM HOUSE: INTRODUCTORY

"The Custom House" is not really an integral part of the novel proper. It was added by Hawthorne as an afterthought on the advice of his publisher. It was supposed to add a light touch to increase sales.

"The Custom House" aims to be an explanation of how Hawthorne came to write *The Scarlet Letter*. Hawthorne was fired from his job as Custom House Surveyor when the election of 1849 ousted his party from office. As the Custom House was a political appointment which depended on the good graces of the administration, Hawthorne was out of work. In a way, the Custom House job did lead Hawthorne to *The Scarlet Letter*. Salem had a firm hold on Hawthorne, even if it was a hold he sometimes struggled to break. The place had been native soil to his family for generations. Hawthorne's father had been born there, and his father before him—sailors all, who helped to build the great New England shipping trade. The Custom House itself was a repository of the past. On the second floor, a little-used cobweb-covered room housed a collection of ancient records. One day, while rummaging through the rubbish heaps, Hawthorne found a small package, neatly wrapped in yellowing parchment. It had apparently been overlooked by generations of previous Custom House employees. Unwrapping the package, Hawthorne found "a certain affair of fine red cloth," shaped like the letter A. And along with that curious piece of cloth, he discovered a manuscript, which upon examination proved to date from Colonial times, recording the story of Hester Prynne.

Such, is the story Hawthorne tells, for the discovery of the letter and the manuscript is a fabrication.

Grim the characters may be and forbidding, severe even to cruelty in their treatment of Hester Prynne. But they keep their sights not on receipts of purchase, but on the eternal truths revealed to them by God.

The Puritans have belief, conviction, faith-choose whatever word you like to convey that inner force which makes a human being stand for something larger than himself. Perhaps you will say the Puritans have soul, if you mean by that an inviolate spirit.

4.10 CHAPTER SUMMARIES

CHAPTER 1: THE PRISON-DOOR

Hawthorne opens *The Scarlet Letter* just outside the prison of a village in Boston of 1640s. We begin to expect a story of a crime already committed, of characters whose lives are already darkened by guilt and disgrace. "The sad-colored garments" of the spectators; the prison-door, "heavily timbered with oak and studded with iron spikes create a somber mood and paint a cheerless picture. And they hint, as well, at a society that places punishment far above forgiveness on its scale of values. A wild rose bush blossoms by the prison door adding color to the setting. A natural thing, the rose bush suggests a world beyond the narrow confines of the Puritan community, where beauty and vibrant color flourish and crime finds tolerance and pity. Here Hawthorne marks the thematic boundaries of his novel: law and nature, repression and freedom.

CHAPTER 2: THE MARKET-PLACE

"The Market-Place," is an important setting for the story. In Puritan Boston an adultress is made to stand on the scaffold in the market place. The woman has been brought to the scaffold for an ordeal of shaming, an ordeal she endures with stubborn pride. She does not drop her gaze, but instead responds to the angry stares of the crowd with quiet defiance. In her arms, the woman carries an infant, an emblem of her sin. On her breast, she wears another: a scarlet letter A (for Adulteress), intended by the magistrates to be a badge of shame, but already the subject of curious speculation. On a nearby balcony, seated in a place of honor among the judges, is the woman's lover, the man who is supposed to be standing on the scaffold by her side. Among the crowd an interested observer, the woman's secret husband, watches, his keen eyes searching for his rival, his thoughts already turned to revenge.

In this first encounter in the market-place, the young woman, Hester Prynne, and the Puritan community are in fierce conflict. On one side is a woman who has violated a strict social and religious code, and on the other side is a grim and forbidding crowd. The crowd has severe expressions on the face. One hard-faced matron suggests branding Hester Prynne's forehead with a hot iron as a more appropriate punishment than the wearing of the scarlet letter. And a second woman goes further, calling for the death penalty. Hester Prynne walks into their midst with a radiance undimmed by her stay in prison. She carries herself with a stately, natural grace. Hester is beautiful, of course. And her rich, deep complexion and her glossy black hair suggest a sensuality.

Under such pressure any other woman might have burst into tears or appealed for mercy but Hester does not speak. Pride dominates her expression, her clothing is rich beyond the allowance of the colony's laws; and the scarlet letter, sewn by Hester in prison and worn this day by order of the Governor and the ministers. And what a letter it is! Made not out of simple red flannel used for colds and rheumatism, as one woman observes, but elaborately embroidered with threads of gold. A badge of shame that looks more like a sign of defiance, thrown in the magistrates' teeth.

She is extraordinary, as she stands there on the scaffold. She is the daughter of impoverished English gentry, wed as a girl to an old, misshapen scholar who spent his days poring over dusty books. Sent on ahead of her husband to the New World, she found herself neither widow nor wife in a rugged frontier community where a woman alone had no place and no life. When we first encounter Hester, she has spent two years waiting for a man who may never come, a man whose arrival, in any case, is not welcome to her.

CHAPTER 3: THE RECOGNITION

As Hester Prynne stands on the scaffold, her husband appears before her startled eyes at the edge of the crowd. The shock or dismay he may feel at seeing his wife on the scaffold, with another man's child in her arms, he immediately suppresses his emotions and keeps his face calm.

By the time Hester's eyes meet his own, he has plotted his course of action. He indicates, secrecy to his wife by raising a finger to his lips.

The glance he fixes on Hester Prynne is keen and penetrative. Chillingworth looks like a man who has cultivated his mind at the expense of an other faculties—a perilous enterprise, in Hawthorne's view. Where his overbearing intellect will take him, we will see in later chapters. Chillingworth's finger raised to his lips, commanding Hester's silence, begins a pattern of secrecy that is the mainspring of the novel's plot. He assumes total ignorance of Hester and her situation. He takes on a new identity, that of a recently arrived physician, seeking the shelter of civilization after a stay among the savages.

As Chillingworth's conversation with the townsman indicates, he will use his new position to solve the mystery that confronts him: the identity of his wife's lover. In this chapter we now have two characters in hiding, a concealed husband and a concealed lover. We are hearing a lot of proud talk in this market-place about the godly colony of Massachusetts, where "iniquity is dragged out into the sunshine." Turning to Hester Prynne, the magistrates attempt to make her reveal the name of her partner in sin. In a ringing voice that echoes through the crowd, the Reverend John Wilson, religious head of the colony, calls upon the adulteress to forego her "hardness and obstinacy" and identify the man who led her into error. But encountering only silence, Wilson admits defeat. He turns to Arthur Dimmesdale to second his appeal.

Wilson's words turn our attention to Arthur Dimmesdale, seated on the balcony with the magistrates, but somehow apart from the rest. Dimmesdale is younger than the

men who surround him, and softer. Against the icy sternness of the Puritan elders, he appears too sensitive. The magistrates, we note, are men of action. Dimmesdale is a scholar, fresh from the great English universities. He is not at home in the market-place. He prefers the seclusion of his study. Right now, he would give a lot to be at home with his books. The minister seems to be frankly troubled to be witness to this spectacle at all. His presence has been required; it has not been a matter of choice. His intervention in the proceedings is also involuntary. He speaks to Hester Prynne only at Wilson's insistence. His call for confession leaves some freedom of choice. "If thou feelest it to be for thy soul's peace," he tells Hester, "I charge thee to speak out the name of thy fellow sinner."

Dimmesdale's arguments are also more personal than Wilson's, presumably closer to the heart of a woman in love. He urges Hester to confess for her lover's own good. It is a moving appeal, a compelling line of reasoning, and a totally amazing speech, once we realize that Dimmesdale is talking against himself. Every word the minister utters is charged with double meaning. Each inflection of his voice has one significance for the crowd of spectators, another for Hester Prynne who alone knows that Dimmesdale himself is the man the magistrates so urgently seek. Dimmesdale is in a tight corner, he is a public official, under orders to elicit Hester's confession. He is also the private lover who benefits from her silence.

As Hester's pastor, Dimmesdale has a moral obligation to seek the salvation of her soul. Hester maintains silence. Her refusal to speak gives us an opportunity to measure her generosity of spirit. Wilson states that confession may remove the scarlet letter from her breast. Hester has understood, better than the magistrates, the meaning of the badge of shame they have forced upon her. She claims the letter for her own, clutching it to herself with a mixture of pride and despair. "Never!" she answers Wilson, "The letter is too deeply branded. Ye cannot take it off."

CHAPTER 4: THE INTERVIEW

"The Interview" brings together the estranged husband and wife in the Boston prison. Chillingworth has come to the prison in the role of a physician sent for by the jailor who can no longer control his overwrought charges, Hester and Pearl. When Hester sees Chillingworth, she becomes as still as death. Her heart leaps into her throat. Hester has steeled herself to bear the day's trials, but her husband's unlooked-for arrival throws her completely off base. Hester's bravery in the market place is not evident now. She can barely look Chillingworth in the face. She feels all the shame and terror she never felt before the magistrates. Hester, in fact, believes that Chillingworth has come to the prison with murder in his heart. When the physician hands her a draught of medicine to calm her down, Hester visibly hesitates, wondering if there is poison in the cup.

He takes on himself a share of the blame for his wife's downfall. "It was my folly, and thy weakness. I,- a man of thought,- the bookworm of great libraries,- a man already in decay,- what had I to do with youth and beauty like thine own!" Chillingworth's real purpose is revenge, though not against Hester. It is her lover he seeks. Chillingworth

has come to the prison to ask the man's name. "I will keep thy secret, as I have his," Hester swears to Chillingworth.

CHAPTER 5: HESTER AT HER NEEDLE

For Hester's violation of the Puritan code, the magistrates inflict two punishments: first, the hours of shame on the scaffold; and second, the life-long burden of the scarlet letter. In this chapter, Hawthorne turns to the long, gray years following the turbulent scene in the market-place. Many readers of *The Scarlet Letter* see the start of a great change in Hester, a move away from the fierce defiance of the opening chapters towards a growing acceptance of her fate. Hester turns her back on these escape routes. She stays in the settlement, shackled, as if by an iron chain of guilt, to the scene of her crime and punishment. Hester has changed the rich clothing of the scaffold scene for a modest, nondescript dress. In her rejection of finery, she is more severe than her Puritan neighbors, who employ Hester's needle for such occasional luxuries as christening robes and gorgeously embroidered gloves.

Hester uses her spare hours not for the detailed work she loves, but in the making of coarse garments for the colony's indigent. It is an act of penance for which she gets small thanks. The poor receive her gifts with insults. Hester now moves quietly and usefully through the community, bowing her head as indignities are heaped upon it. Hester has chosen to stay in the Puritan settlement for a reason she dares not admit, even to herself: the man she loves is there. Here is the tie she feels to Boston, an unblessed union to be recognized in the next world, if not in this one. Hester subdues her taste for the beautiful out of a guilty conscience. Hester's acts of charity are a camouflage for anger and bitterness. Though she sews for the poor, she wishes them to the devil. She may show outward patience when insulted and abused, but inwardly she is stung to the quick. It is a narrow foothold that Hester maintains in a community that offers her no support or human warmth, but that does not entirely cast her off.

CHAPTER 6: PEARL

Pearl is half child, half literary symbol. The product of a broken rule, she does not obey rules herself and has a wild and stormy nature. Pearl's high coloring and warm complexion are the gifts of her mother. They also suggest the fiery state of Hester's emotions during her term of imprisonment. Pearl's uncontrolled rages at her Puritan peers-priggish little brats that they are-and the hostile playmates she invents with her fertile imagination, express her sense of alienation, her recognition that she is an outcast's child. With her outbursts of temper, Pearl is a constant reproach to Hester for bringing an innocent being into an adverse world. She is a reminder of the far-reaching, unthought-of consequences of sin. But nothing that Pearl does causes Hester so much anguish as the child's fascination with the scarlet letter.

The letter is the first object of Pearl's consciousness. As her infant hands reach for the threads of red and gold her face takes on a knowing smile. The letter is the subject of her play. She makes it a target for flowers which she hurls at her mother, jumping up and

down with glee. The effect of Pearl's behavior, whatever the cause, keeps Hester's sense of shame fresh and acute. The wound is not allowed to heal. Even in the privacy of her cottage, away from the prying eyes of the community, Hester is not for a moment safe.

CHAPTER 7: THE GOVERNOR'S HALL

Hawthorne describes the house first, as if it were right there before him, a 200-year-old mansion. And then he imaginatively strips it of the accretions of time—the moss, the dust, the emotional residue of lives—to show us the house as it was in 1640, sparkling, clean, and new. Inside the mansion, the *Chronicles of England* lies open on the window seat, as if someone has been called away in the middle of a page. A large pewter tankard has a foamy bit of ale in it, as if someone has just taken a draught and put it down. A suit of armor, fresh from the London armorer, stands polished and ready for use.

Hester has come to Bellingham's home, disturbed by rumors of a movement afoot to take Pearl away from her. The leaders of the community, the Governor chief among them, have decided that the child's welfare would be better served if she were placed in worthier hands. Hester arrives determined to fight for her rights as a mother. But the outfit in which she has clothed Pearl is a doubtful argument in her favor. Pearl wears a crimson velvet tunic, embroidered with gold. It is, to put it mildly, an outlandish costume in a society where black and gray are the going colors. Bellingham will find in the child's outfit all the more reason to place Pearl in a home where she will be "soberly clad." Pearl is the scarlet letter "come to life." Hester has lavished all her skill as a seamstress on a dress that points out the likeness between the two emblems of her sin.

CHAPTER 8: THE ELF-CHILD AND THE MINISTER

In this chapter, there is a contest between Hester Prynne and the magistrates over Pearl. Hester is so strong in her sense of the right of a mother to her child—that she seems almost a match for these stern and rigorous law makers. At the first sight of Pearl, the magistrates gathered in the Governor's hall are taken aback. They don't know what to make of the high-spirited child. In her red velvet tunic, Pearl seems to them like an apparition from another—and an older and gayer—world. She reminds Wilson of the glowing reflections cast by the stained glass windows of the high Gothic cathedrals in Europe. She recalls to Bellingham the unruly children of the English court theatricals. The old men are kindly to Pearl, but clearly disapproving. When the child fails to recite her catechism properly, they consider the question of Hester's continued custody to be closed. Pearl will be taken from her mother.

In their decision to put Pearl in a proper, God-fearing home, the Governor and Wilson have not reckoned with Hester Prynne. The mother is prepared to fight, clutching Pearl tightly in her arms, Hester cries out her defiance. Hester's entreaties, however, fall on deaf ears. She turns in desperation to her one possible source of help. She has spied, in Arthur Dimmesdale, a potential ally in the enemy camp. Hester has sensed Dimmesdale's presence all along, though she has not acknowledged it until now. The second private exchange between Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale takes place in full view of an

uncomprehending audience. Hester is addressing Dimmesdale, of course, not as her pastor, but as the unnamed father of her child. Although she does not explicitly threaten to give Dimmesdale away, the implication is there. Dimmesdale, honestly moved by Hester's distress and perhaps just as honestly frightened by her implied threats, comes forward to intervene on her behalf. Dimmesdale succeeds in swaying Bellingham and Wilson where Hester has failed.

CHAPTER 9: THE LEECH

In past centuries doctors were known as leeches because of their common practice of bleeding patients. The title of this chapter is characteristically ambiguous. It points, on the one hand, to Chillingworth's newly assumed career as a doctor, and, on the other hand, to his role as emotional parasite. He is now a man who lives off another's suffering. Like Chillingworth himself, the title has a surface meaning as well as a deeper one. As a doctor, Chillingworth is professional. He does not seek Dimmesdale out aggressively. When Dimmesdale, denying his need for a doctor's care, says that he would be well content to die if it were God's will, Chillingworth is quick to attribute to the minister only the best, and least personal, of motives.

By careful handling of Dimmesdale, Chillingworth manages to build a bond of intimacy with him. He becomes a sounding board for the minister's ideas, a recipient of confidences—medical and otherwise. Chillingworth's motives, as we know, are entirely malevolent. Chillingworth is guilty of more than a betrayal of friendship or an abuse of a doctor's privilege. He is trespassing on holy ground, entering with irreverent curiosity the sacred precincts of another man's soul. He is also shoveling away all of Dimmesdale's virtues to find the lode of evil he suspects. And while he is digging, he begins to show signs of getting dirty. Rumors are rife in Boston. Chillingworth is an arch villain or even a fiend. Chillingworth, after all, has made his own life dependent on Dimmesdale's. Revenge is his sole reason to exist.

CHAPTER 10: THE LEECH AND HIS PATIENT

Chillingworth has worked his way to the position of Dimmesdale's friend and counselor. The doctor now shares the minister's quarters to keep his patient under his wing. The doctor goes to Dimmesdale with an ugly weed plucked from a nearby graveyard. He tells Dimmesdale that the weed represents some guilty secret that was buried with the corpse. Dimmesdale takes the bait. In his experience, the minister says, men find great comfort in confession. Undoubtedly, the dead man longed to tell his secret, but could not do so. The minister begins to talk, not about men in general, but about himself. He offers a justification for silence that lies close to his heart. Perhaps men shrink from confession, Dimmesdale says, because once they have sullied their reputations, they no longer have a hope of redeeming past evil with future good deeds. Confessed sinners put themselves beyond the pale of society, where they can no longer serve God or their fellow men.

The tense discussion between Dimmesdale and Chillingworth is interrupted by the merry laughter of Pearl that comes floating in through the window. The child is up to her usual tricks. She is playing with the scarlet letter, outlining the red token on Hester's dress with burrs that prick less than her own cool indifference. There is a look of pain on Hester's face. The two men have reached a critical point in their relationship. For a moment, Dimmesdale has seen the malice in Chillingworth's eyes. He has recognized his enemy. But he backs down, filled with self-doubt. Chillingworth, too, has had a glimpse of what lies beneath the veil. He has penetrated Dimmesdale's reserve and found the streak of passion he's always suspected in the man. And he finds something else. Coming upon Dimmesdale in deep sleep Chillingworth thrusts aside a piece of cloth that, up to now, has always hidden the minister's chest from sight and sees a letter over the minister's heart that corresponds to the one on Hester's dress.

CHAPTER 11: THE INTERIOR OF A HEART

This chapter explores the widening gap between the saintly minister perceived by the community and the sinner Dimmesdale knows himself to be. The title of the chapter is important because the interior of a heart is where reality lies. It is a dark interior in these guilt-stricken characters of Hawthorne. The author leads us into the dim recesses of the minister's mind. His mind is filled with gloom, despair and self loathing. He is living a lie in the sight of a God who knows and loves the truth. As a priest, Dimmesdale must guide his thoughts and actions by a higher, clearer light than other men. Dimmesdale's agony is only intensified by the irony of his situation. The worse he feels, the better he appears in the eyes of his congregation. Dimmesdale grows pale and thin. His sermons take on a new and moving note and the people of Boston thank , Heaven for their minister.

Dimmesdale 's self-contempt only increases with every half-hearted attempt he makes to set himself right. He indulges in some morbid forms of penance. He takes up fasting and fasts until he faints. He takes a whip to his shoulders and beats himself until he bleeds. Life for the minister has become unbearable. The very objects of his bedchamber-the heavy leather Bible, the thick oak table-have lost their and solidity. Dimmesdale begins to see through things, almost to walk through them, like a ghost.

CHAPTER 12: THE MINISTER'S VIGIL

In this chapter Dimmesdale comes to the scaffold to stand where Hester Prynne stood, in a frank and open declaration that he is the man who belonged by her side seven years before. He makes a frank and open declaration in the middle of the night, when no one can see. Some people come along, and the first person to pass unsuspectingly by is Reverend John Wilson, on his way home from Governor Winthrop's deathbed. Hester and Pearl, also returning from Winthrop's bedside, mount the scaffold at Dimmesdale's pressing invitation. The three figures, outlined against the night sky, make a dim, obscure picture, a shadow show of the real scene of confession which should take place in daylight. The shadow show is enough for Dimmesdale, giving him the first measure of peace he has known in years. But it is not enough for Pearl.

Twice the child demands of the minister, will he take her hand and her mother's "tomorrow noontide"? On hearing Dimmesdale's reply-no, not in the light of this world-Pearl struggles to withdraw her hand from the minister's and run away. Pearl's departure is halted by a meteor that floods the night sky with an unearthly light. The figures on the scaffold stand illuminated now, as if on the Day of Judgment-the minister with his hand over the A on his heart, Hester wearing her scarlet A; and Pearl, herself a symbol, between them-under a fiercely glowing A in the sky. It is a perfect symbolic picture. Dimmesdale has read the dull red lines of the letter in the meteor's trail, but "another's guilt might have seen another symbol in it."

CHAPTER 13: ANOTHER VIEW OF HESTER

This chapter brings a second portrait of Hester. On the surface, Hester's submission to society has deepened. She lives within conformity with the rigid Puritan code. With no reputation to lose, Hester has conducted herself in such a manner that not the busiest gossip in Boston can find a hint of scandal to report. Hester's charity to the poor continues, and she accepts, without complaint, the insults she receives at their hands. She has become a self-ordained Sister of Mercy. Her new role is that of tender and competent nurse to the colony's ill and dying. The scarlet letter has become a sign of Hester's community with people in trouble. In households darkened by sorrow, the red token glimmers with comfort. A grateful, if fickle, public has invested the scarlet letter with a new meaning. The A no longer stands for "Adulteress." It now means "Able." Condemned as an adulteress, Hester has become a free thinker, something far more dangerous in this stuffy, illiberal world. Once she was a dissenter, a person who broke with her society over a single law. Now she is a heretic, a person who questions the basis of every law.

Someone like Hester, an outcast from society who lives on the edge of the wilderness, has no recourse to other minds and ideas, even in books. She has nothing to go on but her own experience, her admittedly distorted view of life. We should note that Hester's criticism of society ends in speculation and stops short of action. She never becomes a reformer or what we might call an advocate of women's liberation. Hester's emotions are crushed, or buried deep within her. Her ideas in her society are literally unspeakable. As a result, Hester, like Dimmesdale and Chillingworth, is leading a double life.

CHAPTER 14: HESTER AND THE PHYSICIAN

The sight of Dimmesdale on the scaffold has given Hester a shock. She never knew the minister was so demoralized. She realizes now that, by her silence, she has left Dimmesdale far too long under Chillingworth's evil influence. She will seek out her husband to prevent what further damage she can. She has imagined him in a cozy position of honor and respect, while she was all the while suffering disgrace. She realizes now that she has misread the man. Clearly Dimmesdale has been suffering, too. If Hester

has grown, Chillingworth has diminished. The years have shriveled him up. He stoops now when he walks, and his face has a dark, furtive look.

Hester, noting the change in her husband, is stricken with guilt. She believes Chillingworth's deterioration is, in part, traceable to herself. She has given Chillingworth a promise of silence that she now regrets. She has left her husband in a position to watch Dimmesdale day and night, to poison the minister's thoughts, to play on his heartstrings. She will retract that promise now. Chillingworth, at first, denies Hester's accusation. "What evil have I done the man?" Chillingworth asks. Why, no evil at all. In fact, Chillingworth asserts, he has lavished on Dimmesdale medical care fit for a king. It is only thanks to the physician's care that Dimmesdale is still alive.

Contemplating just how far he has fallen from grace, Chillingworth knows there is no turning back. Once he was a decent man, kindly, honest, just. But now he is a hellish creature, given over to another's torment. Overwhelmed by a sense of futility, Hester gives way to despair. She will not stoop to plead with such a creature as Chillingworth, even for Dimmesdale's life. She will do as she must. She will go to the minister and reveal her husband's secret, though all the while she will expect the worst. Chillingworth's eyes light up at the sheer magnificence of Hester's despair. He feels a thrill of admiration for her capacity to look truth so coolly in the face. What a woman, he thinks to himself. Chillingworth closes the chapter with a moral shrug of the shoulders. He cannot change, he will not pardon. For the desperate straits in which he, Hester, and Dimmesdale now find themselves, there is really no one to blame. It has all been fate, or "dark necessity."

CHAPTER 15: HESTER AND PEARL

One day watching Chillingworth go, Hester makes one of the private judgments that mark her lately as an independent thinker: "Be it sin, or no,'... 'I hate the man!'" She knows that she has no business hating anyone, especially a man she has wronged. Moreover, she has just described pardon to Chillingworth as a "priceless benefit." She knows she should be searching for that golden vein of forgiveness within herself. But the bitter memories that come flooding in are too strong for Christian doctrine. Hester recalls with horror the early days of her marriage, when she and Chillingworth would sit by the fire, exchanging smiles that represented lukewarm affection, perhaps, but surely not love. She believes it her own worst sin that she consented to a marriage of contentment-or worse, convenience. And she judges it Chillingworth's foulest crime that he cheated her, when she was too young to know better, into thinking herself happy at his side.

Hester accepts responsibility for Chillingworth's deterioration. Now she is blaming him for her own mistakes. "He betrayed me!" she says to herself. "He has done me worse wrong than I did him!" Pearl has, as usual, been thinking about the scarlet letter and incorporating it in her games. But this time, there is a special earnestness in her manner that makes Hester wonder whether Pearl has reached the age to be trusted with some of the truth. Holding her mother's hand and looking with unusual thoughtfulness into her mother's eyes, Pearl asks the two questions that have troubled her all her

life. Hester hesitates, tempted to tell her daughter something of the story of her sin. But at the last moment, she backs down. She gives the child a shamefully false and silly answer. Hester tells Pearl she wears the scarlet letter for decoration, for the "sake of its golden thread." Pearl repeats her questions day and night until Hester is driven half-mad. Plagued by these constant reminders of her cowardice she threatens to lock the child in a closet. Hester's unaccustomed harshness suggests she regrets the lost opportunity. The moment of trust and closeness may not come again.

CHAPTER 16: A FOREST WALK

Having failed to prevent Chillingworth from his revengeful attitude, Hester decides to seek out Dimmesdale and reveal to the minister himself the true identity of Chillingworth. She has learned that Dimmesdale has gone to visit the Apostle Eliot, a missionary among the Indians. She decides to meet the minister in the forest on his return. The woods are dark and somber, but Hester welcomes the darkness as an assurance of privacy. She has come here to meet Arthur Dimmesdale far away from prying eyes.

To Pearl, the forest is a friendly place. The brook babbles to her like a playmate. The forest is free; nobody watches in the woods to report misbehavior to the magistrates. Here people do as they like. And what they like is breaking rules. Hester will soon respond to that wild note of the forest. In the meantime, we discover, Pearl has heard more than a general tale of devils and witches from that old crone in the chimney corner. She has heard a very specific reference in the story to her mother. Is it true, Pearl asks, that the scarlet letter is the Black Man's mark? And does it glow red at night when Hester meets him in the forest?

Hester responds to Pearl's question with one of her own: has Pearl ever awakened at night and found her mother gone from the cottage? It is possible that Hester is being evasive, answering one question with another. But more likely, she is claiming simple justice from her daughter. We remember that Hester has, in fact, been invited to the forest by Mistress Hibbins. And she declined the invitation, choosing instead to stay at home with Pearl. In any case, Pearl will not be put off, she repeats her questions. And this time, Hester does not lie to her daughter. She answers with something at least like the truth. "Once in my life I met the Black Man! The scarlet letter is his mark!"

CHAPTER 17: THE PASTOR AND HIS PARISHIONER

In this chapter there is a meeting of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale. It is a reunion that dominates the next three chapters. Seven years have passed since the lovers have met in privacy. Time has taken a frightful toll on the minister, and disciplined Hester. They enquire about each other. Dimmesdale asks Hester if she has found peace. He tells Hester that he is sick of his false position. He is doubtful of the efficiency of his work and bitter in his soul at the contrast between what he is and what he seems. Hester has come to the forest expressly to tell Dimmesdale that he has an enemy. She speaks with great fear. She believes that her deception of the minister has been a dire

wrong. As she confesses it, she throws herself, in an unusually demonstrative gesture, at Dimmesdale's feet.

He turns to Hester in anger, accusing her of nothing short of betrayal. The raging minister tells Hester she has left him indecently exposed to his enemy. Thanks to her, his suffering has been witnessed by the very eye that would gloat over it. Dimmesdale might have remembered that Hester has had her own trials to bear, trials in which he offered her no aid. But Dimmesdale's fit of anger passes, leaving him quieter than before. He is now willing to make a kinder judgment on both Hester and himself. He says that both of them are not the worst sinners in the world. Chillingworth's revenge has been blacker than their sin because he has violated the sanctity of a human heart."

Dimmesdale states that Chillingworth is guilty of a premeditated crime. The old man has turned the cold light of his intellect on human suffering and, what's more, has sought to increase it. Dimmesdale's sin, on the contrary, is the result of runaway passion. For once, guided by Hester and not by Chillingworth, Dimmesdale can see the human element in his situation. He can offer himself a small measure of forgiveness. Hester confirms Dimmesdale's judgment. She pushes the minister further than he is ready to go. Hester and Dimmesdale sit quietly for a while, grateful for this brief respite in their troubles. The path lies before them back to the settlement where Hester must take up her burden of shame and Dimmesdale his life of hypocrisy. They linger in the gray twilight of the forest. Dimmesdale is the first to break the spell. He comes back to reality with a start and asks Hester, what he can do about Chillingworth. Now that he knows the physician's true identity, he can no longer live under the same roof with the man but he sees no escape except to crawl under the leaves and die. The deterioration in Dimmesdale becomes evident now. He is childish in his confusion, too weak to make the most basic decisions about life. He turns to Hester as a small boy might turn to his mother, placing all responsibility in her hands. Hester is shocked by her lover's disintegration, but she accepts the opportunity his weakness provides. She advises Dimmesdale to leave the area of torment and go into the far world out of reach of Chillingworth and begin a new life.

Dimmesdale protests that he is too weak to start a new life. He has moral objections, too. He would feel like a sentry deserting his post. But his protests are feeble. He is all the while angling for something. Twice he says to Hester that he is unable to consider such a venture alone. Hester is at the starting gate, waiting for him. It is the invitation, even if only half-expressed, that she has been hoping for. She whispers to her minister, "Thou shalt not go alone!"

CHAPTER 18: A FLOOD OF SUNSHINE

Hester's words echo in Dimmesdale's mind and he is very happy.. However Dimmesdale, is not calm to come up with a rational decision. He is exhausted and emotionally spent. He is wide open to the power of suggestion. He will grasp at any solution Hester offers him. Taking off her cap, Hester unlooses her hair. As the dark strands cascade down her back, she becomes a woman again. Her eyes grow radiant. A flush comes to her cheek. The sunlight, which previously shunned Hester, now seeks her

out. In her present state, she is at one with nature. The forest glows in the golden light, rejoicing with the lovers, sharing their mood. We sense that something vitally important has happened in this scene, a possibility barely even hinted at before. Hester and Dimmesdale have come to life again. The minister, half-dead when he first lay down in the forest, is buoyed up, hopeful, energetic. The woman of marble that was Hester Prynne only a few pages ago is now all tenderness and fire. There is an unfitting element in their scheme. It is Pearl she does not fit with the lovers.

CHAPTER 19: THE CHILD AT THE BROOK-SIDE

Hester tells Dimmesdale, that he should get to know his daughter. Pearl has wandered off in the woods somewhere. She is busy picking flowers and playing. Dimmesdale, is not a proud father as Hester had hoped. Selfish as always, he worries that people may have noticed the striking resemblance between Pearl and himself. Hester, reminds him that, in future he need not be afraid to be recognized as Pearl's father. Yet Dimmesdale is nervous. He says that children make him nervous. In the meantime, Pearl reaches them. Hester and Dimmesdale are dumbstruck by her wild beauty. Decked with flowers, Pearl resembles a native spirit of the forest.

When Pearl stops by the bank of the stream, she is reflected in a pool of water, so that there are two Pearls, both shimmering in the gloom. The double image has a kind of unreality. And Hester is seized by the fancy that Pearl has wandered off into another world, on the far side of the brook, where she will be forever cut off from her mother. Hester's idea proves to be no fancy at all but nothing short of the truth. Pearl stubbornly refuses to obey her mother's command to jump across the stream and make friends with the minister. Instead, the child points an accusing finger at the vacant spot on Hester's dress. She frowns, she stamps her foot. And when Hester begins to scold, Pearl bursts into shrieks that echo through the forest.

It is all too much for Dimmesdale's nerves. He begs Hester to do something fast. Hester has no choice but to pacify Pearl. She knows what the child misses, and she wades into the stream to retrieve the scarlet letter. Pearl's silent message, as she stands there on the far side of the stream, is that there is no return from experience to innocence. She will not recognize her mother until the scarlet letter is once more in place and Hester's luxuriant hair, that radiant sign of young womanhood, is once more imprisoned beneath the restraining cap. Pearl is now willing to greet her mother, but she will have nothing to do with the minister. When Dimmesdale plants a nervous kiss on her forehead, she runs back to the stream to wash it off. Hester and Dimmesdale draw aside to discuss their plans for the future.

CHAPTER 20: THE MINISTER IN A MAZE

Dimmesdale returns home from the forest and there is a change in him. The minister who went to the woods was weak to the point of death and on return, he seems a little mad. The minister is terrified and amazed at himself. Seeing Hester was like lifting the lid off a boiling pot. Dimmesdale, having chosen what he knew to be sin, is becoming

every minute more of a sinner. He goes home and begins anew that piece of work which is so important to him, the Election Sermon. He channels, the energy sparked by the forest meeting into his true calling, the saving of souls. He works like a man inspired (or a man possessed) until the next morning, where the sermon lies finished before him on the study floor.

CHAPTER 21: THE NEW ENGLAND HOLIDAY

In this chapter, Hawthorne shows us a lighter side of Puritanism. We come upon the colonists in a highly unusual act: celebrating to mark the election of new magistrates, the colony has set aside its work. The citizens of Boston have gathered in the market-place to make merry as best they can. There is a parade planned, with music, and wrestling matches, too. Hester and Pearl are part of the celebration. Though Hester stands on the sidelines, wearing her usual austere dress and her usual stony expression, the note of celebration echoes in her heart. She has come to the market-place, she imagines, wearing the scarlet letter for the last time. She silently invites the crowd of spectators to look their last on her badge of shame. In a little while, the letter will lie at the bottom of the sea. And Boston won't have Hester Prynne to mock at any more.

Hester has made plans to leave the colony that very day. She has booked passage for Dimmesdale, Pearl, and herself on a ship, now berthed in the harbor. It is due to sail for England with the evening. As Hester speaks to the shipmaster, she discovers that Chillingworth has also booked passage on the same boat. The leech will stick to his patient all the way to England. There will be no shaking him off. Hester is shaken by the shipmaster's news. As she digests this unwelcome piece of information, she catches sight of Chillingworth on the other side of the square. He is watching her across the mass of gaily chattering people. On his face, he wears the implacable smile of fate.

CHAPTER 22: THE PROCESSION

In the market-place, the magistrates: firm, stalwart men who in times of peril have stood up to protect the colony like rocks against the tide are on parade. Pearl in her bright red dress is flitting among the spectators like a wild bird. Hester watches Dimmesdale as he passes by in the procession. This is not the man she left in the woods. His step is firm and energetic now and he is as indifferent to her presence. Hester is worried because it is the eve of their escape. Dimmesdale's preoccupied air is also noticed by Mistress Hibbins. She corners Hester and asks, who would believe that this saintly minister, who looks as if his head has been buried in his books for months on end, has in fact just returned from an airing in the woods?

Hester is startled at the question. When Hester protests that she cannot speak lightly of the pious Mr. Dimmesdale, Mistress Hibbins indignantly tells her that she has been to the forest so many times and can tell who else has been there, even if no tell-tale twigs or leaves still cling to their hair? What the old witch is saying is that she needs no black magic to see into the minister's heart. Hester approaches the meeting house to hear

Dimmesdale's Election Sermon. As the place is packed, she stands outside by the scaffold of the pillory, listening to the rise and fall of Dimmesdale's voice.

CHAPTER 23: THE REVELATION

Dimmesdale's Election Sermon is a crowning effort full of inspiration. The crowd is drawn towards him. The spirit of prophecy has lifted Dimmesdale to new heights from which he foretold a glorious future for the people of New England. Yet it is a future that their minister will not share. The citizens of Boston sense that Dimmesdale is dying. He has spoken like an angel ascending to heaven, who has shaken his wings and sent down truths upon them. Dimmesdale approaches the scaffold and calls out to Hester and Pearl to join him. The child flies to his side, for this is the public sign of recognition that she has been waiting for. Hester moves slowly, unwillingly, forward. She knows what is coming. She is about to lose her lover a second time. And this time, the pain is sharper because it is unexpected.

Chillingworth is equally surprised by Dimmesdale's obvious intention. He rushes forward to stop the minister from making a public confession. If Hester is losing a lover, he is losing a victim. He cannot play on Dimmesdale's secret guilt once it is known to the public. Chillingworth makes a last, frantic appeal to the minister's cowardice stating that his life and honor can still be saved, if only he will stop now. Dimmesdale, however, brushes Chillingworth aside. He is no longer listening. Dimmesdale stretches forth his hand to Hester to ask for her support. He no longer has the strength to mount the scaffold alone. But now that he has brought himself to the brink of confession, he hesitates. It's all very well for you to confess, Hester is tells Dimmesdale. You won't have to face the consequences. But what about me? What about Pearl? There's no escape for us now. When you are gone, we'll still be left to face the people.

She gives Dimmesdale her arm and the minister, supported by Hester and Pearl, climbs to the wooden platform where he confesses his sin to the people of Boston. It is a dramatic speech. He tears away the cloth that covers his chest and reveals to the crowd the mark, shaped like a letter A, which has eaten into his flesh. The market-place is in great confusion but on the scaffold, Dimmesdale is calm. He turns to Pearl to ask for the kiss she refused him in the forest. The child complies. As she leans her face toward her father's, a great change comes over her. She is truly touched for the first time in her young life. The wicked imp vanishes, replaced by a little girl with a heart. Hester, having lost the lifetime she planned with Dimmesdale, now bargains for second best. Dimmesdale sacrifices many things-love, life, honor-to make his peace with God. He leaves his fate to God. But he turns to heaven at the end darkly, doubtfully.

4.11 CONCLUSION

After Dimmesdale's confession and his death there is some disagreement about the meaning of Dimmesdale's last actions. Some observers of the scaffold scene deny the minister's guilt. They say there was no mark on his chest and that he died in Hester's arms to show that we are all sinners alike. Chillingworth dies, too. He has built his life around

Dimmesdale's, using all his energies on tormenting the minister, and now he has nothing left. So Chillingworth shrivels up and blows away with the wind.

In his will, however, Chillingworth names Pearl as his heir. Pearl! The daughter of Hester Prynne and Arthur Dimmesdale.

4.12 Major Characters

Hester Prynne

Hester Prynne is the heroine (protagonist) and she wears the scarlet letter. The letter which is made of cloth in the shape of an “A,” signifies that she has committed adultery. The early chapters of the book suggest that, prior to her marriage, Hester was a strong-willed and impetuous young woman—she remembers her parents as loving guides who frequently had to restrain her incautious behavior. The fact that she has an affair also suggests that she once had a passionate nature. She married Chillingworth although she

did not love him. She is publicly and alienated from the rest of the community for committing adultery. After that Hester becomes contemplative. She speculates on human nature, social organization, and larger moral questions. Hester's sufferings also lead her to be philosophic and a freethinker. Hester also becomes kind and compassionate maternal figure as a result of her sufferings. She is highly protective towards her daughter Pearl. Hester becomes compassionate and cares for the poor and brings them food and clothing. By the end, Hester has become a mother figure to the women of the community. Her charity to the poor, her comfort to the broken-hearted, and her unquestioned presence in times of trouble are the direct result of her search for repentance. The shame attached to her scarlet letter is forgiven by the society. Women recognize that her punishment and penitence are over. Suffering disciplines Hester, so that she grows strong. She is a woman in tragic circumstances, trapped in a loveless marriage and in love with another man. Hester is portrayed as an intelligent, capable, extraordinary woman. It is the circumstance that shapes her character.

Roger Chillingworth

He is actually Hester's husband in disguise. He is much older than she is and had sent her to America while he settled his affairs in Europe. Since he is captured by Native Americans, he arrives in Boston late and finds Hester and her illegitimate child being displayed on the scaffold. He wishes to take revenge so decides to stay in Boston. He is a scholar and uses his knowledge to disguise himself as a doctor, intent on discovering and tormenting Hester's anonymous lover. Chillingworth is self-absorbed and both physically and psychologically monstrous. His single-minded revengeful attitude reveals him to be the most malevolent character in the novel. For seven years, he has only one thought: to find and torment the man who has betrayed him. He eats, sleeps, dreams, and breathes revenge. His appearance is symbolic of evil. As his name suggests, Roger Chillingworth is a man devoid of human warmth. His deformed shoulders mirror his distorted soul. He was a difficult husband to deal with and ignored his wife most of the time, yet expected her to shower him with affection when he did spend time with her. Chillingworth's decision to assume the identity of a "leech," or doctor, is fitting. After Dimmesdale dies, Chillingworth no longer has a victim so he dies. Similarly, Dimmesdale's revelation that he is Pearl's father removes Hester from the old man's clutches. Having lost the objects of his revenge, the leech has no choice but to die.

Chillingworth represents true evil. He is associated with secular and sometimes illicit forms of knowledge, as his chemical experiments and medical practices occasionally verge on witchcraft and murder. He is interested in revenge, not justice, and he seeks the deliberate destruction of others rather than a redress of wrongs. His desire to hurt others stands in contrast to Hester and Dimmesdale's sin, which had love, not hate, as its intent. Any harm that may have come from their deed is forgivable, whereas Chillingworth plots unforgivable harm.

Reverend Arthur Dimmesdale

Dimmesdale is Hester Prynne's lover and the tragic hero of the novel. He is a young man who achieved fame in England as a theologian and then immigrated to America. In a moment of weakness, he and Hester became lovers. Although he will not confess it publicly, he is the father of Pearl. Dimmesdale is a coward and a hypocrite. He is pale and weak from the first moment we see him. He is guilty and torments himself physically and mentally. As a result his heart condition weakens. Dimmesdale is an intelligent and emotional man, and his sermons are masterpieces of eloquence and persuasiveness. His commitments to his congregation are in constant conflict with his feelings of sinfulness and need to confess.

Arthur Dimmesdale, like Hester Prynne, is an individual whose identity owes more to external circumstances than to his innate nature. We are able to infer that Dimmesdale was a scholar of some renown at Oxford University. His past suggests that he is probably somewhat aloof, the kind of man who would not have much natural sympathy for ordinary men and women. However, Dimmesdale has an unusually active conscience. The fact that Hester takes all of the blame for their shared sin burdens his conscience. As a result he opens up his mind and allows himself to empathize with others. Consequently, he becomes an eloquent and emotionally powerful speaker and a compassionate leader, and his congregation is able to receive meaningful spiritual guidance from him. Ironically, the townspeople do not believe Dimmesdale's protestations of sinfulness. Given his background and his penchant for rhetorical speech, Dimmesdale's congregation generally interprets his sermons allegorically rather than as expressions of any personal guilt. This drives Dimmesdale into deeper guilt and self-punishment and leads to still more deterioration in his physical and spiritual condition. The town's idolization of him reaches new heights after his Election Day sermon, which is his last. Torn between the desire to confess and atone and the cowardice which holds him back, Dimmesdale goes a little mad. He takes up some morbid forms of penance. With his last ounce of strength, he crawls to the scaffold and confesses his sin instead of escaping. In his death, Dimmesdale becomes more of a symbol of divine judgment.

Pearl

She is Hester Prynne's illegitimate daughter. Pearl is young, moody, and mischievous and has the ability to perceive things that other children do not. She quickly understands the truth about her mother and Dimmesdale. The townspeople say that she barely seems human and spread rumors that her unknown father is actually the Devil. She is wise far beyond her years.

Pearl merely functions as a symbol in the novel. She is young and only seven years old when Dimmesdale dies. However she provokes the thoughts of the adults. She questions the on various occasions and draws their attention to the overlooked truths of the adult world. In general, children in *The Scarlet Letter* are portrayed as more perceptive and more honest than adults, and Pearl is the most perceptive of them all. Pearl makes us constantly aware of her mother's scarlet letter and of the society that

produced it. From an early age, she concentrates on the emblem. Pearl's innocent and inquires about the relationships between those around her particularly between Hester and Dimmesdale. Pearl provides the text's harshest, and most penetrating, judgment of Dimmesdale's failure to admit to his adultery.

4.13 Minor Characters

Governor Bellingham

He is a wealthy, elderly gentleman who spends much of his time with the other town fathers. Despite his role as governor of a budding American society, he is almost a traditional English aristocrat. Bellingham tends to strictly adhere to the rules, but he is easily swayed by Dimmesdale's eloquence. He remains blind to the misbehaviors taking place in his own house: his sister, Mistress Hibbins, is a witch.

Mistress Hibbins

She is a widow who lives with her brother, Governor Bellingham, in his luxurious mansion. She is commonly known to be a witch who ventures into the forest at night to ride with the "Black Man." Her appearances at public occasions remind the reader of the hypocrisy in the Puritan society.

Reverend Mr. John Wilson

Boston's, Reverend Wilson is scholar and an elderly clergyman. He is a typical Puritan father. Like Governor Bellingham, Wilson follows the community's rules strictly but can be swayed by Dimmesdale's eloquence. Unlike Dimmesdale, his junior colleague, Wilson preaches hellfire and damnation and advocates harsh punishment of sinners.

Narrator

The unnamed narrator works as the surveyor of the Salem Custom House some two hundred years after the events in the novel take place. He discovers an old manuscript in the building's attic that tells the story of Hester Prynne; when he loses his job, he decides to write a fictional treatment of the narrative. He writes because he is interested in American history and because he believes that America needs to better understand its religious and moral heritage.

4.14 Themes

Sin

The experience of Hester and Dimmesdale reminds us of the story of Adam and Eve. While Adam and Eve were expelled from the garden of Eden Hester was expelled from the society. Sin results in expulsion and suffering. However it also results in knowledge of what it means to be human. Hester, punished to wear the scarlet letter speculates on various aspects which ordinary women do not think of. As for Dimmesdale, the burden of his sin gives him a heart that vibrates in unison with sinners. His eloquent and powerful sermons arise from this sense of empathy. Hester and Dimmesdale contemplate their own sinfulness on a daily basis and try to reconcile with their

experiences. The Puritan elders, on the other hand, insist on seeing earthly experience as merely an obstacle on the path to heaven. Thus, they view sin as a threat to the community that should be punished and suppressed. Their answer to Hester's sin is to banish her. Hester and Dimmesdale's experience shows that a state of sinfulness can lead to personal growth, sympathy, and understanding of others. Paradoxically, these qualities are shown to be incompatible with a state of purity.

Evil

The "Black Man, in the novel is seen as the embodiment of evil. During the course of the novel, the "Black Man" is associated with Dimmesdale, Chillingworth, and Mistress Hibbins. Some people believe that little Pearl is the Devil's child. One tends to contemplate if :Chillingworth's selfishness in marrying Hester force her to the "evil" she committed in Dimmesdale's arms? Is Hester and Dimmesdale's deed responsible for Chillingworth's transformation into a malevolent being? This confusion over the nature and causes of evil reveals the problems with the Puritan conception of sin. The novel argues that true evil arises from the close relationship between hate and love. As the narrator points out in the novel's concluding chapter, both emotions depend upon a high degree of intimacy and knowledge of the heart. Each makes the individual dependent upon another. Evil is not found in Hester and Dimmesdale's lovemaking, nor even in the cruel ignorance of the Puritan fathers. Evil, is found in the carefully plotted and precisely aimed revenge of Chillingworth, whose love has been perverted. Pearl is not entirely wrong when she thinks Dimmesdale is the "Black Man," because her father, too, has perverted his love. Dimmesdale, who should love Pearl, does not even publicly acknowledge her. His cruel denial of love to his own child may be seen as further perpetrating evil.

Self and Society

After Hester is publicly shamed and forced by the people of Boston to wear a badge of humiliation she is not intent on leaving the town. She is not physically imprisoned, and leaving the Massachusetts Bay Colony would allow her to remove the scarlet letter and resume a normal life. Surprisingly, Hester reacts with dismay when Chillingworth tells her that the town fathers are considering letting her remove the letter. Hester's behavior is based on her desire to determine her own identity rather than to allow others to determine it for her. To her, running away or removing the letter would be an acknowledgment of society's power over her: she would be admitting that the letter is a mark of shame and something from which she desires to escape. Instead, Hester stays wearing the scarlet letter as a symbol of her own experiences and character. Her past sin is a part of who she is; to pretend that it never happened would mean denying a part of herself. Thus, Hester very determinedly integrates her sin into her life.

Dimmesdale also struggles against a socially determined identity. As the community's minister, he is more symbol than human being. Except for Chillingworth, those around the minister willfully ignore his obvious anguish, misinterpreting it as holiness. Unfortunately, Dimmesdale never fully recognizes the truth of what Hester has learned: that individuality and strength are gained by quiet self-assertion and by a reconfiguration, not a rejection, of one's assigned identity.

4.15 Symbols

The Scarlet Letter

The scarlet letter is a symbol of shame. It becomes an identity to Hester. The letter's meaning shifts as time passes. Originally intended to mark Hester as an adulterer, the "A" eventually comes to stand for "Able." The Native Americans who come to watch the Election Day pageant think it marks her as a person of importance and status.

The Meteor

While Dimmesdale stands on the scaffold with Hester and Pearl, a meteor traces out an "A" in the night sky. To Dimmesdale, the meteor implies that he too should wear a mark of shame just as Hester does. The meteor is interpreted differently by the rest of the community, which thinks that it stands for "Angel" and marks Governor Winthrop's entry into heaven. Symbols are taken to mean what the beholder wants them to mean.

Pearl

Pearl is a living symbol of her mother's scarlet letter. She is the result of sin and the indicator of a transgression. Yet, even as a reminder of Hester's "sin," Pearl is more than a mere punishment to her mother: she is also a blessing. Pearl's existence gives her mother reason to live, brightening her spirits when she is tempted to give up.

The Rosebush Next to the Prison Door

The narrator chooses to begin his story with the image of the rosebush beside the prison door. The rosebush symbolizes the ability of nature to endure and outlive man's activities. Yet, paradoxically, it also symbolizes the futility of symbolic interpretation: the narrator mentions various significances that the rosebush might have, never affirming or denying them, never privileging one over the others.

4.16 Let us Sum Up

The summary of the main plot, chapter summaries as well as the notes on characters and thematic elements provides the students a comprehensive view of the novels. It enables students to understand that Hemingway and Hawthorne are masters of fiction. The students will be able to discern the puritanical influence on American society in the early stages.

4.17 Lesson End Activities

1. What is the dominant theme in *The Old Man and the Sea*?
2. Discuss the role of pride in Santiago's plight.
3. Discuss the symbolism in *The Old Man and the Sea*.
4. Discuss the relationship between the scarlet letter and Hester's identity. Why does she repeatedly refuse to stop wearing the letter? What is the difference between the identity she creates for herself and the identity society assigns to her?

5. Who is the chief character in The Scarlet Letter, Hester Prynne or Arthur Dimmesdale? Explain.
6. Attempt a contrastive analysis of the characters Arthur Dimmesdale and Roger Chillingworth.
7. Hester Prynne is the best or worst citizen of Boston? Elucidate.
8. Discuss the double life of any leading character in the novel.
9. Discuss a significance of “The Scarlet Letter”.
10. Comment on the theme of “The Scarlet Letter”.
11. Describe the use of symbols in “The Scarlet Letter”.

4.18 Points for Discussion

1. Comment on the Narrative techniques used in the novels prescribed for your study.
2. Comment on the major themes of American fiction with reference to the novel presented.

4.19 References

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UNIT – V

CRITICISM

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5.0 Aims and Objectives

- Provide information on the period when the author lived or wrote about.
- Introduce criticism of contemporaries on works of writer(s).
- Develop rhetorical strategies.
- Enable students learn how to comment on different genres of literature.
- Provide models for the students to evaluate, analyze, and synthesize texts or writers

The Variety of American criticism 1910-1940 R.K.Kholi

5.1 Introduction

The growth of criticism in America within the span of 30 years is traced by R.K.Kholi. He joins Joel E. Springham in stating that the old rules regarding concept of technique, moral judgment of literature, environment of the artist, genres, have all undergone a change. Today criticism is concerned with what the poet wants to convey and how does he achieve it. This is the foundation with which the author illustrates the approaches made by prominent American critics to evaluate literary works.

5.2 The Moral Approach

This section is concerned with critics of humanism namely **Babbit, More and Winters**. While comparing the classics of the east and the west Babbit is not happy with

the degeneration of western traditions. He feels that Bacon's scientific humanitarianism and Rousseau's sentimental humanitarianism have led to such degeneration. Babbitt is of the view that though modern man has grasped complex facts he has lost track of self restraint. So Babbitt advocates that man must return to humanitarianism through moral choice and inner discipline. However both Babbitt and More feel that the chief function of poetry is not to further any moral or social cause. Babbitt strongly rejected the orthodox concept of religion on the grounds that religion can get along without humanism but humanism cannot get along without religion.

Babbitt advocates height of imagination and distinguishes between **Arcadian imagination**, ethical imagination and individual's impulses. According to Babbitt Shelley and Keats possess Arcadian imagination and Wordsworth falls short of "high seriousness" because he exalts the low and common life. Babbitt dismisses Coleridge also. The only Romantic to escape Babbitt's scathing attack is Goethe. Sherwood Anderson, Lewis, Dos Passos and Sandburg are condemned as Romanticism on all fours by Babbitt. Babbitt favours Emerson and Jonathan Edwards because they examine the revival of the inner self. Babbitt is a historian of literary ideas.

More for his part has exemplified the ethical imagination of Thoreau, Emerson and Milton. With his subtle intellect and complex personality, he has lauded Hawthorne's puritanical views and Whitman's ethical sermons. Like Babbitt, More also felt that contemporary American Literature has moved to the lower rungs with Amy Lowell, Dressier, Masters, Anderson and Lewis. More feels that dos Passos's "Manhattan Transfer" is an "explosion in a cesspool".

Yvor Winters moves on the same plane with Babbitt in certain areas. Winters is of the view that moral evaluation is more important in literature than the craft of language. Literature should uphold absolute truths and values. According to Winters, "Paradise Lost" is an ideal moralistic poem. He does not favour hedonistic and romantic version of literature. Though an upholder of intellectual and moral values in literature Winters is a maverick humanist and critic. Winters is of the view that Eliot, Pound and Crane's works suffer from primitive decadence, obscurantism, spiritual drift and moral anarchy. Hawthorne, Melville and James too fall under Winters' lashing attack in his "Primitivism and Decadence" and "Mule's Curse". Winters is of the view that such obscurantism and romanticism will befog the American mind. Thus we are able to note that these critics of humanism are concerned with the nature of man, society, civilization and history. Babbitt, More and Winters are not concerned with religious orthodoxy.

5.3 Religious and Mythical Critics

Ransom chooses the Old Testament's 'God of wrath and Thunder' and makes a comparison between fall of man, Satan and the legend of Prometheus. According to him science is an annihilating, predatory abstraction. In 'God without Thunder', Ransom takes up a fundamentalists' attitude and attacks positivism, naturalism and liberalism. He also evaluates a reader's profundity on myth and religion. Ransom has high praise for Donne and Milton. According to him Shakespeare is an amateur lacking university discipline.

Ransom is of the view that science is to be blamed for the degeneration of man and nature. Ransom opines that religion is aesthetic because it exists primarily for rituals rather than doctrines. In "The New Criticism" Ransom discusses the tension between matter and content in poetry.

T.S. Eliot has steered the opposite course of Ransom. In "tradition and Individual Talents", he states that the "romantic taste for the different" has led to chaos in the modern world. Eliot is of the view that the writer should excel in individuality and must deviate from inherited wisdom. Lawrence, Yeats and Pound are condemned by him. He feels that they have fed poetry with some "transcendent stimuli". Eliot says that Pound's XXX Cantos lack dignity yet he feels Pound is one among the important Poets in English. Eliot feels that the human beings portrayed lack reality. Kholi feels that the criticism of Babbitt, Winters, Ransom and Eliot is affected by dissociation of judgment.

5.4 Psychological Approach

We see that Pound makes use of Psychology for comprehending and defining literature. According to Pound 'image' in literature is "that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex" in a particular context and time. Pound's view of 'complex' is similar to that of Hart Van Wyck Brooks, in "The Ordeal of Mark Twain". Brooks opines that the conflict between the unconscious self and conscious will find expression in the writer's characters attitudes and themes. He illustrates that Twain, an artist and satirist was thwarted by the Victorian taboos. Brooks also points out that his preoccupation with childhood in regression, twins etc. are the outcome of personal conflicts and frustrations. Brooks states that, but for the absence of mother fixation, Twain could have achieved heights like Cervantes, Voltaire or Swift.

Expressing his views on Poe, Joseph Wood Krutch says that all the forces that wrecked his life shaped his works. With much psychological insight Krutch views poetic genius as compensatory. He says Poe's works reflect childhood conflicts, betrayal of his father, death of his mother, and lack of a loving homely atmosphere. The childhood experiences have scarred his psyche and it is reflected in his sub normal sexual development, mother fixation, death ridden heroines and isolated heroes. Krutch says Poe wrote detective stories to prevent himself from going mad.

Ludwig Lewisohn has viewed the literary history of America through Freudian glasses. Contrary to More, Lewisohn condemns both Emerson and Thoreau. However he is all praise for Whitman. Lewisohn accuses Poe, Hawthorne and Melville for giving expression to neurotic thoughts. Hawthorne he states turned reality into legend and facts into fantasy. While Poe's work was defensive neurosis, Melville turned his inner conflicts into ghastly symbols. Lewisohn appreciates Stephen Crane and Frank Norris. He calls them "Pathfinders", who liberated American tradition from the inhibitions of Victorian gentility.

Brooks and Lewisohn have different views on the influence of environment on the writers. Brooks feels that environment is the shaping force and the blighted careers

and arrested careers have shaped the present American environment. The basic dichotomy of American life today is the high brow puritans and transcendentalists on one side and the low brow businessmen on the other. Whitman alone emerges as a saviour of the race. Brooks' review of the American part pictures America as a country ruined by industrialization.

5.5 Liberalism

Vernon L. Parrington had faith in liberalism and was against the principles of Puritanism and Calvinism. He was a supporter of Jeffersonian ideals. According to Parrington the American tradition has been shaped by English independency, French romanticism, Industrial Revolt, Laissez Faire Capitalism, 19th Century science and continental theory of collectivism. Whitman emerges as a hero in his eyes embodying enlightenment through passion for liberty, faith in mankind, humanitarianism and egalitarianism. Whitman blended into reality and transcended it. According to Parrington Mark Twain represents the cross currents of American life. Parrington also dismisses Poe, Melville and Hawthorne accusing them as pessimists and skeptics. In spite of his narrow concept of reality and culture, Parrington has created a radical democratic- social tradition for American Writers.

5.6 Marxist Point of View

Calverton lauds Whitman as a comrade and poet of the people. According to him America is built on a bourgeois experiment. He delves into the 19th Century middleclass individualism brought out by writers of Self Reliance and the Open Road to despair and disillusion. Calverton feels that Sinclair was the one, who brought in the first signs of American radical society. Granville Hicks, who is a committed Marxist has evaluated the tradition of American Literature from Emerson to Dos Passos. According to Hicks, writers like Norris, Phillips, Sinclair and London constitute a tradition of brotherhood, justice and intellectual honesty. He says Emily Dickinson's poems lack the vigour of her time. He dismisses Twain, Henry James, Melville and calls T.S. Eliot an intellectual bankrupt and a mere ripple in the American Literary system.

5.7 Critical Renaissance in America

Thus we are able to discern that the possible method proposed by Springham does not enable a complete evaluation of a work of art. The questions posed by Stanley Edgar Hyman in his "The Armed Vision" regarding the artist's life, childhood, family, desires, needs, class, livelihood and relation between the work and the archetypes of rituals to literature etc. serve as provable statements of the content. Such questions posed by critics in the 1940s paved way for the critical renaissance in America.

Social Content and Literary Theory in America- S.M. Pandeya

Here S.M. Pandeya analyses the social context determined by the economical, political and cultural climes prevailing in America during the post industrial revolt. He feels the industrial revolt has paved the way for new trends in literature and

literary theories. He begins by outlining the views of literary critics to advertisements and propaganda, which forms the most pronounced feature of social context of literature. He probes into the doctrines which are false or hollow and pose a threat to the independence of intellect in an individual. The industrial civilization and technological achievements have led to dislocation of values.

5.8 Views of Various Critics on Advertisement and Propaganda

Babbit describes the present age as being subjected to the rise of 'creative salesmanship'. Pandeya outlines the literary critic's view of advertisement and propaganda. Babbit is of the view that today propaganda is behind everything- right from choice of religion to cigarettes. He comments on the progressive theory of scientific determinism which permits temperamental liberty. But it traps mankind and makes them evade consciousness and sink into a metaphysical dream.

T.S. Eliot is of the view that the influence of advertisement or propaganda will deteriorate man's power for clear thinking. The result would be that everyone's mind will get used to vague jargons and there will be a lot of words for everything but nothing to express the exact ideas. Eliot feels that this will give rise to double standards. He questions the Marxist theology stating that that only when human beings have a natural aversion to bear responsibilities And strain they will subject themselves to the total subordination by the state. Eliot also examines the modern eschatology of progress. He states that the present must be sacrificed to the needs of the future resulting in loss of faith on the present.

Northrop Frye is of the opinion that the propaganda and advertisements has resulted in the development of two attitudes among writers. One is to join the bandwagon of survival of the fittest, perceive the times and try to live a self respecting life. The other one is to be passive and accept life as it is without making any attempt to modify the prevailing situation. Creative and Communicative arts have given rise to such conflicting attitudes. While creative arts induce active response, communicating arts which are chiefly used for propaganda and advertisements create a mass culture. This mass culture is accepted passively. This mass culture is the keynote of politics and economics. Under the garb of public relations, propaganda is received to create an impression of active attitude. Frye joins Eliot in stating that the theories of progress sacrifice the present for the sake of the future. As a result the power exists in the hands of those who are proficient in 'Stentorian lying', hyptonised leadership and panic stricken suppression of freedom and criticism.

The Literary theories evoked by these forces

5.9 The General Critical Intelligence

American literary theory of the 20th Century has been under the influence of advertisements, propaganda and theory of progress. Babbit feels that writers should develop general critical intelligence and enable people to get a sense of proportion and

values. Developing a general critical intelligence will save the people from becoming passive receptacles. According to Eliot general critical intelligence is criticizing our own minds. He views contemporary literature as an emphasis of absurdity, anxiety and queasy apocalyptic foreboding in ironic tones. It seems to respond to the prevailing social condition.

5.10 Tradition

Tradition has evolved a theory of critical response to literature in order to ensure a correct scale of values. Its chief aim is to prevent dissociation of values. Babbit's concept of tradition is through Socratic principles of scrutinizing the present. In "The Critic and American Life", he brings modern naturalistic realism under the perspective of traditional religious and humanistic realism with special reference to Jonathan Edwards and Milton. More is of the view that the tradition of taste is a criterion to judge the quality of a literary work because tradition enables us to distinguish the universal from the transient. Eliot's concept of tradition recommends a historical sense. According to him literary tradition is a principle of aesthetic and historical criticism which can be acquired by conscious effort. However in social life tradition is identifying with a group and acting through generations unconsciously. This is called orthodoxy and it prevents the dislocation of values. It helps to "look back upon the past without regret and the future without fear".

Tradition for Frye constitutes literary conventions, myths and archetypes. Frye states that mythology of an age is made of ideas, images, beliefs, assumptions, anxieties, hopes of people, so it is a product of human concerns. The Western Mythology is divided as modern and pre-modern. The former is further classified as cliché' mythology of liberal arts. Cliché' mythology is projected through families, teachers, neighbours, mass media, political wings, newspapers, television and movies. These often consist of fall, exodus, pastoral and apocalyptic myth. The mythology of liberal arts consists of cliché' stereo types with literary archetypes found in modern literary units of alienation, anxiety, absurd etc. Humorously Frye states that in democratic countries mythology struggles to remain open and in communist countries the bureaucracy struggles to keep it shut. Thus we find that history and literature are complementary.

5.11 Education and Scholarship in Preserving right Sense of Values

Babbit, Eliot and Frye stress the vitality of education and scholarship for the preservation of values. Education along with the principles of general critical intelligence enable the critic to obtain the right focus without being disturbed by the world of advertisements, propaganda and theories of progress. Frye states that scholarship gives rise to spiritual vision of an unborn world and the scholar must realize the value of this vision. In an autonomous atmosphere scholarship and arts can reshape the general education. He says Primary education of the three Rs makes an individual adjust to the society, but exposure to the world of arts and scholarship initiates him to the three As making him more critical and intelligent participating member of the society.

Frye says that cliché' mythology, Marxist or Hegelian notions cannot bring about a desired social change. The unborn world is born out of the tension between the opposites of freedom and concern. Frye recommends real freedom associated with the imaginative vision of arts and a rational vision of science. Both myth of concern and freedom must be examined. He underlines that the 1984 society destroyed its freedom but the society of the "Brave New World" is one that has forgotten its concern. So one must embark on some critical path to live in the history of our times.

5.12 Glossary

Irving Babbitt -(Aug. 2, 1865- July 15, 1933) was a critic and teacher, leader of the movement in literary criticism known as the "New Humanism," or <http://www.britannica.com/memberlogin> **Neohumanism**. Babbitt was educated at Harvard University and at the Sorbonne in Paris and taught French and comparative literature at Harvard from 1894 until his death. He was a vigorous teacher, lecturer, and essayist.

Paul Elmer More- (December 12, 1864 – March 9, 1937) was an American journalist, critic, essayist and Christian apologist. He was educated at Washington University in St. Louis and Harvard University. More taught Sanskrit at Harvard.

Arthur Yvor Winters -(October 17, 1900 - January 26, 1968) was an American poet and literary critic, whose criticism was often embroiled in controversy.

John Crowe Ransom -(April 30, 1888, Pulaski, Tennessee- July 3, 1974, Gambier, Ohio) was an American poet, essayist, social and political theorist, man of letters, critic and an academician.

Thomas Stearns Eliot-(September 26, 1888 – January 4, 1965), was a poet, dramatist and literary critic. He received the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1948.

Ezra Weston Loomis Pound -(October 30, 1885 – November 1, 1972) was an American expatriate poet and critic who was a major figure of the Modernist movement in early-to mid- 20th century poetry. He was the driving force behind several Modernist movements, notably Imagism and Vorticism.

Hart Van Wyck Brooks -(February 16, 1886- May 2, 1963) was an American literary critic, biographer, and historian. Brooks was educated at Harvard University and graduated in 1908. The masterpiece of his literary career was a series of studies entitled *Makers and Finders*, which chronicled the development of American literature during the long 19th century.

Joseph Wood Krutch-(November 25, 1893 – May 22, 1970) was an American writer, critic, and naturalist. He became a theater critic for *The Nation* and wrote several books, gaining acclaim through a work critical of the impact of science and technology.

Ludwig Lewisohn-(May 30, 1882, Berlin, Germany – December 31, 1955) was an American Jewish critic and novelist.

Vernon L. Parrington- (1871– 1929) was an American historian. He graduated from Harvard University in 1893 and in 1897 was hired as instructor of English and modern languages at the University of Oklahoma. The work of Van Wyck Brooks and Vernon L. Parrington illustrated two of the main approaches. In *America's Coming-of-Age* (1915), *Letters and Leadership* (1918), and *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* (1920) .

Calverton –(1900-1940) The Marxist critic articulates what he terms "a sociological criticism of literature," in which writing is viewed as an expression of the social system from which it springs.

Granville Hicks - (September 9, 1901 - June 18, 1982) was an American Marxist novelist, literary critic, educator, and editor.

Stanley Edgar Hyman- (1919– 1970) was a literary critic who wrote primarily about critical methods: the distinct strategies critics use in approaching literary texts.

Northrop Frye - (July 14, 1912 – January 23, 1991), a Canadian, was one of the most distinguished literary critics and literary theorists of the twentieth century.

5.13 Let Us Sum Up

After reading the sections and the glossary provided in this lesson the students will get an of a critic's critic.

5.14 Lesson End Activity

- 1) Comment on the moral Approach of *Babbit*, *Winters* and *More*.
- 2) Write a note on:
 - a) Mythical critics
 - b) Psychological approach
 - c) Moral approach
- 3) Elaborate the views of critics on Advertisement and Propaganda.

5.15 Points for Discussion

1. Make an estimation on Modern American critics.
2. 'Age must have a purpose' – Discuss with reference to the modern American critics prescribed for your study.

5.16 References

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BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY

DISTANCE EDUCATION

M.A.English Literature- Paper : AmericanLiterature

Time: 3hrs

Marks :100

Answer any five of the following
All questions carry equal marks.

1. Comment on the theme of death in Emily Dickinson's poetry.
2. Attempt a critical appreciation of Plath's "Daddy".
3. Sketch the character of Brutus Jones as a Tragic hero.
4. Comment on the themes in "A Street Car Named Desire".
5. Emerson is a champion of self reliance- Elucidate .
6. What is the dominant theme in *The Old Man and the Sea*?
7.) Comment on the theme of "The Scarlet Letter".
8. Comment on the moral Approach of Babbit, Winters and More.

BHARATHIAR UNIVERSITY

DISTANCE EDUCATION

M.A.English Literature- Paper : AmericanLiterature

Time: 3hrs

Marks :100

Answer any five of the following
All questions carry equal marks.

- 1.“Good fences make good neighbours”- Elucidate.
2. Comment on the imagery in Whitman’s “Crossing Brklyn Ferry”.
- 3.Explain O’Neill’s use of symbolism in “The Emperor Jones”.
- 4.How does each character contribute to Blanche's breakdown?
- 5.Attempt an analysis of Poe as a critic.
- 6.Comment on the themes in “A Street Car Named Desire”.
- 7.Describe the use of symbols in “The Scarlet Letter”.
8. Write a note on:
 - a. Mythical critics
 - b. Psychological approach
 - c. Moral approach