SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT – 1 - Fiction II – SHS1202

1. Narrative Techniques:

A narrative technique (also known more narrowly for literary fictional narratives as a literary technique, literary device, or fictional device) is any of several specific methods the creator of a narrative uses to convey what they want - in other words, a strategy used in the making of a narrative to relay information to the audience and, particularly, to "develop" the narrative, usually in order to make it more complete, complicated, or interesting. Literary techniques are distinguished from literary elements, which exist inherently in works of writing.

Different types of Narrative Techniques:

Types of narrative techniques are relevant to style, plot, narrative perspectiveor point of view, character, setting and theme.

Narrative Techniques in Style:

Common techniques relevant to style, or the language chosen to tell a story, include metaphors, similes, personification, imagery, hyperbole, and alliteration.

The style a writer uses is seen in the diction, or the language used. Figurative language is a common element in narrative writing.

Metaphors and similes are expressions used to compare two things in an effort to help the reader have a better understanding of what the writer is attempting to convey. The difference between a simile and a metaphor is, a simile uses words, ‘like’, 'as' or 'than' in the comparison, while the metaphor does not utilize these words.

Consider the metaphor: 'It's raining men.' Obviously, this does not mean it is literally raining men, since that is impossible. It simply means that there are a lot of men present. An example of a simile: 'It was raining like cats and dogs.' Again, this does not literally mean cats and dogs are coming from the sky; that is impossible. This is an expression that helps the reader understand the rain is very powerful and forceful.

Imagery creates visuals for the reader that appeal to our senses and usually involves figurative language: 'The bar was a dark, gloomy eyesore.' This statement appeals to our senses to help us visualize and feel the negative aspects of this location.

Personification is seen when an inanimate object is given human or animal-like qualities, like: 'The stars danced in the sky.' We know stars cannot dance. This statement is an attempt to help the reader have a better picture of how the stars appeared to move in a dancing fashion.

Hyperbole is an over-exaggeration to make a point. You might have heard someone say: 'My purse weighs a ton.' We know this is not meant to be in the literal sense but is meant to help the reader understand the excessive weight of the purse.

Alliteration is seen when the writer uses the same letters together in a sentence. Here is a classic example: 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers.' Some writers use alliteration to help readers remember phrases or concepts, while some writers simply use this technique because it is 'catchy' and appealing to readers.

Narrative Techniques in plot:

Common techniques relevant to plot, which is the sequence of events that makes up a narrative, include backstory, flashback, flash-forward, and foreshadowing.

Backstory: Story that precedes events in the story being told—past events or background that add meaning to current circumstances.

Eg:Though The Lord of the Rings trilogy takes place towards the end of the Third Age, the narration gives glimpses of the mythological/historical events which took place in the First and Second Age

Flashback: General term for altering time sequences, taking characters back to the beginning of the tale, for instance. The story of "The Three Apples" in Arabian Nights tale begins with the discovery of a young woman's dead body. After the murderer later reveals himself, he narrates his reasons for the murder as a flashback of events leading up to the discovery of her dead body at the beginning of the story.

Frame story, or a story within a story: A main story that organizes a series of shorter stories. Early examples include Panchatantra, Arabian Nights, and The Decameron. A more modern example is Brian Jacques' The Legend of Luke.

Framing deviceA single action, scene, event, setting, or any element of significance at the beginning and end of a work. The use of framing devices allows frame stories to exist.

In Arabian Nights, Scheherazade, the newly wed wife to the King, is the framing device. As a character, she is telling the "1,001 stories" to the King, in order to delay her execution night by night. However, as a framing device her purpose for existing is to tell the same 1,001 stories to the reader.

Plot twist: Unexpected change ("twist") in the direction or expected outcome of the plot.

An early example is the Arabian Nights tale "The Three Apples". A locked chest found by a fisherman contains a dead body, and two different men claim to be the murderer, which turns out to be the investigator's own slave.

Narrative Techniques in Perspective:

Common techniques relevant to narrative perspective, or who is telling the story, include first person, second person, third person, and third-person omniscient.

Audience surrogate:Audience surrogates are those characters you find who ask the same questions an audience would, or are confused by the same things an audience would: someone who can act as a proxy for the audience within the story. For example, Harry Potter acts as an audience surrogate, as he is taken from the normal world and introduced to Hogwarts as we, the readers, are. His complete lack of knowledge and consequent wonder in regards to the wizarding world is what the audience has when reading the novels. As Harry moves throughout the story he faces entirely foreign concepts to both him and the audience, and by having him oblivious, he is able to ask other characters and avoid the dreaded narrative exposition dumps. Though exposition dumps do technically still happen, they are provided in a much more digestible format in dialogue.

Defamiliarization:This term and the concept behind it were introduced in 1917 by Viktor Shklovsky in his essay 'Art as Technique.' To explain his thinking behind defamiliarization,

Shklovsky claimed that the technique of art is to make objects 'unfamiliar'… Art is a way of experiencing the artfulness of an object: the object is not important…' Let's take an object we all know and try to defamiliarize it to see if we can find its 'artfulness.'

Writers also identify their works as art, and some of them even use their work to discuss the various aspects of creating that art. They often achieve this discussion through a literary technique known as defamiliarization, in which the process of writing is itself focused on more than any particular plotline.

Writers use this technique to help demonstrate the line between reality and their art. Although literary works are often praised for faithful reflections of real life, their authors still recognize them as pieces of art and use defamiliarization to remind their readers of that fact. Novelists might employ the technique to compose reflexive novels, or extended works of prose fiction in which authors bring direct attention to the fact that they're creating a literary work. Similar texts, such as short stories and poems, are also often referred to as being 'writerly,' meaning they consciously identify themselves as works of art through their focus on their own unique mechanics and use of language.

Eg: *Tristram Shandy* by Laurence Sterne certainly takes his life's story seriously; however, this narrator-protagonist of this 1759 classic has the funny tendency to digress: so much so that you're over a third of the way through the novel before you even hear anything about his birth!

First-person Narration:A text presented from the point of view of a character, especially the protagonist, as if the character is telling the story themselves.
Eg: Mark Twain's Adventures of Huckleberry Finn uses the title character as the narrator, while Sherlock Holmes is primarily told from Watson's perspective.

Magical realism:Describing events in a real-world setting but with magical trappings, often incorporating local customs and invented beliefs. Different from urban fantasy in that the magic itself is not the focus of the story.Eg: Gabriel Garcia Marquez was an incredibly popular author from Colombia. He wrote the famous novel *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, which is an example of magical realism. In the novel, which takes place over many generations, fantastical things are always happening. For example, a woman experiences her own personal Rapture, being sucked up to Heaven; another woman is visited by Death and told that she will die when she finishes the

shawl she is working on; and finally, a baby is devoured by ants. These events, although miraculous, are treated as matter-of-fact, like they could (and do) happen every day.

Second-person Narration: A text written in the style of a direct address, in the second-person.

Eg: Tom Robbins' "Half Asleep in Frog Pajamas" is an example of a noveltold in second-person. Many of the stories in Lorrie Moore's book "Self-Help" are also written in second-person.

Third-person Narration:

A text written as if by an impersonal narrator who is not affected by the events in the story. Can be omniscient or limited, the latter usually being tied to a specific character, a group of characters, or a location.

Eg: A Song of Ice and Fire is written in multiple limited third-person narrators that change with each chapter. The Master and Margarita uses an omniscient narrator.

Narrative Techniques in Setting:

Setting: The setting is both the time and geographic location within a narrative or within a work of fiction. A literary element, the setting initiates the main backdrop and mood of a story, often referred to as the story world.

Eg: The novel *Ulysses* by James Joyce is set in Dublin, Ireland, the action taking place on a single day, 16 June 1904. The action of the novel takes place from one side of Dublin Bay to the other, opening in Sandycove to the South of the city and closing on Howth Head to the North. While the novel parallels the story of Odysseus, the hero of Homer's epic poem *Odyssey*, whose role is carried by Leopold Bloom, much of the setting is described realistically, with great attention to detail. The locations within Dublin also represent locations in the Odyssey. Bloom's home is at 7 Eccles Street, and at the same time, Ithaca, the home of Odysseus. The Post office, Westland Row and Sweny's pharmacy in Lombard Street represent the Dublin location

for Episode 5, Lotus Eaters; the National Library of Ireland parallels Episode 9, Scylla and Charybdis and so on.

Backstory: Story that precedes events in the story being told—past events or background that add meaning to current circumstances.
Eg: Though *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy takes place towards the end of the Third Age, the narration gives glimpses of the mythological/historical events which took place in the First and Second Age.

Utopia: The literary term utopia denotes an illusionary place that projects the notion of a perfect society to the reader. Here, the "perfect society" refers to ideal conditions achieved within the material world, as opposed to the expected idealism of afterlife in Christianity or other religions. Further, the citizens presiding in such utopias are bearers of a perfect moral code, or at the least, every violator of the moral code is harshly punished. A utopian society is one where all social evils have been cured.
Eg: Plato's *The Republic*, written around 380 BC, is usually considered the first example of Utopia in history.

Dystopia: Dystopia is a world in which everything is imperfect, and everything goes terribly wrong. Dystopian literature shows us a nightmarish image about what might happen to the world in the near future. Usually the main themes of dystopian works are rebellion, oppression, revolutions, wars, overpopulation, and disasters. On the other hand, *utopia* is a perfect world – exactly opposite of dystopia.
Eg:George Orwell's *1984,*his classic novel, shows a dystopian society. He has written this novel to describe the future, and the ways government takes advantage of new technologies in order to rule and control the people. The leading character, Winston Smith, falls in a trap where Big Brother, a leader of the party always watches him and other low-grade members of that society. Inner party members live a life of luxury, while outer members live in dirty apartments. Besides, there is no emotional and mental freedom. The party does not allow anyone to rebel, even by using their minds. We see violence everywhere in this dystopic society, and the majority of

people are poor, which further proves it as a fine example of dystopia. We notice everything goes decrepit, and its scenes are often dreary and dark.

Alternate History:

Alternate history or alternative history (Commonwealth English),[1][2] sometimes abbreviated as AH,[3] is a genre of fiction consisting of stories in which one or more historical events occur differently. These stories usually contain "what if" scenarios at crucial points in history and present outcomes other than those in the historical record. The stories are conjectural, but are sometimes based on fact. Alternate history has been seen as a subgenre of literary fiction, science fiction, or historical fiction; alternate history works may use tropes from any or all of these genres. Another term occasionally used for the genre is "allohistory" (literally "other history") The Collins English Dictionary defines alternative history as "a genre of fiction in which the author speculates on how the course of history might have been altered if a particular historical event had had a different outcome."

Eg: *Men Like Gods* by H.G. Wells. Possibly the first Alternate History novel that posits cross-time travel in a physical sense.

Fictional Location:Fictional locations are places that exist only in fiction and not in reality, such as the Negaverse or Planet X. Writers may create and describe such places to serve as backdrop for their fictional works. Fictional locations are also created for use as settings in role-playing games such as *Dungeons and Dragons*. Fictional locations vary greatly in their size. Very small places like a single room are kept out of the umbrella of fictional locations by convention, as are most single buildings.

Eg: A fictional location can be the size of a university (H.P. Lovecraft's Miskatonic University), a town (Stephen King's Salem's Lot), a county (William Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County), a state (Winnemac in various Sinclair Lewis stories)

Narrative Techniques in Character:

Antagonist: In literature, an antagonist is a character, or a group of characters, which stands in opposition to the *protagonist*, which is the main character. The term "antagonist" comes from the Greek word *antagonistēs*, which means "opponent," "competitor," or "rival."

It is common to refer to an antagonist as a *villain* (the bad guy), against whom a *hero* (the good guy) fights in order to save himself or others. In some cases, an antagonist may exist within the protagonist that causes an inner conflict or a moral conflict inside his mind. This inner conflict is a major theme of many literary works, such as *Doctor Faustus*, by Christopher Marlowe, *Hamlet*, by William Shakespeare, and *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man*, by James Joyce. Generally, an antagonist appears as a foil to the main character, embodying qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of the main character.

Eg: *Antigone* by Sophocles - A classical example of an antagonist is that of King Creon in Sophocles' tragedy *Antigone*. Here, the function of the antagonist is to obstruct the main character's progress, through evil plots and actions. Antigone, the protagonist, struggles against King Creon, the antagonist, in her effort to give her brother a respectable burial. Through his evil designs, Creon tries to hamper her in this attempt by announcing that her brother was a traitor, and decreeing that "he must be left to the elements." This protagonist-antagonist conflict becomes the theme of this tragedy.

Antihero: An antihero is a main character in a story who lacks the typical heroic qualities of bravery, courage, morality, and the special ability and desire to achieve for the greater good. The antihero is thus still the protagonist of the narrative, yet is a foil to the traditional hero archetype.The word antihero comes from Greek, where the prefix "anti" means "against" and the word "hero" means a "protector or defender."

Eg: *Hamlet* by William Shakespeare

Hamlet's most famous speech from William Shakespeare's eponymous tragedy indicates his status as an antihero. The central drama from the play is that Hamlet's uncle, Claudius, has killed Hamlet's father, married Hamlet's mother, and assumed the throne of Denmark. Hamlet wants to enact revenge on Claudius, but is too contemplative and cautious to act at first. He is also plagued with thoughts of suicide and of the after-life. When Hamlet finally does act, he does so rashly and erratically, and fails to achieve what he means to do though bravery or with noble intentions.

Difference Between Antihero and Antagonist:

Though they may sound similar, the definition of antihero is very different from the definition of antagonist. The antagonist is always a character who has opposing goals from the protagonist. Even if the antagonist is not a bad character in and of themselves, he or she will put up obstacles that the protagonist must overcome. The antagonist, in fact, may be a heroic character such as a police officer who opposes the actions of the protagonist. An antihero, on the other hand, is always the protagonist in the story. Even if the audience does not agree with her or her actions, the audience is supposed to understand the antihero's motivations and sympathize with this character.

Archenemy: An archenemy (sometimes spelled arch-enemy) is the main enemy of someone. In fiction, it is a character who is the hero's or protagonist's most prominent and worst enemy. The word *archenemy* or *arch-enemy* originated around the mid-16th century, from the words *arch-* (from Greek "arkhos" meaning "most important") and *enemy*. An archenemy may also be referred to as archfoe, archvillain, or archnemesis.

Eg:Sherlock Holmes' archenemy is the criminal Mastermind; Professor James Moriarty.
In Moby Dick, Ishmael fights against Moby Dick; the white whale.
Lord Voldemort is the archenemy of Harry Potter; his only victim that survived.
Eragon's archenemy is Galbatorix; an evil dragon rider who betrayed his old team.

Character arc:A character arc is the transformation or inner journey of a character over the course of a story. If a story has a character arc, the character begins as one sort of person and gradually transforms into a different sort of person in response to changing developments in the story. Since the change is often substantive and leading from one personality trait to a diametrically opposite trait (for example, from greed to benevolence), the geometric term *arc* is often used to describe the sweeping change. In most stories, lead characters and protagonists are the characters most likely to experience character arcs, although it is possible for lesser characters to change as well.[1] A driving element of the plots of many stories is that the main character seems initially unable to overcome opposing forces, possibly because he or she lacks skills or knowledge or resources or friends. To overcome such obstacles, the protagonist must

change, possibly by learning new skills, to arrive at a higher sense of self-awareness or capability. Protagonists can achieve such self-awareness by interacting with their environment, by enlisting the help of mentors, by changing their viewpoint, or by some other method.
Eg: Shakespeare's *Hamlet* sees the eponymous character, once a young scholarly prince full of promise, quickly becoming a melancholic brooder after his father's death. The play shows his slow but deadly fall into madness.

Character's voice: Voice in literature is the individual style in which a certain author writes his or her works. Voice includes many different literary devices and stylistic techniques, including syntax, semantics, diction, dialogue, character development, tone, pacing, and even punctuation. Though the definition of voice can feel like a somewhat nebulous concept, voice is integral to appreciating a piece of literature. Authors are generally thought to have a unique voice that appears across their entire oeuvre, even if they change from one genreto another.
Eg: *Ulysses* by James Joyce

> *...and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes.*

James Joyce's style varied wildly from one text to another, and yet even as his style evolved, his authorial voice is consistent. The above excerpt is the very final part of Molly Bloom's soliloquy that ends Joyce's epic masterpiece *Ulysses*. Joyce often experimented with stream of consciousness writing, and pushed the bounds of what could be considered a sentence. There is a certain exuberance on display in the above excerpt that makes it a beautiful example of voice.

Characterization: Characterization is a literary device that is used step-by-step in literature to highlight and explain the details about a character in a story. It is in the initial stage in which the writer introduces the character with noticeable emergence. After introducing the character, the

writer often talks about his behavior; then, as the story progresses, the thought-processes of the character.The next stage involves the character expressing his opinions and ideas, and getting into conversations with the rest of the characters. The final part shows how others in the story respond to the character's personality.

Eg: *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald. There are many examples of characterization in literature. *The Great Gatsby*, is probably the best. In this particular book, the main idea revolves around the social status of each character. The major character of the book, Mr. Gatsby, is perceptibly rich, but he does not belong to the upper stratum of society. This means that he cannot have Daisy. Tom is essentially defined by his wealth and the abusive nature that he portrays every now and then, while Daisy is explained by Gatsby as having a voice "full of money."

Deuteragonist: In literature, the deuteragonist or secondary main character is the second most important character, after the protagonist and before the tritagonist.[1] The deuteragonist may switch between supporting and opposing the protagonist, depending on the deuteragonist's own conflict or plot. The deuteragonist often assumes the role of "sidekick" to the protagonist.
Eg: In Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, the protagonist is Huck and the deuteragonist, his constant companion, is Jim. In this story the tritagonist would be Tom Sawyer. Conversely, the deuteragonist could also be a particularly visible antagonist, normally whom the actual antagonist hides behind. In some cases, the deuteragonist is a sidekick who is also used as a foil for the protagonist, in order to more greatly enhance the powers or strengths of the main character. Dr. John Watson, for example, in the Sherlock Holmes series by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, is an educated and intelligent gentleman of professional standing, and yet his own intelligence is of too rigid a stance to embrace fully the kind of possibilities of which the more maverick Sherlock Holmes is capable.

False protagonist: In fiction, a false protagonist is a literary technique, often used to make the plot more jarring or more memorable by fooling the audience's preconceptions, that constructs a character who the audience assumes is the protagonist but is later revealed not to be.

A false protagonist is presented at the start of the fictional work as the main character, but then is eradicated, often by killing them (usually for shock value or as a plot twist) or changed in terms of their role in the story (i.e. making them a lesser character, a character who leaves the story, or revealing them to actually be the antagonist)

Eg: George R. R. Martin's novel *A Game of Thrones*, the first entry in the *A Song of Ice and Fire* epic fantasy series, features chapters told from the point of view of numerous characters, though the most prominent is Ned Stark, who is generally assumed to be the novel's main protagonist until the final chapters where he is unexpectedly executed.

Focal character: In any narrative, the focal character is the character on whom the audience is meant to place the majority of their interest and attention. They are almost always also the protagonistof the story; however, in cases where the "focal character" and "protagonist" are separate, the focal character's emotions and ambitions are not meant to be empathized with by the audience to as high an extent as the protagonist (this is the main difference between the two character terms). The focal character is mostly created to simply be the "excitement" of the story, though not necessarily the main character about whom the audience is emotionally concerned. The focal character is, more than anyone else, "the person on whom the spotlight focuses; the center of attention; the man whose reactions dominate the screen."

Eg: In Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera*, the protagonist is Christine Daaé (the audience is concerned mostly with her emotions, aims, and well-being), while the focal character is the "Phantom" (the audience is concerned mostly with the allure of his actions and reactions—though to some degree, later on, his emotions as well). In another example, in "The Fall of the House of Usher" by Edgar Allan Poe, the protagonist of the story is unnamed and does not have a great effect on the story, though he is present. He does not show much emotion throughout the story, and the reader is not as interested in him. The focal character of the story is Roderick Usher, whom the reader cares for more greatly and follows his condition and emotions more.

The focal character is also not necessarily the same thing as the viewpoint character, through whose perspective the story is seen. In Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's works of Sherlock Holmes, Watson is the viewpoint character, but the story revolves around Holmes, making him the focal character.

Foil: In literature, a foil is a character that shows qualities that are in contrast with the qualities of another character. The objective is to highlight the traits of the other character. The term *foil*, though generally being applied to a contrasting character, may also be used for any comparison that is drawn to portray a difference between two things. A foil is a secondary character who contrasts with the major character to enhance the importance of the major character. The etymology of the term *foil*testifies the aforementioned assertion as the word is taken from the practice of backing gems with foil (tool), so that they shine more brightly.
Eg: Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Book I, is based on the comparison of two contrasting characters: God and Satan. Satan, in the entire work, appears as a foil to God. The negative traits of Satan and the positive traits of God are frequently compared, which consequently brings to the surface not only the contrast between the two characters, but also "justify the ways of God…" We reach a conclusion that it is only just for Satan to be expelled from the paradise because of his refusal to give in to the will of God.

Protagonist: Characters in a story have many roles and purposes, all of them dictated by the writer's intent and style. The protagonist (sometimes called the hero or heroine) is the main character in a story, novel, drama, or other literary work. The protagonist is the character that the reader or audience empathizes with. The protagonist typically makes the key decisions and he or she will experience the consequences of those decisions.In some cases, the reader will experience the story through the eyes of the protagonist. But that is not always the case. In some instances, the story can be revealed through several characters who describe their perspective to the reader or the audience. The nature and moral fiber of the protagonist can also vary. The protagonist may be the hero or heroine of the story, as well as a character that the reader or audience dislikes.

Eg:*Vanity Fair* -Becky Sharpe is by far more interesting than *Vanity Fair*'s extremely good Amelia, and for this reason, the story's primary center of gravity remains with Becky.

Stock character:A **stock character** is a stereotypical fictional character in a work of art such as a novel, play, or film, whom audiences recognize from frequent recurrences in a particular

literary tradition. Stock characters are archetypal characters distinguished by their flatness. As a result, they tend to be easy targets for parody and to be criticized as clichés. The presence of a particular array of stock characters is a key component of many genres. The point of the stock character is to move the story along by allowing the audience to already understand the character.

Eg: *Romeo and Juliet* - Tybalt is an example of a stock character. He is the hothead who causes trouble and cannot be reasoned with. Many stories have one. Tybalt sees Romeo at the ball and refuses to allow him to be there. He wants to fight Romeo even after Capulet insists that he has a good reputation. Later, he sees Romeo on the street and insists on fighting him again, even after Romeo does not want to fight. Of course Romeo does not want to fight, he is in love with Tybalt's cousin Juliet! Yet Tybalt will not listen.

Supporting character:A supporting character is a character in a narrative that is not focused on by the primary storyline, but appears or is mentioned in the story enough to be more than just a minor character or a cameo appearance. Sometimes, supporting characters may develop a complex back-story of their own, but this is usually in relation to the main character, rather than entirely independently. In television, supporting characters may appear in more than half of the episodes per season.

In some cases, especially in ongoing material such as comic books and television series, supporting characters themselves may become main characters in a spin-off if they are sufficiently popular with fans

Eg: Mythology offers us Homer's Iliad and Odyssey. Odysseus is, of course, an important character in the Iliad (something to do with a horse, IIRC), but only one of many and features quite late in the story. The Odyssey is then the story of his (very extended) journey home (although it should be pointed out that 7 years of his 10 year journey are spent shacked up with Circe). You could also add Virgil's Aeneid, which begins with the fall of Troy and follows Aeneas, a refugee from the Trojan side, on his journeys.But possibly the most famous example is in theatre, and it's a triple example. Shakespeare's History play sequence of Richard II to Henry V sees Henry Bolingbroke as a secondary character in Richard II, but rising to the throne as King Henry IV in Henry IV parts I and II. One of the major subplots of Henry IV is Prince Hal's

carousing with Sir John Falstaff. Both Hal and Falstaff got to star in their own right in Henry V and The Merry Wives of Windsor respectively.

Tritagonist: In literature, the tritagonist or tertiary main character is the third most important character of a narrative, after the protagonist and deuteragonist. In ancient Greek drama, the tritagonist was the third member of the acting troupe.

As a character, a tritagonist may act as the instigator or cause of the sufferings of the protagonist. Despite being the least sympathetic character of the drama, he or she occasions the situations by which pity and sympathy for the protagonist are excited

Narrator:A narrator is the person from whose perspective a story is told. The narrator narrates the text.A narrator only exists in fictional texts or in a narrative poem. A narrator may be a character in the text; however, the narrator does not have to be a character in the text.The point of a narrator is to narrate a story, i.e., to tell the story. What the narrator can and cannot see determines the perspective of the text and also determines how much the reader knows.
"The term **'narrator'** can be used in both a broad and a narrow sense. The broad sense is 'one who tells a story,' whether that person is real or imagined; this is the sense given in most dictionary definitions. Literary scholars, however, by 'narrator' often mean a purely imaginative person, a voice emerging from a text to tell a story. Narrators of this kind include omniscient narrators, that is, narrators not only who are imaginary but who exceed normal human capabilities in their knowledge of events."

Personification: Using comparative metaphors and similes to give living characteristics to abstract concepts and non-human entities.
Eg: Taken from Act I, Scene II of *Romeo and Juliet*: “When well-appareled April on the heel / Of limping winter treads.”

Anthropomorphism: Form of personification that applies human-like characteristics to animals and objects.
Eg: *The Adventures of Pinocchio* by Carlo Collodi or the Cheshire Cat of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll.

Hamartia: The character flaw of an initially rich and powerful hero that leads to his tragic downfall. This is also referred to as the tragic flaw. The character flaw of an initially rich and powerful hero that leads to his tragic downfall. This is also referred to as the tragic flaw.
Eg: Oedipus kills his own father because he doesn't understand his true parentage.

Pathetic fallacy: Reflecting a character's (usually the protagonist) mood in the atmosphere or inanimate objects. Related to anthropomorphism and projection.
Eg: The storm in William Shakespeare's *King Lear*, which mirrors Lear's mental deterioration.

Narrative Techniques in Theme:

Thematic patterning: Distributing recurrent thematic concepts and moralistic motifs among various incidents and frames of a story. In a skillfully crafted tale, thematic patterning may emphasize the unifying argument or salient idea disparate events and disparate frames have in common.
Eg: Each of the chapters of Ulysses by James Joyce.

Metaphor: Evoking imagination by means of using figurative language.
Eg: Her tears were a river flowing down her cheeks.

Irony: This discrepancy between expectation and reality occurs in three forms: situational irony, where a situation features a discrepancy between what is expected and what is actualized; dramatic irony, where a character is unaware of pivotal information already revealed to the audience (the discrepancy here lies in the two levels of awareness between the character and the audience); and verbal irony, where one states one thing while meaning another. The difference between verbal irony and sarcasm is exquisitely subtle and often contested. The concept of irony is too often misunderstood in popular usage. Unfortunate circumstances and coincidences do not constitute irony (nor do they qualify as being *tragic*.
Eg: A person hears a prophecy about himself. His endeavor to stop the prophecy from coming true, makes it come true.

2 Types of Fiction:

Ethnic

Stories and novels whose central characters are black, Native American, Italian-American, Jewish, Appalachian or members of some other specific cultural group. Ethnic fiction usually deals with a protagonist caught between two conflicting ways of life: mainstream American culture and his ethnic heritage.

Eg: *Brick Lane*by Monica Ali

Fictional

The biography of a real person that goes beyond the events of a person's life by being fleshed out with imagined scenes and dialogue. The writer of fictional biographies strives to make it clear that the story is, indeed, fiction and not history. Eg: *Alice in Wonderland* by Lewis Carroll is a good example of fiction. The story narrates various adventures of the main character, Alice, in a fictitious land full of incredible creatures and events. Alice has to go through certain magical experiences in the wonderland. According to the story, one day, while reading book, Alice grows bored, and notices a white rabbit. She follows the rabbit when it goes into a hole in the ground.When peeping through the hole, Alice loses her balance and falls in. She floats down slowly into the hole, and observes everything around her. Then Alice enters Wonderland, where she witnesses a number of weird things. This entire magical tale is fabricated and imaginary, which makes it a good fiction to enjoy.

Gothic

This type of category fiction dates back to the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Contemporary gothic novels are characterized by atmospheric, historical settings and feature young, beautiful women who win the favor of handsome, brooding heroes—simultaneously dealing successfully with some life-threatening menace, either natural or supernatural. Gothics rely on mystery, peril, romantic relationships and a sense of foreboding for their strong, emotional effect on the reader.

Eg: A classic early gothic novel is Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights*. The gothic writer builds a series of credible, emotional crises for his ultimately triumphant heroine. Sex between the woman and her lover is implied rather than graphically detailed; the writer's descriptive talents

are used instead to paint rich, desolate, gloomy settings in stark mansions and awesome castles. He composes slow-paced, intricate sketches that create a sense of impending evil on every page.

Historical

A fictional story set in a recognizable period of history. As well as telling the stories of ordinary people's lives, historical fiction may involve political or social events of the time.

Eg: War and Peaceby Leo TolstoyTolstoy's 1869 novel - often described as the greatest ever - chronicles the effects of the Napoleonic wars on five aristocratic Russian families.

Horror

Howard Phillips (H.P.) Lovecraft, generally acknowledged to be the master of the horror tale in the twentieth century and the most important American writer of this genre since Edgar Allan Poe, maintained that "The oldest and strongest emotion of mankind is fear, and the oldest and strongest kind of fear is fear of the unknown. These facts few psychologists will dispute, and their admitted truth must establish for all time the genuineness and dignity of the weirdly horrible tales as a literary form." Lovecraft distinguishes horror literature from fiction based entirely on physical fear and the merely gruesome. "The true weird tale has something more than secret murder, bloody bones or a sheeted form clanking chains according to rule. A certain atmosphere of breathless and unexplainable dread of outer, unknown forces must be present; there must be a hint, expressed with a seriousness and portentousness becoming its subject, of that most terrible concept of the human brain—a malign and particular suspension or defeat of the fixed laws of Nature which are our only safeguards against the assaults of chaos and the daemons of unplumbed space." It is that atmosphere—the creation of a particular sensation or emotional level—that, according to Lovecraft, is the most important element in the creation of horror literature.

Eg: Victor Lavalle's *The Ballad of Black Tom*

Victor LaValle's novels and characters are strange, surreal, and idiosyncratic, and his almost-formal style of writing makes the reading experience just as strange.

Structuralism:

In sociology, anthropology, and linguistics, structuralism is the methodology that implies elements of human culture must be understood by way of their relationship to a larger, overarching system or structure. It works to uncover the structures that underlie all the things that humans do, think, perceive, and feel. Alternatively, as summarized by philosopher Simon Blackburn, structuralism is "the belief that phenomena of human life are not intelligible except through their interrelations. These relations constitute a structure, and behind local variations in the surface phenomena there are constant laws of abstract culture".

Structuralism in Europe developed in the early 1900s, in the structural linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure and the subsequent Prague, Moscow and Copenhagen schools of linguistics. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, when structural linguistics was facing serious challenges from the likes of Noam Chomsky and thus fading in importance, an array of scholars in the humanities borrowed Saussure's concepts for use in their respective fields of study. French anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss was arguably the first such scholar, sparking a widespread interest in structuralism.

The structuralist mode of reasoning has been applied in a diverse range of fields, including anthropology, sociology, psychology, literary criticism, economics and architecture. The most prominent thinkers associated with structuralism include Claude Lévi-Strauss, linguist Roman Jakobson, and psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan. As an intellectual movement, structuralism was initially presumed to be the heir apparent to existentialism.[3] However, by the late 1960s, many of structuralism's basic tenets came under attack from a new wave of predominantly French intellectuals such as the philosopher and historian Michel Foucault, the philosopher and linguist Jacques Derrida, the Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser, and the literary critic Roland Barthes. Though elements of their work necessarily relate to structuralism and are informed by it, these theorists have generally been referred to as post-structuralists. In the 1970s, structuralism was criticized for its rigidity and ahistoricism. Despite this, many of structuralism's proponents, such as Lacan, continue to assert an influence on continental philosophy and many of the fundamental assumptions of some of structuralism's post-structuralist critics are a continuation of structuralism.

Imagism:

Imagism is a type of poetry that describes images with simple language and great focus. It came out of the Modernist movement in poetry. In the early 1900s, poets abandoned the old ways of writing poems and created a new movement in poetry called Modernism. Modernist poets changed the style and content of poetry by abandoning rhyme and meter, among other things.

Some Modernist poets began to focus on imagery in poetry. In traditional poetry, images are described in great detail with many words, and then they are linked to a philosophical idea or theme.

A 20th century movement in poetry advocating free verse and the expression of ideas and emotions through clear precise images.This advocated the use of free verse, common speech patterns, and clear concrete images as a reaction to Victorian sentimentalism.

Example:

"Aubade" by William Shakespeare

HARK! hark! the lark at heaven's gate sings,

And Phoebus 'gins arise,

His steeds to water at those springs

On chaliced flowers that lies;

And winking Mary-buds begin

To ope their golden eyes:

With everything that pretty bin,

My lady sweet, arise!

Arise, arise!

Aubade is a song sung outdoors usually at dawn.This little piece is captivating.The imagery are Phebus' steeds ,the steeds turning to water at those springs, chaliced flowers ,Mary-buds opening their golden eyes.

Symbolism:

Definition: Symbolism is the representation of one thing for another using a person, object, or idea.

When used as a literary device, symbolism means to instill objects with a certain meaning that is different from their original meaning or function. Other literary devices, such as *metaphor, allegory, and allusion*, aid in the development of symbolism.

Symbolism is often used by writers to enhance their writing. Symbolism can give a literary work more richness and color and can make the meaning of the work deeper.

Purpose of Symbolism:

Symbolism is the representation of one thing for another using a person, object, or idea. A symbol is a person, place, action, word, or thing that by association, resemblance, or convention represents something other than itself. Strengthened by other forms of figurative language, such as metaphors and imagery, symbols can deepen the meaning an object already has. The bird is a symbol both of female independence and of nature. A symbol is the use of something concrete to represent an abstract concept.

Symbols do alter their meanings depending on the context they are used in. “A chain”, for example, may stand for “union” as well as “imprisonment”. Thus, symbolic meaning of an object or an action is understood by when, where and how it is used. It also depends on who reads them.

Symbolism gives a writer freedom to add double levels of meanings to his work: a literal one that is self-evident and the symbolic one whose meaning is far more profound than the literal one. The symbolism, hence, gives universality to the characters and the themes of a piece of literature. Symbolism in literature evokes interest in readers as they find an opportunity to get an insight of the writer’s mind on how he views the world and how he thinks of common objects and actions, having broader insinuations.

Examples of Symbolism:

In Shakespeare’s play, *Hamlet,* Yorick’s skull is a symbol for both death and fate. Hamlet speaks to this skull at great length, contemplating death and the concept of mortality. The skull is a physical representation of these ideas.

In Robert Frost's poem "The Road not Taken," two roads represent choices in life. The roads "diverged in a yellow wood" and the speaker has the option to choose one or the other. He contemplates each and eventually chooses "the road less traveled by" which ends up "making all the difference."

4. Stream of Consciousness :

Stream of consciousness, narrative technique in nondramatic fiction intended to render the flow of myriad impressions—visual, auditory, physical, associative, and subliminal—that impinge on the consciousness of an individual and form part of his awareness along with the trend of his rational thoughts. The term was first used by the psychologist William James in *The Principles of Psychology*(1890). As the psychological novel developed in the 20th century, some writers attempted to capture the total flow of their characters' consciousness, rather than limit themselves to rational thoughts. To represent the full richness, speed, and subtlety of the mind at work, the writer incorporates snatches of incoherent thought, ungrammatical constructions, and free association of ideas, images, and words at the pre-speech level.

The stream-of-consciousness novel commonly uses the narrative techniques of interior monologue. Probably the most famous example is James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922), a complex evocation of the inner states of the characters Leopold and Molly Bloom and Stephen Dedalus. Other notable examples include *Leutnant Gustl* (1901) by Arthur Schnitzler, an early use of stream of consciousness to re-create the atmosphere of pre-World War I Vienna; William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* (1929), which records the fragmentary and impressionistic responses in the minds of three members of the Compson family to events that are immediately being experienced or events that are being remembered; and Virginia Woolf's *The Waves* (1931), a complex novel in which six characters recount their lives from childhood to old age.

5. Figures of Speech:

Definition:

A figure of speech is a literary device in which language is used in an unusual—or "figured"—way in order to produce a stylistic effect. Figures of speech can be broken into two main groups: figures of speech that play with the ordinary meaning of words (such as metaphor, simile,

and hyperbole), and figures of speech that play with the ordinary arrangement or pattern in which words are written (such as alliteration, ellipsis, and antithesis).
The oldest and still most common way to organize figures of speech is to split them into two main groups: tropes and schemes.

- **Tropes** are figures of speech that involve a deviation from the expected and literal meaning of words.
- **Schemes** are figures of speech that involve a deviation from the typical mechanics of a sentence, such as the order, pattern, or arrangement of words.

1. Tropes:

Generally, a trope uses comparison, association, or wordplay to play with the literal meaning of words or to layer another meaning on top of a word's literal meaning. Some of the most commonly used tropes are explained briefly below.

Metaphor: A metaphor is a figure of speech that makes a comparison between two unrelated things by stating that one thing is another thing, even though this isn't literally true. For example, if someone says "it's raining cats and dogs," this obviously doesn't literally mean what it says—it's a metaphor that makes a comparison between the weight of "cats and dogs" and heavy rain. Metaphors are tropes because their effect relies not on the mechanics of the sentence, but rather on the association created by the use of the phrase "cats and dogs" in a non-literal manner.

Simile: A simile, like a metaphor, makes a comparison between two unrelated things. However, instead of stating that one thing *is* another thing (as in metaphor), a simile states that one thing is *like* another thing. To stick with cats and dogs, an example of a simile would be to say "they fought like cats and dogs."

Oxymoron: An oxymoron pairs contradictory words in order to express new or complex meanings. In the phrase "parting is such sweet sorrow" from *Romeo and Juliet*, "sweet sorrow" is an oxymoron that captures the complex and simultaneous feelings of pain and pleasure associated with passionate love. Oxymorons are tropes because their effect comes from a combination of the two words that goes beyond the literal meanings of those words.

Hyperbole: A hyperbole is an intentional exaggeration of the truth, used to emphasize the importance of something or to create a comic effect. An example of a hyperbole is to say that a backpack "weighs a ton." No backpack literally weighs a ton, but to say "my backpack weighs ten pounds" doesn't effectively communicate how burdensome a heavy backpack feels. Once again, this is a trope because its effect comes from understanding that the words mean something different from what they literally say.

Irony: Irony is a literary device or event in which how things seem to be is in fact very different from how they actually are. If this seems like a loose definition, don't worry—it is. Irony is a broad term that encompasses three different types of irony, each with their own specific definition: verbal irony, dramatic irony, and situational irony. Most of the time when people use the word irony, they're actually referring to one of these specific types of irony.

Paradox :A paradox is a figure of speech that seems to contradict itself, but which, upon further examination, contains some kernel of truth or reason. Oscar Wilde's famous declaration that "Life is much too important to be taken seriously" is a paradox. At first it seems contradictory because important things are meant to be taken seriously, but Wilde's paradoxical suggestion is that, the more important something is, the more important it is *not* to take it seriously.

Personification: Personification is a type of figurative language in which non-human things are described as having human attributes, as in the sentence, "The rain poured down on the wedding guests, indifferent to their plans." Describing the rain as "indifferent" is an example of personification, because rain can't be "indifferent," nor can it feel any other human emotion. However, *saying* that the rain feels indifferent poetically emphasizes the cruel timing of the rain. Personification can help writers to create more vivid descriptions, to make readers see the world in new ways, and to more powerfully capture the human experience of the world (since people really *do* often interpret the non-human entities of the world as having human traits).

2. Schemes:

Schemes are mechanical—they're figures of speech that tinker with words, sounds, and structures (as opposed to meanings) in order to achieve an effect. Schemes can themselves be broken down in helpful ways that define the sort of tinkering they employ.

Repetition: Repeating words, phrases, or even sounds in a particular way.

Omission: Leaving out certain words or punctuation that would normally be expected.

Changes of word order: Shifting around words or phrases in atypical ways.

Balance: Creating sentences or phrases with equal parts, often through the use of identical grammatical structures.

Some of the most commonly used schemes are explained briefly below, though you can get even more detail on each from its specific LitCharts entry.

Alliteration: In alliteration, the same sound repeats in a group of words, such as the “b” sound in: “Bob brought the box of bricks to the basement.” Alliteration uses repetition to create a musical effect that helps phrases to stand out from the language around them.

Assonance: A scheme in which vowel sounds repeat in nearby words, such as the "ee" sound in the proverb: "the squeaky wheel gets the grease." Like alliteration, assonance uses repeated sounds to create a musical effect in which words echo one another—it's a scheme because this effect is achieved through repetition of words with certain sounds, not by playing with the meaning of words.

Ellipsis: The deliberate omission of one or more words from a sentence because their meaning is already implied. In the example, "Should I call you, or you me?" the second clause uses ellipsis. While its implication is "or should you call me," the context of the sentence allows for the omission of "should" and "call." Ellipsis is a scheme because it involves an uncommon usage of language.

Parallelism: The repetition of sentence structure for emphasis and balance. This can occur in a single sentence, such as "a penny saved is a penny earned," and it can also occur over the course

of a speech, poem, or other text. Parallelism is a scheme because it creates emphasis through the mechanics of sentence structure, rather than by playing with the actual meanings of words.

Anaphora: Anaphora is a figure of speech in which words repeat at the beginning of successive clauses, phrases, or sentences. For example, Martin Luther King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech contains anaphora: "So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania..."

SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT– 2- Fiction II – SHS1202

2.1 Stream of Consciousness

Definition:

In literature, stream of consciousness is a method of narration that describes happenings in the flow of thoughts in the minds of the characters.

The term was initially coined by psychologist William James in his research, *The Principles of Psychology*. He writes:

"… it is nothing joined; it flows. A 'river' or a 'stream' is the metaphors by which it is most naturally described. In talking of it hereafter, let's call it the stream of thought, consciousness, or subjective life."

Another appropriate term for this device is "interior monologue," where the individual thought processes of a character, associated to his or her actions, are portrayed in the form of a monologue that addresses the character itself. Therefore, it is different from the "dramatic monologue" or "soliloquy," where the speaker addresses the audience or the third person.

Function of Stream of Consciousness:

Stream of consciousness is a style of writing developed by a group of writers at the beginning of the 20th century. It aimed at expressing in words the flow of characters' thoughts and feelings in their minds. The technique aspires to give readers the impression of being inside the minds of the characters. Therefore, the internal view of the minds of the characters sheds light on plot and motivationin the novel.

Examples of Stream of Consciousness in Literature

The stream of consciousness style of writing is marked by the sudden rise of thoughts and lack of punctuation. The use of this narration style is generally associated with the modern novelist and short story writers of the 20th century.

Example 1: *Ulysses* (By James Joyce)

James Joyce successfully employs the narrative mode in his novel *Ulysses*, which describes a day in the life of a middle-aged Jew, Mr. Leopold Broom, living in Dublin, Ireland. Read the following excerpt:

"He is young Leopold, as in a retrospective arrangement, a mirror within a mirror (hey, presto!), he beholdeth himself. That young figure of then is seen, precious manly, walking on a nipping morning from the old house in Clambrassil to the high school, his book satchel on him bandolier wise, and in it a goodly hunk of wheaten loaf, a mother's thought."

These lines reveal the thoughts of Bloom, as he thinks of the younger Bloom. The self-reflection is achieved by the flow of thoughts that takes him back to his past.

Example 2: *Mrs. Dalloway* (By Virginia Woolf)

Another 20th-century writer that followed James Joyce's narrative method was Virginia Woolf. Let us read an excerpt from her novel *Mrs. Dalloway*:

"What a lark! What a plunge! For so it always seemed to me when, with a little squeak of the hinges, which I can hear now, I burst open the French windows and plunged at Bourton into the open air. How fresh, how calm, stiller than this of course, the air was in the early morning; like the flap of a wave; the kiss of a wave; chill and sharp and yet (for a girl of eighteen as I then was) solemn, feeling as I did, standing there at the open window, that something awful was about to happen …"

By voicing her internal feelings, the Ms. Woolf gives freedom to the characters to travel back and forth in time. Mrs. Dalloway went out to buy flower for herself, and on the way her thoughts move through the past and present, giving us an insight into the complex nature of her character.

Example 3: *The British Museum Is Falling Down* (By David Lodge)

We notice the use of this technique in David Lodge's novel *The British Museum Is Falling Down*. It is a comic novel that imitates the stream of consciousness narrative techniques of

writers like Henry James, James Joyce, and Virginia Woolf. Below is an excerpt from Chapter 3 of the novel:

"It partook, he thought, shifting his weight in the saddle, of metempsychosis, the way his humble life fell into moulds prepared by literature. Or was it, he wondered, picking his nose, the result of closely studying the sentence structure of the English novelists? One had resigned oneself to having no private language any more, but one had clung wistfully to the illusion of a personal property of events. A find and fruitless illusion, it seemed, for here, inevitably came the limousine, with its Very Important Personage, or Personages, dimly visible in the interior. The policeman saluted, and the crowd pressed forward, murmuring 'Philip', 'Tony', 'Margaret', 'Prince Andrew'."

We see the imitation of the typical structure of the stream-of-conscious narrative technique of Virginia Woolf. We notice the integration of the outer and inner realities in the passage that is so typical of Virginia Woolf, especially the induction of the reporting clauses "he thought," and "he wondered," in the middle of the reported clauses.

2.2 Salman Rushdie- *Midnight's Children*

Born on June 19, 1947, in Bombay (now Mumbai), India, Salman Rushdie is a British-Indian novelist. The only son of a University of Cambridge-educated businessman and school teacher in Bombay, Rushdie studied history at King's College at the University of Cambridge. Rushdie's 1988 novel, The Satanic Verses (1988), led to accusations of blasphemy against Islam, forcing him to go into hiding for several years.

Sir Ahmed Salman Rushdie was born June 19, 1947 in Bombay (now Mumbai), India. The only son of a wealthy Indian businessman and a school teacher, Rushdie was educated at a Bombay private school before attending The Rugby School, a boarding school in Warwickshire, England. He went on to attend King's College at the University of Cambridge, where he studied history.

After earning his M.A. from Cambridge, Rushdie briefly lived with his family in Pakistan, where his parents had moved in 1964. There, he found work as a television writer but soon returned to England, where for much of the 1970s he worked as a copywriter for an advertising agency.

While Rushdie would later become a target of Muslim extremists, the religion was very much a part of his upbringing. His grandfather, a kind man and family doctor, was a devout Muslim, who said his prayers five times a day and went to Hajj to Mecca.But his grandfather's embrace of the religion was not shrouded in intolerance, something that greatly shaped the young Rushdie.

"You could sit there as an 11- or 12-year-old boy and say, 'Grandfather, I don't believe in god.' And he would say, 'Really? That's very interesting. Sit down here and tell me all about it.' And there would be no kind of attempt to ram something down your throat or criticize you. There would just be conversation."

In 1975 Rushdie published his first book, Grimus, a fantasy and science fiction novel that received tepid reviews. Undeterred by the response, Rushdie kept writing and his second work, Midnight's Children, proved life altering.

Published in 1981, the book, which tells the story of India's complicated history through a pickle-factory worker named Saleem Sinai, was a critical and commercial success. The honors included the Booker Prize and the James Tait Black Memorial Prize (for fiction). In 1993 and 2008 it was awarded the "Best of the Bookers," a distinction that made it the best novel to have won a Booker Prize for Fiction in the award's 25 and later 40-year history.

Rushdie's follow-up, 1983's Shame won the French literary prize, Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger, and was shortlisted for the Booker Prize, further cementing Rushdie's place among literature's upper echelon.

In 1988 Rushdie published The Satanic Verses, a novel drenched in magical realism and whose main story was inspired in part by the life of Muhammad. Critics adored it. The book won the Whitbread Award for novel of the year and was a finalist for the Booker Prize.

But it also drew immediate condemnation from the Islamic world for what was perceived to be its irreverent account of Muhammad. In many countries with large Muslim populations, the novel was banned and on February 14, 1989, Ayatollah Khomeini, the spiritual leader of Iran, issued a fatwa requiring the author's execution. A bounty was offered for Rushdie's death and for a number of years the writer was forced to live under police protection.

To try and dial back the outrage, Rushdie issued a public apology and voiced his support for Islam. The heat around The Satanic Verses eventually cooled and in 1998, Iran declared it would not support the fatwa.In 2012 Rushdie published Joseph Anton: A Memoir, an autobiographical account of what life was like for him during the decade-long fatwa.

Even at the height of controversy surrounding his famous novel, Rushdie continued to write. In all he's written eleven novels, as well as a pair of children's books and published several collections of essays and works of non-fiction. Rushdie's 12th novel, Two Years Eight Months and Twenty-Eight Nights was published in September 2015. Overall, his books have been translated into more than 40 languages.

Rushdie's litany of honors and awards are considerable, including honorary doctorates and fellowships at six European and six American universities. In 2007 Queen Elizabeth II knighted him. In 2014 Rushdie was awarded the PEN/Pinter Prize. Established in memory of the late Nobel-Laureate playwright Harold Pinter, the annual award honors a British writer for their body of work.

Rushdie has also maintained a fiery tongue and pen. He's been a fierce defender of freedom of expression and was a frequent critic of the US led war in Iraq. In 2008 he publicly regretted his embrace of Islam in the wake of the criticism of The Satanic Verses.

"It was deranged thinking," he said. "I was more off-balance than I ever have been, but you can't imagine the pressure I was under. I simply thought I was making a statement of fellowship. As soon as I said it, I felt as if I had ripped my own tongue out."

Plot Overview:

Saleem Sinai, the narrator of *Midnight's Children*, opens the novel by explaining that he was born on midnight, August 15, 1947, at the exact moment India gained its independence from British rule. Now nearing his thirty-first birthday, Saleem believes that his body is beginning to crack and fall apart. Fearing that his death is imminent, he grows anxious to tell his life story. Padma, his loyal and loving companion, serves as his patient, often skeptical audience.
Saleem's story begins in Kashmir, thirty-two years before his birth, in 1915. There, Saleem's grandfather, a doctor named Aadam Aziz, begins treating Naseem, the woman who becomes Saleem's grandmother. For the first three years Aadam Aziz treats her, Naseem is always covered by a sheet with a small hole in it that is moved to expose the part of her that is sick. Aadam Azis sees his future wife's face for the first time on the same day World War I ends, in 1918. Aadam Aziz and Naseem marry, and the couple moves to Agra, where Aadam—a doctor whose loss of religious faith has affected him deeply—sees how protests in the name of independence get violently suppressed. Aadam and Naseem have three daughters, Alia, Mumtaz, and Emerald, and two sons, Mustapha and Hanif. Aadam becomes a follower of the optimistic activist Mian Abdullah, whose anti-Partition stance eventually leads to his assassination. Following Abdullah's death, Aadam hides Abdullah's frightened assistant, Nadir Khan, despite his wife's opposition. While living in the basement, Nadir Khan falls in love with Mumtaz, and the two are secretly married. However, after two years of marriage, Aadam finds out that his daughter is still a virgin, as Nadir and Mumtaz have yet to consummate their marriage. Nadir Khan is sent running for his life when Mumtaz's sister, Emerald, tells Major Zulfikar—an officer in the Pakistani army, soon to be Emerald's husband—about his hiding place in the house. Abandoned by her husband, Mumtaz agrees to marry Ahmed Sinai, a young merchant who until then had been courting her sister, Alia.

Mumtaz changes her name to Amina and moves to Delhi with her new husband. Pregnant, she goes to a fortune-teller who delivers a cryptic prophecy about her unborn son, declaring that the boy will never be older or younger than his country and claiming that he sees two heads, knees and a nose. After a terrorist organization burns down Ahmed's factory, Ahmed and Amina move to Bombay. They buy a house from a departing Englishman, William Methwold, who owns an estate at the top of a hill. Wee Willie Winky, a poor man who entertains the families of

Methwold's Estate, says that his wife, Vanita, is also expecting a child soon. Unbeknownst to Wee Willie Winky, Vanita had an affair with William Methwold, and he is the true father of her unborn child. Amina and Vanita both go into labor, and, at exactly midnight, each woman delivers a son. Meanwhile, a midwife at the nursing home, Mary Pereira, is preoccupied with thoughts of her radical socialist lover, Joseph D'Costa. Wanting to make him proud, she switches the nametags of the two newborn babies, thereby giving the poor baby a life of privilege and the rich baby a life of poverty. Driven by a sense of guilt afterward, she becomes an ayah, or nanny, to Saleem.

Because it occurs at the exact moment India gains its independence, the press heralds Saleem's birth as hugely significant. Young Saleem has an enormous cucumber like nose and blue eyes like those of his grandfather, Aadam Aziz. His mischievous sister, nicknamed the Brass Monkey, is born a few years later. Overwhelmed by the expectations laid on him by the prophecy, and ridiculed by other children for his huge nose, Saleem takes to hiding in a washing chest. While hiding one day, he sees his mother sitting down on the toilet; when Amina discovers him, she punishes Saleem to one day of silence. Unable to speak, he hears, for the first time, a babble of voices in his head. He realizes he has the power of telepathy and can enter anyone's thoughts. Eventually, Saleem begins to hear the thoughts of other children born during the first hour of independence. The 1,001 midnight's children—a number reduced to 581 by their tenth birthday—all have magical powers, which vary according to how close to midnight they were born. Saleem discovers that Shiva, the boy with whom he was switched at birth, was born with a pair of enormous, powerful knees and a gift for combat.

One day, Saleem loses a portion of his finger in an accident and is rushed to the hospital, where his parents learn that according to Saleem's blood type, he couldn't possibly be their biological son. After he leaves the hospital, Saleem is sent to live with his Uncle Hanif and Aunt Pia for a while. Shortly after Saleem returns home to his parents, Hanif commits suicide. While the family mourns Hanif's death, Mary confesses to having switched Saleem and Shiva at birth. Ahmed—now an alcoholic—grows violent with Amina, prompting her to take Saleem and the Brass Monkey to Pakistan, where she moves in with Emerald. In Pakistan, Saleem watches as Emerald's husband, General Zulfikar, stages a coup against the Pakistani government and ushers in a period of martial law.

Four years later, after Ahmed suffers a heart failure, Amina and the children move back to Bombay. India goes to war with China, while Saleem's perpetually congested nose undergoes a medical operation. As a result, he loses his telepathic powers but, in return, gains an incredible sense of smell, with which he can detect emotions.

Saleem's entire family moves to Pakistan after India's military loss to China. His younger sister, now known as Jamila Singer, becomes the most famous singer in Pakistan. Already on the brink of ruin, Saleem's entire family—save Jamila and himself—dies in the span of a single day during the war between India and Pakistan. During the air raids, Saleem gets hit in the head by his grandfather's silver spittoon, which erases his memory entirely.

Relieved of his memory, Saleem is reduced to an animalistic state. He finds himself conscripted into military service, as his keen sense of smell makes him an excellent tracker. Though he doesn't know exactly how he came to join the army, he suspects that Jamila sent him there as a punishment for having fallen in love with her. While in the army, Saleem helps quell the independence movement in Bangladesh. After witnessing a number of atrocities, however, he flees into the jungle with three of his fellow soldiers. In the jungle of the Sundarbans, he regains all of his memory except the knowledge of his name. After leaving the jungle, Saleem finds Parvati-the-witch, one of midnight's children, who reminds him of his name and helps him escape back to India. He lives with her in the magician's ghetto, along with a snake charmer named Picture Singh.

Disappointed that Saleem will not marry her, Parvati-the-witch has an affair with Shiva, now a famous war hero. Things between Parvati and Shiva quickly sour, and she returns to the magicians' ghetto, pregnant and still unmarried. There, the ghetto residents shun Parvati until Saleem agrees to marry her. Meanwhile, Indira Gandhi, the prime minister of India, begins a sterilization campaign. Shortly after the birth of Parvati's son, the government destroys the magician's ghetto. Parvati dies while Shiva captures Saleem and brings him to a forced sterilization camp. There, Saleem divulges the names of the other midnight's children. One by one, the midnight's children are rounded up and sterilized, effectively destroying the powers that so threaten the prime minister. Later, however, Indira Gandhi loses the first election she holds.

The midnight's children, including Saleem, are all set free. Saleem goes in search of Parvati's son, Aadam, who has been living with Picture Singh. The three take a trip to Bombay, so Picture Singh can challenge a man who claims to be the world's greatest snake charmer. While in Bombay, Saleem eats some chutney that tastes exactly like the ones his ayah, Mary, used to make. He finds the chutney factory that Mary now owns, at which Padma stands guarding the gate. With this meeting, Saleem's story comes full circle. His historical account finally complete, Saleem decides to marry Padma, his steadfast lover and listener, on his thirty-first birthday, which falls on the thirty-first anniversary of India's independence. Saleem prophesies that he will die on that day, disintegrating into millions of specks of dust.

Midnight's Children Character Analysis:

Saleem Sinai:

Saleem is the sickly narrator and protagonist of Midnight's Children. He was born at the stroke of midnight on August 15, 1947, the same moment that India gained its independence from the British Empire. The time of his birth infused him with powers of telepathy, a gift he used to find the other children born near midnight on that same day. Later, he acquired a gift of smell that allowed him to discern emotions and personalities in people. In terms of his narration as a rhetorical device, he often forgets facts of his story. His assertion of magical powers and a supernatural connection with India in his narration also makes him unreliable storyteller. Combined with his narcissistic attitude and God complex, it is difficult for the reader to ascertain whether or not he is reading too deeply into his own existence. Overall, his story is an allegory for the birth and rise of India as an independent nation.

Padma:

Padma is Saleem's present-day caretaker. She is physically strong and brawny compared to Saleem's frail, cracked body and therefore represents a more down-to-earth presence that keeps Saleem grounded. Rhetorically, her role is that of the audience as Saleem tells her about his growth in conjunction with India's growth. Whereas Saleem will follow tangents and try to explain the significance of himself and his life, Padma is more interested in the action of the tale. It is her influence that balances out Saleem's long-winded, prosaic story-telling. She also embodies the skepticism that the audience has for Saleem's narration. Her disbelief of Saleem's magic powers and metaphysical connection with India mirrors that of the reader.

Shiva:

Shiva is Saleem's "midnight twin" although they were born to different parents. Due to a switch-up at birth and uncanny physical similarities between the two babies, Saleem was given to Shiva's parents while Shiva was given to Saleem's parents. Other aspects of Shiva's life are inverted characteristics of Saleem's life. For example, Saleem is sickly and introverted, whereas Shiva is robust, healthy, and extremely violent. Shiva's attributes which coincide with those of the Hindu god Shiva. Two other aspects of the god Shiva are part of Shiva's storyline: destruction and procreation. These manifest when Shiva puts an end to the Midnight's Children Counsel, and in the fact that he fathered hundreds of children with women all across India during his 20's.

Aadam Aziz:

Aadam Aziz is Saleem's grandfather. Saleem's story begins with Aadam, an Indian doctor, returning to his homeland after obtaining his medical degree from Germany. He remains a wispy figure in Saleem's life as Aadam became increasingly absent due to a "hole" that grew inside him after he lost his faith.

Naseem Ghani/"Reverend Mother"

Naseem is Saleem's grandmother. While she and Aadam had a unique courtship, their marriage turned sour quickly due to Aadam's disgust with Naseem's religious fervor. She became known as "Reverend Mother" because of her religious devotion, and grew large and powerful in response to Aadam's shriveling personhood.

Mumtaz Aziz/Amina Sinai:

Amina Sinai is Saleem's mother. Born as Mumtaz, the second daughter to Aadam and Naseem, she enters a marriage to refugee Nadir Khan. Once the family finds out that the two never consummated their marriage, Mumtaz is divorced and then marries Ahmed Sinai. It is Ahmed who changes her name to Amina to signify her new life as his husband. As a mother, she is devoted and loving and always puts her children first when Ahmed's alcoholism threatens the family.

Ahmed Sinai:

Ahmed is Saleem's father. He tries to be a successful businessman, but his attempts at personal wealth fail -- according to him, because of a fake "family curse" he invents one night while drunk. He resents his wife and family and spends most of the story as an alcoholic.

“Brass Monkey”/Jamila Sinai/Jamila Singer:

“Brass Monkey” is the nickname of Jamila Sinai, Saleem’s sister. She goes by Brass Monkey for the majority of her childhood because of the red color of her hair and her aloof, destructive personality. It isn’t until the Sinai family moves to Pakistan that her real name, Jamila, is revealed. Immediately, she becomes famous celebrity "Jamila Singer" because of her magical, pure voice. While she and Saleem are fond for each other during their childhood, she forever shuns him after he admits that he is in love with her.

Mary Pereira:

Mary is Saleem’s nanny, known as an “ayah.” Saleem comes to see her as a second mother, even after he finds out that she was the person who switched Saleem and Shiva at birth. At the time, Mary wanted to do her part in an effort to impress her revolutionary lover, Joseph. After the switch, however, she felt guilty for her crime and dedicated her life to raising Saleem for free as compensation.

Parvati-the-witch/Leylah Sinai:

Parvati-the-witch is Saleem’s loyal friend in the Midnight’s Children Counsel. As an adult, she takes the name Leylah when she and Saleem marry. Though she carries Shiva’s biological son, Parvati and Saleem raise him as their own child.

Indira Gandhi/"The Widow":

The Widow is the fictitious representation of Indira Ghandi, the fourth Prime Minister of India. Her father was the first Prime Minister, giving her a unique position as a child of India’s independence. During her first term, she realized that the Midnight’s Children Counsel represented a threat to her leadership. With the help of Shiva’s strength and Saleem, whom she took captive, she had all the surviving members of the Midnight’s Children Council captured and sterilized so that their magical powers could not be passed down, thus securing her claim as the only “legitimate” child of India.

Major Themes

The Single and the Many

Born at the dawn of Indian independence and destined, upon his death, to break into as many pieces as there are citizens of India, Saleem Sinai manages to represent the entirety of India within his individual self. The notion that a single person could possibly embody a teeming,

diverse, multitudinous nation like India encapsulates one of the novel's fundamental concerns: the tension between the single and the many. The dynamic relationship between Saleem's individual life and the collective life of the nation suggests that public and private will always influence one another, but it remains unclear whether they can be completely equated with one another. Throughout the novel, Saleem struggles to contain all of India within himself—to cram his personal story with the themes and stories of his country—only to disintegrate and collapse at the end of his attempt.

Politically speaking, the tension between the single and the many also marks the nation of India itself. One of the fastest growing nations in the world, India has always been an incredibly diverse. Its constitution recognizes twenty-two official languages, and the population practices religions as varied as Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, and Buddhism, among many others. Indian culture is similarly hybrid, having been influenced by countless other cultures over the millennia of its development. At the same time, however, maintaining India's sprawling diversity in a peaceful fashion has often proved difficult: India's division into the Islamic nation of Pakistan and the secular, but mostly Hindu nation of India—a process known as Partition—remains the most striking example of the desire to contain and reduce India's plurality. In Midnight's Children, the child Saleem watches as protestors attempt to do divide the city of Bombay along linguistic lines, another attempt to categorize and cordon off multiplicity.

Saleem, a character who contains a multitude of experiences and sensitivities, stands in stark contrast to the protestors who demand their own language-based region, the strict monotheism of Pakistan, and Indira Gandhi's repression of contradictory dissension. His powers of telepathy allow him to transcend the barriers of language, while he himself—with his English blood, poor background, wealthy upbringing, and eclectic religious influeces—reflects India's diversity and range. The Midnight Children's Conference that he convenes is, in its initial phase, a model for pluralism and a testimony to the potential power inherent within coexisting diversity, which is a natural and definitive element of Indian culture. In Midnight's Children, the desire for singularity or purity—whether of religion or culture—breeds not only intolerance but also violence and repression.

The Unreliability of Memory and Narrative

Factual errors and dubious claims are essential aspects of Saleem's fantastic narrative. He willfully acknowledges that he misplaced Gandhi's death, an obviously seminal moment in India's history, as well as willfully misremembers the date of an election. He frets over the accuracy of his story and worries about future errors he might make. Yet, at the same time, after acknowledging his error, Saleem decides to maintain his version of events, since that's how they appeared to occur to him and now there can be no going back. Despite its potential historical inaccuracies, Saleem sees his story as being of equal importance as the world's most important religious texts. This is not only his story but also the story of India. The errors in his story, in addition to casting a shadow of doubt over some of what he claims, point to one of the novel's essential claims: that truth is not just a matter of verifiable facts. Genuine historical truth depends on perspective—and a willingness to believe. Saleem notes that memory creates its own truth, and so do narratives. Religious texts and history books alike stake their claim in truth not only because they are supported by facts but also because they have been codified and accepted upon, whether by time or faith. The version of history Saleem offers comes filtered through his perspective, just as every other version of history comes filtered through some alternate perspective. For Saleem, his version is as true as anything else that could be written, not just because this is the way he has arranged it, but because this is the version he believes.

Destruction vs. Creation

The battle between Saleem and Shiva reflects the ancient, mythological battle between the creative and destructive forces in the world. The enmity and tension between the two begin at the moment of their simultaneous births. The reference to Shiva, the Hindu god of both destruction and procreation, reflects not only the tension between destruction and creation but also the inextricably bound nature of these two forces. Saleem, as the narrator of Midnight's Children, is responsible for creating the world we, as readers, are engaged in. He represents Brahma, the god of creation. What Saleem creates, however, is not life, but a story. By delivering Saleem into the hands of the Widow, Shiva is responsible for the destruction of the midnight's children, and yet, by fathering Aadam and hundreds of other children, he ensures the continuation of their legacy.

2.3 WILLIAM FAULKNER – THE SOUND AND THE FURY

William Faulkner was born in New Albany, Mississippi, but his family soon moved to Oxford, Mississippi. Almost all of his novels take place in and around Oxford, which he renames Jefferson, Mississippi. Even though Faulkner is a contemporary American author, he is already considered to be one of the world's greatest novelists. In 1949, he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature, the highest prize that can be awarded to a writer.

Faulkner came from a rather distinguished Mississippi family. His great-grandfather, Colonel William Cuthbert Falkner (the "u" was added to Faulkner's name by mistake when his first novel was published and Faulkner retained this spelling), came to Mississippi from South Carolina during the first part of the nineteenth century. The Colonel appears in many of Faulkner's novels under the name of Colonel John Sartoris. Colonel William Falkner had a fairly notable career as a soldier both in the Mexican War and in the American Civil War. During the Civil War, Falkner's hot temper was responsible for his demotion from full colonel to lieutenant colonel. After the Civil War, Colonel Falkner was deeply involved in the problems of the reconstruction period. He killed several men during this time and became a rather notorious figure. He also built a railroad and ran for public office. During all of these fascinating activities, he took out time to write one of the nation's bestsellers, The White Rose of Memphis, which appeared in 1880. He also wrote two other books, but only his first was an outstanding success. He was finally killed by one of his rivals. The later members of the Falkner family were not quite so distinguished as was the great-grandfather.

With the publication of his third novel, Sartoris, William Faulkner placed his novels in a mythological county that he called Yoknapatawpha County. Most of the rest of his novels and short stories are set in this county. The Compsons, who are the central characters in this novel, also appear in later works. One of Faulkner's great achievements is the creation of this imaginary county. He worked out his plan so carefully that many characters who are minor characters in one novel become central characters in a later work. He also drew a map of this county to show where certain events take place; it appears at the end of a later novel, Absalom, Absalom!

In all of his work, Faulkner has used new techniques to express his views of man's position in the modern world. In his earlier works, Faulkner viewed man's position in the universe with despair. He saw man as a weak creature incapable of rising above his selfish needs. Later, Faulkner's view changed. In his more recent works, he sees man as potentially great, or, in Faulkner's own words, "Man will not merely endure: he will prevail." In almost all of his novels, Faulkner penetrates deeply into the psychological motivations for man's actions and investigates man's dilemma in the modern world. Of all his achievements, The Sound and the Fury is considered to be one of his greatest novels.

Plot Overview:

Attempting to apply traditional plot summary to The Sound and the Fury is difficult. At a basic level, the novel is about the three Compson brothers' obsessions with their sister Caddy, but this brief synopsis represents merely the surface of what the novel contains. A story told in four chapters, by four different voices, and out of chronological order, The Sound and the Fury requires intense concentration and patience to interpret and understand.

The first three chapters of the novel consist of the convoluted thoughts, voices, and memories of the three Compson brothers, captured on three different days. The brothers are Benjy, a severely retarded thirty-three-year-old man, speaking in April, 1928; Quentin, a young Harvard student, speaking in June, 1910; and Jason, a bitter farm-supply store worker, speaking again in April, 1928. Faulkner tells the fourth chapter in his own narrative voice, but focuses on Dilsey, the Compson family's devoted "Negro" cook who has played a great part in raising the children. Faulkner harnesses the brothers' memories of their sister Caddy, using a single symbolic moment to forecast the decline of the once prominent Compson family and to examine the deterioration of the Southern aristocratic class since the Civil War.

The Compsons are one of several prominent names in the town of Jefferson, Mississippi. Their ancestors helped settle the area and subsequently defended it during the Civil War. Since the war, the Compsons have gradually seen their wealth, land, and status crumble away. Mr. Compson is an alcoholic. Mrs. Compson is a self-absorbed hypochondriac who depends almost entirely upon Dilsey to raise her four children. Quentin, the oldest child, is a sensitive bundle of neuroses. Caddy is stubborn, but loving and compassionate. Jason has been difficult and mean-

spirited since birth and is largely spurned by the other children. Benjy is severely mentally disabled, an "idiot" with no understanding of the concepts of time or morality. In the absence of the self-absorbed Mrs. Compson, Caddy serves as a mother figure and symbol of affection for Benjy and Quentin.

As the children grow older, however, Caddy begins to behave promiscuously, which torments Quentin and sends Benjy into fits of moaning and crying. Quentin is preparing to go to Harvard, and Mr. Compson sells a large portion of the family land to provide funds for the tuition. Caddy loses her virginity and becomes pregnant. She is unable or unwilling to name the father of the child, though it is likely Dalton Ames, a boy from town.

Caddy's pregnancy leaves Quentin emotionally shattered. He attempts to claim false responsibility for the pregnancy, lying to his father that he and Caddy have committed incest. Mr. Compson is indifferent to Caddy's promiscuity, dismissing Quentin's story and telling his son to leave early for the Northeast.

Attempting to cover up her indiscretions, Caddy quickly marries Herbert Head, a banker she met in Indiana. Herbert promises Jason Compson a job in his bank. Herbert immediately divorces Caddy and rescinds Jason's job offer when he realizes his wife is pregnant with another man's child. Meanwhile, Quentin, still mired in despair over Caddy's sin, commits suicide by drowning himself in the Charles River just before the end of his first year at Harvard.

The Compsons disown Caddy from the family, but take in her newborn daughter, Miss Quentin. The task of raising Miss Quentin falls squarely on Dilsey's shoulders. Mr. Compson dies of alcoholism roughly a year after Quentin's suicide. As the oldest surviving son, Jason becomes the head of the Compson household. Bitterly employed at a menial job in the local farm-supply store, Jason devises an ingenious scheme to steal the money Caddy sends to support Miss Quentin's upbringing.

Miss Quentin grows up to be an unhappy, rebellious, and promiscuous girl, constantly in conflict with her overbearing and vicious uncle Jason. On Easter Sunday, 1928, Miss Quentin steals several thousand dollars from Jason and runs away with a man from a traveling show. While Jason chases after Miss Quentin to no avail, Dilsey takes Benjy and the rest of her family to Easter services at the local church.

Character Analysis:

Caddy

Born Candace Compson, daughter of Jason III and Caroline Compson, in 1892, Caddy is the second of the four Compson siblings. She is strong-willed, even as a child. Caddy is the only Compson who treats her mentally challenged little brother, Benjy, with gentleness and compassion, and Benjy adores her. Their older brother, Quentin, is obsessed with her. As an adult, her brother Jason resents her. By the time she is a teenager, Caddy is promiscuous. She becomes pregnant and marries Herbert Head without his knowing that she is pregnant by another man. Her brother Quentin's unhealthy obsession with Caddy's "honor" causes him to commit suicide, and when Caddy's husband becomes aware that the daughter she bears is not his, he divorces her. Her parents take the baby but disown their daughter, and Caddy never returns to Jefferson to live. However, she sends money for her daughter, Quentin, which her brother Jason intercepts and keeps for himself.

Benjy

Born in 1895, Benjy, originally called Maury, is the fourth and youngest child of Jason and Caroline Compson. Benjy (also called Benjamin and Ben in the novel) has his name changed by his mother at age five when his mental disability is confirmed. She does not want her brother Maury, with whom her son shares a name, to be embarrassed socially by such a namesake. Most people in the household share this attitude toward Benjy—as a humiliating burden to bear. Only Caddy and Dilsey seem to understand him. They treat Benjy compassionately and try to accommodate his needs. Although Benjy cannot speak or understand events around him, he does have an uncanny ability to intuit when a situation is very wrong. His has a sharp sense of smell that tells him when things are amiss in his world.

Dilsey

Dilsey is an African American woman in her 70s, who has been working for the Compsons and living in a cabin on their property for years. She has raised her children and grandchildren well there, while also serving as the surrogate mother of the Compson family. Dilsey is hardworking, practical, proud, and fair. She is a true believer in God's grace. Unlike the Compsons, Dilsey is

not controlled by the past but lives fully in the present. She is not afraid of the truth but ultimately realizes she has no ability to change the course of events.

Jason

Born in 1894, Jason is the third child of Jason and Caroline Compson. From childhood, Jason displays the signs of cruelty and sadism that become full-blown as an adult. As the third child, he feels he has been stuck with the remnants of the decaying family and must care for Dilsey's family as well. Jason believes the family fortune was wasted on Quentin's education and Caddy's wedding, leaving him with nothing. Power- and money-hungry, Jason struggles to escape his family's doomed history. He has no compunction about stealing from his mother, sister, and niece. Jason dreams of getting his revenge and dominating others, but fails to do so.

Quentin

Born in 1891, Quentin is the oldest child of Jason and Caroline Compson. He has an unhealthy infatuation with his sister, Caddy, that ultimately drives him to commit suicide while a student at Harvard University. Quentin seems troubled from childhood, perhaps partly by the burden of being the oldest child in a dysfunctional family. His alcoholic father fills his head with depressing philosophies about the futility of life. His self-centered mother lies in bed with fake illnesses and makes no attempt to hide her favoritism of his younger brother Jason. Quentin is viewed as the possible salvation of the family but has lost his own ability to look forward to the future. He is also obsessed with the past in the form of the Old South's code of purity regarding women's behavior and men's obligation to defend it.

Miss Quentin

Named for her uncle who died before she was born, Miss Quentin (often called simply "Quentin" in the text) seems doomed to continue the Compson fall from grace. Although her mother, Caddy, wants to see her and take care of her financially, Miss Quentin's Uncle Jason controls everything. He spites Caddy by denying her any access to her daughter and by stealing the money she sends to provide for her. Like her mother, Quentin becomes promiscuous in her teens. She gets her revenge on Jason when she runs off with his money and a man from a traveling show, never to be heard from again**.**

Theme

The Corruption of Southern Aristocratic Values

The first half of the nineteenth century saw the rise of a number of prominent Southern families such as the Compsons. These aristocratic families espoused traditional Southern values. Men were expected to act like gentlemen, displaying courage, moral strength, perseverance, and chivalry in defense of the honor of their family name. Women were expected to be models of feminine purity, grace, and virginity until it came time for them to provide children to inherit the family legacy. Faith in God and profound concern for preserving the family reputation provided the grounding for these beliefs.

The Civil War and Reconstruction devastated many of these once-great Southern families economically, socially, and psychologically. Faulkner contends that in the process, the Compsons, and other similar Southern families, lost touch with the reality of the world around them and became lost in a haze of self-absorption. This self-absorption corrupted the core values these families once held dear and left the newer generations completely unequipped to deal with the realities of the modern world.

We see this corruption running rampant in the Compson family. Mr. Compson has a vague notion of family honor—something he passes on to Quentin—but is mired in his alcoholism and maintains a fatalistic belief that he cannot control the events that befall his family. Mrs. Compson is just as self-absorbed, wallowing in hypochondria and self-pity and remaining emotionally distant from her children. Quentin's obsession with old Southern morality renders him paralyzed and unable to move past his family's sins. Caddy tramples on the Southern notion of feminine purity and indulges in promiscuity, as does her daughter. Jason wastes his cleverness on self-pity and greed, striving constantly for personal gain but with no higher aspirations. Benjy commits no real sins, but the Compsons' decline is physically manifested through his retardation and his inability to differentiate between morality and immorality.

The Compsons' corruption of Southern values results in a household that is completely devoid of love, the force that once held the family together. Both parents are distant and ineffective.

Caddy, the only child who shows an ability to love, is eventually disowned. Though Quentin loves Caddy, his love is neurotic, obsessive, and overprotective. None of the men experience any true romantic love, and are thus unable to marry and carry on the family name.

At the conclusion of the novel, Dilsey is the only loving member of the household, the only character who maintains her values without the corrupting influence of self-absorption. She thus comes to represent a hope for the renewal of traditional Southern values in an uncorrupted and positive form. The novel ends with Dilsey as the torchbearer for these values, and, as such, the only hope for the preservation of the Compson legacy. Faulkner implies that the problem is not necessarily the values of the old South, but the fact that these values were corrupted by families such as the Compsons and must be recaptured for any Southern greatness to return.

Resurrection and Renewal

Three of the novel's four sections take place on or around Easter, 1928. Faulkner's placement of the novel's climax on this weekend is significant, as the weekend is associated with Christ's crucifixion on Good Friday and resurrection on Easter Sunday. A number of symbolic events in the novel could be likened to the death of Christ: Quentin's death, Mr. Compson's death, Caddy's loss of virginity, or the decline of the Compson family in general.

The Sound and The fury as the Stream - of - consciousness novel

The term "stream-of-consciousness" refers to a technique of narration. Prior to the twentieth century, an author would simply tell the reader what one of the characters was thinking. Stream-of-consciousness is a technique whereby the author writes as though inside the minds of the characters. Since the ordinary person's mind jumps from one event to another, stream-of-consciousness tries to capture this phenomenon. Thus, in the Benjy section, everything is presented through the apparently unorganized succession of images, and, in the Quentin section, everything is presented through random ideas connected by association. We have writing that jumps from one thought to another without any indication of a change. This technique is radically different from the older form of presenting the narrative through logical sequence and argument.

This technique reflects the twentieth-century development, research, and interest in the psychology of "free association." As a technique, stream-of-consciousness was first used in English by James Joyce and Virginia Woolf. But Faulkner's use of this technique in The Sound and the Fury is probably the most successful and outstanding use that we have yet had.

Even while using this technique, Faulkner varies it with each section. For example, in the Benjy section, Faulkner's style is basically simple, which does not mean that the section is simple, but that each individual sentence is a rather simple and uncomplicated one. There are no difficult words because the vocabulary of Benjy would naturally be simple. Since his mind does not function logically, Faulkner records the thinking in terms of basic images. Thus, when Benjy sees the gate or the barn, he remembers another event that happened at the gate or the barn. Likewise, his thought can be interrupted halfway through a thought; sometimes he can return to it and sometimes the thought is lost forever. Stylistically, Faulkner has created a powerful tour de force by suggesting the functioning of Benjy's mind, but he has still brought enough order to that mind so that the reader can follow his thoughts.

Whereas Faulkner's style is relatively noncomplex in presenting the simple mind of Benjy, when he turns to the complex and intricate mind of Quentin, his style changes drastically. In Quentin's section, we find long, complex, and difficult ideas. Quentin is trying to solve complicated moral issues; therefore, his section is more complicated. Likewise, Quentin's mind is a more advanced mind and his thoughts jump from one idea to another very quickly. The technique that Faulkner uses to give order to Quentin's section is that of presenting this section on the day when Quentin is about to commit suicide. Therefore, Quentin's mind is concerned only with one or two ideas — the dishonor of his sister Caddy and the nihilistic philosophy of his father.

Whenever Quentin's mind jumps back to some thought of the past, it is to these two subjects. If Quentin had been concerned with other things, his section would be far more complicated. And as we reread the section, we realize that every scene returns to these events. For example, Quentin is riding with Gerald when he remembers his embarrassing talk with Dalton Ames on the bridge, and suddenly he asks if Gerald has a sister. The fight that occurs is a result of Quentin relating his past question and the consequent fight with Dalton to the present situation involving Gerald.

The style changes drastically again with Jason's section. Jason's mind is involved, but it is the mind of a monomaniac. He is concerned only with getting money and punishing others. Thus, his section flows along at a rapid pace because he is not troubled with the intricacies of life, and he is not concerned with images or impressions. The order and simplicity of his section is a result of his single-minded viciousness.

The final section offers us the first straightforward narrative. Here Faulkner adjusts his style to fit the character of Dilsey. We have a quiet, dignified style; the reader is presented the events of the fourth section without any comment or without any complicated sentence structure. And in the light of the other three sections narrated by a Compson, this final section has a strong sense of control and order.

Faulkner's virtuosity, therefore, is seen in the way he adjusts his style to fit the mind of each individual narrator. From Benjy's impressions and images to Quentin's obsessed concern with a single idea to Jason's monomania, Faulkner's style shifts in order to lend additional support to his subject matter.

SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT 3- Fiction II – SHS1202

Satire definition:

Satire is a literary term and form of rhetoric that uses various devices to expose flaws, critique society, and ridicule politics. Such devices include humor, irony, and exaggeration.

Satire is a style of writing that intends to ridicule and point out society's flaws. This ridicule is often masked in humor.

When using satire, the writer's intention is to expose what he thinks is a "problem" in society. This "problem" could be popular or political.

The point of satire is not only to expose but also to initiate change. The writer sees a problem and wants it corrected.

Humor is an effective way to expose flaws because it is generally received better than direct comments. A common example of using satire and humor to initiate change is political cartoons. Political cartoons provide a writer an avenue to critique society. The cartoonist does this through humor. The cartoon is received well because the audience, whether in support of the cartoonist's view or not, can laugh at the subject matter. However, the writer intends to point out a particular flaw that he thinks needs to be corrected.

List of the best satirical novels from various authors, such as Joseph Heller, Evelyn Waugh and Mark Twain, on various topics that are written to ridicule a popular point of view in order to have readers change their opinion about it. Some authors show up a few times on the list for their satirical writings so be sure that you are voting for your favourite satire book and not just the author behind the work.

Books such as *Catch-22*, *Animal Farm* and *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* are on this list because the authors present their own opinions on the subjects and usually give their solutions on how the issues can be resolved. Topics that are usually covered in satirical novels are politics,

economy, religion and other forms of power in a society. A lot of these topics are the most pressing in a society and the topics can be considered taboo.

Romance:

In the strictest academic terms, a romance is a narrative genre in literature that involves a mysterious, adventurous, or spiritual a story line where the focus is on a quest that involves bravery and strong values, not a love interest. However, modern definitions of romance also include stories that have a relationship issue as the main focus.

Examples of Romance:

In the academic sense, an example of a romance is a story in which the main character is a hero who must conquer various challenges as part of a quest. Each challenge could be its own story and can be taken out of the overall story without harming the plot.

Types of Romance:

Gothic:

In Gothic romance, the settings are usually in distant regions and the stories feature dark and compelling characters. They became popular in the late 19th century and usually had a sense of transcendence, supernatural, and irrationality. Popular Gothic novels still read by many high school students today are classics such as:

- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley
- *The Scarlet Letter* by Nathaniel Hawthorne.

Historical:

Historical romance takes place in times long past and appears romantic due to the adventure and wildness of the time. This also provides value and meaning to the lifestyle of the characters. The following novels fit in this sub-genre:

- *The Last of the Mohicans* by James Fenimore Cooper
- *Rob Roy* by Sir Walter Scott.

Contemporary/Modern:

Contemporary romance focuses on a love relationship and has a happy ending. There are two ways these romance novels are written: as a series or category romance (the author writes a succession of books that fit a theme or follow a storyline) or as a single-title romance.

Even more so, within the sub-genre romance, and as seen in many movies, there can be:

- comedy-romance
- tragic-romance
- satire-romance
- serious romance

Playwrights and poets also treat romance with various tones.

3. Jane Austen – *Pride and Prejudice*

3. 1 Plot Overview:

The news that a wealthy young gentleman named Charles Bingley has rented the manor of Netherfield Park causes a great stir in the nearby village of Longbourn, especially in the Bennet household. The Bennets have five unmarried daughters—from oldest to youngest, Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Kitty, and Lydia—and Mrs. Bennet is desperate to see them all married. After Mr. Bennet pays a social visit to Mr. Bingley, the Bennets attend a ball at which Mr. Bingley is present. He is taken with Jane and spends much of the evening dancing with her. His close friend, Mr. Darcy, is less pleased with the evening and haughtily refuses to dance with Elizabeth, which makes everyone view him as arrogant and obnoxious.

At social functions over subsequent weeks, however, Mr. Darcy finds himself increasingly attracted to Elizabeth's charm and intelligence. Jane's friendship with Mr. Bingley also continues to burgeon, and Jane pays a visit to the Bingley mansion. On her journey to the house she is caught in a downpour and catches ill, forcing her to stay at Netherfield for several days. In order to tend to Jane, Elizabeth hikes through muddy fields and arrives with a spattered dress, much to the disdain of the snobbish Miss Bingley, Charles Bingley's sister. Miss Bingley's spite only increases when she notices that Darcy, whom she is pursuing, pays quite a bit of attention to Elizabeth.

When Elizabeth and Jane return home, they find Mr. Collins visiting their household. Mr. Collins is a young clergyman who stands to inherit Mr. Bennet's property, which has been "entailed," meaning that it can only be passed down to male heirs. Mr. Collins is a pompous fool, though he is quite enthralled by the Bennet girls. Shortly after his arrival, he makes a proposal of marriage to Elizabeth. She turns him down, wounding his pride. Meanwhile, the Bennet girls have become

friendly with militia officers stationed in a nearby town. Among them is Wickham, a handsome young soldier who is friendly toward Elizabeth and tells her how Darcy cruelly cheated him out of an inheritance.

At the beginning of winter, the Bingleys and Darcy leave Netherfield and return to London, much to Jane's dismay. A further shock arrives with the news that Mr. Collins has become engaged to Charlotte Lucas, Elizabeth's best friend and the poor daughter of a local knight. Charlotte explains to Elizabeth that she is getting older and needs the match for financial reasons. Charlotte and Mr. Collins get married and Elizabeth promises to visit them at their new home. As winter progresses, Jane visits the city to see friends (hoping also that she might see Mr. Bingley). However, Miss Bingley visits her and behaves rudely, while Mr. Bingley fails to visit her at all. The marriage prospects for the Bennet girls appear bleak.

That spring, Elizabeth visits Charlotte, who now lives near the home of Mr. Collins's patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh, who is also Darcy's aunt. Darcy calls on Lady Catherine and encounters Elizabeth, whose presence leads him to make a number of visits to the Collins's home, where she is staying. One day, he makes a shocking proposal of marriage, which Elizabeth quickly refuses. She tells Darcy that she considers him arrogant and unpleasant, then scolds him for steering Bingley away from Jane and disinheriting Wickham. Darcy leaves her but shortly thereafter delivers a letter to her. In this letter, he admits that he urged Bingley to distance himself from Jane, but claims he did so only because he thought their romance was not serious. As for Wickham, he informs Elizabeth that the young officer is a liar and that the real cause of their disagreement was Wickham's attempt to elope with his young sister, Georgiana Darcy.

This letter causes Elizabeth to reevaluate her feelings about Darcy. She returns home and acts coldly toward Wickham. The militia is leaving town, which makes the younger, rather man-crazy Bennet girls distraught. Lydia manages to obtain permission from her father to spend the summer with an old colonel in Brighton, where Wickham's regiment will be stationed. With the arrival of June, Elizabeth goes on another journey, this time with the Gardiners, who are relatives of the Bennets. The trip takes her to the North and eventually to the neighborhood of Pemberley, Darcy's estate. She visits Pemberley, after making sure that Darcy is away, and delights in the building and grounds, while hearing from Darcy's servants that he is a wonderful, generous master. Suddenly, Darcy arrives and behaves cordially toward her. Making no mention of his proposal, he entertains the Gardiners and invites Elizabeth to meet his sister.

Shortly thereafter, however, a letter arrives from home, telling Elizabeth that Lydia has eloped with Wickham and that the couple is nowhere to be found, which suggests that they may be living together out of wedlock. Fearful of the disgrace such a situation would bring on her entire family, Elizabeth hastens home. Mr. Gardiner and Mr. Bennet go off to search for Lydia, but Mr. Bennet eventually returns home empty-handed. Just when all hope seems lost, a letter comes from Mr. Gardiner saying that the couple has been found and that Wickham has agreed to marry Lydia in exchange for an annual income. The Bennets are convinced that Mr. Gardiner has paid off Wickham, but Elizabeth learns that the source of the money, and of her family's salvation, was none other than Darcy.

Now married, Wickham and Lydia return to Longbourn briefly, where Mr. Bennet treats them coldly. They then depart for Wickham's new assignment in the North of England. Shortly thereafter, Bingley returns to Netherfield and resumes his courtship of Jane. Darcy goes to stay with him and pays visits to the Bennets but makes no mention of his desire to marry Elizabeth.

Bingley, on the other hand, presses his suit and proposes to Jane, to the delight of everyone but Bingley's haughty sister. While the family celebrates, Lady Catherine de Bourgh pays a visit to Longbourn. She corners Elizabeth and says that she has heard that Darcy, her nephew, is planning to marry her. Since she considers a Bennet an unsuitable match for a Darcy, Lady Catherine demands that Elizabeth promise to refuse him. Elizabeth spiritedly refuses, saying she is not engaged to Darcy, but she will not promise anything against her own happiness. A little later, Elizabeth and Darcy go out walking together and he tells her that his feelings have not altered since the spring. She tenderly accepts his proposal, and both Jane and Elizabeth are married.

Character Analysis:

Elizabeth Bennet - The novel's protagonist. The second daughter of Mr. Bennet, Elizabeth is the most intelligent and sensible of the five Bennet sisters. She is well read and quick-witted, with a tongue that occasionally proves too sharp for her own good. Her realization of Darcy's essential goodness eventually triumphs over her initial prejudice against him.

Fitzwilliam Darcy - A wealthy gentleman, the master of Pemberley, and the nephew of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Though Darcy is intelligent and honest, his excess of pride causes him to look down on his social inferiors. Over the course of the novel, he tempers his class-consciousness and learns to admire and love Elizabeth for her strong character.

Jane Bennet - The eldest and most beautiful Bennet sister. Jane is more reserved and gentler than Elizabeth. The easy pleasantness with which she and Bingley interact contrasts starkly with the mutual distaste that marks the encounters between Elizabeth and Darcy.

Charles Bingley - Darcy's considerably wealthy best friend. Bingley's purchase of Netherfield, an estate near the Bennets, serves as the impetus for the novel. He is a genial, well-intentioned

gentleman, whose easygoing nature contrasts with Darcy's initially discourteous demeanor. He is blissfully uncaring about class differences.

Mr. Bennet - The patriarch of the Bennet family, a gentleman of modest income with five unmarried daughters. Mr. Bennet has a sarcastic, cynical sense of humor that he uses to purposefully irritate his wife. Though he loves his daughters (Elizabeth in particular), he often fails as a parent, preferring to withdraw from the never-ending marriage concerns of the women around him rather than offer help.

Mrs. Bennet - Mr. Bennet's wife, a foolish, noisy woman whose only goal in life is to see her daughters married. Because of her low breeding and often unbecoming behavior, Mrs. Bennet often repels the very suitors whom she tries to attract for her daughters.

George Wickham - A handsome, fortune-hunting militia officer. Wickham's good looks and charm attract Elizabeth initially, but Darcy's revelation about Wickham's disreputable past clues her in to his true nature and simultaneously draws her closer to Darcy.

Lydia Bennet - The youngest Bennet sister, she is gossipy, immature, and self-involved. Unlike Elizabeth, Lydia flings herself headlong into romance and ends up running off with Wickham.

Mr. Collins - A pompous, generally idiotic clergyman who stands to inherit Mr. Bennet's property. Mr. Collins's own social status is nothing to brag about, but he takes great pains to let everyone and anyone know that Lady Catherine de Bourgh serves as his patroness. He is the worst combination of snobbish and obsequious.

Miss Bingley - Bingley's snobbish sister. Miss Bingley bears inordinate disdain for Elizabeth's middle-class background. Her vain attempts to garner Darcy's attention cause Darcy to admire Elizabeth's self-possessed character even more.

Lady Catherine de Bourgh - A rich, bossy noblewoman; Mr. Collins's patron and Darcy's aunt. Lady Catherine epitomizes class snobbery, especially in her attempts to order the middle-class Elizabeth away from her well-bred nephew.

Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner - Mrs. Bennet's brother and his wife. The Gardiners, caring, nurturing, and full of common sense, often prove to be better parents to the Bennet daughters than Mr. Bennet and his wife.

Charlotte Lucas - Elizabeth's dear friend. Pragmatic where Elizabeth is romantic, and also six years older than Elizabeth, Charlotte does not view love as the most vital component of a marriage. She is more interested in having a comfortable home. Thus, when Mr. Collins proposes, she accepts.

Georgiana Darcy - Darcy's sister. She is immensely pretty and just as shy. She has great skill at playing the pianoforte.

Mary Bennet - The middle Bennet sister, bookish and pedantic.

Catherine Bennet - The fourth Bennet sister. Like Lydia, she is girlishly enthralled with the soldiers.

Theme

Love

Pride and Prejudice contains one of the most cherished love stories in English literature: the courtship between Darcy and Elizabeth. As in any good love story, the lovers must elude and overcome numerous stumbling blocks, beginning with the tensions caused by the lovers' own personal qualities. Elizabeth's pride makes her misjudge Darcy on the basis of a poor first impression, while Darcy's prejudice against Elizabeth's poor social standing blinds him, for a time, to her many virtues. (Of course, one could also say that Elizabeth is guilty of prejudice and

Darcy of pride—the title cuts both ways.) Austen, meanwhile, poses countless smaller obstacles to the realization of the love between Elizabeth and Darcy, including Lady Catherine's attempt to control her nephew, Miss Bingley's snobbery, Mrs. Bennet's idiocy, and Wickham's deceit. In each case, anxieties about social connections, or the desire for better social connections, interfere with the workings of love. Darcy and Elizabeth's realization of a mutual and tender love seems to imply that Austen views love as something independent of these social forces, as something that can be captured if only an individual is able to escape the warping effects of hierarchical society. Austen does sound some more realist (or, one could say, cynical) notes about love, using the character of Charlotte Lucas, who marries the buffoon Mr. Collins for his money, to demonstrate that the heart does not always dictate marriage. Yet with her central characters, Austen suggests that true love is a force separate from society and one that can conquer even the most difficult of circumstances.

Reputation

Pride and Prejudice depicts a society in which a woman's reputation is of the utmost importance. A woman is expected to behave in certain ways. Stepping outside the social norms makes her vulnerable to ostracism. This theme appears in the novel, when Elizabeth walks to Netherfield and arrives with muddy skirts, to the shock of the reputation-conscious Miss Bingley and her friends. At other points, the ill-mannered, ridiculous behavior of Mrs. Bennet gives her a bad reputation with the more refined (and snobbish) Darcys and Bingleys. Austen pokes gentle fun at the snobs in these examples, but later in the novel, when Lydia elopes with Wickham and lives with him out of wedlock, the author treats reputation as a very serious matter. By becoming Wickham's lover without benefit of marriage, Lydia clearly places herself outside the social pale, and her disgrace threatens the entire Bennet family. The fact that Lydia's judgment,

however terrible, would likely have condemned the other Bennet sisters to marriageless lives seems grossly unfair. Why should Elizabeth's reputation suffer along with Lydia's? Darcy's intervention on the Bennets' behalf thus becomes all the more generous, but some readers might resent that such an intervention was necessary at all. If Darcy's money had failed to convince Wickham to marry Lydia, would Darcy have still married Elizabeth? Does his transcendence of prejudice extend that far? The happy ending of *Pride and Prejudice* is certainly emotionally satisfying, but in many ways it leaves the theme of reputation, and the importance placed on reputation, unexplored. One can ask of *Pride and Prejudice,* to what extent does it critique social structures, and to what extent does it simply accept their inevitability?

Class

The theme of class is related to reputation, in that both reflect the strictly regimented nature of life for the middle and upper classes in Regency England. The lines of class are strictly drawn. While the Bennets, who are middle class, may socialize with the upper-class Bingleys and Darcys, they are clearly their social inferiors and are treated as such. Austen satirizes this kind of class-consciousness, particularly in the character of Mr. Collins, who spends most of his time toadying to his upper-class patron, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Though Mr. Collins offers an extreme example, he is not the only one to hold such views. His conception of the importance of class is shared, among others, by Mr. Darcy, who believes in the dignity of his lineage; Miss Bingley, who dislikes anyone not as socially accepted as she is; and Wickham, who will do anything he can to get enough money to raise himself into a higher station. Mr. Collins's views are merely the most extreme and obvious. The satire directed at Mr. Collins is therefore also more subtly directed at the entire social hierarchy and the conception of all those within it at its correctness, in complete disregard of other, more worthy virtues. Through the Darcy-Elizabeth

and Bingley-Jane marriages, Austen shows the power of love and happiness to overcome class boundaries and prejudices, thereby implying that such prejudices are hollow, unfeeling, and unproductive. Of course, this whole discussion of class must be made with the understanding that Austen herself is often criticized as being a classist: she doesn't really represent anyone from the lower classes; those servants she does portray are generally happy with their lot. Austen does criticize class structure but only a limited slice of that structure.

Motifs

Motifs are recurring structures, contrasts, and literary devices that can help to develop and inform the text's major themes.

Courtship

In a sense, *Pride and Prejudice* is the story of two courtships—those between Darcy and Elizabeth and between Bingley and Jane. Within this broad structure appear other, smaller courtships: Mr. Collins's aborted wooing of Elizabeth, followed by his successful wooing of Charlotte Lucas; Miss Bingley's unsuccessful attempt to attract Darcy; Wickham's pursuit first of Elizabeth, then of the never-seen Miss King, and finally of Lydia. Courtship therefore takes on a profound, if often unspoken, importance in the novel. Marriage is the ultimate goal, courtship constitutes the real working-out of love. Courtship becomes a sort of forge of a person's personality, and each courtship becomes a microcosm for different sorts of love (or different ways to abuse love as a means to social advancement).

Journeys

Nearly every scene in *Pride and Prejudice* takes place indoors, and the action centers around the Bennet home in the small village of Longbourn. Nevertheless, journeys—even short ones—function repeatedly as catalysts for change in the novel. Elizabeth's first journey, by which she

intends simply to visit Charlotte and Mr. Collins, brings her into contact with Mr. Darcy, and leads to his first proposal. Her second journey takes her to Derby and Pemberley, where she fans the growing flame of her affection for Darcy. The third journey, meanwhile, sends various people in pursuit of Wickham and Lydia, and the journey ends with Darcy tracking them down and saving the Bennet family honor, in the process demonstrating his continued devotion to Elizabeth.

Symbols

Symbols are objects, characters, figures, and colors used to represent abstract ideas or concepts.

Pemberley

Pride and Prejudice is remarkably free of explicit symbolism, which perhaps has something to do with the novel's reliance on dialogue over description. Nevertheless, Pemberley, Darcy's estate, sits at the center of the novel, literally and figuratively, as a geographic symbol of the man who owns it. Elizabeth visits it at a time when her feelings toward Darcy are beginning to warm; she is enchanted by its beauty and charm, and by the picturesque countryside, just as she will be charmed, increasingly, by the gifts of its owner. Austen makes the connection explicit when she describes the stream that flows beside the mansion. "In front," she writes, "a stream of some natural importance was swelled into greater, but without any artificial appearance." Darcy possesses a "natural importance" that is "swelled" by his arrogance, but which coexists with a genuine honesty and lack of "artificial appearance." Like the stream, he is neither "formal, nor falsely adorned." Pemberley even offers a symbol-within-a-symbol for their budding romance: when Elizabeth encounters Darcy on the estate, she is crossing a small bridge, suggesting the broad gulf of misunderstanding and class prejudice that lies between them—and the bridge that their love will build across it.

4. George Orwell – *Animal Farm*

Plot Overview:

Old Major, a prize-winning boar, gathers the animals of the Manor Farm for a meeting in the big barn. He tells them of a dream he has had in which all animals live together with no human beings to oppress or control them. He tells the animals that they must work toward such a paradise and teaches them a song called "Beasts of England," in which his dream vision is lyrically described. The animals greet Major's vision with great enthusiasm. When he dies only three nights after the meeting, three younger pigs—Snowball, Napoleon, and Squealer—formulate his main principles into a philosophy called Animalism. Late one night, the animals manage to defeat the farmer Mr. Jones in a battle, running him off the land. They rename the property Animal Farm and dedicate themselves to achieving Major's dream. The cart-horse Boxer devotes himself to the cause with particular zeal, committing his great strength to the prosperity of the farm and adopting as a personal maxim the affirmation "I will work harder." At first, Animal Farm prospers. Snowball works at teaching the animals to read, and Napoleon takes a group of young puppies to educate them in the principles of Animalism. When Mr. Jones reappears to take back his farm, the animals defeat him again, in what comes to be known as the Battle of the Cowshed, and take the farmer's abandoned gun as a token of their victory. As time passes, however, Napoleon and Snowball increasingly quibble over the future of the farm, and they begin to struggle with each other for power and influence among the other animals. Snowball concocts a scheme to build an electricity-generating windmill, but Napoleon solidly opposes the plan. At the meeting to vote on whether to take up the project, Snowball gives a passionate speech. Although Napoleon gives only a brief retort, he then makes a strange noise, and nine attack dogs—the puppies that Napoleon had confiscated in order to "educate"—burst

into the barn and chase Snowball from the farm. Napoleon assumes leadership of Animal Farm and declares that there will be no more meetings. From that point on, he asserts, the pigs alone will make all of the decisions—for the good of every animal.

Napoleon now quickly changes his mind about the windmill, and the animals, especially Boxer, devote their efforts to completing it. One day, after a storm, the animals find the windmill toppled. The human farmers in the area declare smugly that the animals made the walls too thin, but Napoleon claims that Snowball returned to the farm to sabotage the windmill. He stages a great purge, during which various animals who have allegedly participated in Snowball's great conspiracy—meaning any animal who opposes Napoleon's uncontested leadership—meet instant death at the teeth of the attack dogs. With his leadership unquestioned (Boxer has taken up a second maxim, "Napoleon is always right"), Napoleon begins expanding his powers, rewriting history to make Snowball a villain. Napoleon also begins to act more and more like a human being—sleeping in a bed, drinking whisky, and engaging in trade with neighboring farmers. The original Animalist principles strictly forbade such activities, but Squealer, Napoleon's propagandist, justifies every action to the other animals, convincing them that Napoleon is a great leader and is making things better for everyone—despite the fact that the common animals are cold, hungry, and overworked.

Mr. Frederick, a neighboring farmer, cheats Napoleon in the purchase of some timber and then attacks the farm and dynamites the windmill, which had been rebuilt at great expense. After the demolition of the windmill, a pitched battle ensues, during which Boxer receives major wounds. The animals rout the farmers, but Boxer's injuries weaken him. When he later falls while working on the windmill, he senses that his time has nearly come. One day, Boxer is nowhere to be found. According to Squealer, Boxer has died in peace after having been taken to the hospital,

praising the Rebellion with his last breath. In actuality, Napoleon has sold his most loyal and long-suffering worker to a glue maker in order to get money for whisky.

Years pass on Animal Farm, and the pigs become more and more like human beings—walking upright, carrying whips, and wearing clothes. Eventually, the seven principles of Animalism, known as the Seven Commandments and inscribed on the side of the barn, become reduced to a single principle reading "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." Napoleon entertains a human farmer named Mr. Pilkington at a dinner and declares his intent to ally himself with the human farmers against the laboring classes of both the human and animal communities. He also changes the name of Animal Farm back to the Manor Farm, claiming that this title is the "correct" one. Looking in at the party of elites through the farmhouse window, the common animals can no longer tell which are the pigs and which are the human beings.

Character Analysis

Napoleon - The pig who emerges as the leader of Animal Farm after the Rebellion. Based on Joseph Stalin, Napoleon uses military force (his nine loyal attack dogs) to intimidate the other animals and consolidate his power. In his supreme craftiness, Napoleon proves more treacherous than his counterpart, Snowball.

Snowball - The pig who challenges Napoleon for control of Animal Farm after the Rebellion. Based on Leon Trotsky, Snowball is intelligent, passionate, eloquent, and less subtle and devious than his counterpart, Napoleon. Snowball seems to win the loyalty of the other animals and cement his power.

Boxer - The cart-horse whose incredible strength, dedication, and loyalty play a key role in the early prosperity of Animal Farm and the later completion of the windmill. Quick to help but rather slow-witted, Boxer shows much devotion to Animal Farm's ideals but little ability to think

about them independently. He naïvely trusts the pigs to make all his decisions for him. His two mottoes are “I will work harder” and “Napoleon is always right.”

Squealer - The pig who spreads Napoleon’s propaganda among the other animals. Squealer justifies the pigs’ monopolization of resources and spreads false statistics pointing to the farm’s success. Orwell uses Squealer to explore the ways in which those in power often use rhetoric and language to twist the truth and gain and maintain social and political control.

Old Major - The prize-winning boar whose vision of a socialist utopia serves as the inspiration for the Rebellion. Three days after describing the vision and teaching the animals the song “Beasts of England,” Major dies, leaving Snowball and Napoleon to struggle for control of his legacy. Orwell based Major on both the German political economist Karl Marx and the Russian revolutionary leader Vladimir Ilych Lenin.

Clover - A good-hearted female cart-horse and Boxer’s close friend. Clover often suspects the pigs of violating one or another of the Seven Commandments, but she repeatedly blames herself for misremembering the commandments.

Moses - The tame raven who spreads stories of Sugarcandy Mountain, the paradise to which animals supposedly go when they die. Moses plays only a small role in *Animal Farm,* but Orwell uses him to explore how communism exploits religion as something with which to pacify the oppressed.

Mollie - The vain, flighty mare who pulls Mr. Jones’s carriage. Mollie craves the attention of human beings and loves being groomed and pampered. She has a difficult time with her new life on Animal Farm, as she misses wearing ribbons in her mane and eating sugar cubes. She represents the petit bourgeoisie that fled from Russia a few years after the Russian Revolution.

Benjamin - The long-lived donkey who refuses to feel inspired by the Rebellion. Benjamin firmly believes that life will remain unpleasant no matter who is in charge. Of all of the animals on the farm, he alone comprehends the changes that take place, but he seems either unwilling or unable to oppose the pigs.

Muriel - The white goat who reads the Seven Commandments to Clover whenever Clover suspects the pigs of violating their prohibitions.

Mr. Jones - The often drunk farmer who runs the Manor Farm before the animals stage their Rebellion and establish Animal Farm. Mr. Jones is an unkind master who indulges himself while his animals lack food; he thus represents Tsar Nicholas II, whom the Russian Revolution ousted.

Mr. Frederick - The tough, shrewd operator of Pinchfield, a neighboring farm. Based on Adolf Hitler, the ruler of Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, Mr. Frederick proves an untrustworthy neighbor.

Mr. Pilkington - The easygoing gentleman farmer who runs Foxwood, a neighboring farm. Mr. Frederick's bitter enemy, Mr. Pilkington represents the capitalist governments of England and the United States.

Mr. Whymper - The human solicitor whom Napoleon hires to represent Animal Farm in human society. Mr. Whymper's entry into the Animal Farm community initiates contact between Animal Farm and human society, alarming the common animals.

Jessie and Bluebell - Two dogs, each of whom gives birth early in the novel. Napoleon takes the puppies in order to "educate" them.

Minimus - The poet pig who writes verse about Napoleon and pens the banal patriotic song "Animal Farm, Animal Farm" to replace the earlier idealistic hymn "Beasts of England," which Old Major passes on to the others.

Themes

Themes are the fundamental and often universal ideas explored in a literary work.

The Corruption of Socialist Ideals in the Soviet Union

Animal Farm is most famous in the West as a stinging critique of the history and rhetoric of the Russian Revolution. Retelling the story of the emergence and development of Soviet communism in the form of an animal fable, *Animal Farm* allegorizes the rise to power of the dictator Joseph Stalin. In the novella, the overthrow of the human oppressor Mr. Jones by a democratic coalition of animals quickly gives way to the consolidation of power among the pigs. Much like the Soviet intelligentsia, the pigs establish themselves as the ruling class in the new society.

The struggle for preeminence between Leon Trotsky and Stalin emerges in the rivalry between the pigs Snowball and Napoleon. In both the historical and fictional cases, the idealistic but politically less powerful figure (Trotsky and Snowball) is expelled from the revolutionary state by the malicious and violent usurper of power (Stalin and Napoleon). The purges and show trials with which Stalin eliminated his enemies and solidified his political base find expression in *Animal Farm* as the false confessions and executions of animals whom Napoleon distrusts following the collapse of the windmill. Stalin's tyrannical rule and eventual abandonment of the founding principles of the Russian Revolution are represented by the pigs' turn to violent government and the adoption of human traits and behaviors, the trappings of their original oppressors.

Although Orwell believed strongly in socialist ideals, he felt that the Soviet Union realized these ideals in a terribly perverse form. His novella creates its most powerful ironies in the moments in which Orwell depicts the corruption of Animalist ideals by those in power. For *Animal*

Farm serves not so much to condemn tyranny or despotism as to indict the horrifying hypocrisy of tyrannies that base themselves on, and owe their initial power to, ideologies of liberation and equality. The gradual disintegration and perversion of the Seven Commandments illustrates this hypocrisy with vivid force, as do Squealer's elaborate philosophical justifications for the pigs' blatantly unprincipled actions. Thus, the novella critiques the violence of the Stalinist regime against the human beings it ruled, and also points to Soviet communism's violence against human logic, language, and ideals.

The Societal Tendency Toward Class Stratification

Animal Farm offers commentary on the development of class tyranny and the human tendency to maintain and reestablish class structures even in societies that allegedly stand for total equality. The novella illustrates how classes that are initially unified in the face of a common enemy, as the animals are against the humans, may become internally divided when that enemy is eliminated. The expulsion of Mr. Jones creates a power vacuum, and it is only so long before the next oppressor assumes totalitarian control. The natural division between intellectual and physical labor quickly comes to express itself as a new set of class divisions, with the "brainworkers" (as the pigs claim to be) using their superior intelligence to manipulate society to their own benefit. Orwell never clarifies in *Animal Farm* whether this negative state of affairs constitutes an inherent aspect of society or merely an outcome contingent on the integrity of a society's intelligentsia. In either case, the novella points to the force of this tendency toward class stratification in many communities and the threat that it poses to democracy and freedom.

The Danger of a Naïve Working Class

One of the novella's most impressive accomplishments is its portrayal not just of the figures in power but also of the oppressed people themselves. *Animal Farm* is not told from the perspective

of any particular character, though occasionally it does slip into Clover's consciousness. Rather, the story is told from the perspective of the common animals as a whole. Gullible, loyal, and hardworking, these animals give Orwell a chance to sketch how situations of oppression arise not only from the motives and tactics of the oppressors but also from the naïveté of the oppressed, who are not necessarily in a position to be better educated or informed. When presented with a dilemma, Boxer prefers not to puzzle out the implications of various possible actions but instead to repeat to himself, "Napoleon is always right." *Animal Farm* demonstrates how the inability or unwillingness to question authority condemns the working class to suffer the full extent of the ruling class's oppression.

The Abuse of Language as Instrumental to the Abuse of Power

One of Orwell's central concerns, both in *Animal Farm* and in *1984,* is the way in which language can be manipulated as an instrument of control. In *Animal Farm,* the pigs gradually twist and distort a rhetoric of socialist revolution to justify their behavior and to keep the other animals in the dark. The animals heartily embrace Major's visionary ideal of socialism, but after Major dies, the pigs gradually twist the meaning of his words. As a result, the other animals seem unable to oppose the pigs without also opposing the ideals of the Rebellion. By the end of the novella, after Squealer's repeated reconfigurations of the Seven Commandments in order to decriminalize the pigs' treacheries, the main principle of the farm can be openly stated as "all animals are equal, but some animals are more equal than others." This outrageous abuse of the word "equal" and of the ideal of equality in general typifies the pigs' method, which becomes increasingly audacious as the novel progresses. Orwell's sophisticated exposure of this abuse of language remains one of the most compelling and enduring features of *Animal Farm,* worthy of close study even after we have decoded its allegorical characters and events.

Motifs

Songs

Animal Farm is filled with songs, poems, and slogans, including Major's stirring "Beasts of England," Minimus's ode to Napoleon, the sheep's chants, and Minimus's revised anthem, "Animal Farm, Animal Farm." All of these songs serve as propaganda, one of the major conduits of social control. By making the working-class animals speak the same words at the same time, the pigs evoke an atmosphere of grandeur and nobility associated with the recited text's subject matter. The songs also erode the animals' sense of individuality and keep them focused on the tasks by which they will purportedly achieve freedom.

State Ritual

As Animal Farm shifts gears from its early revolutionary fervor to a phase of consolidation of power in the hands of the few, national rituals become an ever more common part of the farm's social life. Military awards, large parades, and new songs all proliferate as the state attempts to reinforce the loyalty of the animals. The increasing frequency of the rituals bespeaks the extent to which the working class in the novella becomes ever more reliant on the ruling class to define their group identity and values.

Symbols

Animal Farm

Animal Farm, known at the beginning and the end of the novel as the Manor Farm, symbolizes Russia and the Soviet Union under Communist Party rule. But more generally, Animal Farm stands for any human society, be it capitalist, socialist, fascist, or communist. It possesses the internal structure of a nation, with a government (the pigs), a police force or army (the dogs), a

working class (the other animals), and state holidays and rituals. Its location amid a number of hostile neighboring farms supports its symbolism as a political entity with diplomatic concerns.

The Barn

The barn at Animal Farm, on whose outside walls the pigs paint the Seven Commandments and, later, their revisions, represents the collective memory of a modern nation. The many scenes in which the ruling-class pigs alter the principles of Animalism and in which the working-class animals puzzle over but accept these changes represent the way an institution in power can revise a community's concept of history to bolster its control. If the working class believes history to lie on the side of their oppressors, they are less likely to question oppressive practices. Moreover, the oppressors, by revising their nation's conception of its origins and development, gain control of the nation's very identity, and the oppressed soon come to depend upon the authorities for their communal sense of self.

The Windmill

The great windmill symbolizes the pigs' manipulation of the other animals for their own gain. Despite the immediacy of the need for food and warmth, the pigs exploit Boxer and the other common animals by making them undertake backbreaking labor to build the windmill, which will ultimately earn the pigs more money and thus increase their power. The pigs' declaration that Snowball is responsible for the windmill's first collapse constitutes psychological manipulation, as it prevents the common animals from doubting the pigs' abilities and unites them against a supposed enemy. The ultimate conversion of the windmill to commercial use is one more sign of the pigs' betrayal of their fellow animals. From an allegorical point of view, the windmill represents the enormous modernization projects undertaken in Soviet Russia after the Russian Revolution.

SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT 4 - Fiction II – SHS1202

Gothic Fiction

Definition of Gothic Fiction:

The term Gothic fiction refers to a style of writing that is characterized by elements of fear, horror, death, and gloom, as well as romantic elements, such as nature, individuality, and very high emotion. These emotions can include fear and suspense.

This style of fiction began in the mid 1700s with a story titled, *The Castle of Otranto* (in 1764), by Horace Walpole. This story was about a doomed family and is filled with death, desire, and intrigue. This story is considered to be the first of the Gothic fiction tales, since it encompassed many of the characteristics of the genre. The term **Gothic** actually originated as a term belittling the architecture and art of the period, which was dark, decaying, and dismal.

Characteristics of Gothic Literature:

There are a few elements of the Gothic novel that are standard for almost every novel within the Gothic Literature genre. Here are a few of them:

1. Decaying or ruined scenery
2. The use of the supernatural within the text (perhaps the Devil tries to make a deal or a portrait moves on its own)
3. An isolated (whether voluntary or involuntary) protagonist
4. An antagonist that is the epitome of evil (usually a man and usually due to a fall from grace)
5. Protagonist falls from grace due to temptation from antagonist
6. The protagonist is only saved once they are reunited with their loved one
7. The underlying theme of the novel also applies to the real world
8. Real life fears (death, murder, destruction) are the same as in real life but at a much higher rate

4.1 Charles Dickens – *Great Expectations*

Plot Overview:

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

One day Pip is taken by his Uncle Pumblechook to play at Satis House, the home of the wealthy dowager Miss Havisham, who is extremely eccentric: she wears an old wedding dress everywhere she goes and keeps all the clocks in her house stopped at the same time. During his visit, he meets a beautiful young girl named Estella, who treats him coldly and contemptuously. Nevertheless, he falls in love with her and dreams of becoming a wealthy gentleman so that he might be worthy of her. He even hopes that Miss Havisham intends to make him a gentleman and marry him to Estella, but his hopes are dashed when, after months of regular visits to Satis House, Miss Havisham decides to help him become a common laborer in his family's business.

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

One day a lawyer named Jaggers appears with strange news: a secret benefactor has given Pip a large fortune, and Pip must come to London immediately to begin his education as a gentleman.

Pip happily assumes that his previous hopes have come true—that Miss Havisham is his secret benefactor and that the old woman intends for him to marry Estella.

In London, Pip befriends a young gentleman named Herbert Pocket and Jaggers's law clerk, Wemmick. He expresses disdain for his former friends and loved ones, especially Joe, but he continues to pine after Estella. He furthers his education by studying with the tutor Matthew Pocket, Herbert's father. Herbert himself helps Pip learn how to act like a gentleman. When Pip turns twenty-one and begins to receive an income from his fortune, he will secretly help Herbert buy his way into the business he has chosen for himself. But for now, Herbert and Pip lead a fairly undisciplined life in London, enjoying themselves and running up debts. Orlick reappears in Pip's life, employed as Miss Havisham's porter, but is promptly fired by Jaggers after Pip reveals Orlick's unsavory past. Mrs. Joe dies, and Pip goes home for the funeral, feeling tremendous grief and remorse. Several years go by, until one night a familiar figure barges into Pip's room—the convict, Magwitch, who stuns Pip by announcing that he, not Miss Havisham, is the source of Pip's fortune. He tells Pip that he was so moved by Pip's boyhood kindness that he dedicated his life to making Pip a gentleman, and he made a fortune in Australia for that very purpose.

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

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

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

Pip decides to go abroad with Herbert to work in the mercantile trade. Returning many years later, he encounters Estella in the ruined garden at Satis House. Drummle, her husband, treated her badly, but he is now dead. Pip finds that Estella's coldness and cruelty have been replaced by a sad kindness, and the two leave the garden hand in hand, Pip believing that they will never part again.

Character Analysis:

Pip - The protagonist and narrator of *Great Expectations,* Pip begins the story as a young orphan boy being raised by his sister and brother-in-law in the marsh country of Kent, in the southeast of England. Pip is passionate, romantic, and somewhat unrealistic at heart, and he tends to expect more for himself than is reasonable. Pip also has a powerful conscience, and he deeply wants to improve himself, both morally and socially.

Estella - Miss Havisham's beautiful young ward, Estella is Pip's unattainable dream throughout the novel. He loves her passionately, but, though she sometimes seems to consider him a friend, she is usually cold, cruel, and uninterested in him. As they grow up together, she repeatedly warns him that she has no heart.

Miss Havisham - Miss Havisham is the wealthy, eccentric old woman who lives in a manor called Satis House near Pip's village. She is manic and often seems insane, flitting around her house in a faded wedding dress, keeping a decaying feast on her table, and surrounding herself with clocks stopped at twenty minutes to nine. As a young woman, Miss Havisham was jilted by her fiancé minutes before her wedding, and now she has a vendetta against all men. She deliberately raises Estella to be the tool of her revenge, training her beautiful ward to break men's hearts.

Abel Magwitch ("The Convict") - A fearsome criminal, Magwitch escapes from prison at the beginning of *Great Expectations* and terrorizes Pip in the cemetery. Pip's kindness, however, makes a deep impression on him, and he subsequently devotes himself to making a fortune and

using it to elevate Pip into a higher social class. Behind the scenes, he becomes Pip's secret benefactor, funding Pip's education and opulent lifestyle in London through the lawyer Jaggers.

Joe Gargery - Pip's brother-in-law, the village blacksmith, Joe stays with his overbearing, abusive wife—known as Mrs. Joe—solely out of love for Pip. Joe's quiet goodness makes him one of the few completely sympathetic characters in *Great Expectations*. Although he is uneducated and unrefined, he consistently acts for the benefit of those he loves and suffers in silence when Pip treats him coldly.

Jaggers - The powerful, foreboding lawyer hired by Magwitch to supervise Pip's elevation to the upper class. As one of the most important criminal lawyers in London, Jaggers is privy to some dirty business; he consorts with vicious criminals, and even they are terrified of him. But there is more to Jaggers than his impenetrable exterior. He often seems to care for Pip, and before the novel begins he helps Miss Havisham to adopt the orphaned Estella. Jaggers smells strongly of soap: he washes his hands obsessively as a psychological mech-anism to keep the criminal taint from corrupting him.

Herbert Pocket - Pip first meets Herbert Pocket in the garden of Satis House, when, as a pale young gentleman, Herbert challenges him to a fight. Years later, they meet again in London, and Herbert becomes Pip's best friend and key companion after Pip's elevation to the status of gentleman. Herbert nicknames Pip "Handel." He is the son of Matthew Pocket, Miss Havisham's cousin, and hopes to become a merchant so that he can afford to marry Clara Barley.

Wemmick - Jaggers's clerk and Pip's friend, Wemmick is one of the strangest characters in *Great Expectations*. At work, he is hard, cynical, sarcastic, and obsessed with "portable property"; at home in Walworth, he is jovial, wry, and a tender caretaker of his "Aged Parent."

Biddy - A simple, kindhearted country girl, Biddy first befriends Pip when they attend school together. After Mrs. Joe is attacked and becomes an invalid, Biddy moves into Pip's home to care for her. Throughout most of the novel, Biddy represents the opposite of Estella; she is plain, kind, moral, and of Pip's own social class.

Dolge Orlick - The day laborer in Joe's forge, Orlick is a slouching, oafish embodiment of evil. He is malicious and shrewd, hurting people simply because he enjoys it. He is responsible for the attack on Mrs. Joe, and he later almost succeeds in his attempt to murder Pip.

Mrs. Joe - Pip's sister and Joe's wife, known only as "Mrs. Joe" throughout the novel. Mrs. Joe is a stern and overbearing figure to both Pip and Joe. She keeps a spotless household and frequently menaces her husband and her brother with her cane, which she calls "Tickler." She also forces them to drink a foul-tasting concoction called tar-water. Mrs. Joe is petty and ambitious; her fondest wish is to be something more than what she is, the wife of the village blacksmith.

Uncle Pumblechook - Pip's pompous, arrogant uncle. (He is actually Joe's uncle and, therefore, Pip's "uncle-in-law," but Pip and his sister both call him "Uncle Pumblechook.") A merchant obsessed with money, Pumblechook is responsible for arranging Pip's first meeting with Miss Havisham. Throughout the rest of the novel, he will shamelessly take credit for Pip's rise in social status, even though he has nothing to do with it, since Magwitch, not Miss Havisham, is Pip's secret benefactor.

Compeyson - A criminal and the former partner of Magwitch, Compeyson is an educated, gentlemanly outlaw who contrasts sharply with the coarse and uneducated Magwitch.

Compeyson is responsible for Magwitch's capture at the end of the novel. He is also the man who jilted Miss Havisham on her wedding day.

Bentley Drummle - An oafish, unpleasant young man who attends tutoring sessions with Pip at the Pockets' house, Drummle is a minor member of the nobility, and the sense of superiority this gives him makes him feel justified in acting cruelly and harshly toward everyone around him. Drummle eventually marries Estella, to Pip's chagrin; she is miserable in their marriage and reunites with Pip after Drummle dies some eleven years later.

Molly - Jaggers's housekeeper. In Chapter 48, Pip realizes that she is Estella's mother.

Mr. Wopsle - The church clerk in Pip's country town; Mr. Wopsle's aunt is the local schoolteacher. Sometime after Pip becomes a gentleman, Mr. Wopsle moves to London and becomes an actor.

Startop - A friend of Pip's and Herbert's. Startop is a delicate young man who, with Pip and Drummle, takes tutelage with Matthew Pocket. Later, Startop helps Pip and Herbert with Magwitch's escape.

Miss Skiffins - Wemmick's beloved, and eventual wife.

Theme

Ambition and Self-Improvement

The moral theme of *Great Expectations* is quite simple: affection, loyalty, and conscience are more important than social advancement, wealth, and class. Dickens establishes the theme and shows Pip learning this lesson, largely by exploring ideas of ambition and self-improvement—ideas that quickly become both the thematic center of the novel and the psychological

mechanism that encourages much of Pip's development. At heart, Pip is an idealist; whenever he can conceive of something that is better than what he already has, he immediately desires to obtain the improvement. When he sees Satis House, he longs to be a wealthy gentleman; when he thinks of his moral shortcomings, he longs to be good; when he realizes that he cannot read, he longs to learn how. Pip's desire for self-improvement is the main source of the novel's title: because he believes in the possibility of advancement in life, he has "great expectations" about his future.

Ambition and self-improvement take three forms in *Great Expectations*—moral, social, and educational; these motivate Pip's best and his worst behavior throughout the novel. First, Pip desires moral self-improvement. He is extremely hard on himself when he acts immorally and feels powerful guilt that spurs him to act better in the future. When he leaves for London, for instance, he torments himself about having behaved so wretchedly toward Joe and Biddy. Second, Pip desires social self-improvement. In love with Estella, he longs to become a member of her social class, and, encouraged by Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, he entertains fantasies of becoming a gentleman. The working out of this fantasy forms the basic plot of the novel; it provides Dickens the opportunity to gently satirize the class system of his era and to make a point about its capricious nature. Significantly, Pip's life as a gentleman is no more satisfying—and certainly no more moral—than his previous life as a blacksmith's apprentice. Third, Pip desires educational improvement. This desire is deeply connected to his social ambition and longing to marry Estella: a full education is a requirement of being a gentleman. As long as he is an ignorant country boy, he has no hope of social advancement. Pip understands this fact as a child, when he learns to read at Mr. Wopsle's aunt's school, and as a young man, when he takes lessons from Matthew Pocket. Ultimately, through the examples of Joe, Biddy, and Magwitch,

Pip learns that social and educational improvement are irrelevant to one's real worth and that conscience and affection are to be valued above erudition and social standing.

Social Class

Throughout *Great Expectations,* Dickens explores the class system of Victorian England, ranging from the most wretched criminals (Magwitch) to the poor peasants of the marsh country (Joe and Biddy) to the middle class (Pumblechook) to the very rich (Miss Havisham). The theme of social class is central to the novel's plot and to the ultimate moral theme of the book—Pip's realization that wealth and class are less important than affection, loyalty, and inner worth. Pip achieves this realization when he is finally able to understand that, despite the esteem in which he holds Estella, one's social status is in no way connected to one's real character. Drummle, for instance, is an upper-class lout, while Magwitch, a persecuted convict, has a deep inner worth.

Perhaps the most important thing to remember about the novel's treatment of social class is that the class system it portrays is based on the post-Industrial Revolution model of Victorian England. Dickens generally ignores the nobility and the hereditary aristocracy in favor of characters whose fortunes have been earned through commerce. Even Miss Havisham's family fortune was made through the brewery that is still connected to her manor. In this way, by connecting the theme of social class to the idea of work and self-advancement, Dickens subtly reinforces the novel's overarching theme of ambition and self-improvement.

Crime, Guilt, and Innocence

The theme of crime, guilt, and innocence is explored throughout the novel largely through the characters of the convicts and the criminal lawyer Jaggers. From the handcuffs Joe mends at the smithy to the gallows at the prison in London, the imagery of crime and criminal justice pervades

the book, becoming an important symbol of Pip's inner struggle to reconcile his own inner moral conscience with the institutional justice system. In general, just as social class becomes a superficial standard of value that Pip must learn to look beyond in finding a better way to live his life, the external trappings of the criminal justice system (police, courts, jails, etc.) become a superficial standard of morality that Pip must learn to look beyond to trust his inner conscience. Magwitch, for instance, frightens Pip at first simply because he is a convict, and Pip feels guilty for helping him because he is afraid of the police. By the end of the book, however, Pip has discovered Magwitch's inner nobility, and is able to disregard his external status as a criminal. Prompted by his conscience, he helps Magwitch to evade the law and the police. As Pip has learned to trust his conscience and to value Magwitch's inner character, he has replaced an external standard of value with an internal one.

Motifs

Doubles

One of the most remarkable aspects of Dickens's work is its structural intricacy and remarkable balance. Dickens's plots involve complicated coincidences, extraordinarily tangled webs of human relationships, and highly dramatic developments in which setting, atmosphere, event, and character are all seamlessly fused.

In *Great Expectations,* perhaps the most visible sign of Dickens's commitment to intricate dramatic symmetry—apart from the knot of character relationships, of course—is the fascinating motif of doubles that runs throughout the book. From the earliest scenes of the novel to the last, nearly every element of *Great Expectations* is mirrored or doubled at some other point in the book. There are two convicts on the marsh (Magwitch and Compeyson), two invalids (Mrs. Joe

and Miss Havisham), two young women who interest Pip (Biddy and Estella), and so on. There are two secret benefactors: Magwitch, who gives Pip his fortune, and Pip, who mirrors Magwitch's action by secretly buying Herbert's way into the mercantile business. Finally, there are two adults who seek to mold children after their own purposes: Magwitch, who wishes to "own" a gentleman and decides to make Pip one, and Miss Havisham, who raises Estella to break men's hearts in revenge for her own broken heart. Interestingly, both of these actions are motivated by Compeyson: Magwitch resents but is nonetheless covetous of Compeyson's social status and education, which motivates his desire to make Pip a gentleman, and Miss Havisham's heart was broken when Compeyson left her at the altar, which motivates her desire to achieve revenge through Estella. The relationship between Miss Havisham and Compeyson—a well-born woman and a common man—further mirrors the relationship between Estella and Pip.

This doubling of elements has no real bearing on the novel's main themes, but, like the connection of weather and action, it adds to the sense that everything in Pip's world is connected. Throughout Dickens's works, this kind of dramatic symmetry is simply part of the fabric of his novelistic universe.

Comparison of Characters to Inanimate Objects

Throughout *Great Expectations,* the narrator uses images of inanimate objects to describe the physical appearance of characters—particularly minor characters, or characters with whom the narrator is not intimate. For example, Mrs. Joe looks as if she scrubs her face with a nutmeg grater, while the inscrutable features of Mr. Wemmick are repeatedly compared to a letter-box. This motif, which Dickens uses throughout his novels, may suggest a failure of empathy on the narrator's part, or it may suggest that the character's position in life is pressuring them to

resemble a thing more than a human being. The latter interpretation would mean that the motif in general is part of a social critique, in that it implies that an institution such as the class system or the criminal justice system dehumanizes certain people.

Symbols

Satis House

In Satis House, Dickens creates a magnificent Gothic setting whose various elements symbolize Pip's romantic perception of the upper class and many other themes of the book. On her decaying body, Miss Havisham's wedding dress becomes an ironic symbol of death and degeneration. The wedding dress and the wedding feast symbolize Miss Havisham's past, and the stopped clocks throughout the house symbolize her determined attempt to freeze time by refusing to change anything from the way it was when she was jilted on her wedding day. The brewery next to the house symbolizes the connection between commerce and wealth: Miss Havisham's fortune is not the product of an aristocratic birth but of a recent success in industrial capitalism. Finally, the crumbling, dilapidated stones of the house, as well as the darkness and dust that pervade it, symbolize the general decadence of the lives of its inhabitants and of the upper class as a whole.

The Mists on the Marshes

The setting almost always symbolizes a theme in *Great Expectations* and always sets a tone that is perfectly matched to the novel's dramatic action. The misty marshes near Pip's childhood home in Kent, one of the most evocative of the book's settings, are used several times to symbolize danger and uncertainty. As a child, Pip brings Magwitch a file and food in these mists; later, he is kidnapped by Orlick and nearly murdered in them. Whenever Pip goes into the mists,

something dangerous is likely to happen. Significantly, Pip must go through the mists when he travels to London shortly after receiving his fortune, alerting the reader that this apparently positive development in his life may have dangerous consequences.

Bentley Drummle

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

4.2 Mary Shelley – *Frankenstein*

Plot Overview:

In a series of letters, Robert Walton, the captain of a ship bound for the North Pole, recounts to his sister back in England the progress of his dangerous mission. Successful early on, the mission is soon interrupted by seas full of impassable ice. Trapped, Walton encounters Victor Frankenstein, who has been traveling by dog-drawn sledge across the ice and is weakened by the cold. Walton takes him aboard ship, helps nurse him back to health, and hears the fantastic tale of the monster that Frankenstein created.

Victor first describes his early life in Geneva. At the end of a blissful childhood spent in the company of Elizabeth Lavenza (his cousin in the 1818 edition, his adopted sister in the 1831 edition) and friend Henry Clerval, Victor enters the university of Ingolstadt to study natural philosophy and chemistry. There, he is consumed by the desire to discover the secret of life and, after several years of research, becomes convinced that he has found it.

Armed with the knowledge he has long been seeking, Victor spends months feverishly fashioning a creature out of old body parts. One climactic night, in the secrecy of his apartment, he brings his creation to life. When he looks at the monstrosity that he has created, however, the sight horrifies him. After a fitful night of sleep, interrupted by the specter of the monster looming over him, he runs into the streets, eventually wandering in remorse. Victor runs into Henry, who has come to study at the university, and he takes his friend back to his apartment. Though the monster is gone, Victor falls into a feverish illness.

Sickened by his horrific deed, Victor prepares to return to Geneva, to his family, and to health. Just before departing Ingolstadt, however, he receives a letter from his father informing him that

his youngest brother, William, has been murdered. Grief-stricken, Victor hurries home. While passing through the woods where William was strangled, he catches sight of the monster and becomes convinced that the monster is his brother's murderer. Arriving in Geneva, Victor finds that Justine Moritz, a kind, gentle girl who had been adopted by the Frankenstein household, has been accused. She is tried, condemned, and executed, despite her assertions of innocence. Victor grows despondent, guilty with the knowledge that the monster he has created bears responsibility for the death of two innocent loved ones.

Hoping to ease his grief, Victor takes a vacation to the mountains. While he is alone one day, crossing an enormous glacier, the monster approaches him. The monster admits to the murder of William but begs for understanding. Lonely, shunned, and forlorn, he says that he struck out at William in a desperate attempt to injure Victor, his cruel creator. The monster begs Victor to create a mate for him, a monster equally grotesque to serve as his sole companion.

Victor refuses at first, horrified by the prospect of creating a second monster. The monster is eloquent and persuasive, however, and he eventually convinces Victor. After returning to Geneva, Victor heads for England, accompanied by Henry, to gather information for the creation of a female monster. Leaving Henry in Scotland, he secludes himself on a desolate island in the Orkneys and works reluctantly at repeating his first success. One night, struck by doubts about the morality of his actions, Victor glances out the window to see the monster glaring in at him with a frightening grin. Horrified by the possible consequences of his work, Victor destroys his new creation. The monster, enraged, vows revenge, swearing that he will be with Victor on Victor's wedding night.

Later that night, Victor takes a boat out onto a lake and dumps the remains of the second creature in the water. The wind picks up and prevents him from returning to the island. In the morning, he finds himself ashore near an unknown town. Upon landing, he is arrested and informed that he will be tried for a murder discovered the previous night. Victor denies any knowledge of the murder, but when shown the body, he is shocked to behold his friend Henry Clerval, with the mark of the monster's fingers on his neck. Victor falls ill, raving and feverish, and is kept in prison until his recovery, after which he is acquitted of the crime.

Shortly after returning to Geneva with his father, Victor marries Elizabeth. He fears the monster's warning and suspects that he will be murdered on his wedding night. To be cautious, he sends Elizabeth away to wait for him. While he awaits the monster, he hears Elizabeth scream and realizes that the monster had been hinting at killing his new bride, not himself. Victor returns home to his father, who dies of grief a short time later. Victor vows to devote the rest of his life to finding the monster and exacting his revenge, and he soon departs to begin his quest.

Victor tracks the monster ever northward into the ice. In a dogsled chase, Victor almost catches up with the monster, but the sea beneath them swells and the ice breaks, leaving an unbridgeable gap between them. At this point, Walton encounters Victor, and the narrative catches up to the time of Walton's fourth letter to his sister.

Walton tells the remainder of the story in another series of letters to his sister. Victor, already ill when the two men meet, worsens and dies shortly thereafter. When Walton returns, several days later, to the room in which the body lies, he is startled to see the monster weeping over Victor. The monster tells Walton of his immense solitude, suffering, hatred, and remorse. He asserts that

now that his creator has died, he too can end his suffering. The monster then departs for the northernmost ice to die.

Character Analysis:

Victor Frankenstein - The doomed protagonist and narrator of the main portion of the story. Studying in Ingolstadt, Victor discovers the secret of life and creates an intelligent but grotesque monster, from whom he recoils in horror. Victor keeps his creation of the monster a secret, feeling increasingly guilty and ashamed as he realizes how helpless he is to prevent the monster from ruining his life and the lives of others.

The monster - The eight-foot-tall, hideously ugly creation of Victor Frankenstein. Intelligent and sensitive, the monster attempts to integrate himself into human social patterns, but all who see him shun him. His feeling of abandonment compels him to seek revenge against his creator.

Robert Walton - The Arctic seafarer whose letters open and close *Frankenstein*. Walton picks the bedraggled Victor Frankenstein up off the ice, helps nurse him back to health, and hears Victor's story. He records the incredible tale in a series of letters addressed to his sister, Margaret Saville, in England.

Alphonse Frankenstein - Victor's father, very sympathetic toward his son. Alphonse consoles Victor in moments of pain and encourages him to remember the importance of family.

Elizabeth Lavenza - An orphan, four to five years younger than Victor, whom the Frankensteins adopt. In the 1818 edition of the novel, Elizabeth is Victor's cousin, the child of Alphonse Frankenstein's sister. In the 1831 edition, Victor's mother rescues Elizabeth from a

destitute peasant cottage in Italy. Elizabeth embodies the novel's motif of passive women, as she waits patiently for Victor's attention.

Henry Clerval - Victor's boyhood friend, who nurses Victor back to health in Ingolstadt. After working unhappily for his father, Henry begins to follow in Victor's footsteps as a scientist. His cheerfulness counters Victor's moroseness.

William Frankenstein - Victor's youngest brother and the darling of the Frankenstein family. The monster strangles William in the woods outside Geneva in order to hurt Victor for abandoning him. William's death deeply saddens Victor and burdens him with tremendous guilt about having created the monster.

Justine Moritz - A young girl adopted into the Frankenstein household while Victor is growing up. Justine is blamed and executed for William's murder, which is actually committed by the monster.

Caroline Beaufort - The daughter of Beaufort. After her father's death, Caroline is taken in by, and later marries, Alphonse Frankenstein. She dies of scarlet fever, which she contracts from Elizabeth, just before Victor leaves for Ingolstadt at age seventeen.

Beaufort - A merchant and friend of Victor's father; the father of Caroline Beaufort.

Peasants - A family of peasants, including a blind old man, De Lacey; his son and daughter, Felix and Agatha; and a foreign woman named Safie. The monster learns how to speak and interact by observing them. When he reveals himself to them, hoping for friendship, they beat him and chase him away.

M. Waldman - The professor of chemistry who sparks Victor's interest in science. He dismisses the alchemists' conclusions as unfounded but sympathizes with Victor's interest in a science that can explain the "big questions," such as the origin of life.

M. Krempe - A professor of natural philosophy at Ingolstadt. He dismisses Victor's study of the alchemists as wasted time and encourages him to begin his studies anew.

Mr. Kirwin - The magistrate who accuses Victor of Henry's murder.

Themes Dangerous

Knowledge

The pursuit of knowledge is at the heart of *Frankenstein,* as Victor attempts to surge beyond accepted human limits and access the secret of life. Likewise, Robert Walton attempts to surpass previous human explorations by endeavoring to reach the North Pole. This ruthless pursuit of knowledge, of the light (see "Light and Fire"), proves dangerous, as Victor's act of creation eventually results in the destruction of everyone dear to him, and Walton finds himself perilously trapped between sheets of ice. Whereas Victor's obsessive hatred of the monster drives him to his death, Walton ultimately pulls back from his treacherous mission, having learned from Victor's example how destructive the thirst for knowledge can be.

Sublime Nature

The sublime natural world, embraced by Romanticism (late eighteenth century to mid-nineteenth century) as a source of unrestrained emotional experience for the individual, initially offers characters the possibility of spiritual renewal. Mired in depression and remorse after the deaths of William and Justine, for which he feels responsible, Victor heads to the mountains to lift his spirits. Likewise, after a hellish winter of cold and abandonment, the monster feels his heart lighten as spring arrives. The influence of nature on mood is evident throughout the novel, but for Victor, the natural world's power to console him wanes when he realizes that the monster will haunt him no matter where he goes. By the end, as Victor chases the monster obsessively, nature, in the form of the Arctic desert, functions simply as the symbolic backdrop for his primal struggle against the monster.

Monstrosity

Obviously, this theme pervades the entire novel, as the monster lies at the center of the action. Eight feet tall and hideously ugly, the monster is rejected by society. However, his monstrosity results not only from his grotesque appearance but also from the unnatural manner of his creation, which involves the secretive animation of a mix of stolen body parts and strange chemicals. He is a product not of collaborative scientific effort but of dark, supernatural workings.

The monster is only the most literal of a number of monstrous entities in the novel, including the knowledge that Victor used to create the monster (see "Dangerous Knowledge"). One can argue that Victor himself is a kind of monster, as his ambition, secrecy, and selfishness alienate him from human society. Ordinary on the outside, he may be the true "monster" inside, as he is

eventually consumed by an obsessive hatred of his creation. Finally, many critics have described the novel itself as monstrous, a stitched-together combination of different voices, texts, and tenses (see Texts).

Secrecy

Victor conceives of science as a mystery to be probed; its secrets, once discovered, must be jealously guarded. He considers M. Krempe, the natural philosopher he meets at Ingolstadt, a model scientist: "an uncouth man, but deeply imbued in the secrets of his science." Victor's entire obsession with creating life is shrouded in secrecy, and his obsession with destroying the monster remains equally secret until Walton hears his tale.

Whereas Victor continues in his secrecy out of shame and guilt, the monster is forced into seclusion by his grotesque appearance. Walton serves as the final confessor for both, and their tragic relationship becomes immortalized in Walton's letters. In confessing all just before he dies, Victor escapes the stifling secrecy that has ruined his life; likewise, the monster takes advantage of Walton's presence to forge a human connection, hoping desperately that at last someone will understand, and empathize with, his miserable existence.

Motifs

Passive Women

For a novel written by the daughter of an important feminist, *Frankenstein* is strikingly devoid of strong female characters. The novel is littered with passive women who suffer calmly and then expire: Caroline Beaufort is a self-sacrificing mother who dies taking care of her adopted daughter; Justine is executed for murder, despite her innocence; the creation of the female

monster is aborted by Victor because he fears being unable to control her actions once she is animated; Elizabeth waits, impatient but helpless, for Victor to return to her, and she is eventually murdered by the monster. One can argue that Shelley renders her female characters so passive and subjects them to such ill treatment in order to call attention to the obsessive and destructive behavior that Victor and the monster exhibit.

Abortion

The motif of abortion recurs as both Victor and the monster express their sense of the monster's hideousness. About first seeing his creation, Victor says: "When I thought of him, I gnashed my teeth, my eyes became inflamed, and I ardently wished to extinguish that life which I had so thoughtlessly made." The monster feels a similar disgust for himself: "I, the miserable and the abandoned, am an abortion, to be spurned at, and kicked, and trampled on." Both lament the monster's existence and wish that Victor had never engaged in his act of creation.

The motif appears also in regard to Victor's other pursuits. When Victor destroys his work on a female monster, he literally aborts his act of creation, preventing the female monster from coming alive. Figurative abortion materializes in Victor's description of natural philosophy: "I at once gave up my former occupations; set down natural history and all its progeny as a deformed and abortive creation; and entertained the greatest disdain for a would-be science, which could never even step within the threshold of real knowledge." As with the monster, Victor becomes dissatisfied with natural philosophy and shuns it not only as unhelpful but also as intellectually grotesque.

Symbols

Light and Fire

“What could not be expected in the country of eternal light?” asks Walton, displaying a faith in, and optimism about, science. In Frankenstein, light symbolizes knowledge, discovery, and enlightenment. The natural world is a place of dark secrets, hidden passages, and unknown mechanisms; the goal of the scientist is then to reach light. The dangerous and more powerful cousin of light is fire. The monster’s first experience with a still-smoldering flame reveals the dual nature of fire: he discovers excitedly that it creates light in the darkness of the night, but also that it harms him when he touches it.

The presence of fire in the text also brings to mind the full title of Shelley’s novel, *Frankenstein: or, The Modern Prometheus.* The Greek god Prometheus gave the knowledge of fire to humanity and was then severely punished for it. Victor, attempting to become a modern Prometheus, is certainly punished, but unlike fire, his “gift” to humanity—knowledge of the secret of life—remains a secret.

SATHYABAMA
INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
(DEEMED TO BE UNIVERSITY)
Accredited "A" Grade by NAAC | 12B Status by UGC | Approved by

SCHOOL OF SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

UNIT 5 - Fiction II – SHS1202

5.TRAGEDY

Definition

Tragedy is a type of drama that presents a serious subject matter about human suffering and corresponding terrible events in a dignified manner.

Greek Tragedy

The term is Greek in origin, dating back to the 5th century BC, when it was assigned by the Greeks to a specific form of plays performed at festivals in Greece. The local governments supported such plays, and the mood surrounding the presentation of these plays was that of a religious ceremony, as the entire community, along with the grand priest, attended the performances.

The subject matter of Greek tragedies was derived chiefly from Homer's *Iliad*, and *Odyssey*, which included misfortunes of heroes of history and religious mythology. The three prominent Greek dramatists were Aeschylus (525–456 BC), Sophocles (496–406 BC), and Euripides (480–406 BC).

Aristotle's Definition of Tragedy

Aristotle defines Tragedy in his famous work *Poetics* as:

"Tragedy is an imitation of an action that is admirable, complete (composed of an introduction, a middle part and an ending), and possesses magnitude; in language made pleasurable, each of its species separated in different parts; performed by actors, not through narration; effecting through pity and fear the purification of such emotions."

From the above definition, we can understand the objective of the Greek tragedies, which is the "…purification of such emotions," also called "catharsis." Catharsis is a release of emotional tension, after an overwhelming experience, that restores or refreshes the spirit.

English Tragedy

Shaped on the models of Seneca, the first English tragedy appeared in 1561, written by Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville. The play chose the story of a British king and his sufferings at the hand of his two disobedient sons as a subject matter. The importance of the play lies in the fact that it transformed the style of English drama, from morality and mystery plays, to the writing of tragedies in the Elizabethan era.

Tragedy Examples

Below is the list of prominent English tragedy writers and their famous works:

A. Christopher Marlowe

Marlowe was the first English dramatist worthy of the tradition of Greek tragedy. The characters of his tragedies are the great men of history, who became victims of their own fate.

- Tamburlaine
- Doctor Faustus
- The Jew of Malta
- Edward III

B. William Shakespeare

Shakespeare, the most popular of all playwrights, knew the Greek tragedy style well and he used several Greek themes but modified them to his own purpose. He intentionally violates the unity of action and mixes tragic actions with comical. Examples of tragedy written by Shakespeare include:

- Hamlet
- Othello
- King Lear
- Macbeth
- Antony and Cleopatra

- Troilus and Cressida

C. John Webster

Webster was a Jacobean dramatist who modeled his tragedies on the Shakespearean model. Among his famous works are the following tragedy examples:

- Titus Andronicus
- The White Devil
- The Duchess of Malfi

D. Henrick Ibsen

He is known as “the father of realism”. He was the creator of some of the well-known tragedies also called “problem plays”. His famous works are:

- A Doll’s House
- Hedda Gabler
- The Wild Duck
- Emperor and Galilean

E. Arthur Miller

He is a famous American playwright and essayist. His famous works are:

- All My Sons
- Death of a Salesman
- The Crucible
- A View from the Bridge
- The misfits

5.2 Thomas Hardy – *Tess of D'Urberville*

Plot Overview:

The poor peddler John Durbeyfield is stunned to learn that he is the descendent of an ancient noble family, the d'Urbervilles. Meanwhile, Tess, his eldest daughter, joins the other village girls in the May Day dance, where Tess briefly exchanges glances with a young man. Mr. Durbeyfield and his wife decide to send Tess to the d'Urberville mansion, where they hope Mrs. d'Urberville will make Tess's fortune. In reality, Mrs. d'Urberville is no relation to Tess at all: her husband, the merchant Simon Stokes, simply changed his name to d'Urberville after he retired. But Tess does not know this fact, and when the lascivious Alec d'Urberville, Mrs. d'Urberville's son, procures Tess a job tending fowls on the d'Urberville estate, Tess has no choice but to accept, since she blames herself for an accident involving the family's horse, its only means of income.

Tess spends several months at this job, resisting Alec's attempts to seduce her. Finally, Alec takes advantage of her in the woods one night after a fair. Tess knows she does not love Alec. She returns home to her family to give birth to Alec's child, whom she christens Sorrow. Sorrow dies soon after he is born, and Tess spends a miserable year at home before deciding to seek work elsewhere. She finally accepts a job as a milkmaid at the Talbothays Dairy.

At Talbothays, Tess enjoys a period of contentment and happiness. She befriends three of her fellow milkmaids—Izz, Retty, and Marian—and meets a man named Angel Clare, who turns out to be the man from the May Day dance at the beginning of the novel. Tess and Angel slowly fall in love. They grow closer throughout Tess's time at Talbothays, and she eventually accepts his proposal of marriage. Still, she is troubled by pangs of conscience and feels she should tell Angel about her past. She writes him a confessional note and slips it under his door, but it slides under the carpet and Angel never sees it.

After their wedding, Angel and Tess both confess indiscretions: Angel tells Tess about an affair he had with an older woman in London, and Tess tells Angel about her history with Alec. Tess forgives Angel,

but Angel cannot forgive Tess. He gives her some money and boards a ship bound for Brazil, where he thinks he might establish a farm. He tells Tess he will try to accept her past but warns her not to try to join him until he comes for her.

Tess struggles. She has a difficult time finding work and is forced to take a job at an unpleasant and unprosperous farm. She tries to visit Angel's family but overhears his brothers discussing Angel's poor marriage, so she leaves. She hears a wandering preacher speak and is stunned to discover that he is Alec d'Urberville, who has been converted to Christianity by Angel's father, the Reverend Clare. Alec and Tess are each shaken by their encounter, and Alec appallingly begs Tess never to tempt him again. Soon after, however, he again begs Tess to marry him, having turned his back on his -religious ways.

Tess learns from her sister Liza-Lu that her mother is near death, and Tess is forced to return home to take care of her. Her mother recovers, but her father unexpectedly dies soon after. When the family is evicted from their home, Alec offers help. But Tess refuses to accept, knowing he only wants to obligate her to him again.

At last, Angel decides to forgive his wife. He leaves Brazil, desperate to find her. Instead, he finds her mother, who tells him Tess has gone to a village called Sandbourne. There, he finds Tess in an expensive boardinghouse called The Herons, where he tells her he has forgiven her and begs her to take him back. Tess tells him he has come too late. She was unable to resist and went back to Alec d'Urberville. Angel leaves in a daze, and, heartbroken to the point of madness, Tess goes upstairs and stabs her lover to death. When the landlady finds Alec's body, she raises an alarm, but Tess has already fled to find Angel. Angel agrees to help Tess, though he cannot quite believe that she has actually murdered Alec. They hide out in an empty mansion for a few days, then travel farther. When they come to Stonehenge, Tess goes to sleep, but when morning breaks shortly thereafter, a search party discovers them. Tess is arrested and sent to jail. Angel and Liza-Lu watch as a black flag is raised over the prison, signaling Tess's execution.

5.2 Character Analysis:

Tess Durbeyfield - The novel's protagonist. Tess is a beautiful, loyal young woman living with her impoverished family in the village of Marlott. Tess has a keen sense of responsibility and is committed to doing the best she can for her family, although her inexperience and lack of wise parenting leave her extremely vulnerable. Her life is complicated when her father discovers a link to the noble line of the d'Urbervilles, and, as a result, Tess is sent to work at the d'Urberville mansion. Unfortunately, her ideals cannot prevent her from sliding further and further into misfortune after she becomes pregnant by Alec d'Urberville. The terrible irony is that Tess and her family are not really related to this branch of the d'Urbervilles at all: Alec's father, a merchant named Simon Stokes, simply assumed the name after he retired.

Angel Clare - An intelligent young man who has decided to become a farmer to preserve his intellectual freedom from the pressures of city life. Angel's father and his two brothers are respected clergymen, but Angel's religious doubts have kept him from joining the ministry. He meets Tess when she is a milkmaid at the Talbothays Dairy and quickly falls in love with her.

Alec d'Urberville - The handsome, amoral son of a wealthy merchant named Simon Stokes. Alec is not really a d'Urberville—his father simply took on the name of the ancient noble family after he built his mansion and retired. Alec is a manipulative, sinister young man who does everything he can to seduce the inexperienced Tess when she comes to work for his family. When he finally has his way with her, out in the woods, he subsequently tries to help her but is unable to make her love him.

Mr. John Durbeyfield - Tess's father, a lazy peddler in Marlott. John is naturally quick, but he hates work. When he learns that he descends from the noble line of the d'Urbervilles, he is quick to make an attempt to profit from the connection.

Mrs. Joan Durbeyfield - Tess's mother. Joan has a strong sense of propriety and very particular hopes for Tess's life. She is continually disappointed and hurt by the way in which her daughter's life actually

proceeds. But she is also somewhat simpleminded and naturally forgiving, and she is unable to remain angry with Tess—particularly once Tess becomes her primary means of support.

Mrs. d'Urberville - Alec's mother, and the widow of Simon Stokes. Mrs. d'Urberville is blind and often ill. She cares deeply for her animals, but not for her maid Elizabeth, her son Alec, nor Tess when she comes to work for her. In fact, she never sees Tess as anything more than an impoverished girl.

Marian, Izz Huett, and Retty Priddle - Milkmaids whom Tess befriends at the Talbothays Dairy. Marian, Izz, and Retty remain close to Tess throughout the rest of her life. They are all in love with Angel and are devastated when he chooses Tess over them: Marian turns to drink, Retty attempts suicide, and Izz nearly runs off to Brazil with Angel when he leaves Tess. Nevertheless, they remain helpful to Tess.

Marian helps her find a job at a farm called Flintcomb-Ash, and Marian and Izz write Angel a plaintive letter encouraging him to give Tess another chance.

Reverend Clare - Angel's father, a somewhat intractable but principled clergyman in the town of Emminster. Mr. Clare considers it his duty to convert the populace. One of his most difficult cases proves to be none other than Alec d'Urberville.

Mrs. Clare - Angel's mother, a loving but snobbish woman who places great stock in social class. Mrs. Clare wants Angel to marry a suitable woman, meaning a woman with the proper social, financial, and religious background. Mrs. Clare initially looks down on Tess as a "simple" and impoverished girl, but later grows to appreciate her.

Reverend Felix Clare - Angel's brother, a village curate.

Reverend Cuthbert - Clare Angel's brother, a classical scholar and dean at Cambridge. Cuthbert, who can concentrate only on university matters, marries Mercy Chant.

Eliza Louisa Durbeyfield - Tess's younger sister. Tess believes Liza-Lu has all of Tess's own good qualities and none of her bad ones, and she encourages Angel to look after and even marry Liza-Lu after Tess dies.

Sorrow - Tess's son with Alec d'Urberville. Sorrow dies in his early infancy, after Tess christens him herself. She later buries him herself as well, and decorates his grave.

Mercy Chant - The daughter of a friend of the Reverend Clare. Mr. Clare hopes Angel will marry Mercy, but after Angel marries Tess, Mercy becomes engaged to his brother Cuthbert instead.

4.2.4 Themes

The Injustice of Existence

Unfairness dominates the lives of Tess and her family to such an extent that it begins to seem like a general aspect of human existence in *Tess of the d'Urbervilles.* Tess does not mean to kill Prince, but she is punished anyway, just as she is unfairly punished for her own rape by Alec. Nor is there justice waiting in heaven. Christianity teaches that there is compensation in the afterlife for unhappiness suffered in this life, but the only devout Christian encountered in the novel may be the reverend, Mr. Clare, who seems more or less content in his life anyway. For others in their misery, Christianity offers little solace of heavenly justice. Mrs. Durbeyfield never mentions otherworldly rewards. The converted Alec preaches heavenly justice for earthly sinners, but his faith seems shallow and insincere. Generally, the moral atmosphere of the novel is not Christian justice at all, but pagan injustice. The forces that rule human life are absolutely unpredictable and not necessarily well-disposed to us. The pre-Christian rituals practiced by the farm workers at the opening of the novel, and Tess's final rest at Stonehenge at the end, remind us of a world where the gods are not just and fair, but whimsical and uncaring. When the narrator concludes the novel with the statement that "'Justice' was done, and the President of the Immortals (in the Aeschylean phrase) had ended his sport with Tess," we are reminded that justice must be put in ironic quotation marks, since it is not really just at all. What passes for "Justice" is in fact one of the pagan gods enjoying a bit of "sport," or a frivolous game.

Changing Ideas of Social Class in Victorian England

*Tess of the d'Urbervilles*presents complex pictures of both the importance of social class in nineteenth-century England and the difficulty of defining class in any simple way. Certainly the Durbeyfields are a powerful emblem of the way in which class is no longer evaluated in Victorian times as it would have been in the Middle Ages—that is, by blood alone, with no attention paid to fortune or worldly success. Indubitably the Durbeyfields have purity of blood, yet for the parson and nearly everyone else in the novel, this fact amounts to nothing more than a piece of genealogical trivia. In the Victorian context, cash matters more than lineage, which explains how Simon Stokes, Alec's father, was smoothly able to use his large fortune to purchase a lustrous family name and transform his clan into the Stoke-d'Urbervilles. The d'Urbervilles pass for what the Durbeyfields truly are—authentic nobility—simply because definitions of class have changed. The issue of class confusion even affects the Clare clan, whose most promising son, Angel, is intent on becoming a farmer and marrying a milkmaid, thus bypassing the traditional privileges of a Cambridge education and a parsonage. His willingness to work side by side with the farm laborers helps endear him to Tess, and their acquaintance would not have been possible if he were a more traditional and elitist aristocrat. Thus, the three main characters in the Angel-Tess-Alec triangle are all strongly marked by confusion regarding their respective social classes, an issue that is one of the main concerns of the novel.

Men Dominating Women

One of the recurrent themes of the novel is the way in which men can dominate women, exerting a power over them linked primarily to their maleness. Sometimes this command is purposeful, in the man's full knowledge of his exploitation, as when Alec acknowledges how bad he is for seducing Tess for his own momentary pleasure. Alec's act of abuse, the most life-altering event that Tess experiences in the novel, is clearly the most serious instance of male domination over a female. But there are other, less blatant examples of women's passivity toward dominant men. When, after Angel reveals that he

prefers Tess, Tess's friend Retty attempts suicide and her friend Marian becomes an alcoholic, which makes their earlier schoolgirl-type crushes on Angel seem disturbing. This devotion is not merely fanciful love, but unhealthy obsession. These girls appear utterly dominated by a desire for a man who, we are told explicitly, does not even realize that they are interested in him. This sort of unconscious male domination of women is perhaps even more unsettling than Alec's outward and self-conscious cruelty. Even Angel's love for Tess, as pure and gentle as it seems, dominates her in an unhealthy way. Angel substitutes an idealized picture of Tess's country purity for the real-life woman that he continually refuses to get to know. When Angel calls Tess names like "Daughter of Nature" and "Artemis," we feel that he may be denying her true self in favor of a mental image that he prefers. Thus, her identity and experiences are suppressed, albeit unknowingly. This pattern of male domination is finally reversed with Tess's murder of Alec, in which, for the first time in the novel, a woman takes active steps against a man. Of course, this act only leads to even greater suppression of a woman by men, when the crowd of male police officers arrest Tess at Stonehenge. Nevertheless, for just a moment, the accepted pattern of submissive women bowing to dominant men is interrupted, and Tess's act seems heroic.

4.2.4 Motifs

Birds

Images of birds recur throughout the novel, evoking or contradicting their traditional spiritual association with a higher realm of transcendence. Both the Christian dove of peace and the Romantic songbirds of Keats and Shelley, which symbolize sublime heights, lead us to expect that birds will have positive meaning in this novel. Tess occasionally hears birdcalls on her frequent hikes across the countryside; their free expressiveness stands in stark contrast to Tess's silent and constrained existence as a wronged and disgraced girl. When Tess goes to work for Mrs. d'Urberville, she is surprised to find that the old woman's pet finches are frequently released to fly free throughout the room. These birds offer images of hope and liberation. Yet there is irony attached to birds as well, making us doubt

whether these images of hope and freedom are illusory. Mrs. d'Urberville's birds leave little white spots on the upholstery, which presumably some servant—perhaps Tess herself—will have to clean. It may be that freedom for one creature entails hardship for another, just as Alec's free enjoyment of Tess's body leads her to a lifetime of suffering. In the end, when Tess encounters the pheasants maimed by hunters and lying in agony, birds no longer seem free, but rather oppressed and submissive. These pheasants are no Romantic songbirds hovering far above the Earth—they are victims of earthly violence, condemned to suffer down below and never fly again.

The Book of Genesis

The Genesis story of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden is evoked repeatedly throughout *Tess of the d'Urbervilles,* giving the novel a broader metaphysical and philosophical dimension. The roles of Eve and the serpent in paradise are clearly delineated: Angel is the noble Adam newly born, while Tess is the indecisive and troubled Eve. When Tess gazes upon Angel in Chapter XXVII, "she regarded him as Eve at her second waking might have regarded Adam." Alec, with his open avowal that he is bad to the bone, is the conniving Satan. He seduces Tess under a tree, giving her sexual knowledge in return for her lost innocence. The very name of the forest where this seduction occurs, the Chase, suggests how Eve will be chased from Eden for her sins. This guilt, which will never be erased, is known in Christian theology as the original sin that all humans have inherited. Just as John Durbeyfield is told in Chapter I that "you don't live anywhere," and his family is evicted after his death at the end of the novel, their homelessness evokes the human exile from Eden. Original sin suggests that humans have fallen from their once great status to a lower station in life, just as the d'Urbervilles have devolved into the modern Durbeyfields. This Story of the Fall—or of the "Pure Drop," to recall the name of a pub in Tess's home village—is much more than a social fall. It is an explanation of how all of us humans—not only Tess— never quite seem to live up to our expectations, and are never able to inhabit the places of grandeur we feel we deserve.

Variant Names

The transformation of the d'Urbervilles into the Durbeyfields is one example of the common phenomenon of renaming, or variant naming, in the novel. Names matter in this novel. Tess knows and accepts that she is a lowly Durbeyfield, but part of her still believes, as her parents also believe, that her aristocratic original name should be restored. John Durbeyfield goes a step further than Tess, and actually renames himself Sir John, as his tombstone epitaph shows. Another character who renames himself is Simon Stokes, Alec's father, who purchased a family tree and made himself Simon Stoke- d'Urberville. The question raised by all these cases of name changing, whether successful or merely imagined, is the extent to which an altered name brings with it an altered identity. Alec acts notoriously ungentlemanly throughout the novel, but by the end, when he appears at the d'Urberville family vault, his lordly and commanding bearing make him seem almost deserving of the name his father has bought, like a spoiled medieval nobleman. Hardy's interest in name changes makes reality itself seem changeable according to whims of human perspective. The village of Blakemore, as we are reminded twice in Chapters I and II, is also known as Blackmoor, and indeed Hardy famously renames the southern English countryside as "Wessex." He imposes a fictional map on a real place, with names altered correspondingly. Reality may not be as solid as the names people confer upon it.

Symbols

Prince

When Tess dozes off in the wagon and loses control, the resulting death of the Durbeyfield horse, Prince, spurs Tess to seek aid from the d'Urbervilles, setting the events of the novel in motion. The horse's demise is thus a powerful plot motivator, and its name a potent symbol of Tess's own claims to aristocracy. Like the horse, Tess herself bears a high-class name, but is doomed to a lowly life of physical labor. Interestingly, Prince's death occurs right after Tess dreams of ancient knights, having just heard

the news that her family is aristocratic. Moreover, the horse is pierced by the forward-jutting piece of metal on a mail coach, which is reminiscent of a wound one might receive in a medieval joust. In an odd way, Tess's dream of medieval glory comes true, and her horse dies a heroic death. Yet her dream of meeting a prince while she kills her own Prince, and with him her family's only means of financial sustenance, is a tragic foreshadowing of her own story. The death of the horse symbolizes the sacrifice of real-world goods, such as a useful animal or even her own honor, through excessive fantasizing about a better world.

The d'Urberville Family Vault

A double-edged symbol of both the majestic grandeur and the lifeless hollowness of the aristocratic family name that the Durbeyfields learn they possess, the d'Urberville family vault represents both the glory of life and the end of life. Since Tess herself moves from passivity to active murder by the end of the novel, attaining a kind of personal grandeur even as she brings death to others and to herself, the double symbolism of the vault makes it a powerful site for the culminating meeting between Alec and Tess. Alec brings Tess both his lofty name and, indirectly, her own death later; it is natural that he meets her in the vault in d'Urberville Aisle, where she reads her own name inscribed in stone and feels the presence of death. Yet the vault that sounds so glamorous when rhapsodized over by John Durbeyfield in Chapter I seems, by the end, strangely hollow and meaningless. When Alec stomps on the floor of the vault, it produces only a hollow echo, as if its basic emptiness is a complement to its visual grandeur. When Tess is executed, her ancestors are said to snooze on in their crypts, as if uncaring even about the fate of a member of their own majestic family. Perhaps the secret of the family crypt is that its grandiosity is ultimately meaningless.

Brazil

Rather surprising for a novel that seems set so solidly in rural England, the narration shifts very briefly to Brazil when Angel takes leave of Tess and heads off to establish a career in farming. Even more exotic

for a Victorian English reader than America or Australia, Brazil is the country in which Robinson Crusoe made his fortune and it seems to promise a better life far from the humdrum familiar world. Brazil is thus more than a geographical entity on the map in this novel: it symbolizes a fantasyland, a place where dreams come true. As Angel's name suggests, he is a lofty visionary who lacks some experience with the real world, despite all his mechanical know-how in farm management. He may be able to milk cows, but he does not yet know how to tell the difference between an exotic dream and an everyday reality, so inevitably his experience in the imagined dream world of Brazil is a disaster that he barely survives. His fiasco teaches him that ideals do not exist in life, and this lesson helps him reevaluate his disappointment with Tess's imperfections, her failure to incarnate the ideal he expected her to be. For Angel, Brazil symbolizes the impossibility of ideals, but also forgiveness and acceptance of life in spite of those disappointed ideals.

5.3 Leo Tolstoy – *Anna Karenina*

Plot Overview:

The Oblonsky family of Moscow is torn apart by adultery. Dolly Oblonskaya has caught her husband, Stiva, having an affair with their children's former governess, and threatens to leave him. Stiva is somewhat remorseful but mostly dazed and uncomprehending. Stiva's sister, Anna Karenina, wife of the St. Petersburg government official Karenin, arrives at the Oblonskys' to mediate. Eventually, Anna is able to bring Stiva and Dolly to a reconciliation.

Meanwhile, Dolly's younger sister, Kitty, is courted by two suitors: Konstantin Levin, an awkward landowner, and Alexei Vronsky, a dashing military man. Kitty turns down Levin in favor of Vronsky, but not long after, Vronsky meets Anna Karenina and falls in love with her instead of Kitty. The devastated Kitty falls ill. Levin, depressed after having been rejected by Kitty, withdraws to his estate in the country. Anna returns to St. Petersburg, reflecting on her infatuation with Vronsky, but when she arrives home she dismisses it as a fleeting crush.

Vronsky, however, follows Anna to St. Petersburg, and their mutual attraction intensifies as Anna begins to mix with the freethinking social set of Vronsky's cousin Betsy Tverskaya. At a party, Anna implores Vronsky to ask Kitty's forgiveness; in response, he tells Anna that he loves her. Karenin goes home from the party alone, sensing that something is amiss. He speaks to Anna later that night about his suspicions regarding her and Vronsky, but she curtly dismisses his concerns.

Some time later, Vronsky participates in a military officers' horse race. Though an accomplished horseman, he makes an error during the race, inadvertently breaking his horse's back. Karenin notices his wife's intense interest in Vronsky during the race. He confronts Anna afterward, and she candidly admits to Karenin that she is having an affair and that she loves Vronsky. Karenin is stunned.

Kitty, meanwhile, attempts to recover her health at a spa in Germany, where she meets a pious Russian woman and her do-gooder protégée, Varenka. Kitty also meets Levin's sickly brother Nikolai, who is also recovering at the spa.

Levin's intellectual half-brother, Sergei Koznyshev, visits Levin in the country and criticizes him for quitting his post on the local administrative council. Levin explains that he resigned because he found the work bureaucratic and useless. Levin works enthusiastically with the peasants on his estate but is frustrated by their resistance to agricultural innovations. He visits Dolly, who tempts him with talk of reviving a relationship with Kitty. Later, Levin meets Kitty at a dinner party at the Oblonsky household, and the two feel their mutual love. They become engaged and marry.

Karenin rejects Anna's request for a divorce. He insists that they maintain outward appearances by staying together. Anna moves to the family's country home, however, away from her husband. She encounters Vronsky often, but their relationship becomes clouded after Anna reveals she is pregnant. Vronsky considers resigning his military post, but his old ambitions prevent him.

Karenin, catching Vronsky at the Karenin country home one day, finally agrees to divorce. Anna, in her childbirth agony, begs for Karenin's forgiveness, and he suddenly grants it. He leaves the divorce decision in her hands, but she resents his generosity and does not ask for a divorce. Instead, Anna and Vronsky go to Italy, where they lead an aimless existence. Eventually, the two return to Russia, where Anna is spurned by society, which considers her adultery disgraceful. Anna and Vronsky withdraw into seclusion, though Anna dares a birthday visit to her young son at Karenin's home. She begins to feel great jealousy for Vronsky, resenting the fact that he is free to participate in society while she is housebound and scorned.

Married life brings surprises for Levin, including his sudden lack of freedom. When Levin is called away to visit his dying brother Nikolai, Kitty sparks a quarrel by insisting on accompanying him. Levin finally

allows her to join him. Ironically, Kitty is more helpful to the dying Nikolai than Levin is, greatly comforting him in his final days.

Kitty discovers she is pregnant. Dolly and her family join Levin and Kitty at Levin's country estate for the summer. At one point, Stiva visits, bringing along a friend, Veslovsky, who irks Levin by flirting with Kitty. Levin finally asks Veslovsky to leave. Dolly decides to visit Anna, and finds her radiant and seemingly very happy. Dolly is impressed by Anna's luxurious country home but disturbed by Anna's dependence on sedatives to sleep. Anna still awaits a divorce.

Levin and Kitty move to Moscow to await the birth of their baby, and they are astonished at the expenses of city life. Levin makes a trip to the provinces to take part in important local elections, in which the vote brings a victory for the young liberals. One day, Stiva takes Levin to visit Anna, whom Levin has never met. Anna enchants Levin, but her success in pleasing Levin only fuels her resentment toward Vronsky. She grows paranoid that Vronsky no longer loves her. Meanwhile, Kitty enters labor and bears a son. Levin is confused by the conflicting emotions he feels toward the infant. Stiva goes to St. Petersburg to seek a cushy job and to beg Karenin to grant Anna the divorce he once promised her. Karenin, following the advice of a questionable French psychic, refuses.

Anna picks a quarrel with Vronsky, accusing him of putting his mother before her and unfairly postponing plans to go to the country. Vronsky tries to be accommodating, but Anna remains angry. When Vronsky leaves on an errand, Anna is tormented. She sends him a telegram urgently calling him home, followed by a profusely apologetic note. In desperation, Anna drives to Dolly's to say goodbye, and then returns home. She resolves to meet Vronsky at the train station after his errand, and she rides to the station in a stupor. At the station, despairing and dazed by the crowds, Anna throws herself under a train and dies.

Two months later, Sergei's book has finally been published, to virtually no acclaim. Sergei represses his disappointment by joining a patriotic upsurge of Russian support for Slavic peoples attempting to free

themselves from Turkish rule. Sergei, Vronsky, and others board a train for Serbia to assist in the cause. Levin is skeptical of the Slavic cause, however.

Kitty becomes worried by Levin's gloomy mood. He has become immersed in questions about the meaning of life but feels unable to answer them. One day, however, a peasant remarks to Levin that the point of life is not to fill one's belly but to serve God and goodness. Levin receives this advice as gospel, and his life is suddenly transformed by faith.Later that day, Levin, Dolly, and Dolly's children seek shelter from a sudden, violent thunderstorm, only to discover that Kitty and Levin's young son are still outside. Levin runs to the woods and sees a huge oak felled by lightning. He fears the worst, but his wife and child are safe. For the first time, Levin feels real love for his son, and Kitty is pleased. Levin reflects again that the meaning of his life lies in the good that he can put into it.

Character Analysis:

Anna:

Anna is a beautiful woman in her late 20s who is married to a man 20 years her senior. Although he is a good and responsible husband, he lacks passion and treats her with some degree of condescension. Anna pours all of her love into her son, Seryozha, as a result, because she is starved for affection. When Anna comes to Moscow to help smooth her brother's marital woes, she meets Count Vronsky, and they fall in love. After he pursues her relentlessly over several months, she becomes his mistress and eventually leaves her husband. Although she wishes to transcend the limits of social restraints, she does not have the strength to do so. In the end, Anna kills herself because she sees no way out of her situation. Anna's maiden name is Princess Oblonsky.

Levin:

Levin is a nobleman in his early 30s who manages and farms his own estate, working beside his peasants. He is a nonconformist who disagrees at times with both the liberals and traditionalists, and he has a notion that he can improve his land's productiveness if he can learn more about the relationship

between the land and the peasants. Levin is also in love with Kitty but does not have the confidence to ask her to marry him until it is too late. However, Kitty and Levin get a second chance and end up marrying and living happily.

Karenin:

Karenin is a highly placed government minister who marries Anna after being pressured to do so by her aunt. But he learns to love his wife and is devastated when he discovers she is cheating on him with Vronsky. When she refuses to stop seeing Vronsky, he decides to divorce her. After she gives birth to Vronsky's child and almost dies, he forgives her, but she still cannot stand to live with him and leaves him for Vronsky. He has agreed to give her a divorce, but she initially refuses his offer. After Anna leaves, Karenin deteriorates and becomes dependent on a vindictive and fatuous woman who preaches a distorted form of Christianity.

Vronsky:

Count Vronsky is a handsome military officer in his 20s who receives a brilliant education and begins a promising career. He has no intention of marrying and lives the promiscuous life of a typical officer. When he comes to Moscow, he begins courting Kitty but then sees Anna and experiences "love at first sight." He dances with her at a ball and then follows her back to Petersburg, courting her insistently until she gives in to him. Anna becomes pregnant with his child, and the two of them eventually live together but are not able to become a legal couple because her husband will not divorce her. Vronsky ends up a broken man after Anna commits suicide in a fit of rage and spite.

Kitty:

Kitty is the youngest daughter of the Shcherbatskys, and she has known Levin since she was a child. Kitty, now 18, loves Levin, and he loves her. But he stops courting her, and she meets Vronsky and falls for him. When Levin returns to town and asks her to marry, she says no because she wants Vronsky. Vronsky drops her quickly when he sets eyes on Anna, and then Kitty suffers both rejection and regret

for turning Levin down. Eventually, she and Levin resume friendly relations, and he proposes again. They marry and have their first child by the end of the novel. Kitty is also called Katerina, Katia, and Katenka.

Stiva:

Stiva is Anna's brother and an unrepentant rake. Although he is married, he carries on affairs with a string of women, goes out on the town and treats himself and his girlfriends, and runs through a good part of his wife's estate. He takes no interest in their numerous children and has stopped loving his wife, Dolly, because she has lost her youthful beauty. Stiva is well liked and gets along with everyone, and he tries to intervene with Karenin on behalf of his sister. But he is a man with few values, a hypocrite, and a cheat.

Dolly:

Dolly is Stiva's wife, and she gets a rude awakening at the beginning of the novel when she learns that Stiva has been carrying on an affair with the children's English governess. She thinks about leaving him, but she still loves him, and there are the children to consider. She allows Anna to talk her into forgiving her husband, but as time passes she realizes he is still doing the same thing. She resigns herself to living an unhappy married life and takes solace in her beautiful children. She also cultivates relationships with her sisters and remains good friends with Levin and with Anna. Dolly is also called Dasha, Dashenka, and Dollenka. Her maiden name is Shcherbatsky

Themes

Social Change in Nineteenth-Century Russia

Tolstoy sets his tale of adultery and self-discovery against the backdrop of the huge historical changes sweeping through Russia during the late nineteenth century, making the historical aspects of the novel just as important as the personal and psychological aspects. In the Russia of *Anna Karenina,* a battle rages between the old patriarchal values sustaining the landowning aristocracy and the new, liberal— often called "*libre penseur,*" or freethinking, in the novel—values of the Westernizers. The old-timer

conservatives believe in traditions like serfdom and authoritarian government, while the Westernizing liberals believe in technology, rationalism, and democracy. We see this clash in Levin's difficulty with his peasants, who, refusing to accept the Western agricultural innovations he tries to introduce, believe that the old Russian ways of farming are the best. We also see the confusion of these changing times in the question of the *zemstvo,* or village council, in which Levin tries to participate as a proponent of democracy but which he finally abandons on the grounds that they are useless.

The guests at Stiva's dinner party raise the question of women's rights—clearly a hot topic of the day, and one that shows the influence of Western social progress on Russia. That Dolly and Anna suffer in their marriages, however, does not bode well for the future of feminism in the world of the novel.

Courtship procedures are equally uncertain in the world of *Anna Karenina*. The Russian tradition of arranged marriages is going out of fashion, but Princess Shcherbatskaya is horrified at the prospect of allowing Kitty to choose her own mate. The narrator goes so far as to say plainly that no one knows how young people are to get married in Russia in the 1870s. Taken together, all this confusion created by fading traditions creates an atmosphere of both instability and new potential, as if humans have to decide again how to live. It is only in such a changing atmosphere that Levin's philosophical questionings are possible.

The Blessings of Family Life

Anna Karenina is in many ways a recognizable throwback to the genre of "family novels" popular in Russia several decades earlier, which were out of fashion by the 1870s. The Russian family novel portrayed the benefits and comforts of family togetherness and domestic bliss, often in a very idealized way. In the radically changing social climate of 1860s Russia, many social progressives attacked the institution of the family, calling it a backward and outmoded limitation on individual freedom. They claimed that the family often exploited children as cheap labor. *Anna Karenina*joins in this family

debate. The first sentence of the novel, concerning the happiness and unhappiness of families, underscores the centrality of this idea.

While the novel takes a pro-family position in general, it is nonetheless candid about the difficulties of family life. The notion that a family limits the freedom of the individual is evident in Stiva's dazed realization in the first pages of the novel that he cannot do whatever he pleases. This limitation of freedom is also evident in Levin's surprise at the fact that he cannot go off to visit his dying brother on a whim but must confer with his wife first and respond to her insistence that she accompany him. Yet despite these restrictions on personal liberty, and despite the quarrels that plague every family represented in *Anna Karenina,* the novel portrays family life as a source of comfort, happiness, and philosophical transcendence. Anna destroys a family and dies in misery, whereas Levin creates a family and concludes the novel happily. Anna's life ultimately loses meaning, whereas Levin's attains it, as the last paragraph of the novel announces. Ultimately, Tolstoy leaves us with the conclusion that faith, happiness, and family life go hand in hand.

The Philosophical Value of Farming

Readers of *Anna Karenina* are sometimes puzzled and frustrated by the extensive sections of the novel devoted to Levin's agricultural interests. We are treated to long passages describing the process of mowing, we hear much about peasant attitudes toward wooden and iron plows, and we are subjected to Levin's sociological theorizing about why European agricultural reforms do not work in Russia. Yet this focus on agriculture and farming fulfills an important function in the novel and has a long literary tradition behind it. The idyll, a genre of literature dating from ancient times, portrays farmers and shepherds as more fulfilled and happy than their urban counterparts, showing closeness to the soil as a mark of the good life. Farmers understand growth and potential, and are aware of the delicate balance between personal labor and trust in the forces of nature. In *Anna Karenina,* Tolstoy updates the idyll by

making his spokesman in the novel, Levin, a devoted farmer as well as an impassioned philosopher—and the only character in the novel who achieves a clear vision of faith and happiness.

For Levin, farming is a way of moving beyond oneself, pursuing something larger than one's own private desires—a pursuit that he sees as the cornerstone of all faith and happiness. His days spent mowing the fields bring him into closer contact with the Russian peasants—symbols of the native Russian spirit—than anyone else achieves. Other characters who harp on the virtues of peasants, such as Sergei, rarely interact with them. Levin's connections with farmers thus show him rooted in his nation and culture more so than Europeanized aristocrats like Anna. He is in closer touch with the truths of existence. It is no accident that Levin finally finds faith by listening to his peasant Fyodor, a farmer. Nor is it accidental that Levin's statement of the meaning of life in the novel's last paragraph recalls agriculture. Levin concludes that the value of life is in the goodness he puts into it—just as, we might say, the value of a farm lies in the good seeds and labor that the farmer puts into it. Ultimately, Levin reaches an idea of faith based on growth and cultivation.

Motifs

The Interior Monologue

Though Tolstoy has a reputation for being a simple and straightforward writer, he was in fact a great stylistic innovator. He pioneered the use of a device that is now commonplace in novels but was radically new in the nineteenth century—the interior monologue. The interior monologue is the author's portrayal of a character's thoughts and feelings directly, not merely in paraphrase or summary but as if directly issuing from the character's mind. Earlier writers such as Shakespeare had used the monologue in drama, writing scenes in which characters speak to the audience directly in asides or soliloquies. In narrative fiction, however, writers had rarely exploited the interior monologue for extended passages the way Tolstoy does in *Anna Karenina.* The interior monologue gives the reader great empathy with the

character. When we accompany someone's thoughts, perceptions, and emotions step by step through an experience, we inevitably come to understand his or her motivations more intimately.

In *Anna Karenina,* Tolstoy gives us access to Levin's interior monologue at certain key moments in his life: his experience of the bliss of love when Kitty accepts him as husband, his physical ecstasy at mowing with the peasants, and his fear when Kitty is suffering in childbirth. But Tolstoy uses the device of interior monologue far more extensively and movingly in his portrayal of Anna's last moments, on her ride to the station where she dies at the end of Part Seven. Without access to her thoughts, we would have a much flimsier understanding of what drives Anna to suicide. Without it, her death would be just another casualty on the long list of women in Russian literature who kill themselves over love. Reading Anna's monologue, however, we see the liveliness and even humor that make her such a vivid individual in the novel, as when she interrupts her gloomy meditations to comment on the ridiculous name of the hairstylist Twitkin. We also see the extent to which Anna has become a burden to herself—she dreams of getting rid of Vronsky "and of myself." The interior monologue shows us her suicide not as a glamorous cliché but as a simple and heartbreaking attempt to rid herself of the very self she once attempted to liberate.

Adultery

Anna Karenina is best known as a novel about adultery: Anna's betrayal of her husband is the central event of its main plotline. There was a surge of interest in the topic of adultery in the mid-nineteenth century, as evidenced by works such as Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* (1850) and Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* (1857). Although the guilty party in these works is always a woman who meets a bad end as a result of her wrongdoing, the nineteenth-century adultery novel is actually less religiously moralizing than we might expect. *Anna Karenina* is a case in point. Although the novel is loaded with biblical quotations issuing from the mouths of characters and from its own epigraph, its

moral atmosphere is not overwhelmingly Christian. Indeed, many of the novel's devout Christian characters, such as Madame Stahl and Lydia Ivanovna, are repellent and hypocritical. Tolstoy rarely mentions the church in the novel, and even occasionally gently mocks it, as when Levin rolls his eyes at the confession he must undergo to get married. The religious stigma on adultery is certainly present but it is not all that strong.

The more important condemnation of adultery in *Anna Karenina* comes not from the church but from conventional society: adultery is more a social issue in the novel than a moral or religious one. Karenin's chief objection to Anna's involvement with Vronsky is not that adultery is a sin, or even that it causes him emotional anguish, but rather that society will react negatively. Karenin thinks of propriety and decency, looking good to the neighbors, over anything else. It is for this reason that he is so willing to overlook Anna's affair as long as she does not seek a separation or divorce. He does not care so much about the fact that his wife loves another man; he cares only that she continue to appear to be a good wife. This restrictive power of social convention is what Anna comes to loathe and tries to escape—first in Italy, then in seclusion in the countryside. As such, adultery in *Anna Karenina* is a side effect of the stifling forces of society, making the novel a work of social criticism as much as a story of marital betrayal.

Forgiveness

The idea of Christian forgiveness recurs regularly in *Anna Karenina*and is clearly one of Tolstoy's main topics of exploration in the novel. If the central action of the plot is a sin, then forgiveness is the potential resolution. And if Anna is a sinner, then our attitude toward her and toward the novel depends on whether and how much we can forgive her. Tolstoy establishes forgiveness as a noble ideal when Dolly exclaims to Anna, who is helping the Oblonskys through their marital difficulties, "If you forgive, it's completely, completely." This ideal form of pardon amounts to a total erasure of the sin "as if it hadn't happened," as Anna puts it. Yet Tolstoy does not mindlessly accept forgiveness as a noble

Christian virtue, but instead forces us to consider whether forgiveness is possible and effective. The very epigraph to the novel—"Vengeance is mine; I will repay"—values vengeance, the opposite of forgiveness. This opening thought haunts the entire novel, suggesting that perhaps forgiveness is not the ultimate virtue after all.

Moreover, the characters' attitudes toward forgiveness are sometimes compromised. Dolly ends up forgiving Stiva, but we wonder whether her pardon amounts to her simply shutting her eyes to reality, as we know that Stiva continues his womanizing with unabated enthusiasm afterward. In Dolly's case, forgiveness looks like gullibility or resignation. Forgiveness is even more dubious in other instances. When the seemingly dying Anna begs Karenin's forgiveness and he grants it, both are sincere. But the forgiveness has little effect once Anna recovers: Anna continues to love Vronsky and loathe Karenin as much as ever, and though Karenin is more amenable to the idea of divorce, his treatment of Anna does not change much. Through these events, the novel suggests that forgiveness is an ongoing process that may grow or diminish in intensity. It is not a one-time event, after which all disturbances in a relationship disappear permanently as though they had never existed. Though Karenin forgives Anna, for instance, their emotions remain the same as before. Finally, at the end of the novel, Anna beg forgiveness of God just before killing herself**.**

Symbols

Trains

The many references to trains in *Anna* Karenina all carry a negative meaning. Tolstoy sometimes has a character use the French word *train,* as when Anna complains about Vronsky's workload by saying "*Du train que cela va*"—at the rate his work is going—she will never see him at all in a few years. In this phrase, the word denotes a fast rate of increase of something harmful, which is exactly how Tolstoy viewed the expansion of the railroads.

Literal references to trains are no less negative. Anna first makes her ill-fated acquaintance with Vronsky in a train station, and she sees the death of a railway worker after this meeting as a bad omen. The omen is fulfilled when Anna throws herself under the train near the end of the novel, literally making the railway her killer. The metaphor of transportation—and the "transports of love"—for a quick change of scenery is a clear one. Just as trains carry people away to new places, Anna herself is carried away by her train-station passion for Vronsky, which derails her family life, her social life, and ultimately her physical life as well.

Vronsky's Racehorse

On a literal level, Frou-Frou is the beautiful, pricey horse that Vronsky buys and then accidentally destroys at the officers' race. On a figurative level, Frou-Frou is a clear symbol of Anna, or of Vronsky's relationship with her—both of which are ultimately destroyed. Frou-Frou appears in the novel soon after Vronsky's affair with Anna becomes serious and dangerous for their social reputations. Vronsky meets Anna just before the race, and his conversation with her makes him nervous and unsettled, impairing his performance. This link connects Anna with Frou-Frou still more deeply, showing how Vronsky's liaison with Anna endangers him. The horse race is dangerous as well, as we find out when several officers and horses are injured during the run. Vronsky attempts to ride out both dangers—the horse race and the affair—with his characteristic coolness and poise, and he manages to do so successfully for a time. But his ability to stay on top of the situation is ultimately compromised by the fatal error he makes in sitting incorrectly on Frou-Frou's saddle, ending with a literal downfall for both man and horse.

The symbol of the racehorse implies much about the power dynamic between Anna and Vronsky. The horse is vulnerable and completely under Vronsky's control, just as in an adulterous affair in 1870s Russian society it is the woman who runs the greater risk of being harmed. For Vronsky and the other officer riders, the race is a form of entertainment in which they choose to participate. But there is a

deeper force leading both Anna and Frou-Frou into the race, and the stakes are much higher for them than for Vronsky—the race is a matter of life and death for both woman and horse. Ultimately, the horse's death is a needless result of someone else's mistake, just as Anna's death seems unfair, a tragic waste of a beautiful life.

Levin and Kitty's Marriage

Levin's courtship of and marriage to Kitty is of paramount importance to *Anna Karenina.* The novel frames the marriage as a stubborn individualist's acceptance of and commitment to another human being, with all the philosophical and religious meaning such a connection carries for him. Levin is something of an outcast throughout the early part of the novel. His views alienate him from noblemen and peasantry alike. He is frustrated by Russian culture but unable to feel comfortable with European ways. He is socially awkward and suffers from an inferiority complex, as we see in his self-doubts in proposing to Kitty. Devastated by Kitty's rejection of his marriage proposal, Levin retreats to his country estate and renounces all dreams of family life. We wonder whether he will remain an eccentric isolationist for the rest of his days, without family or nearby friends, laboring over a theory of Russian agriculture that no one will read, as no one reads his brother Sergei's magnum opus.

When the flame of Levin's and Kitty's love suddenly rekindles, leading with lightning speed to a marriage, it represents more than a mere betrothal. Rather, the marriage is an affirmation of Levin's connection with others and his participation in something larger than himself—the cornerstone of the religious faith he attains after marriage. Levin starts thinking about faith when he is forced to go to confession in order to obtain a marriage license. Although he is cynical toward religious dogma, the questions the priest asks him set in motion a chain of thoughts that leads him through a crisis and then to spiritual regeneration. Similarly, Levin's final affirmation of faith on the last page of the novel is a direct result of his near-loss of the family that marriage has made possible. It is no accident that faith

and marriage enter Levin's life almost simultaneously, for they are both affirmations that one's self is not the center of one's existence.