

Biyani's Think Tank

Concept based notes

Pre-Romantics & Romantics

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Paper-III

Ms Abeer Mathur

Department of Arts

Biyani Girls College, Jaipur



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Sector-3, Vidhyadhar Nagar,

Jaipur-302 023 (Rajasthan)

Ph : 0141-2338371, 2338591-95 • Fax : 0141-2338007

E-mail : acad@biyanicolleges.org

Website :www.gurukpo.com; www.biyanicolleges.org

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Preface

I am glad to present this book, especially designed to serve the needs of the students. The book has been written keeping in mind the general weakness in understanding the fundamental concept of the topic. The book is self-explanatory and adopts the “Teach Yourself” style. It is based on question-Answer pattern. The language of book is quite easy and understandable based on scientific approach.

Any further improvement in the contents of the book by making corrections, omission and inclusion is keen to be achieved based on suggestions from the reader for which the author shall be obliged.

I acknowledge special thanks to Mr. Rajeev Biyani, *Chairman* & Dr. Sanjay Biyani, *Director (Acad.)* Biyani Group of Colleges, who is the backbone and main concept provider and also have been constant source of motivation throughout this endeavor. We also extend our thanks to Biyani Shikshan Samiti, Jaipur, who played an active role in coordinating the various stages of this endeavor and spearheaded the publishing work.

I look forward to receiving valuable suggestions from professors of various educational institutions, other faculty members and the students for improvement of the quality of the book. The reader may feel free to send in their comments and suggestions to the under mentioned address.

Abeer Mathur

Syllabus

Section A

The following poems from the *Oxford Book of Eighteenth Century Verse ed.*

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- *Thomas Gray : Ode on the Distant Prospect of Eton College, Ode on the Death of a Favourite Cat, Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard
- Sheridan : *The Rivals*

Section B

- *William Wordsworth: *The Prelude*, Book 1
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- Jane Austen : *Mansfield Park*
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Imperfect sympathies Dream children
- *William Hazlitt : The following essays from *Table Talk* (ed. C.M. Macken, Everyman):
On Familiar Style, On the Ignorance of Learned

Poems

Q.1. Give explanation to reference to context:

a) O thou, by Nature taught

To breathe her genuine thought

In numbers warmly pure and sweetly strong:

Who first on mountains wild,

In Fancy, loveliest child,

Thy babe and Pleasure's, nursed the pow'rs of song!

Ans.a) William Collins was an English poet. Second in influence to Thomas Gray, he was an important poet of the middle decades of the 18th century. Simplicity is in purity of nature, it breathes fresh air into all living beings to express his genuine thoughts. Simplicity is like a lovely child who lives on top of a mountain and poet invokes goddess of simplicity to guide him in writing a wonderful poetry blessed by the serenity of simplicity.

b) Thou, who with hermit heart

Disdain'st the wealth of art,

And gauds, and pageant weeds, and trailing pall:

But com'st a decent maid,

In Attic robe array'd,

O chaste, unboastful nymph, to thee I call!

Ans. b) disdain (You dislike them because they are inferior)

Arrayed (order or rank) , trailing (to drag wearily) gaud(very bright colored)
pageant (a beauty contest)

Nymph – beautiful woman like an enchantress ; weed (a plant considered undesirable) pall (cover for a coffin)

**C) 'Haply some hoary-headed Swain may say,
'Oft have we seen him at the peep of dawn
Brushing with hasty steps the dawns away
To meet the sun upon the upland lawn'.**

Ans. c) Introduction: 'Elegy written in a country churchyard' is not an elegy but 'ode' in form. It is universally believed that Thomas Gray's 'Elegy written in a country churchyard' is not an elegy but 'ode' in form. The poem presents itself in a way which seems tolerable and appreciable too. In this poem, you will find a complete set of expressions of his personal life, his despairs and frustrations. You get to know the life of the villagers of Stoke Poges.

Reference to the context- Perhaps some gray-haired native of this village will say (to the inquirer) , "I have often seen that man early in the morning walk with hurried steps over the dewy ground to greet the rising sun from top of the hill. 'Swain' is a young man who is in love but here it means a gray haired man who is a nature lover.

**d) The curfew tolls the knell of parting day,
 The lowing herd winds slowly o'er the lea,
 The ploughman homeward plods his weary way,
 And leaves the world to darkness and to me.**

Ans. Introduction: This famous poem was begun in the year 1742 and finished in 1749. It was written or meditated in the churchyard at Stoke Poges where Gray's mother and aunt resided after his father's death. In these lines of the poem Gray hears the evening -bell which indicates the death of day and the coming of night.

Reference to the context: The ringing of the evening bell marks the close of the day. The sheep walk slowly in a winding course over the pasture-land , producing their natural sounds. The farmer is returning home with a heavy step,

tired of the day's work. The darkness of the night is descending upon the world,
and I find myself quite alone.

- e) **From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,
Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,
And be with caution bold.
Not all that tempts your wandering eyes
And heedless hearts, is lawful prize;
Nor all that glisters gold.**

Ans. Introduction: The cat stands at the side of a China vase filled with water, gazing into it. She continues gazing, until two goldfish surface in the bowl; she reaches into the vase, but cannot quite get at them. She reaches in again, slips, and falls in. She surfaces eight times, though no help is at hand to save her; thus she drowns.

Context:

The final stanza of the poem contains a moral which holds good more in the case of human females than of female cats. Gray has here rightly insinuated that women are attracted by every shining metal because it looks gold to them. He therefore exhorts women to guard against this kind of temptation. He also urges them not to take false step may land them not to take a false step land them in great trouble. Gray's final advice to women is contained in the line: "Nor all that glisters, gold". The poem as a whole is very amusing; and yet Gray has been able tactfully and skillfully to insert into it some pithy remarks or aphorisms containing practical and useful advice.

In its satirical style, this poem comes very close to Alexander Pope's mock heroic epic, *The Rape of the Lock*, though it certainly does not equal Pope's poem in scope or in length or in the elaborate descriptions of the society of Pope's time. On the whole, we here have a most amusing and diverting poem in which there is

hardly any flaw, and with every smile and every metaphor in it being precise and appropriate.

Q.2. Write the critical summary of 'Ode to Simplicity'.

Ans.2 The measure of the ancient ballad seems to have been made choice of for this ode, on account of the

subject; and it has, indeed, an air of simplicity, not altogether unaffecting:

"By all the honey'd store

On Hybla's thymy shore,

By all her blooms, and mingled murmurs dear,

By her whose lovelorn woe,

In evening musings slow,

Sooth'd sweetly sad Electra's poet's ear."

This allegorical imagery of the honeyed store, the blooms, and mingled murmurs of Hybla, indirectly referring to the

sweetness and beauty of the Attic poetry, has the finest and the happiest effect: yet, possibly, it will bear a

question whether the ancient Greek tragedians had a general claim to simplicity in anything more than the

plans of their drama. Their language, at least, was infinitely metaphorical; yet it must be owned that they

justly copied nature and the passions, and so far, certainly, they were entitled to the palm of true simplicity;

The poet cuts off the prevalence of simplicity among the Romans with the reign of Augustus; and, indeed,

it did not continue much longer, most of the compositions, after that date, giving into false and artificial

ornament.

“No more, in hall or bower,

The passions own thy power,

Love, only love, her forceless numbers mean.”

In these lines the writings of the Provincial poets are principally alluded to, in which simplicity is

generally sacrificed to the rhapsodies (very powerful and full of delight) of romantic love.

Q.3. Define an ode and discuss Collins' Ode to Evening as a pastoral poem.

Ans. 3 This poem personifies evening in rich, complex description. Likened to the Bible's 'Eve' in line 2, already we are given an ambivalent perspective on the subject – both an object of beauty and something fallen and flawed. The poet dwells on evening's ability to both reveal and obscure, and sets up a contrast between characterization as a pure, religious figure, and a sensual, sexualized being. The final exultant address extends this characterization of evening to a reflection on women.

Evening is referred to as 'chaste Eve', bringing an immediate comparison with the Biblical character. The 'chasteness' of Eve as a character is ambiguous, as Milton and others have seen the Fall as a form of seduction, playing on Eve's pride, something countered in the poem by 'modest'. We are therefore meant to see evening as ambivalent, whether the poet is trying to cast off these prejudices or ironically enforce them. This allusion then informs our interpretation of the personified sun, depicted here as male in the convention of describing Apollo the sun-god. We could read this as Adam, Eve's partner, who in the act of setting is being put aside, separated off allowing us to place our focus solely on the evening or 'Eve'.

Evening is also depicted as a Classical muse, inspiring song in the poet which he hopes will 'suit' her – both in the sense of reflecting evening's peace and in the sense of being pleasing to it. There is a pun in the epithet, 'maid composed', in that evening's calm is described as 'composure', but also this figure has been is

involved in 'composing' music as a muse. Perhaps also this figure is itself 'made' or 'composed', manufactured by the poet to stand in for something else – the poem will go on to reveal that it is really reflecting on the nature of womankind not just evening. Using 'compose' in its musical sense, the poet's exhortation to the muse suggests along with the poem's title a desire to praise or elevate the subject.

There is however a darker element to this image; the idea of 'measures, stealing through thy darkening vale' suggests the creeping of a predator. We see the image of a beetle with a 'sullen horn' as well: the ominous side of falling night. This image is partially obscured from us, introducing troubling glimpses like the 'heedless' 'pilgrim', suggesting vulnerability and lack of awareness. Here the poet demonstrates evening's ability to both reveal, as it casts things in a new light and conjures 'elves' and 'nymph's, and obscure, by darkening detail and hiding faces. The lines in which evening's 'elves' emerge are mimetic of the lethargy and gradual change of twilight itself, with long drawn out syntax extending the sentence from line 21 to 27.

The poem is full of religious imagery, used to emphasize the reserved purity of evening's actions. Evening is apostrophized as a 'calm vot'ress', suggesting the word 'devotion' and the idea of votive candles – we have an image of a praying woman strengthened by the reference to a 'dusky veil', standing for both the physical darkness obscuring faces and a symbol of nun-like purity. Contrasted with this calm reserved-ness we see the sensuous vitality instilled in evening by the seasons. The description is sexualized in 'breathing tresses' and 'lap of leaves', suddenly giving 'evening' characteristics of flesh. The 'sport' of Summer and Winter's 'rending of robes' also seem to have sexual connotations. The contrasted views of evening available in the poem match with the ambivalent allusion to Eve as a Biblical character: femininity as both pure and unreachable, and as earthly and bodily.

The final lines ascribe 'Fancy, Friendship, Science and rose-lipped health' to evening, and here we have a clue that the poem also has a discourse on womankind and femininity itself. These things would seem strange to ascribe to 'evening', but might better be a reflection of womankind, with the idea of 'gentlest influence' especially sounding like a description of women typical of this time. One could see the shapely elegance of the poem's form – two

pentameter lines alternating with two trimeter lines – as another incarnation of femininity in the poem.

This poem uses femininity as a way of characterizing and beautifully representing evening. But perhaps more significantly it uses the idea of evening as a means of expressing the poet's views on women as paradoxical, unknowable and life giving.

Q.4. Discuss the 'Ode on the death of a Favorite Cat' as a mock-heroic poem.

Ans.4. Thomas Gray's "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" is a complex and turbulent view into the tragic and horrifying death of Selima, a lovely and unsuspecting feline. With a tone worthy of the regal animal, the reader is taken on a journey into the life of this cat, experiencing not only the beauty that is said creature, but also the sad end she came to, quite undeservingly. Through a skilled combination of tone, connotative words and double meanings, imagery, figurative language and musical device, Gray is able to give the reader a true and appropriate look at the life and death of Selima, a most glorious and wondrous beast.

Gray uses the third-person point of view to relay the ongoing struggle of cat versus nature. The tone is deadly serious, showing a portrait of the cat as a cat with her "conscious tale" and "ears of jet", trying to accomplish no more than procuring a hummer of a goldfish for lunch. However, the tale takes a deadly turn when the fated Selima goes a paw too far and tumbles face-first into the goldfish tub. The reader, through this tone (which some might call mock-heroic, could they not see the utter tragedy and seriousness of Selima's fate), is taken into the life and death of a cat who was merely hungry; alas, she ends up swimming with the fishes.

The use of connotative words and double meanings is the underlying foundation of the poem, and provides a tapestry upon which the rest of the poem is woven (and upon which the poor Selima might have loved to nap). In the first stanza, the "lofty vase" mocks "pensive Selima," showing that the vase was aware, all along, of the fate of the cat. In the second stanza, the reader is shown Selima's "conscious tale," implying that this is no normal cat; she is capable of thought and perception. Not only is she a cranially superior breed, she also has a "fair round

face," attesting to the beauty that accompanied the brains . Gray offers further evidence of Selima's gifted intelligence: when she was peering on the goldfish pond, she appreciated what she saw. According to Gray, she "purred her applause," showing demonstrably that Selima had cognitive abilities never before witnessed by ordinary mortals.

Unfortunately, however, Selima's great intelligence was betrayed by her attraction the "angel forms" that appear in the lake, "[betraying] a golden gleam" . It appears that Selima, like all women of the early seventeenth century, is attracted to riches and gold, for (according to the authority on the subject, Mr. Gray), "what female heart can gold despise," especially when the gold is wrapped around as tasty a morsel as the fish .

A bit of foreshadowing is given when our fated heroine, the cat, is referred to as a "hapless nymph," hinting that this paragon of feline acumen is about to experience a bit of bad luck. Selima is just reaching out to claim her prize when "malignant fate," that purveyor of all things evil, smiles down on the scene and perhaps nudges Selima from her throne and into the tub of goldfish.

"Eight times" did she "[emerge] from the flood," using up every last life available to her. Gray recalls her meowed pleas the cat-gods everywhere, begging for her life. Alas, according to Gray, "no dolphin came" to save her and the servants, Tom and Susan, who's main responsibility was to ensure the good health of Selima the Wonder Cat, batted nary a paw at the ruckus . Selima, hanging on as long as she could, extinguished gently amidst the objects of her lunchtime ambitions.

Gray leaves his readers with a lesson, a moral to be learned from the sad story of Selima's death:

From hence, ye beauties, undeceived,

Know, one false step is ne'er retrieved,

And be with caution bold.

Not all that tempts your wandering eyes

And heedless hearts is lawful prize;

Nor all the glisters gold.

The powerful message here is clear; be careful where you step, as you may fall into a pond of goldfish and drown. Furthermore, Gray implies, what you covet, though it may be beautiful, may lead you to your death (or even worse, the death of your cat).

The powerful use of connotative words and incredibly subtle didactic message is interwoven with vivid images that allow the reader to become part of the poem. Selima herself is described as having "a snowy beard," a tortoise-shell coat, and "ears of jet and emerald eyes" . The "tub of death," as it has come to be called in my mind, is shown to be a place of beauty, with the occupants, being the goldfish, described as "angel forms" gliding throughout, "their scaly armor's Tyrian hue" catching the attention of the doomed tortoise-shell wonder . The reader is shown Selima, with her "looks intent / Again she stretched, again she bent," frantically pawing for those elusive bite-size morsels. In a startling view, the reader is given a clear and complete picture of the cat as she is alive, and a devastating picture of her death.

Gray interweaves alliteration and assonance liberally throughout the poem, giving it a depth and richness that complements the rhyme and meter. Although subtle, alliteration is sprinkled throughout, as in "fair round face" and "golden gleam," giving the poem a lyrical quality that makes it effortlessly readable . Assonance is also present, especially with the short "e" sounds of the poem (pensive, Selima, stretched, bent) and mixes exquisitely with the rhyme scheme. The rhyme pattern follows an aabccb pattern. The two "sets" of rhyming lines contain eight syllables each (aa and cc), and the singular lines (b) contain six syllables, causing them to "pop" and engage the reader while declaring a point. The two sets of rhymed lines are in iambic octameter, and the two singular sets are in iambic hexameter, making the entire poem not only easy to read, but enjoyable as well.

Gray's use of tone, connotation, imagery, figurative language and musical device make "Ode on the Death of a Favorite Cat" a poem which shocks, impresses and disturbs. With its didactic message, Gray manages to apply to tragedy of the cat's death to any reader's experience and makes it real and emotionally true, evoking

a serene image of life and a horrifying image of death as the cat does what it's supposed to do - be a cat. The mock-heroic style adds humor and levity to the absurd. Gray's mastery of literary tools and style make this a poem that lingers on, laughing in the mind of humans and cats everywhere.

Q.5. Justify the statement 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' is a ballad.

Ans. 5 A ballad is a long song or poem which tells a story in simple language.

'Rime' is a story written in verse. 'Rime' is the alternative spelling of 'rhyme'.

The poem opens abruptly in the manner of a ballad. Without any wasteful prescription, our attention is immediately drawn to the central figure of the story, the Mariner. 'Ancient' conveys the two-fold sense of 'old' and 'of old time'. An atmosphere of 'bygone days' permeates the whole poem.

Two of the most striking features of the mariner's appearance, He uses the atmosphere of dreams to accustom us to his special world, and then he proceeds to create freely within his chosen limits:

The ancient mariner shows many qualities of a dream. It moves in abrupt stages, each of which has its own single, dominating character. Its visual impressions are remarkably brilliant and absorbing. Its emotional impacts change rapidly, but always come with an unusual force as if the poet were haunted and obsessed by them. The mariner himself, with his glittering eye, grey beard and skinny hand seems to have descended from a world haunted by phantoms and specters, whereas supernatural happenings, because of the psychological truth inherent in them. Look to be quite natural. 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' was planned by Wordsworth and Coleridge on the afternoon of the 20th November, 1797, when they were walking in the Quantocks. Coleridge really knows how to draw one's attention in the beginning of the story.

Three young men are walking together to a wedding, when one of them is detained by a grizzled old sailor. The young Wedding-Guest angrily demands that the Mariner let go of him, and the Mariner obeys. But the young man is transfixed by the ancient Mariner's "glittering eye" and can do nothing but sit on a stone and listen to his strange tale.

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner is one of the best representatives of the English ballad tradition. A ballad is not just a kind of song that people slow-dance to with the lights dimmed. No, in poetry terms, it's a kind of poem that tells some kind of narrative or story, often a lengthy one. Coleridge borrows the form of this poem from old, popular English ballads like "Sir Patrick Spens." Most stanzas have four lines, called a "quatrain," and a rhyme scheme that goes ABCB, so the second and fourth lines of each stanza rhyme. Of course, not all of the stanzas have exactly four lines: Coleridge isn't willing to sacrifice meaning for form. The Rime of the Ancient Mariner does feel like a lyric at times. But really, it's a story.

Q. 6. "Keats' Odes grow directly out of inner conflicts." Explain.

Ans. The Odes, a product of Keats' Inner Conflicts:-

It would be true to say that the odes of Keats are the product of certain inner struggles or conflicts. The principal stress in the most important of these odes is a struggle between ideal and actual. They also imply the opposition between pleasure and pain, imagination and reason, fullness and privation, permanence and change, Nature and the human, art and life, freedom and bondage, waking and dream.

The "Ode on a Grecian Urn": Its Duality of Theme:-

In the Ode on a Grecian Urn, the duality of the theme is indicated in the very opening stanza where Keats gives us a contrast between something unchanging (the urn) because it is dead and something transient because it is alive. This equipoise is continued in the second stanza, but but the poet continues to toy with his dual matter without asserting or implying that lifeless permanence is superior or transient reality. Nor does he indicate any preference in the third stanza, though the emphasis here, as in the second stanza, is upon the warmth and the turbulence of life. We have not been made to feel that Keats has any distinct preference for an unrealized but permanent love over an actually experienced transient but actual passion. In the fourth stanza, we are carried into world (the little town) that is permanent, but permanently empty, just as the figures on the urn are permanent but permanently lifeless. In the final stanza, the poet ends his dual game. Here he emphatically addresses this thing of beauty as just what it is a Grecian Urn. This work of art, he says, has "teased" us out of

thought , that is, out of the actual world into an ideal world where we can momentarily and imaginatively enjoy the life that is free from the imperfections of our lot here. But this ideal world is not free of all imperfections: it has very grave deficiencies because it is lifeless, motionless, cold , unreal ("silent form", "cold pastoral", etc.)

The "Ode on Melancholy", Also a Poem of Contrasts:-

The "Ode on Melancholy" is another poem of contrasts. The general idea of this poem is that true melancholy is to be found not in the sad and ugly things of life, such as wolf's bane, nightshade, yew-berries , the beetle, and death moth, but in the beauty and pleasures of the world. The world's true sadness dwells with beauty and joy will soon fade. The poem expresses Keats's experience of the habitual interchange and alteration of the emotions of joy and pain.

But in "Ode to Autumn" poet keeps completely out of picture. He only describes certain sights and sounds without expressing his personal reaction to these sights and sounds. The poem is a perfect Nature-lyric. No human sentiment finds expression ; only the beauty and bounty of nature during autumn are described.

Q.7 Write the detailed summary of " Adonais ".

Ans Adonais is a long poem , running 495 lines in fifty-five Spenserian stanzas. As the poet states in his subtitle , it is an elegy on the death of John Keats. The younger Keats, an acquaintance and fellow romantic poet whom Percy Bysshe Shelley had invited to visit with him in Italy, had been seeking warmer climes to relieve the tuberculosis which eventually took his life, at the age of twenty-six on February 23, 1821. The poem's title requires the reader to pause and reflect momentarily on Shelley's highly conscious design.

"An Elegy on the Death of John Keats" written in the spring of 1821 , and first publication , July 1821.

Traditionally the 'second generation' of English Romantic poet consists of Lord Byron, John Keats and Percy Bysshe Shelley . Shelley personally met both Keats and Byron, but the latter two never met and had little regard for one another's work. Shelley and Keats met in late 1816 via their mutual friend , Liegh Hunt.

Their occasional walks along Hampstead Heath resulted in Shelley advising Keats to not publish his early verse. The advice was well-meant but understandably bothered Keats. Later, when Shelley was a voluntary exile in Italy, the two poets exchanged letters. By this time Keats's genius had matured and Shelley was devoted and enthusiastic admirer. Keats' illness prompted an invitation from Shelley and his wife to stay with them in Italy; Keats declined, travelling instead with Joseph Severn as his companion. When Shelley drowned in 1822, a copy of Keats' works was found in his pocket. Shelley wrote the 'Adonais' elegy immediately about Keats' works was found in his pocket.

Shelley wrote the 'Adonais' elegy immediately after hearing about Keats' death. This poem was composed as a pastoral elegy, specifically in the tradition of Milton's beautiful 'Lycidas'. Like most of Keats' admirers. In Greek mythology, Adonis, a youth of remarkable beauty, the favourite of Aphrodite. As a child he was put in the care of Persephone who refused to allow him to return to the underworld. Mythically, Adonis represents the cycle of death and resurrection in winter's spring.

Q.8 Trace the development of thought and feeling in Gray's Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard. Would you agree that this poem "abounds with sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo"?

Ans. Humble Joys and Simple Labours:

After building up the melancholy atmosphere of the evening, the poet refers to "the rude forefathers" of the village who lie buried in the churchyard and who are now beyond recall. The customary sounds of the morning will no longer awaken them from their eternal sleep. No more will the housewife "ply her evening care" for them and no more will children greet them on their return home. How often did these men perform these labours in the fields or the wood! But now all is ended. Thus the poet creates pathos by referring to the humble labours and the simple domestic joys of these men and by dwelling upon the irrevocable nature of Death.

Death is Inevitable ; Memorials serve no purpose :

Then, in a tone of moralizing, the poet asks the proud and ambitious people not to mock at the humble lives of these men or belittle their daily labours. Death

does not spare even the proud and the ambitious, and "the paths of glory lead but to the grave". Another moral follows when the poet says that monuments or memorials over the dead can serve no purpose. Neither the "storied urn" nor the "animated bust" can bring the departed soul back to the body. The dead are deaf to all words of praise or flattery that their friends may speak. This is the consolation that the poet offers to humble people over whose tombs and memorials are raised.

The Crushing Effect of Poverty Upon These Men:-

Pathos deepens when the poet goes on to say that, for lack of opportunity, the inborn gifts and hidden abilities of these humble men remained undeveloped. There might have been among them someone who could have become a great religious prophet, or someone fit to rule an empire, or someone capable of becoming a great musician. But extreme poverty had a numbing or paralyzing effect upon their talents; and they lived and died unknown, just as many exquisite gems lie unknown at the bottom of the sea or many lovely flowers bloom unknown in the wilderness. There might have been someone with the dauntless courage of Hampden, another with the poetic genius of Milton, another with the aggressive nature and qualities of leadership of Cromwell. But owing to the crushing effect of poverty their capabilities remained suppressed and unknown.

Prevented from Wicked Deeds:-

But for this loss also, the poet finds a consolation. If extreme poverty prevented some of these men from attaining distinction in different spheres of life, the same poverty made it impossible for the others among them to do any mischief. If there was some with the gift of parliamentary oratory or high qualities of statesmanship, there must also have been others with a capacity for doing great harm and injury to mankind by waging war or causing dissensions. But their humble destiny forbade them to act in an unscrupulous manner by suppressing truth and propagating adoration and flattery to men of wealth and rank. These humble men lived quiet, retired

Novels

Q.1. Does Fanny grow as a person over the course of the novel?

Ans. 1 A young girl named Fanny Price comes to live with her wealthy uncle and aunt, Sir Thomas and Lady Bertram. Fanny's family is quite poor; her mother, unlike her sister Lady Bertram, married beneath her, and Fanny's father, a sailor, is disabled and drinks heavily. Fanny is abused by her other aunt, Mrs. Norris, a busybody who runs things at Mansfield Park, the Bertrams' estate. The Bertram daughters, Maria and Julia, are shallow, rather cruel girls, intent on marrying well and being fashionable. The elder son, Tom, is a roustabout and a drunk. Fanny finds solace only in the friendship of the younger son, Edmund, who is planning to be a clergyman. Fanny grows up shy and deferential, caught as she typically is between members of the Bertram family.

Sir Thomas leaves Mansfield Park for Antigua, where he owns plantations. In his absence, two new figures arrive at Mansfield: Henry and Mary Crawford, the brother and sister of the local minister's wife. Henry and Mary are attractive and cheerful, and they soon become indispensable members of the Mansfield circle. Henry flirts extensively with Maria, who is engaged to marry the boring but wealthy Rushworth. He also flirts with Julia when it suits his purposes. At first, Mary is interested in Tom, the older son and heir, but she soon realizes that he is boring and not really interested in her. She finds herself increasingly attracted to Edmund, although the prospect of marrying a clergyman does not appeal to her, and she is often cruel to him on this account. In the meantime, Fanny has innocently fallen in love with Edmund, although she does not even admit this to herself. Yates, a visiting friend of Tom's, proposes that the group should put on a play. His idea is eagerly received by all except for Edmund and Fanny, who are horrified at the idea of acting. The play goes on anyways, however; Maria and Henry, as well as Mary and Edmund (who has been prevailed upon to take a role to avoid bringing in an outsider to play it), get to play some rather lively scenes with one another. When one of the women cannot make a rehearsal, Fanny is pressured to take a role. She is almost forced to give in when Sir Thomas makes a sudden entrance, having arrived from Antigua.

Sir Thomas is unhappy about the play and quickly puts a stop to the improprieties. Since Henry has not declared his love, Maria is married to Rushworth. She and Julia leave Mansfield Park for London. Relationships between the Crawfords and the Bertrams intensify. Edmund nearly proposes to Mary several times, but her condescension and amorality always stop him at the last minute. He confides his feelings to Fanny, who is secretly upset by them. In the meantime, on a lark, Henry has decided to woo Fanny. He is surprised to find himself sincerely in love with her. Fanny has become indispensable as a companion to her aunt and uncle, and on the occasion of her brother William's visit, they give a ball in her honor. Some time after the ball, Henry helps William get a promotion in the Navy. Using this as leverage, he proposes to Fanny, who is mortified and refuses. He continues to pursue her. Her uncle is disappointed that she has refused such a wealthy man, and, as an indirect result, she is sent to stay with her parents in their filthy house. Meanwhile, Edmund has been ordained and continues to debate over his relationship with Mary, to Fanny's dismay.

Henry comes to see Fanny at her parents' and renews his suit. He then leaves to take care of business on his estate. Fanny continues to receive letters from Mary encouraging her to take Henry's proposal. A series of events then happen in rapid succession: Tom Bertram falls dangerously ill as a result of his partying and nearly dies; Henry, who has gone not to his estate but to see friends, has run off with the married Maria; Julia, upset over her sister's rash act, elopes with Yates, Tom's friend. Fanny is recalled to Mansfield, bringing her younger sister Susan with her. Edmund has finally seen through Mary, who has admitted that she would like to see Tom die so that Edmund could be heir, and who has more or less condoned Henry and Maria's actions. He is heartbroken, but Fanny consoles him. Maria and Henry eventually split, and she goes to the Continent to live with the evil Mrs. Norris. Julia and Yates are reconciled to the family. Edmund finally comes to his senses and marries Fanny, and Susan takes her place with the Bertrams. Edmund, Fanny, and the rest of those at Mansfield live happily, while Henry, Mary, and Maria are cast out.

Q.2. Write the detailed summary of "Frankenstein".

Ans 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.

Essays

Q.1. How does Charles Lamb show his knowledge of child psychology?

Ans. Dream children is primarily an essay characterized by an almost tragic quality, but there are several touches of humor in it. The imaginary children's reactions to what the author has to tell them are quite amusing. "Alice put out one of her dear mother's looks too tender to be called upbraiding." "Here John smiled, as much as to say, "that would be foolish indeed," "Here John expanded all his eye-brows and tried to look courageous," all these are touches of humor in an essay which is otherwise moving highly. This does not mean, however, that humor, unmixed with pathos, is not to be found in Lamb's essays. It is surprising that without ever having children Lamb had acute sense of how children react to the happenings in the world of the adults. By deceptively referring to the meticulous reactions of his dream children, he succeeds in catching the reader immediately. The aesthetic impact of the essay becomes more effective for this reason. There are certain essays in which there is absolutely no touch of pathos. Such are fool's day, a chapter on ears, imperfect sympathies, Oxford in the vacation, my relations, imperfect sympathies, the south-sea house, new year's eve, etc. Charles Lamb entitled the essay "Dream Children" because he never married and naturally never became the father of any children. The children he speaks of in the essay were actually the creations of his imagination or fancy.

Q.2. Lamb's essay "Imperfect Sympathies" is full of prejudices. Discuss.

Ans. After reading the essay, I am not sure how I should respond to it: whether I should applaud Lamb for his honesty, his eschewing of the easy solution, or whether I should find his views ugly. I am equivocating here. I know exactly how I feel about Lamb's words in this essay.

He begins the essay by quoting from Browne's Religion Medici: "I am of a constitution so general, that it consorts and sympathies with all things; I have no antipathy, or rather idiosyncrasy in anything. Those narrow prejudices do not

touch me, nor do I behold with prejudice the French, Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch."

Lamb accuses Browne of being "mounted upon the airy stilts of abstraction." Lamb admits he can "feel the differences of mankind, national or individual, to an unhealthy excess. I can look with no indifferent eye upon things or persons." He is, he says, "in plainer words, a bundle of prejudices." He says frankly that he can be a friend to a "worthy man who upon another count cannot be my mate or fellow. I cannot like all people alike."

He says, for example, that, though he has tried all his life, he cannot like Scotchmen, and he assumes they cannot like him. He spends several pages explaining, cleverly I might say, his problem with the Scotch. From what I can glean, Lamb finds the Scotch imperfect thinkers, dogmatic, blind to nuance and irony and humor, absurdly literal. (Here I recall that Dr. Johnson was markedly anti-Caledonian, though one senses in Johnson a bit of acting, as if he feels a need to bolster the notion of himself as a curmudgeon.)

On Blacks Lamb says, "In the Negro countenance you will often meet with strong traits of benignity." He says he has always felt "tenderness towards some of these faces—or rather masks—" he has met in the street. His comment about masks is a perspicacious one. Then Lamb closes the matter about Blacks: "But I should not like to associate with them, to share my meals and good nights with them—because they are black." I must say Lamb's attitude toward African-Americans is much like that of many of the white Southern establishment had during the days of segregation. Men who would never cheat or harm a black man would not share a meal with him. I recall someone's telling me that if he and a black man were in a room when night fell and the room contained only one bed, he would flip a coin with the other fellow for the right to sleep in the bed but that he would not share the bed.

Lamb, as we might imagine, has no use for Quakers. They are, he says, "given to evasion and equivocation." Lamb disdains their austere lifestyle. Lamb likes "books, pictures, theatres, chit-chat, scandal, jokes, ambiguity, and thousand whim-whams. I should starve at their primitive banquet." His appetites are too high for the meager fare the Quakers provide..

I have saved for last Lamb's appraisal of the Jews. He has, he says, "in the abstract, no disrespect for the Jews. But I should not care to be in the habits of familiar intercourse with any of that nation." He admits that "old prejudices cling about me." Standard stuff, right, but then Lamb says something that, considering the sad history of the twentieth century, I had to think about for a while:

"Centuries of injury, contempt, and hate, on the one side—of cloaked revenge, dissimulation, and hate, on the other, between our fathers and theirs, must and ought to affect the blood of the children. I cannot believe it can run clear and kindly yet; or that a few words, such as candour, liberality, the light on nineteenth-century, can close up the breaches of so deadly a disunion."

Auschwitz would prove Lamb right about the ineptness and essential fraud of a few words, of the liberal hope that progress had led to a burying of hate, to a state of social bliss. Lamb goes on to say that he does "not relish the approximation of Jews and Christians." He finds it "hypocritical and unnatural." He does "not like to see the Church and the Synagogue kissing and congeeing in awkward postures of an affected civility." Lamb drags out the old shibboleth that Jews are interested in only "Gain and the pursuit of gain." And he genuflects to the notion that Jews are shrewd, intelligent: "I never heard of an idiot being born among them."

Of course one can take the essay in different ways. Some might say that Lamb is blindly prejudiced and bigoted, accuse him of being a racist, though the charge of "racist" is made so often these days that it sometimes ceases to have meaning and has become little more than a tired bromide. Others might say he is stressing tolerance but abjuring the notion that we must all love one another. "You can expect me," Lamb might be saying, "to respect any worthy man, but you cannot expect me love every worthy man—or long to associate with him." He seems to prefer associating with those who are most like him, those who relish in life what he does. The reader will have to decide for himself or herself his or her view of Lamb.

Q.3. Write an introduction on essayist William Hazlitt.

Ans.3. Hazlitt—There were two pre-eminent literary critics in the second decade of the nineteenth century, Samuel Taylor Coleridge and William Hazlitt. While the former developed his critical principles in his early philosophical studies and in a

decade of splendid poetic creation, the latter had no such period of creativity to look back on when he began his career as journalist-critic in 1813, at the age of thirty-six. His early life was a series of failures. William Hazlitt, the English essayist, journalist, and critic, began his literary career as a "metaphysician," and the principles of his youthful philosophical writing survived to govern his thought during the years when a more brilliant prose style won him fame. Born at Maidstone, Kent, the son of a Dissenting minister, Hazlitt kept faith politically with his Unitarian heritage, but at an early age revolted against his father's rationalistic theology. After trying unsuccessfully to become a painter, he turned in his thirties to journalism and to popular lecturing, and until his death made his living in London as a writer for periodicals. Twice unhappily married, always the fierce defender of both the French Revolution and Napoleon Bonaparte, Hazlitt succeeded in alienating most of his friends and much of his public, although his critical influence on the literature of his time was perhaps second only to Samuel Taylor Coleridge's. Unlike Coleridge, his erstwhile friend and mentor, Hazlitt did not ground his thought in a version of the new Idealism; he stands alone in his age as a romantic thinker who developed a critique of empiricism that nonetheless supported the values and methods of the empiricist tradition.

Q.4. What is the theme of the essay, On the Ignorance of the Learned, and how is it developed?

Or

Trace the development of the thought in the essay, "On the Ignorance of the Learned".

Ans. The Paradoxical Title of the Essay: The Theme of the essay

The theme of the essay, On the Ignorance of the Learned, is clearly stated in the title itself. But this title is paradoxical. How the learned persons be ignorant? A learned man is expected to be a moving encyclopedia of knowledge; and he cannot therefore be ignorant of anything. And yet Hazlitt is able to prove that the learned persons are ignorant of many things. In fact, this essay is satire, on the learned persons, and it effectively exposes the ignorance of such persons. We can state the gist of this essay by saying that the learned possess a surprising amount of knowledge of matters remote from their daily lives but are ignorant of a multitude of facts and truths which concern them in their day-to-day lives.

A Learned Man, a Borrower of Ideas and a Literary Drudge

Learning, says Hazlitt, is, in too many cases, merely a foil to common sense. In other words, learning is just the opposite of common sense. Learning, Hazlitt, Hazlitt further says, is a substitute for true knowledge. A learned man is generally a book-worm who gets lost in the world of books and who feels no interest in the realities of the external world around him. Such a man cannot think for himself. He borrows all his ideas from books. He is as incapable of independent thinking as paralytic is of leaping from his chair. A learned man can only breathe a learned atmosphere, while other men breathe the common air. A learned man is a borrower of ideas and may therefore be regarded as a mere literary drudge who is incapable of writing down anything original. Of course, Hazlitt is here too harsh upon the learned people but he writing a satire; and a satire must exaggerate the faults and shortcomings of its victims.

A Defective System of Education

Hazlitt then proceeds to attack the system of education which encourages only memory-work and which does not develop the thinking faculties of the pupils at school. Hazlitt says that the system of education prevailing in England of his time succeeded only in making a fool of a school-boy, with the result that boys who were bright at school never achieved any great success when they grew up and entered the world at large. Memory was the chief faculty called into play at school. Boys were asked to learn lessons by rote. In grammar, in language, in geography, in arithmetic, etc. boys who had learnt their lessons by heart showed excellent results in the examinations. A lad with a sickly constitution, and no very active mind, was generally at the head of the class. An idler at school, on the other hand, managed to maintain good health and high spirits and was able to keep all his wits about him even though he did not fare well in the examinations. Men of the great genius, says Hazlitt, had seldom distinguished themselves at school or at university. The poets, Thomas Gray and William Collins, are named by Hazlitt as examples of great men who were truants in school. The brightest of the students possessed only an average ability though, by their hard intellectual labors, they did produce excellent essays and epigrams which brought them prizes at school or college. Here, we agree with much of what Hazlitt says about the book-worms and about the healthy, sport-loving students. However, we cannot generalize in a categorical manner and say that a

book-worm rarely succeeds in real life and that idler at school generally achieves considerable success when he enters the world at large.

A satirical sketch of a Learned Man

We now come to the central part of the essay when we find an example of Hazlitt's satirical powers at their best. The main argument of the essay as well as the satire here reaches its height. "Learning is the knowledge of that which none but the learned know". He is the most learned man who knows most of what is removed from common life and from actual observation. Learning is the knowledge of that which has no practical utility at all. The learned man feels proud of his knowledge of names and dates, not of men or things. He thinks nothing and cares nothing about his next-door neighbours, but has a vast knowledge of the tribes and castes of people living in far-off and remote regions of the world. He can hardly find his way into the next street but is well acquainted with the exact dimensions of distant cities like Constantinople and Peking. He does not know whether his oldest acquaintance is a rogue or a fool; but he can neither speak his own language fluently nor write it correctly. A person of this kind, who was a Greek scholar of his time, undertook to point out several errors in Milton's Latin style; but in his own writings there was hardly a sentence of common English.

What the Learned Man Knows, and What He Does Not Know

Continuing his satirical sketch of the learned man or the mere scholar, Hazlitt says that such a man knows nothing except books, and is ignorant even of books. The learned scholar is familiar with books only in far as they are made of other books which, in their turn, are made of yet other books which, in turn, are made of yet other books, and those again made of yet others, endlessly. Such a man parrot those who have parroted others.

Conclusion: This is one of the finest essays of Hazlitt. Reasoning, logic, literary illustrations, illustrations, personal likings have all been pressed into service in this essay to support and elaborate the main thesis; and at end we are not only feel convinced by what Hazlitt has said but are left wondering at Hazlitt's powers of expression and his capacity to pile argument upon argument, and to heap illustration upon illustration. The style of this essay is not the least fascinating feature of it. It has a compact and close-knit structure.

Miscellaneous Questions

Q.1 Write down the summary of Prelude written by William Wordsworth.

Ans **Prelude:** Summary

The Prelude or, Growth of a Poet's Mind; An Autobiographical Poem is an autobiographical epic poem in blank verse by the English poet William Wordsworth. The Prelude affords one of the best approaches to Wordsworth's poetry in general and to the philosophy of nature it contains. However, the apparent simplicity of the poem is deceptive; comprehension is seldom immediate. Many passages can tolerate two or more readings and afford new meaning at each reading. Wordsworth, it will be recalled, likened his projected great philosophical work to a magnificent Gothic cathedral. And he explained (in the Preface to The Excursion) that The Prelude was like an antechapel through which the reader might pass to gain access to the main body of the structure.

The poem begins in his boyhood and continues to 1798. By the latter date, he felt that his formative years had passed, that his poetic powers were mature, and that he was ready to begin constructing the huge parent work. Alternating with his almost religious conviction, there is an unremitting strain of dark doubt through the poem. The poem itself therefore may be considered an attempt to stall for time before going on to what the poet imagined would be far more difficult composition. As he tells the reader repeatedly, his purpose was threefold: to provide a reexamination of his qualifications, to honor Coleridge, and to create an introduction to The Recluse.

It was actually finished in 1805 but was carefully and constantly revised until 1850, when it was published posthumously. It had been remarked that Wordsworth had the good sense to hold back an introductory piece until he was certain that what it was to introduce had some chance of being realized.

Moreover, The Prelude contained passages which promised to threaten the sensibilities of others, as well as himself, during the rapidly changing course of events after 1805. The year 1805 is the approximate date of his conversion to a more conservative outlook. However, his later-year recollection was that this change occurred some ten years earlier, and he tries in his revisions to push the date back.

The 1805 original draft was resurrected by Ernest de Selincourt and first published in 1926. A comparison of it with the 1850 (and final) version shows the vast change the work underwent. Some passages in the earlier version do not appear at all in the later; others are altered almost beyond recognition. The 1805 draft contains the clearest statement of Wordsworth's philosophy and is fresher and more vigorously written. The toned-down work as published in 1850 represents the shift of his thought toward conservatism and orthodoxy during the intervening years. The student is likely to find the 1850 version much more accessible for the purpose of reading the whole poem. Yet on the whole, critics tend to prefer the 1805 version when citing actual lines from the poem.

The only action in the entire poem is an action of ideas. Similarly, it would be inaccurate to speak of the poem as having a plot in any standard sense. Its "story" is easily summarized. The poem falls rather naturally into three consecutive sections: Books 1-7 offer a half-literal, half-fanciful description of his boyhood and youthful environment; Book 8 is a kind of reprise. Books 9-11, in a more fluid and narrative style, depict his exciting adventures in France and London. Books 12-14 are mostly metaphysical and are devoted to an attempt at a philosophy of art, with the end of the last book giving a little summary.

Each of these three "sections" corresponds roughly to a phase in Wordsworth's poetic development and to a period in his life. The first dates from the time of his intuitive reliance on nature, when he wrote simple and graceful lyrics. The second represents his days of hope for, and then disappointment with, the Revolution, and his adoption of Godwinian rationalism, during which he wrote the strong and inspiring sonnets and odes. The last coincides with his later years of reaction and orthodoxy, when he wrote dull and proper works such as *The Excursion* and *Ecclesiastical Sonnets*. The Prelude is critically central to his life work because it contains passages representing all three styles.

In the last analysis, *The Prelude* is valuable because it does precisely what its subtitle implies: It describes the creation of a poet, and one who was pivotal in English letters. In fact, *The Prelude* was so successful in its attempt that there was nothing left to deal with in *The Recluse*. Wordsworth could reach the high level of abstraction needed for a true philosophical epic only sporadically, in some of the shorter lyrics and odes, and could not sustain the tone.

Q.2 Write down the summary of *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* written by S.T Coleridge.

Ans

The Rime of the Ancient Mariner relates the experiences of a sailor who has returned from a long sea voyage. Three men are on the way to a wedding celebration when an old sailor (the Mariner) stops one of them at the door (we'll call him the Wedding Guest). Using his hypnotic eyes to hold the attention of the Wedding Guest, he starts telling a story about a disastrous journey he took. The Wedding Guest really wants to go party, but he can't pry himself away from this grizzled old mariner. The Mariner begins his story. They left port, and the ship sailed down near Antarctica to get away from a bad storm, but then they get caught in a dangerous, foggy ice field. An albatross shows up to steer them through the fog and provide good winds, but then the Mariner decides to shoot it. Oops.

Pretty soon the sailors lose their wind, and it gets really hot. They run out of water, and everyone blames the Mariner. The ship seems to be haunted by a bad spirit, and weird stuff starts appearing, like slimy creatures that walk on the ocean. The Mariner's crewmates decide to hang the dead albatross around his neck to remind him of his error.

Everyone is literally dying of thirst. The Mariner sees another ship's sail at a distance. He wants to yell out, but his mouth is too dry, so he sucks some of his own blood to moisten his lips. He's like, "A ship! We're saved." Sadly, the ship is a ghost ship piloted by two spirits, Death and Life-in-Death, who have to be the last people you'd want to meet on a journey. Everyone on the Mariner's ship dies.

The wedding guest realizes, "Ah! You're a ghost!" But the Mariner says, "Well, actually, I was the only one who didn't die." He continues his story: he's on a boat with a lot of dead bodies, surrounded by an ocean full of slimy things. Worse, these slimy things are nasty water snakes. But the Mariner escapes his curse by unconsciously blessing the hideous snakes, and the albatross drops off his neck into the ocean.

The Mariner falls into a sweet sleep, and it finally rains when he wakes up. A storm strikes up in the distance, and all the dead sailors rise like zombies to pilot the ship. The sailors don't actually come back to life. Instead, angels fill their bodies, and another supernatural spirit under the ocean seems to push the boat. The Mariner faints and hears two voices talking about how he killed the albatross and still has more penance to do. These two mysterious voices explain how the ship is moving.

After a speedy journey, the ship ends up back in port again. The Mariner sees angels standing next to the bodies of all his crewmates. Then a rescue boat shows up to take him back to shore. The Mariner is happy that a guy called "the hermit" is on the rescue boat. The hermit is in a good mood. All of a sudden there's a loud noise, and the Mariner's ship sinks. The hermit's boat picks up the Mariner.

When they get on shore, the Mariner is desperate to tell his story to the hermit. He feels a terrible pain until the story had been told.

In fact, the Mariner says that he still has the same painful need to tell his story, which is why he stopped the Wedding Guest on this occasion. Wrapping up, the Mariner tells the Wedding Guest that he needs to learn how to say his prayers and love other people and things. Then the Mariner leaves, and the Wedding Guest no longer wants to enter the wedding. He goes home and wakes up the next day, as the famous last lines go, "a sadder and a wiser man."

Q.3 Write down the summary of Kubla Khan penned by S.T Coleridge.

Ans The unnamed speaker of the poem tells of how a man named Kubla Khan traveled to the land of Xanadu. In Xanadu, Kubla found a fascinating pleasure-dome that was "a miracle of rare device" because the dome was made of caves of ice and located in a sunny area. The speaker describes the contrasting

composition of Xanadu. While there are gardens blossoming with incense-bearing trees and “sunny spots of greenery,” across the “deep romantic chasm” in Xanadu there are “caverns measureless to man” and a fountain from which “huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail.” Amid this hostile atmosphere of Nature, Kubla also hears “ancestral voices prophesying war.” However, Kubla finds relief from this tumultuous atmosphere through his discovery of the miraculous sunny pleasure-dome made of ice.

In the last stanza of the poem, the narrator longs to revive a song about Mount Abora that he once heard a woman play on a dulcimer. The speaker believes that the song would transport him to a dream world in which he could “build that dome in air” and in which he can drink “the milk of Paradise.”

Analysis

A recurring motif throughout Coleridge’s poetry is the power of dreams and of the imagination, such as in “Frost at Midnight,” “Dejection: An Ode,” and “Christabel” In “Discovery and the Domestic Affections in Coleridge and Shelley,” Michelle Levy explains that Coleridge’s “fascination with the unknown reflects a larger cultural obsession of the Romantic period” (694).

Perhaps the most fantastical world created by Coleridge lies in “Kubla Khan.” The legendary story behind the poem is that Coleridge wrote the poem following an opium-influenced dream. In this particular poem, Coleridge seems to explore the depths of dreams and creates landscapes that could not exist in reality. The “sunny pleasure-dome with caves of ice” exemplifies the extreme fantasy of the world in which Kubla Khan lives.

Similar to several of Coleridge’s other poems, the speaker’s admiration of the wonders of nature is present in “Kubla Khan.” Yet what is striking and somewhat different about the portrayal of nature in this particular poem is the depiction of the dangerous and threatening aspects of nature. For example, consider the following passage:

But oh! that deep romantic chasm which slanted

Down the green hill athwart a cedarn cover!

A savage place! as holy and enchanted

As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
 By woman wailing for her demon-lover!
 And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,
 As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,
 A mighty fountain momently was forced:
 Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
 Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
 Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
 And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever
 It flung up momently the sacred river (lines 12-24)

In "Secret(ing) Conversations: Coleridge and Wordsworth," Bruce Lawder highlights the significance of Coleridge's use of a feminine rhyme scheme in the above stanza, in which the last two syllables of the lines rhyme (such as "seething" and "breathing"). Lawder notes that "the male force of the 'sacred river' literally interrupts, and puts an end to, the seven successive feminine endings that begin the second verse paragraph" (80). This juxtaposition of female forces versus male forces parallels the juxtaposition of Coleridge's typical pleasant descriptions of nature versus this poem's unpleasant descriptions. In most of Coleridge's works, nature represents a nurturing presence. However, in "Kubla Khan," nature is characterized by a rough, dangerous terrain that can only be tamed by a male explorer such as Kubla Khan.

The last stanza of the poem was added later, and is not a direct product of Coleridge's opium-dream. In it the speaker longs to re-create the pleased-dome of Kubla Khan "in air," perhaps either in poetry, or in a way surpassing the miraculous work of Kubla Khan himself. The speaker's identity melds with that of Kubla Khan, as he envisions himself being spoken of by everyone around, warning one another to "Beware! Beware!/His flashing eyes, his floating hair!" Kubla Khan/the speaker becomes a figure of superstition, around whom those who would remain safe should "Weave a circle[...] thrice" to ward off his power.

Coleridge conflates the near-mythic figure of Kubla Khan manipulating the natural world physically, with the figure of the poet manipulating the world "in air" through the power of his words. In either case, the creative figure becomes a source of awe, wonder, and terror combined.

Q.4 Write the critical appreciation of Adonais written by John Keats.

Ans

The poet weeps for Keats who is dead and who will be long mourned. He calls on Urania to mourn for Keats who died in Rome (sts. 1-VII). The poet summons the subject matter of Keats poetry to weep for him. It comes and mourns at his bidding (sts. VIII-XV). Nature, celebrated by Keats in his poetry, mourns him. Spring, which brings nature to new life, cannot restore him (sts. XVI-XXI). Urania rises, goes to Keats' death chamber and laments that she cannot join him in death (sts. XXII-XXIX). Fellow poets mourn the death of Keats: Byron, Thomas Moore, Shelley, and Leigh Hunt (sts. XXX-XXXV). The anonymous Quarterly Review critic is blamed for Keats' death and chastised (sts. XXXVI-XXXVII).

The poet now urges his readers not to weep any longer. Keats has become a portion of the eternal and is free from the attacks of reviewers. He is not dead; it is the living who are dead. He has gone where "envy and calumny and hate and pain" cannot reach him. He is "made one with Nature." His being has been withdrawn into the one Spirit which is responsible for all beauty. In eternity other poets, among them Chatterton, Sidney, and Lucan, come to greet him (sts. XXXVIII-XLVI). Let anyone who still mourns Keats send his "spirit's light" beyond space and be filled with hope, or let him go to Rome where Keats is buried. Let him "Seek shelter in the shadow of the tomb. / What Adonais is, why fear we to become?" He is with the unchanging Spirit, Intellectual Beauty, or Love in heaven. By comparison with the clear light of eternity, life is a stain (sts. XLVII-LII).

The poet tells himself he should now depart from life, which has nothing left to offer. The One, which is Light, Beauty, Benediction, and Love, now shines on him. He feels carried "darkly, fearfully, afar" to where the soul of Keats glows like a star, in the dwelling where those who will live forever are (sts. LIIILV).

Analysis

Shelley did not hear of the death of Keats in Rome, in February 1821, until some weeks later. The relations between the two were not close. They had met and there had been a few letters exchanged. Shelley had shown sympathy when he learned of Keats' intention to go to Italy for his health and had invited him to be his guest. Shelley also knew of the attacks of the reviewers on Keats' poetry. His own poetry had fared no better than Keats' at the hands of the Tory reviewers. When the report of Keats' death reached him, he was convinced that Keats had been hounded to death by the reviewers, so he decided to write a defense of Keats and an attack on the Tory reviewers. The result was *Adonais*, which he wrote in the spring and published in the fall of 1821. To make doubly clear his aggressive intention in the poem, he provided it with a preface in which he called the Tory reviewers "wretched men" and "literary prostitutes." The reviewer of Keats' *Endymion* in the *Quarterly* was accused of murder. *Adonais* and its preface brought down on Shelley the wrath of the conservative reviewers. *Blackwood's Magazine* attacked him with special savagery. The reception of *Adonais* deepened Shelley's despairing conviction that he had failed as a poet. He wrote on January 25, 1822, to Leigh Hunt: "My faculties are shaken to atoms . . . I can write nothing; and if *Adonais* had no success, and excited no interest what incentive can I have to write?"

Shelley gave his elegy a title that pointed clearly to his intention to attack the reviewers. *Adonis* in classical mythology was killed by a boar; *Adonais* (a variant of *Adonis* coined by Shelley) was killed by reviewers. It was in the tradition of elegy to use proper names taken from classical literature. Shelley's coinage may have been intended to forestall the misapprehension that the poem was about *Adonis*. *Adonais* was close enough to serve his purpose. For his stanza he picked the Spenserian, which was perhaps unfortunate. The long nine-line Spenserian can be a kind of bushel basket to poets inclined to wordiness, as Shelley was.

For his primary models in writing a formal elegy, Shelley went to two Sicilian Greek poets, Bion and Moschus. He had translated part of Bion's "Lament for *Adonis*" and Moschus' "Lament for Bion." His borrowings from them are very extensive and constitute the weakest part of his elegy, namely, the first half, which is full of personifications that are given speaking and acting roles. His indebtedness to Moschus is particularly great. In Moschus, groves and gardens, nymphs, Echo, the Loves, towns and cities, the muse, and pastoral poets mourn

for Bion. When Bion died, trees dropped their fruit and blossoms faded, according to Moschus. In Bion's "Lament," Shelley found the death of Adonis from the attack of a boar, the description of the corpse in death, the thorns tearing the feet of Venus as she walked, the Loves cutting off their curls to cast on Adonis, washing his wound and fanning his body, and a good deal more that is also in Moschus.

The poem begins with a confident assertion that the fame of Keats will live forever. Shelley then addresses five stanzas to the muse Urania which do little to advance the movement of the poem and which furnish a critical estimate of Keats that posterity has not supported. Shelley felt that Keats was a promising poet, not a poet who had achieved greatness. Stanzas IX through XIV are devoted to the thoughts and feelings which went into Keats' poetry; they are very swollen with personification and metaphor and are probably the least interesting part of the poem. Stanzas XV, XVI, and XVII likewise contribute little to the elegy. Adonais becomes interesting when Shelley, following the lead of Moschus, meditates on the return of spring in all its freshness and sadly contrasts it with the finality of death, from which there is no return: "Alas! that all we loved of him should be, / But for our grief, as if it had not been, / And grief itself be mortal." Stanzas XVIII through XXI move the reader by appealing to common experience.

Stanzas XXII-XXXV are devoted to what in elegy is sometimes called the "procession of mourners." Urania, properly the muse of astronomy but who had been made the heavenly muse of lofty poetry in *Paradise Lost* by Milton, is first in the procession. The most interesting part of this overlong section of the poem assigned to Urania is her attack on the Tory reviewers who are called "herded wolves," "obscene ravens," and "vultures" by Shelley. The human mourners, Byron, Thomas Moore, Shelley himself, and Keats' friend Leigh Hunt follow Urania. Shelley's self-portrait in stanzas XXXI-XXXIV, besides being overlong, is marred by the self-pity which is the common denominator in all his poetic self-portraits. Of the four poets included, only Hunt can be considered an admirer of Keats' poetry. Shelley liked Keats' unfinished "Hyperion" but not much else by Keats. Byron didn't like it and Moore was apparently not familiar with it. Other prominent living poets such as Wordsworth, Coleridge, Scott, and Robert Southey, the poet laureate, are not included in the "procession" probably because

they were Tories. Since Keats was not well-known as a poet in his lifetime, Shelley faced a practical difficulty in forming a procession.

In stanzas XXXVI and XXXVII Shelley turns to the anonymous reviewer of Keats' *Endymion* in the *Quarterly Review* (now known to be John Wilson Croker) and calls him a "nameless worm," a "noteless blot," a snake, and a beaten hound. His punishment will be remorse, self-contempt, and shame. With the attack on the *Quarterly* reviewer, the mourning section of the poem ends and the consolation section begins (XXXVIII). Keats has been released from the burden of life: "He has outsoared the shadow of our night; / Envy and calumny and hate and pain, / . . . Can touch him not and torture not again . . . He is made one with Nature." He has been absorbed into Shelley's rather elusive deity, the nature and function of which we can derive only from his poetry. The deity which Shelley variously calls a Power, the one Spirit, and the One is responsible for all the beauty in the world. It "wields the world with never-wearied love, / Sustains it from beneath, and kindles it above." Keats, who created beauty by his poetry, will continue to create beauty as part of the one Spirit. Shelley's god is not a personal god but a force, and Keats will not retain his personal identity in the hereafter as part of this force. In stanzas XLV and XLVI, he classes Keats with those poets who died too young to achieve the full maturity of such poets as Thomas Chatterton, Sir Philip Sidney, and the Roman poet Lucan.

Stanzas XLVII-LII form a unit addressed to the person who still mourns Keats in spite of Shelley's exhortation to bring mourning to an end. In stanza XLVII, a difficult stanza, such a person is invited to reach out imaginatively in spirit beyond space. Then he will see existence in true perspective and be filled with hope. He will see the true relation between life and death and realize that life constricts and death releases. In stanzas XLVIII-LI, the mourner is invited to go to Rome where Keats is buried. There "in the shadow of the tomb," in beautiful surroundings (in the preface to *Adonais*, Shelley says of the cemetery where Keats is buried that "it might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."), he will remember what Keats has become and will lose his reason to mourn. Keats is with the One, unchanging ultimate reality. To be with the One is to be in "the white radiance of Eternity," by comparison with which life is a stain. Death is a release into Eternity.

In the last three stanzas of the poem, Shelley turns to himself. He asks himself why he should want to cling to life any longer. His hopes are gone, "a light is passed from the revolving year, / And man, and woman; and what still is dear / Attracts to crush, repels to make thee wither." This is one of Shelley's many despairing confessions of his unhappiness and one of his most explicit death wishes. Shelley's desire to be absorbed into the One Spirit, to join Keats seems motivated more by despair than by ardent desire to be with his deity, which is called Light, Beauty, and Benediction. Shelley's impulsive nature gives the concluding stanza an intensity which is belied by the hatred of life revealed in stanza LIII.

Shelley's most famous poem suffers by comparison with Milton's *Lycidas*, the standard by which English elegies will inevitably be judged. Shelley says much less than Milton in many more words, and the most eloquent parts of *Adonais* are not equal to the most eloquent parts of *Lycidas*. Shelley is merely prolix where Milton is meaningful. A close examination of *Adonais* shows that rhyme frequently determined his choice of words. *Adonais* does not have a firm structure; its development seems haphazard. The image of Keats given by Shelley is that of a weakling killed by reviewers. The biography of Keats reveals a quite different Keats — a manly, slightly belligerent poet not apt to be profoundly discouraged by harsh criticism. (In the preface to *Adonais*, Shelley remarks that "the poor fellow seems to have been hooted from the stage of life . . .") The heaven in which Shelley places Keats is not Christian; it is not Milton's heaven where "tears are wiped forever from [our] eyes." Shelley's consolation section could hardly have been very consoling to Keats' relatives and friends. *Adonais* is, however, an often forceful and certainly generous defense of an insufficiently appreciated brother poet.

Q.5 Attempt to analysis Keats's Ode to melancholy as a sensuous poetry.

Ans:

The reader is not to go to the underworld (Lethe), nor to drink wolf's-bane (a poison), nor to take nightshade (also a poison), nor to have anything to do with yew-berries, the beetle, the death-moth, and the owl (all symbolic of death). Death and all things associated with it numb the experience of anguish. When a melancholy mood comes to the individual, he should feed it by observing the

beauty of roses, rainbows, and peonies. Or if the one he loves is angry, let him hold her hand and feed on the loveliness of her eyes. Melancholy dwells with beauty, "beauty that must die," joy, and pleasure. It is to be found at the very heart of delight, but only the strongly sensuous man perceives it there. He is the one who can have the deepest experience of melancholy.

Analysis

The "Ode to Melancholy" belongs to a class of eighteenth-century poems that have some form of melancholy as their theme. Such poetry came to be called the "Graveyard School of Poetry" and the best-known example of it is Thomas Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard." The romantic poets inherited this tradition. One of the effects of this somber poetry about death, graveyards, the brevity of pleasure and of life was a pleasing feeling of melancholy.

Keats' special variation on the theme was to make the claim that the keenest experience of melancholy was to be obtained not from death but from the contemplation of beautiful objects because they were fated to die. Therefore the most sensuous man, the man who can "burst Joy's grape against his palate fine," as Keats put it in a striking image, is capable of the liveliest response to melancholy. Keats' own experience of life and his individual temperament made him acutely aware of the close relationship between joy and sorrow. His happiness was constantly being chipped away by frustration. He was himself a very sensuous individual. In the "Ode to Melancholy," Keats, instead of rejecting melancholy, shows a healthy attraction toward it, for unless one keenly experiences it, he cannot appreciate joy.

The abruptness with which "Ode to Melancholy" begins is accounted for by the fact that the stanza with which the poem begins was originally the second stanza. The original first stanza was

Though you should build a bark of dead men's bones,
 And rear a phantom gibbet for a mast,
 Stitch creeds together for a sail, with groans
 To fill it out, blood-stained and aghast;
 Although your rudder be a dragon's tail
 Long sever'd, yet still hard with agony,

Your cordage large uprootings from the skull
Of bald Medusa, certes you would fail
To find the Melancholy – whether she
Dreameth in any isle of Lethe dull.

We don't know why Keats rejected this original beginning stanza, but we can guess. He was straining to create images of death that would convey something of the repulsiveness of death – to give the reader a romantic shudder of the Gothic kind – and what he succeeded in doing was repulsive instead of delicately suggestive and was out of keeping with what he achieved in the rest of the poem. Moreover, he may have felt that two stanzas on death were more than enough. The stanza is crude and Keats realized it.

The stanza with which Keats decided to begin the poem is startling, but not crude. Keats brought together a remarkable collection of objects in the stanza. Lethe is a river in the classical underworld. Wolfsbane and nightshade are poisonous plants. The yew-berry is the seed (also poisonous) of the yewtree, which, because it is hardy and an evergreen, is traditionally planted in English graveyards. Replicas of a black beetle were frequently placed in tombs by Egyptians; to the Egyptians, the scarab or black beetle was a symbol of resurrection, but to Keats they were a symbol of death because of their association with tombs. The death-moth or butterfly represented the soul leaving the body at death. The owl was often associated with otherworldly symbols because of its nocturnal habits and its ominous hooting. Death is the common denominator of the displays in Keats' museum of natural history. The language of the stanza is vastly superior to that of the discarded stanza. Nothing in it can compare with calling nightshade the "ruby grape of Proserpine," the queen of the underworld, nor with making a rosary of yew-berries and thereby automatically suggesting prayers for the dying or the dead. The stanza is one of the richest and strangest in Keats' poetry.

Q.6 Elaborate upon Keats's description of Nature and Beauty in the poem Ode to Autumn.

Ans

Odes often address an inanimate object or abstract idea directly, but they do not always portray that object/idea as a person, as Keats does. We think that autumn is a woman, because the seasons were typically personified as beautiful women in

European Art. The Italian painter Botticelli, for example, depicted spring as a pregnant woman. (Check out the painting here.) In this poem, the lady autumn teams up with the sun, basks in the breeze of a granary, and takes lazy naps in a field.

Lines 2-3: Autumn is personified for the first of many times in the poem. She and the sun whisper together like a bunch of gossipy teenage girls. But the goal is serious and necessary: they are responsible for the bounty of fruit and crops that will sustain people through the winter.

Line 12: The speaker asks a rhetorical question to introduce a connection he believes the reader will recognize, between autumn and the harvest.

Lines 13-15: The personification of autumn feels most explicit in these lines, where her long hair is gently lifted by the wind. "Winnowing wind" is an example of alliteration. Implicitly her hair is compared to chaff, the inedible part of a grain that blows away after the threshing process.

Lines 16-18: Autumn has several different roles in this poem. Here she is a laborer in the fields, taking a nap after working hard to harvest the flowers with her "hook." The hook, too, is personified. It is presented as a conscious thing that chooses to "spare" the flowers, rather than as a tool that just lies idle.

Lines 19-20: From a laborer, autumn then becomes like a "gleaner" in this simile, which compares her to the people who pick up the scraps from the field after the harvest.

Lines 21-22: Autumn's "look," the appearance on her face while watching the cider, is an example of metonymy when the word "patient" is attached. An expression cannot itself be patient, but her look is associated with the patience of her character.

Line 24: Autumn is addressed for the final time, as the speaker tells her not to feel jealous of spring.

Q.7 Write the summary of Gray's Elegy written in a Country Churchyard.

Ans

Among the most powerful and finest elegies in English Literatures 'Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard' remains the immortal. 'Elegy written in a country churchyard' was penned down by Thomas Gray and was completed in around seven years. The poem was contemplated upon in the village of Stokes Poges after the death of Gray's school friend Richard West and hence the Gray-West persona the obscure young man who died with his ambition unfulfilled.

The poem opens with Gray creating a mood of despondency and sets the tone of melancholic reflection by creating atmosphere of the churchyard by describing how after a long and tiring day 'ploughman plods his weary way' and 'leaves the world to darkness and to me.'

In such an ambience, he plunges to deliberate upon the lives of modest forefathers of the hamlet which makes him understand the irrevocable nature of death : 'Each in his narrow cell forever laid/ the rude forefather's of the hamlet sleep'

It is a fact that neither any customary sounds of the morning like 'The cock shrill clarion' nor housewife's 'evening care' shall arouse these forefathers from their 'lowly bed' He recognizes the simple life of those who lived close to the soil sympathizing over their fate with humanitarian enthusiasm.

The poet moves on with a tone of moralizing advising the rich, high and the haughty not to mock at the simple joys of these men or belittle their unspectacular labor for death is the greatest leveler : 'The paths of glory lead but to the grave'.

No monuments or memorials were raised for these dead men, but what purpose do they serve? The 'storied urn' or 'the animated bust' cannot call the 'fleeting breath'. The dead are unaffected by any exaggerated words of flattery.

Gray now expresses another convincing idea of the caliber of these village forefathers to prove their worth as great administrators, musicians and orators which was suppressed owing to extreme poverty and lack of education : 'chill

penury repressed their noble rage/And froze the genial current of the soul'.

However he does understand the distinct advantages of poverty and illuminates the brighter side of oblivion. Gray highlights the fact that the simple life of these men prevented them from committing crime and bloodshed which often accompany an individual's quest for power : 'Forbade to wade through slaughter to a throne/And shut the gates of Mercy on mankind'.

The tombstones of these men carry awkwardly executed inscriptions of their names and ages. The idea of the natural desire of a human to be remembered after death is also discussed as a dying man largely relies on the love and sympathy of someone left living behind : 'On some fond breast the parting soul relies/some pious drops the closing eye requires'.

The last few stanzas contain the self portrait of Gray and the technique of dramatic persona. We learn that how the poet used to greet sunshine from the top of the hill and that at noon time he used to stretch himself beneath a beech tree in a contemplative mood. He describes how someday he shall lie buried in some churchyard and some kindred soul shall inquire his fate.

The poem closes with the self written epitaph of Gray who reflects himself as a 'Melancholy' and scholarly person with a sympathetic and generous heart who shall with full confidence rest in 'The bosom of his father and his God'.

Gray's 'Elegy' is deservedly popular, mainly owing to its universal appeal which finds an echo in every heart.

Take for instance take the initial idea of the poem of the irrevocability of death. The teaching stands true for all humans and the beauty of verse is enhanced by the vivid description of day to day happenings.

Consider again the obvious idea of death being no respects of birth or status. 'The paths of glory lead but to the grave' is a line on which a thoughtful reader lingers for several minutes for it embodies an universal truth.

A very striking idea is expressed in the following four lines which account for the moral of the elegy : 'Full many a gem of purest ray serene/ The dark unfathom'd caves of the ocean bear/ Full many a flower is born to blush unseen/ And waste its sweetness upon the desert air'.

Thus, Dr. Johnson rightfully remarks about it : '(The Elegy) abounds in images which find a mirror in every heart and sentiments to which every bosom returns an echo'.

Q.8 Write the summary of Gray's Elegy written on a distant prospect of Eton College.

Ans Thomas Gray (1716-71) is remembered mostly for his celebrated "Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard", but it would be a mistake to think of him as a poetic "one hit wonder". He was the best-known poet of his age and was offered the post of Poet Laureate, which he declined.

This poem is about the author's experiences at Eton College in England and throughout the rest of his life, offering a plethora of wisdom on dealing with maturity, happiness, nostalgia, and misfortune. The poem starts off with an apostrophe, where the author, Thomas Gray, addresses the spires and antique towers on the campus of Eton College. The entire first stanza is an elaborate description of the college campus, where the author looks back on its beauty and splendor. Stanza two continues with nostalgia and reminiscence from his college years. Gray looks back on his innocence and reminisces in the times when he was young and carefree. Stanza three continues the reminiscence of days gone. Here, Gray speaks about different activities he recalls participating in on the campus of Eton College. Moving onto stanza five, Gray writes about happiness, and how it is more appealing when not possessed: "Gay hope is theirs by fancy fed, / Less pleasing when possessed;"

When one begins to read stanza six, they may notice a change in tone. This acts as a transition stanza and totally changes the mood of the poem from reflective and reminiscent to sorrowful and melancholic. This stanza along with the following stanza exudes the ideas that misfortune is waiting for innocent children and to be

human is to suffer. The ninth stanza continues with the concepts of sorrow arriving with age and adds new concepts such as the idea that a smorgasbord of emotional oppression manifests once one grows older. The tenth and final stanza summarizes the ideas introduced before, that with old age and maturity comes suffering and sorrow, but it also introduces and concludes with the famed line "...where ignorance is bliss, / 'Tis folly to be wise." This concept basically means that as long as one lacks knowledge, they are able to be carefree. Ultimately, this is a beautifully enlightening piece that offers a surplus of advice and counsel on what becomes apparent with maturity



Key Terms

Ode to simplicity :

disdain - You dislike them because they are inferior.

Arrayed - order or rank

Trailing -to drag wearily

Pageant - a beauty contest

Nymph – beautiful woman like an enchantress

Weed -a plant considered undesirable

Elegy written in a country churchyard:

Curfew - bell rung in the evening.

Knell- rings.

Lowling- bellowing.

Herd- Herd (large group of animals) of sheep.

Lea- Pasture land.

Plods- Walks heavily.

Ode on the death of a favorite cat:

Feline- belonging to the cat family.

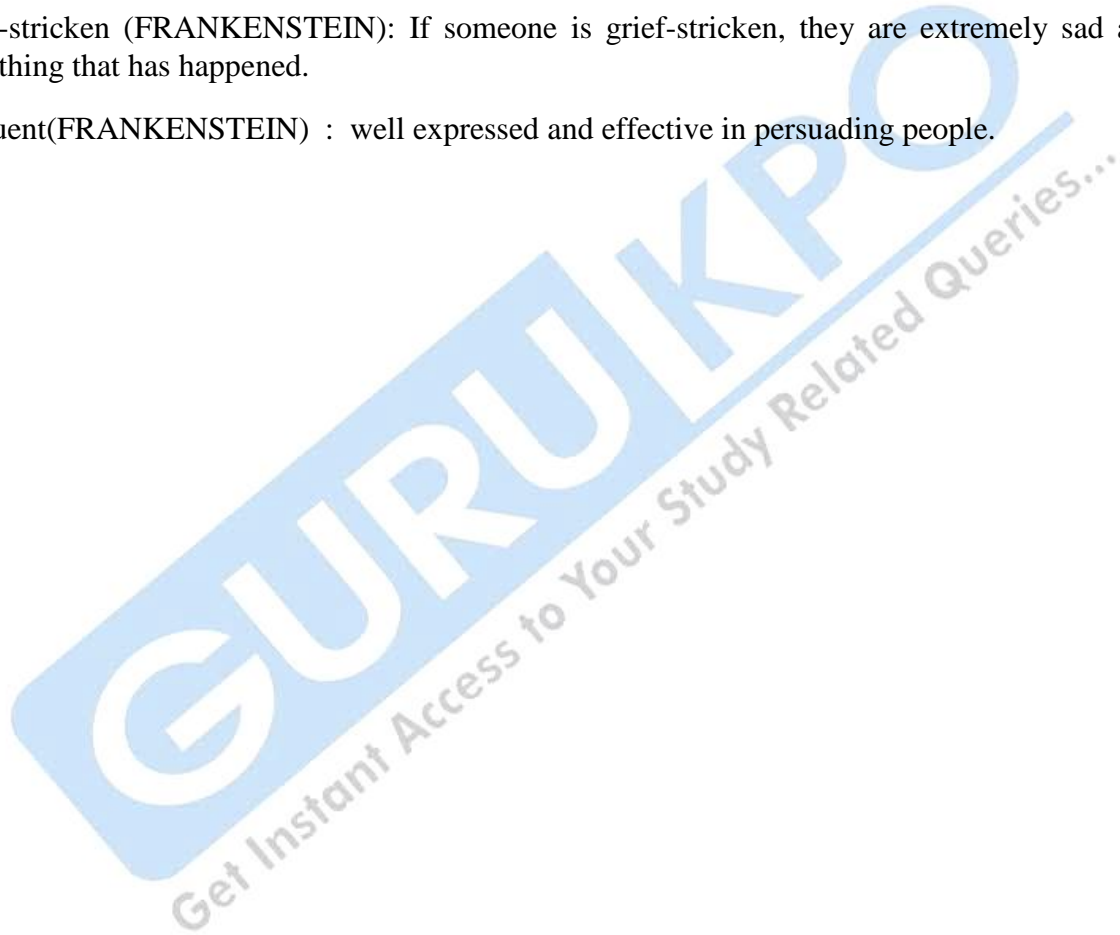
ROMANTICISM-Romanticism is attitudes, ideals and feelings which are romantic rather than realistic. Gray's poetry divides itself naturally into periods in which it is possible to trace the progress of his liberation from the classic rules which had so long governed English literature. His early poems – Hymn to Adversity, Ode on Spring, and On a Distant Prospect of Eton College-reveal two suggestive features : first the appearance of melancholy and , second, the study of nature as a suitable background for the play of human emotions. The second period shows the same tendencies more strongly developed , the period belong the ELEGY, The Progress of Poesy, and The Bard. In the third period , Gray reveals a new field of romantic

interest in two Norse poems, The Fatal Sisters and The Descent of Odin. In the “Elegy written in a Country Churchyard” the sights and sounds described in the opening stanzas create a rural atmosphere and suggest that interest in Nature which, in a highly developed form, become one of the most conspicuous features of romanticism. The herd winding slowly over the lea, the ploughman returning home with weary step, the landscape fading, the beetle flying round and round, the owl occasionally crying and complaining to the moon- all these pictures show the poet’s interest in the many-sided life of Nature. Gray’s poems are an early symptom of discontent with Augustan (or neo-classical) orthodoxy.

APHORISM- A short witty sentence which expresses a general truth or comment.

Grief-stricken (FRANKENSTEIN): If someone is grief-stricken, they are extremely sad about something that has happened.

Eloquent(FRANKENSTEIN) : well expressed and effective in persuading people.



CASE STUDY

MANSFIELD PARK :-

Mansfield Park was written between 1811 and 1813, published in 1814 and was the first novel that Jane Austen's produced after a ten year hiatus. It represents a more mature style dealing with darker themes and a moralistic tone. It is quite a different novel than many of her followers have come to expect and seems at odds with her first two published novels Sense and Sensibility and Pride and Prejudice which were written as a young woman and reflect a lighter, more energetic and romantic stories.

This divergence may account for its criticism and disappointment from Austen's faithful readers who expect yet another of her light, bright and sparkling novels and are instead given on first reflection a slowly evolving intricate story presenting thoughtful underlying themes and perplexing characters who often act at odds against our instinctive wishes.

The strongest adversarial criticism of the novel is with its heroine Fanny Price who has been tagged as weak, timid and ineffectual. Opinions on Fanny vary greatly and can ignite heated debate within readers of the novel. Other problems often lamented are with the hero Edmund Bertram who is said to be unbelievably too good and overly moralistic. Even though love and marriage is the motivation of many of the young people in the novel, it is a cold calculating affair with little romance and few happy moments. The reader is often as much at odds with the couples and they are with each other!

To say that Mansfield Park is the dark horse of Jane Austen's oeuvre may seem extreme to some and accurate to others. However, this difference of opinion is not uncommon placing it in an interesting light. Anything that elicits such sundry and strong feeling deserves deeper investigation and understanding. Mansfield Park may have its ardent fans and fervent foes, but I am inclined to believe in Jane Austen's motives and writing style, and enjoy it for its beautiful language, intricate plot and witty dialogue. Gentle Fanny deserves greater attention, and I am happy to comply.

THE RIVALS:-

The Rivals, a comedy in five acts, established Richard Brinsley Sheridan's reputation in the London theatre in 1775. While the plot is complex, the characters are stock comic caricatures of human folly, aptly named.

The Rivals is a comedy of incident, the excellence of which is partly to be found in the action. Its characterization is, in essence, conventional and shows less knowledge of human nature than does Goldsmith's work. Captain Absolute the generous, impulsive youth, Sir Anthony the testy, headstrong father, Fag and Lucy the menials who minister to their employers' intrigues, are as old as Latin comedy; Bob Acres, the blustering coward, is akin to Sir Andrew Aguecheek and had trod the stage in Jonson's learned sock; Sir Lucius O'Trigger is related to Cumberland's O'Flaherty; Mrs. Malaprop has a long pedigree, including Dogberry, Lady Froth, Mrs. Slipslop and Tabitha Bramble. Yet, apart from the actual business on the stage, these characters are irresistibly effective. As in the case of Goldsmith, Sheridan's importance is found in the new wine which he poured into old bottles. The Georgian public expected in their plays a certain piquancy which should remind them of their social or domestic life. But, whereas authors of the sentimental school flavoured their work with emotions pertaining to woman's affairs, Sheridan perceived that there was another element of good breeding, quite different but equally modern. The expansion of the British empire had called into existence a virile and energetic governing class of soldiers and politicians. This aristocracy felt, as deeply as any "jessamy" or "macaroni," the humanising influence of polite learning and domestic refinement, yet with a difference. As society set a value on delicate attentions, sympathetic and discerning compliments, subtle turns of phrase and gracefulness of manner, these arts were cultivated as an accomplishment in order to maintain social supremacy. The class in question, did not, like sentimentalists, affect strong passions beneath a veneer of politeness, but, rather, a superb serenity which rose superior to all emotion. Drawing-room diplomacy had often appeared in letters and memoirs; but Sheridan was the first writer to make it the essence of a play. Despite the conventionality of the character-drawing and of some of the situations, The Rivals has an atmosphere which satisfies this ideal. As each figure moves and speaks on the stage, the reader is conscious of a coterie whose shibboleth was distinction—a coterie whose conversation regarded the most commonplace topics as worthy of its wit, which abhorred eccentricity and smiled at all those who, like Fag, Sir Anthony, Faulkland, Mrs. Malaprop and Bob Acres, fell short of the rule of easy self-possession.

After some initial difficulties, The Rivals proved a complete success and

Sheridan was launched on his career as a dramatist. The opportunities of quick returns which the theatre now offered had their full influence even on an author of his literary taste and dramatic sense. His next production, *St. Patrick's Day*, is a trifle composed with no other object than to make money by amusing the public. *The Duenna* (1775) is an adaptation of old material to suit the fashion for operas. We meet again the stage old man; his name is Don Jerome, instead of Sir Antony, but he is just as obstinate, irascible and well-bred. Then, we have the victim of ignorance and self-complacency, this time a Jew and not a garrulous and affected old woman, but his end is dramatically the same as Mrs. Malaprop's. Comic situations, as in *The Rivals*, arise out of mistaken identities, which are admissible only in the make-believe of a musical farce. The plot was taken from Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, and, though the dialogue has much of Sheridan's brilliant phrase-making and whimsical humour, the chief literary merit of the play must be sought in the lyrics, with their vigorous directness and touch of classical culture.



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