Study of Literary Texts

Lectures for Third Year Students LMD

Prepared by:
Dr. GHARIRI Assil

Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>

The study of literary texts is a cornerstone of human inquiry, providing a glimpse into the complex fabric of human experience, emotion, and thinking. Throughout cultures and epochs, literature has functioned as a mirror, reflecting the various sides of society, highlighting universal truths and prompting introspection. Literary writings, from ancient civilization's epic poetry to modern authors' experimental novels, have captivated readers and researchers alike with their power to elicit empathy, challenge perceptions, and inspire profound reflection.

The study of literary writings is fundamentally an analysis of language, narrative, symbolism, and thematic aspects weaved together by skillful authors. Scholars use close inspection and analysis to unearth the layers of meaning inherent in texts, deciphering the complexities of character development, plot structure, and stylistic decisions. This interpretation process not only helps us understand individual works, but it also gives insight on larger literary traditions, movements, and cultural settings. Literary studies cover a wide range of genres, from classic works of fiction and poetry to modern narratives and experimental formats. Each genre provides distinct insights and difficulties, inviting readers to explore varied literary landscapes and connect with a wide range of ideas and voices. Whether digging into the everlasting themes of love and sorrow in Shakespearean sonnets or wrestling with the difficulties of identity and belonging in postcolonial novels, literary text analysis takes readers on a transforming journey of discovery and reflection.

Furthermore, the study of literary texts goes beyond simply appreciating aesthetic beauty or narrative intricacy; it acts as a prism through which to examine societal norms, power dynamics, and cultural values. Scholars can discover hidden biases, challenge prevailing narratives, and stimulate critical debate about issues of social justice and equality by looking at how gender, racism, class, and other social dimensions are represented in literary works. In this approach, literary studies not only improve our comprehension of literature, but also contribute to broader discussions about identity, representation, and the human condition.

What is literature?

1. Introduction

So, before speaking about literary texts and the way of reading them, first let's have a look at literature as a field of study. In most cases literature is referred to as the totality of written expression with the exception that not every written document could be considered as literature. The definition, thus, include extra words such as aesthetic, or artistic to distinguish literary works from everyday texts such as: newspapers, telephon books, scholarly writings...etc

Historically, the latin word "litteratura" is derived from "littera" which means letter which is the smallest element of alphabitical writing. The word *litteratura* was a translation of the Greek word *grammatike*, the knowledge of reading and writing. Oxford dictionary defines literature as: written works, especially those considered of superior or lasting artistic merit. But what do we mean by art? Again, following Oxford dictionary, art is defined as: works produced by human creative skill and imagination

What does this really mean? It means first that a work we call "literature" says something about issues, experiences, or ideas that are of intense, ongoing interest to many, many people (i.e. the "ideas of permanent and universal interest"). Furthermore, a work we call "literature," will not simply address topics we care about and are interested in; it will address these topics in special ways (artistic ways). That is, the "form" of the expression or *how* the expression is presented somehow contributes to the uniqueness of the work.

Since people create ideas and give them permanence and universal interest, we can paraphrase this part of our definition to mean that literature addresses topics that are of deep interest to many, many people. What are these topics? Probably the things that make our lives both complicated and worth living: freedom, truth, beauty, love, loyalty, despair, hope, hopelessness, etc.. .Contemplative people across places and throughout time have concerned themselves with these ideas and have represented and explored them through literature. Many stories and poems deal with love and war and truth and psychology and human emotion, but literary texts will

make us feel like we see something about these things that we didn't see before or didn't see as clearly or didn't feel as intensely.

Our definition of "literature" above implies that when determining whether or not a text is "literary" we should consider not just *what* is said but also *how* it is said. Here lies an often-forgotten aspect of literature: style. Style means the specific techniques used within literary works to create particular effects. There are many, many texts that speak thoughtfully and deeply about issues that matter to the people, but that doesn't make them "literary" texts. A history book, a psychology textbook, a recipe…all of these may offer valuable insight into issues we care about, but they are likely not literary texts because they don't offer this insight in a way that is, itself, remarkable for the way it functions to create an experience that is greater than the ideas themselves. Usually, in an artistic work, the style of the presentation strives to achieve a particular effect—that is, the style works to create a special impact on the ways listeners of a song, the viewers of a painting, or the readers of a story think about, feel, understand, and relate to the ideas represented in the artistic work This attention to the ways of communicating for effect and to intensify and deepen one's felt understanding is what caused writer Iris Murdoch to describe literature as "a sort of disciplined technique for arousing certain emotions." On the other hand, literary works are divided into multiple kinds called: genres.

2. **Literary Genres and Forms**

Before speaking about the different forms and genres of literature, it is essential to comprehend the structure of it. Poetry, prose, and drama are the three main categories under which literature can be generically categorized. People frequently mix up genres and forms. Please pay attention to how you pronounce the word genre, which has French roots. Okay, so, the Form generally refers to the way a piece of literature is structured. Differently said, it is principally structural, whereas the Genre is about the substance of a literary text. It is connected to the artwork's subject matter. Therefore, the author decides whether to write about romance, mystery, horror, crime, biography...etc. so, the Genre is more about the content. To sum up we can say: the distinction of literature based on content is known as Genre, while the one based on structure is known as Form. Language manifests itself differently in prose and poetry. Both stem from Latin. Verse means to turn around or

to bend. When you look at a piece of verse, it takes a couple of readings to understand it whereas Prose denotes being, straightforward, or direct. Therefore, the main differences are the following:

Prose	Poetry
Has the form of sentences and paragraphs	Has the form of verses and stanzas
Regular linguistic patterns	The use of high elevated language to manifest ideas and emotions
Words are not limited	Words are limited
No occurrence of rhymes and rhythm	The use of rhymes and rhythm most often
Simple to comprehend	Requires between the lines reading
May or may not be employed inventively	Employed inventively and artistically

3. **Conclusion:** On the whole, you can differentiate between prose and poetry in light of the fact that prose is written in complete sentences and passages; rather, verse has various approaches of consuming the space, line pieces, sentence fragments, mysterious words. Taking everything into account prose utilizes typical language pattern, pretty much it imitates the daily conversation. Yet, what is essential for poetry is the expression of emotions and thoughts.

Activity: Discuss the following saying by the Romantic Poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge: "Prose is words in their best order; poetry is best words in best order." (Ricks, 202, p.147)

Fiction

1. ## **Introduction:**

In this module, we will speak mainly about prose more specifically fiction. So, what exactly is fiction? Fiction is broadly defined as any creative work that is narrative in nature. What story do you tell? It is an original piece of work. In addition to that, it tells a story, thus there is also a component of narration there. There is a tale to tell.

2. ## **The Components of Narration**

There is always at least one tale included within a novel, and in many instances there are multiple stories. But what causes that to take place? There are a lot of different characters included. In point of fact, characters are representations of individuals like the ones you and I encounter in the world around us, right? Therefore, residents of the fictional country are referred to as characters.

Therefore, characters might be thought of as the equivalent of what we refer to as citizens in our day-to-day lives. And just as we live in a certain location, the characters in your story will need to reside in a particular location as well; hence, you will have a variety of settings. I'm going to go over the various components that go into making up a novel. It goes without saying that we need to be familiar with the contents of a literary book before we can grasp what it's about. Consequently, there are locations, some of which are genuine, while others are merely in the author's imagination. There is a single incident, a series of events, or many events that take place, and there is a narrative that connects all of these characters. Therefore, the development of a fictional world, which may be based on a genuine locale and contains a cast of characters that are credible, is generally speaking what is meant by the term "a work of fiction". To put it another way, when an author develops a world in a novel, that world functions similarly to a parallel world, and we are obligated to consider the characters that the author creates in that world as genuine. Because of this, we often remark that there is truth hidden within fiction, and this is one reason why fiction possesses such power.

So, there is an imaginary character who is not true, an imaginary location which is not true, an imaginary action which is not true, an imaginary plot which is not true, and as a whole an imaginary story which is not genuine; yet what it says in

this sequence of not true is the truth. What a contradiction, right? What exactly is this truth? The reality of life. The beauty of a novel is that, while being filled with a string of lies, it ultimately allows the reader to get close to the source of the truth. In the following lessons, we will, of course, go over all of these aspects, characters, and other related topics.

Literature possesses the power to make us feel as though we are a part of the story being told, or it can turn us into a song or a moving narrative through which the message is conveyed. As a result, this aspect of narrativizing is always relevant because it is a fundamental component of the human genotype.This means that it is encoded in our DNA[1]. It is a component of our complete make-up, specifically our genetic make-up. Because of this, as long as there are people in the world, there will also be books and other works of fiction, albeit in a variety of formats and manifestations. It doesn't matter if it's a book, a short story, a television show, a movie, a reality show, or anything else: there is always some kind of story involved. The fact that there is always some kind of story involved is the reason why we are so captivated by certain things. This preoccupation with tales goes back further than modern times, which dates back to around 2400 or 2500 BC ((Dani & De Laet, 1996).

3. The Significance of Fictional Narratives

Therefore, it is known that humans have been sharing their experiences through the use of fabricated stories ever since they first appeared. Of course, poetry written far earlier served the function of a story as well. You can claim that the novel derives from the oral tradition of literature yet, you can say that the novel is a more modern kind of literature.

It should come as no surprise that Terry Eagleton, a brilliant and exceptional theorist, is the one who makes this observation on the capacity of the book to construct a parallel universe and on the manner in which it builds a world of make-believe for us (Eagleton, 2008). The fact that we are aware that the book we are reading is a work of fiction does not change the fact that we experience real emotions. When we are reading a book, sometimes start sobbing, or else we start smiling or laughing. Sometimes we even start laughing out loud.When the main character is pleased, we feel glad for them too. Why does something like that happen?

---

[1] DNA, or deoxyribonucleic acid, is a molecule found in cells that contains the genetic instructions for the development, functioning, growth, and reproduction of all living organisms.

Because the book that you hold in your hands has the natural capacity to bring you into the world that it portrays. Simply by holding the book in your hands, you will be transformed into one of the characters in the story you find yourself in the position of a spectator and begin to follow what occurs with each of the characters. Therefore, when you read a novel, you are transformed into a great spectator, witnessing everything that takes place in that universe from a first-person perspective; this is the reason why you are so profoundly moved by the experience. This is what the reviewer Terry Eagleton commented on: "In reading a piece of fiction we subscribe to a silent agreement with its author, who pretends that something is true and asks us to pretend to take it seriously" (2008, p.22).

4. <u>Conclusion</u>

In fact, Not only do we tell and participate in fictitious stories, but we also ruminate on the themes that are presented in those tales. That is why I compared it to a game of make-believe earlier. We also attribute to it a particular morality, certain ethical standards, and even ideologies, and the majority of the times, these novels mirror the aspirations of a whole race. They mirror our perspective, the perspective of our society; this is why reading novels is such an important thing. They have the unique power to represent our civilization. But if its only purpose were to reflect our culture, then there is no reason for us to read it; rather, they can shed some light on our situations and point us in the direction of the more noble ideals that humanity has always sought.This explains why both you and I need to read of novels.

Activity: write two paragraphs in which you discuss the importance of fiction.

The Elements of a Novel (part I):Characters, Plot , Setting

1. Introduction

Last time, we talked about the reasons why we read novels and the things that happen while we read novels, but now it is time for us to delve a little bit deeper into this realm. Thus, what are the elements that make up this imaginary world? To put it another way, what exactly are the components of fiction?

2. The Characters:

Let's get started with the characters. I have stated that characters are equivalents or comparable to persons who you and I see in our real-life, including both you and me. Therefore, characters are a reflection of ourselves. Reading for characters is more difficult than reading for plot, for character is much more complex, variable and ambiguous. Anyone can repeat what a character is doing in a story, but considerable skills may be needed to describe what a character is. Hence, escape fiction tend to focus on the plot and to present characters that are relatively simple and easy to understand. Immature readers demand that the main characters always be an attractive one, if the character is male, he must be decent, honest, good-hearted and good-looking. Readers who make these demands, do so because for them the story is a material for a daydream. The main character, thus, must return them a pleasing image of self , must be someone such as they imagine themselves to be . The interpretive fiction furnishes a greater variety of central characters. Characters that are sometimes unsympathetic. Human nature is not often entirely bad or perfectly good and interpretive fiction deals often with characters that are neither. Characters are divided into

- **Protagonist** - The principal character of the story (revolves around)
- **Antagonist** - the character which opposes the protagonist.
- **Minor character** - Often supports and illuminates the protagonist.

In fact, fiction offers us an opportunity to observe the human nature in all its complexity. It enables us to understand people and to learn compassion for them . In some respects we can know fictional characters even better than we know real people.

We can view their inner life in a way that is impossible to us in ordinary life. Indeed, by knowing fictional characters, we can also understand people in real life better than we otherwise do.

Revealed Authors may present their characters either directly or indirectly. The process by which the personality of a character is revealed is known as characterization. In direct characterization, they tell us straight out, by analysis or exposition, what the characters are like. In indirect characterization, the authors show us the characters through:

1. **Speech** how does the character speak? What does he tell?
2. **Thought** what is reflected through the character's thoughts and feelings
3. **Reaction** how do the other characters react and interact with the character?
4. **Action** how is the behavior of the character described?
5. **Looks** how does the character look like?

Successful writers rely on indirect presentation and they tend to use it entirely because the characters need to be dramatized (shown speaking and acting) and not only explained like they are in an essay.

In fiction, the characters are classified to either **Flat Characters** or **Round Characters**. Flat characters are characterized by one or two traits; they could be summed up in a sentence. Round characters are complex and many-sided; they might require an essay for full analysis. Both types are necessary for a good fiction. Minor characters must necessarily remain flat, whereas, the protagonist and the antagonist are in the most cases round characters. Furthermore, characters are also divided into **Static** and **Dynamic**. The static character is the same person at the end of the story as at the beginning. However, the dynamic character undergoes a permanent change in terms of personality, mentality, outlook…etc. the change may be small or huge; it maybe for better or worse but it is something important and basic. For these changes to be convincing, they must meet three conditions: (1) it must be within the possibilities of the character who make it. (2) it must be sufficiently motivated by the circumstances in which the character is placed. (3) it must be allowed suffcient time. Cindrella and Sherlock Holmes are a static characher, Stefen Dedalus in *The Portrait*

of an Artist As a Young Boy, is a dynamic character, Dick Professor in *The Child by Tiger* is also a dynamic character.

Fictional life begins when the author breathes life into his characters and convinces us of their reality. Though fullness of characterization does not need to be ultimate aim, soundness of characterization is a test by which the author stands or falls. The reader of a good fiction lives an experience in which he/she enjoyes every bit of it.

3. **The Plot:**

Now we will discuss the plot. What exactly is going on here? Of course, you remember that I mentioned every novel needs to have a plot, right? The events in a story take place in a specific order. In point of fact, it takes place in a period of time. Let's suppose, for example, that a plot is the combination of a story and something that causes that story to happen. On the other hand, you could say that the plot is the progression of events in a story; hence, you may count the story itself as a component of the plot. And the manner, in which it plays out, the various cause and effect variables added to that tale element, produces plot in a sense.

Plot bears about the same relationship to a story that a map to a journey. I t may include what a character says or thinks, as well as what he does, but it leaves out analysis and description and concentrates on major happenings. Because plot is the easiest element in fiction to comprehend and out into words, beginning readers tend to equate it with the content of the work. When asked what a story is about, they will say that it is about a person to whom particular events happen, not that it is about a certain kind of persons or that it presents a certain insight into life. Immature readers read chiefly for plot, mature readers read for whatever revelations of character or life may be presented by means of plot. Because they read chiefly for plot, immature readers have certain demands. They want mixed identities, disguises, secret letters and physical action.

 In a good story, however, a minimum physical action is used. Every story has an action but to be a worthwhile story, it must be a significant action. For a superior writer, there may be as much significant action in a way the man greets a friend as in

how he handles a sword. Thus, both the excitement craved by immature readers and the meaningfulness demanded by the mature readers arise out of some sort of **conflict**: a clash of action, desires, ideas or wills. The main character may be in conflict with some external forces like physical nature, society or fate or he/she may be in conflict with elements of his own nature (man against man). The conflict may be physical, mental, emotional or moral. There is conflict in a chess game, where the competitors sit quite still for hours; emotional conflict may be raging whithin a person sitting calmly in a room. The central character in the conflict is referred to as the protagonist; the forces arrayed against him whether person, nature forces, traits of his personality..etc are called antagonists.

Another important element which should occur in a good plot is **suspense**. Suspence is the quality in a story that makes the readers ask: what is next? And pushes them to read on to find the answer to this question. Suspense is greater when the readers' curiosity is combined withj anxiety. Thus in old serial movies, appropriately called cliffhangers the suspense was made by leaving the hero or the heroine hanging from the edge of the cliff. In murder mysteries, suspense is created by the question who commited the murder. In love stories, it is created by the question will the lovers be reunited again? In more sophisticated forms of fiction suspense may concern not only actions but psychological considerations and moral issues.

Closely connected with the element of suspense in a short story is the element of **surprise**. Whatever happens in a story and which we did not expect come with an element of surprise. The surprise is proportional to the unexpectedness of what happens. In short stories, this surprise is often found at the end which reveals a sudden twist or turn. Surprise is evaluated through two ways: (1) with the fairness with which it is achieved, (2) by the purpose that it serves. If a surprise is brought about by the planting of false clues: details that only purpose is to mislead the reader, and then the reader may not appreciate it. On the other hand, if a surprise seems perfectly logical and natural as we look back over the story the reader may grant it as fairly achieved. Again, a surprise may seem trivial if it exists simply for its own sake. Its justification comes when it serves to reinforce the meaning of the story.

Artistic Unity is essential to a good plot. There must be nothing in the story which is irrelevant, that does not contribute to the total meaning, nothing that is only there for excitement or for its own sake. Good writers exercise rigorous selection: they include nothing that does not advance the central intention of the story. But, they must not only select, they must also arrange. The incidents and episodes should be placed in the most effective order, which is not necessarily the chronological order, should make a logical progression because the various stages of the story are linked together in a chain of cause and effect.

Plot is important, in interpretive fiction, for what it reveals. In testing a story for quality, it is useful to examine how the incidents and episodes are connected for such an examination is a test of the story's probability. Conflict, suspense and surprise are very important elements of a good story. However, we can never get very far by analysis of the plot alone. Plot by itself gives little more indication of the total story than a map gives of the quality of the journey

4. <u>**The Setting:**</u>

The location in which the story takes place, as well as the era are referred to as the novel's setting. The setting functions similarly to a background. The place where everything takes place, the time in which it occurs, the background, the socio-cultural backgrounds, the political backgrounds, and the entirety of the flora and fauna that are portrayed there, are what make up the novel's setting.

Activity: try to find the characters, the plot and the setting of the short story *Luck* written by Mark Twain.

The Elements of a Novel (part II):Point of view,Themes, Structure, Literay devices

5. The Point of View:

Point of view is about who tells the story and how this latter is told. The point of view of a story can indirectly show the author's intentions.

- *First-person* - (**I** and **me** are used; the narrator is actually a part of the story) Narrator participates in action but sometimes has limited knowledge/vision.
- *Third Person (Objective)* - he and she are used; the narrator simply helps tell the story, and lets all character speak for themselves
- *Omniscient* - The narrator knows what each character is thinking and feeling, not just what they are doing throughout the story. This type of narrator usually jumps around within the text, following one character for a few pages or chapters, and then switching to another character for a few pages, chapters, etc.

6. The Themes:

In addition to the above, the theme of a piece of fiction is its controlling idea or its central insight. It is te unifying generalization about life stated or implied by the story. To derive the theme of a story, we must ask what its central purpose is: what view of life it supports or what insight into life it reveals. It is the idea the writer wishes to convey about the subject—the writer's view of the world or a revelation about human nature. Themes, however, are difficult to state briefly or precisely and need to be discussed.

Discovering and stating the theme of a story, is often a delicate task. Sometimes, we will feel what a story is about and yet find it difficult to put this feeling into words. If we are skilled readers it is unnecessary to do so. However, the attempt to state a theme will reveal to us aspects of a story that we should otherwise not have noticed and will lead to more thorough understanding. The ability to state a theme is a test of our understanding of a story. Beginning readers often think they understand a story when in fact they have misunderstood it. They understand the events but not what the events add up to. People sometimes miss the point of a joke. It is not surprising that

they should frequently miss the point of a good piece of fiction, which is many times more complex than a joke.

There is no determined method to discover a theme. Sometimes, we can best get it by asking in what way the main character has changed in the course of a story and what he has learned before its end. At all ties, we should keep in mind the following principles:

1. Themes must be expressible in the form of a statement with a subject and a predicate. It is insufficient to say that the theme of a story is for example motherhood or loyalty. These are only subjects. Theme must be a statement about the subject. For eg: "motherhood has sometimes more frustrations than rewards" or "loyalty to country often inspires heroic self-sacrifice".

2. Themes must be stated as a generalization about life.in stating a theme we do not use the names of the characters or refer to precise places or events, for to do so is to make a specific rather than a general statement.

3. We must be careful not to make the generalization larger than is justified by the terms of the story. Terms like every, all, always should be used cautiously. Terms like some, sometimes, may are more accurate

4. The theme is a central and unifying concept of a story. Therefore: (a) it must not be contradicted by any detail in the story, (b) it must account for all the major details of the story, (c) the theme must not rely upon supposed facts- facts not actually stated or clearly implied by the story. It must be based on the data of the story itself, not on assumptions supplied from our own experience.

5. There is no one way of stating the theme of a story. The story merely presents a view of life, and, as long as the above conditions are fulfilled, that view may surely be stated in more than one way.

6. We should avoid any statement that reduces the theme to some familiar saying that we have heard all our lives.

7. Though we should never dismiss it, we may find that the theme of a story represents a judgment on life with which we don't agree. However, there is value in knowing what the world looks like to others and we can thus use the judgment to expand our knowledge of the human experience even though we cannot ourselves accept it. Good readers will not reject a story because they reject its theme. They can enjoy any story that arises from a sufficient depth of

observation and reflection and is artistically composed, though they disagree with its theme; and they will prefer it to a shallower, less thoughtful story that presents a theme they endorse.

7. <u>The structure</u>

Structure is about the development of the event sequence. A traditional structure goes this way:

- *Exposition* - Background information regarding the setting, characters, and the plot.
- *Rising Action* - The process the story follows as it builds to its main conflict
- *Crisis* - A significant turning point in the story that determines how it must end
- *Falling Action*-the preparation for the end of the story.
- *Resolution/Denouement* - The way the story turns out.

8. <u>The Literary devices:</u>

On the other hand, literary devices are specific language techniques which writers use to create text that is clear, interesting, and memorable. Here are some of the mostly used ones:

Ambiguity - when a single event or expression can mean two different things to two different people.

Example: When it is announced that another baby is on the way, Father remarks, "That could create some problems." He means problems with money, but his young son thinks, "You're right, dad! I don't want to share my room and toys with anybody!"

Anaphora- is a rhetorical device that features the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of successive sentences, phrases, or clauses. Anaphora works as a literary device to allow writers to convey, emphasize, and reinforce meaning. Here are some examples of conversational anaphora:

- "Go big or go home."
- "Be bold. Be brief. Be gone."
- "Get busy living or get busy dying."

- "Give me liberty or give me death."
- "You're damned if you do and you're damned if you don't."

Atmosphere - mood or feeling developed through descriptions of the setting and senses (how things feel, taste, smell, sound, look)

> Example: Camping in those woods, time went slow. The thick forest air just sat on you, hot and wet like a wool blanket, while mosquitoes droned in your ears and stung you on the back where you could never quite reach to smack them.

Dramatic Irony is when the reader knows things that the characters in a story do not

> Example: We learn that Mary really likes Frankie because she writes about him in her diary all the time. Frankie, however, is scared to ask Mary to the dance because she is so popular and "cool." We wish we could tell Frankie what we, as the readers, know!

Epigram is a rhetorical device that is a memorable, brief, interesting, and surprising satirical statement. It originated from the Greek word *epigramma, which* means "*inscription*". Often ingenious or witty statements are considered as epigrams. Some popular examples of epigram used in common speech are:

- "Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind." – *John F. Kennedy*
- "It is better to light a candle than curse the darkness." – *Eleanor Roosevelt*

Flashback - interruption of the present action to insert an episode that took place earlier; this gives the reader needed information to understand a current event, or a character's motivation

> Example: I could tell that Jimmy wasn't going to back down. He stood up to bullies before, like back in first grade when Roger Neary used to eat everybody's snack. One day Jimmy had caught Roger in *his* snack bag, and...

Flash-Forward - a sudden jump forward in time, usually used to eliminate unnecessary events between the more interesting events of a story

> Example: Quietly, Janice slid the book into her backpack. A week later, the teacher asked if anyone had seen her copy of *The Magic Mouse*. "I've looked everywhere," she explained, "and I just can't find it."

Foreshadowing - clues used to alert the reader about events that will occur later; used to build suspense

Hyperbole - obvious exaggeration which is not meant to be taken literally. Example:

- I'm so hungry that I could eat a horse.
- That purse looks like it cost a million dollars.
- He feels buried under a mountain of work.
- I'm dying of thirst.

Hypophora is a figure of speech in which a writer raises a question, and then immediately provides an answer to that question. Commonly, a question is asked in the first paragraph, and then the paragraph is used to answer the question. It is also known as "antipophora," or "anthypophora."

Example :"What should young people do with their lives today? Many things, obviously. But the most daring thing is to create stable communities in which the terrible disease of loneliness can be cured."

Imagery - mental pictures which are created by descriptions of the senses, so that we can see and feel what the character is experiencing

Example: Even the dark, shiny leaves which usually clung to the chimney of my grandmother's house hung dry and brittle on that hot summer day.

Irony - contrast between the expected outcome and the actual way things turn out

Metaphor - a suggested comparison between two unlike things in order to point out a similarity; a metaphor DOES NOT use the word **like, as as, or than**.

Motive - a character's reason for doing what he/she does

Nostalgia: The term *nostalgia*, or the feeling of homesickness, has been derived from a Homeric term, "nostos," which means homecoming. In literature, nostalgia is employed to discuss a general interest in the past, or the personalities of the past, and subsequent feelings of pleasure or pain.

Onomatopoeia - words that imitate, or sound like, the actions they describe

Examples: bang, slurp, ping, slam, hiss, squish

Oxymoron: is a figure of speech pairing two words together that are opposing and/or contradictory. This combination of contrary or antithetical words is also known in conversation as a contradiction in terms. As a literary device, oxymoron has the effect of creating an impression, enhancing a concept, and even entertaining the reader. Example:

- Only choice
- Same difference

- Friendly fire
- Virtual reality
- Controlled chaos

Parody is an imitation of a particular writer, artist, or genre, exaggerating it deliberately to produce a comic effect. The humorous effect in parody is achieved by imitating and overstressing noticeable features of a famous piece of literature, as in caricatures, where certain peculiarities of a person are highlighted to achieve a humorous effect.

Pastiche is a literary piece that imitates a famous literary work by another writer. Unlike parody, its purpose is not to mock, but to honor the literary piece it imitates.

Personification - a description in which an object (or animal, or idea, or force of nature) takes on human characteristics or actions

Examples: the tornado stooped to snatch the house; the sun hid its face behind the clouds; the rain tapped against the window with its wet, insistent fingers

Repetition - the author purposely repeats words or phrases; the author is trying tocreate rhythm or suspense, or is trying to really emphasize a certain idea.

Example: It was all gone. Burned to ashes. He had no clothing, no blankets, no bow, no hatchet, no map. It was all gone.

Simile - a comparison between two unlike things, using **like**, **as as**, or **than** in the comparison

Soliloquy is a literary device in the form of a speech or monologue spoken by a single character in a theatrical play or drama. The purpose of a soliloquy is for the character to express their inner thoughts and feelings that are not intended to be heard or known by other characters in the play or the audience members. Essentially, during a soliloquy, the action of the play stops, as if time has paused for the audience to be "inside" the speaker's head for a moment while they articulate what they are thinking.

Stereotype: in literature, the stereotype is a term that means to construct the image of a person, group, clan, tribe, or region through generalizations.

Trait - a word which describes a character's personality, or how she/he acts in the story; it must always be backed up with evidence (support or proof) from the story

9. **Conclusion:**

The elements of fiction, including plot, character, setting, point of view, theme, and style, collectively contribute to the richness and depth of storytelling. Through skillful manipulation of these elements, authors craft narratives that engage readers emotionally, intellectually, and imaginatively. Plot drives the sequence of events, while well-developed characters evoke empathy and connection. Setting establishes the backdrop and atmosphere, enhancing the reader's immersion in the story. Point of view shapes the narrative perspective, influencing how readers interpret events. Themes provide layers of meaning and insight, inviting reflection on universal truths. Finally, style encompasses the author's unique voice and writing techniques, adding flair and distinctiveness to the narrative. Together, these elements form the backbone of fiction, facilitating the exploration of complex ideas, experiences, and human emotions.

Activity: continue with the short story *Luck* by Mark Twain stating this time the point of view, the themes, the structure and the literary devices found in the text

Types of Fiction (The Novel)

1. Introduction:

At this point, you might be wondering what the different categories of fiction are. Obviously, there is a wide variety of fictional forms. Fiction encompasses a wide variety of literary forms, including novels, short stories, graphic novels, and novellas. The field of fiction encompasses an extremely broad category of literary works. Television shows, motion pictures, and comic books with visuals are all examples of fiction, but, in most cases, when we talk about fiction, we are referring to things like novels and short stories. However, this does not exclude the other genres of fiction that we have just discussed.

2. The Novel: A Closer Look:

Now, let's discuss the first type and the most famous one that is novel. In point of fact, the word "novel" originates from Italian, where it refers to something "new." This is the reason why the definition of "novel" in the dictionary also refers to "new." This means that the novel belongs to a previously unexplored genre. The events that take place in novels, when viewed through the lens of realism, often reflect on personal human experiences that take place in real-world situations. Yet, in modern times, you can also find something known as magic realism. When you read one of Marquez's works set in a universe where magic plays a significant role, you enter that realm. Or even whether you read the novels or watch the Harry Potter series, magic is a component of what actually occurs in those stories. Therefore, this type of writing is called magic realism.

2.1. Historical Context and Influence:

The novel's continued success can be attributed to the fact that it is inextricably linked to modern civilization, often known as industrial civilization. The publication of the first novel coincides with the beginning of our contemporary civilisation. Because of this, it has managed to maintain its status as a kind of popular genre and one that is often used in the literary industry. Curiously enough, along with the advent of industrialization, there has also been a continuous rise of the middle

class. As a result, you may argue that the novel is synonymous with the middle class.It is conceived at the same time as the expansion of the middle class.

In addition to all of these things, the novel is simultaneously concurrent with the beginning of the contemporary scientific era. It is in the late 16th century or notably the beginning of the 17th century onwards, when science begins playing an essential role in defining our civilization, in defining our way of life, and later on, this led to the development of industrialisation. Novels can, then, be linked to these sociological characteristics of both our race and our civilization. The novel, as well became popular during the height of British imperialism. Naturally, out of imperialism and colonization, the British planted the seeds of the novel all throughout the colonies. As a consequence of this, you find novel in a fully-fledged way in almost all of the colonies sometime between the middle of the 18th century and the end of the 18th-19th century.

2.2. The Novel as a Literary Anti-Genre

The novel has been dubbed an anti-genre work by a number of reviewers. Why is it the case? Thus, while there are some clear-cut boundaries for other types of literary works, the novel, on the other hand, is more like a holdall than anything else. You can pretty much write about anything in a novel. You can detect traces of poetry, epics, pastorals, historical elegies, and other literary forms in novels. As a result, this is the rationale behind the famous novelist of the 20th century, Virginia Woolf, referring to the novel as "the most pliable of all forms" (Kopley, 2021, p.144). The fact that it can be molded into whatever form that one desires is what distinguishes it from other things. This is the reason why amazing experiments are taking place throughout the novel According to Terry Eagleton:

> The novel is a mighty melting pot, a mongrel among literary thoroughbreds. There seems to be nothing it cannot do. It can investigate a single human consciousness for eight hundred pages. Or it can recount the adventures of an onion, chart the history of a family over six generations, or recreate the Napoleonic wars. If it is a form particularly associated with the middle class, it is partly because the ideology of that class centres on a dream of total freedom from restraint. (Eagleton, 2013, p.1)

Mikhail Bakhtin, an additionnal noteworthy theorist, draws parallels between novels and another type of literary work known as the epic. Epic is the only literary form that can be compared to novels, regardless of whether the comparison is made to poetry or drama. So, you will find that there are a lot of similarities between epic and novel, but the novel has overtaken epic in a very large number of ways. This is why Bakhtin says that while epic is pinned to the past, the novel embodies the essence of epic and walks ahead, which is why he says that the novel has a favorable position over epic. Bakhtin also believes that the birth of the novel emerges at the same time period as the creation of the new world. Because of this, he believes that the success of novels spurred other genres to adapt and try to handle time in the same way that novels do. This is due to the fact that if there is one quality that distinguishes a novel, it is its flexibility (Golban, 2022) .

3. Conclusion:

The book, as a significant and influential piece of literature, remains strong and unwavering, including expansive worlds created by the human imagination. Novels serve as cultural mirrors, reflecting society changes, philosophical investigations, and the enduring interplay of human emotions, rather than just being expansive narratives. The novel's versatility enables it to explore the profound aspects of human existence, evoking empathy, questioning viewpoints, and providing transformative experiences that extend beyond a single reading. The novel, in its dynamic nature, guarantees the enduring appeal and enlightening impact of stories, which are vital to our collective human experience, in deepening our comprehension of ourselves and the surrounding environment.

Activity: write two paragraphs in which you discuss the following statement: according to Milan Kundera " the stupidity of people comes from having an answer for everything. The wisdom of the novel comes from having a question for everything" (Price, 2013).

Major issues in English Literature

1.Introduction:

        Within the expansive realm of English literature, which encompasses British, American, and Black American literary traditions, we are exposed to a diverse array of voices, topics, and narratives that mirror the complex interactions of social, cultural, and political influences throughout the centuries. Within these literary traditions, writers have extensively explored the intricacies of the human experience, delving into significant themes that are highly relevant to their specific periods and situations. Literature has functioned as a reflective tool for society, capturing the victories, challenges, and changes of humanity, from the lush vistas of Britain to the expansive territory of America and the liberation efforts within Black communities.

        This introduction explores the domains of British, American, and Black American literature, examining the significant concerns and themes that have influenced the literary scene and enhanced our comprehension of the world. By utilizing storytelling and artistic expression, these traditions provide us with valuable perspectives on enduring inquiries regarding identity, power, and justice. They encourage us to delve into the profound depths of the human spirit and the diverse aspects of our collective humanity. Here are the most important issues tackled in the British, American and Black American literatures:

2. **The British Literature:**

        Class and Social Hierarchy: British literature delves into the examination of class divisions and social hierarchies, which mirrors the complex structure of society, where individuals are frequently characterized by their social status and financial position. Writers have shown the inequalities and conflicts that exist within hierarchical systems, ranging from the luxurious residences of the nobility to the poor neighborhoods of the working class. Novels like Charles Dickens' "Great Expectations" and Jane Austen's "Pride and Prejudice" explore the intricacies of social mobility and the challenge of moving up in a society that is strongly divided into different social classes, where a person's position in the social hierarchy often determines their chances and destiny.

        Colonialism and Empire: British literature is heavily influenced by the lasting impact of British colonialism and empire. Writers in this tradition confront the ethical intricacies and societal burdens associated with the expansion of the empire.

British literature frequently idealizes and mythologizes the colonial endeavor, as seen in works like Robinson Crusoe and Rudyard Kipling's *The Jungle Book*. However, it also acknowledges the harsher aspects of colonialism. Authors like Joseph Conrad, known for his work *Heart of Darkness*, and George Orwell, famous for Burmese *Days* provide incisive evaluations of imperialism and its consequences on colonial populations. They delve into topics of power, exploitation, and cultural conflict.

Identity and Nationhood : British literature exemplifies the intricate complexity of British identity and collective awareness, which has been molded over centuries via the influences of migration, conquest, and cultural interchange. Throughout literary history, writers have extensively explored the themes of race, nationality, and belonging, critically examining the myths and narratives that shape the British collective imagination. This can be seen in works ranging from the legendary tales of King Arthur to the avant-garde techniques employed in James Joyce's *Ulysses*. Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth* delve into the intricacies of multicultural Britain, where identities are flexible, disputed, and ever changing in an interconnected globe.

Gender and Feminism: Within the historical records of British literature, the examination of gender roles and feminist viewpoints has consistently emerged as a prominent subject, questioning conventional ideas of femininity and masculinity. Writers have challenged patriarchal structures and argued for women's rights and autonomy through feminist critiques of Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and the subversive comedy found in Virginia Woolf's *Orlando*. British literature has served as a platform for the struggle for gender equality, as evidenced by the works of Mary Wollstonecraft *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* and Angela Carter *The Bloody Chamber*. These writers have effectively challenged and deconstructed preconceptions, while also redefining the portrayal of female experiences in tales.

3. The American Literature:

Race and Ethnicity: American literature provides a medium for examining race and ethnicity, diving into the intricacies of racial identity and specifically focusing on the African American experience. Writers have directly addressed issues of discrimination, bigotry, and structural racism, from the distressing stories of slavery to the ongoing battles for racial justice. Toni Morrison's "Beloved" and Ralph

Ellison's "Invisible Man" provide powerful criticisms of racial oppression while simultaneously honoring the endurance and fortitude of minority people.

Immigration and Multiculturalism: American literature delves into the intricate fabric of variety inside the nation, examining topics such as immigration, the process of assimilation, and the coexistence of multiple cultures. Writers have documented the struggles and successes of immigrants throughout history, from European immigrants at Ellis Island to present-day immigrants from Latin America, Asia, and other regions, as they navigate the process of establishing their identities in a foreign country. Novels like Jhumpa Lahiri's "The Namesake" and Maxine Hong Kingston's "The Woman Warrior" shed light on the intricacies of cultural identity and the conflicts arising from the desire to assimilate and the need to preserve one's history.

Individualism and the American Dream: A key theme in American literature is the exaltation of individualism, self-sufficiency, and the quest for the American Dream. Throughout history, authors have praised the qualities of desire, opportunity, and success, from the adventurous spirit of pioneers to the driven enthusiasm of the Gilded Age entrepreneurs. However, American literature also confronts the less favorable aspects of the American Dream, scrutinizing the disparities and injustices that endure beneath the surface of affluence. Novels like F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* and Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman* provide powerful insights into the fleeting nature of the American Dream and the disappointment that comes with striving for it.

Regionalism and Regional Identity: American literature portrays the varied regional identities and landscapes of the United States, encapsulating the distinct cultural legacy of various regions. Writers have praised the uniqueness of regional cultures and customs, ranging from the rough terrains of the American West to the fertile bayous of the Deep South. Works such as Mark Twain's *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and William Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* provide detailed depictions of local existence, delving into topics of communal identity, inclusion, and interpersonal connections.

Social Justice and Activism: A significant number of American literary works explore the concepts of social justice, activism, and the pursuit of equality. Throughout the 19th century abolitionist literature and throughout the 20th century civil rights movement, writers have utilized their voices to promote change and question established systems of authority and advantage. Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* illuminate topics related to labor rights, racial justice, and gender equality, motivating readers to challenge unfairness and strive for a fair and impartial society.

4. The Black American Literature:

Slavery and its Legacy: The core of Black American writing is around a deep involvement with the lasting impact of slavery, a somber period in American history that still resonates in modern culture. Black American writers address the harsh truths of slavery by employing compelling storytelling and thoughtful introspection. They reveal the profound extent of racial injustice, oppression, and dehumanization experienced by enslaved Africans and their offspring throughout multiple generations. Works like Toni Morrison's "Beloved" and Frederick Douglass's "Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave" serve as testimonies to the distressing ordeals of enslavement, while also shedding light on the enduring fight for liberation, respect, and fairness in the presence of institutional racism and structural inequity.

Identity and Representation: Black American literature acts as a catalyst for examining identity, representation, and self-determination. It challenges stereotypes and reclaims narratives of the Black experience. Throughout the Harlem Renaissance, the Black Arts Movement, and subsequent periods, writers have endeavored to challenge prevailing narratives and affirm the intricate and abundant nature of Black identity. Black American writers utilize poetry, prose, and theater to commemorate the variety of Black experiences and perspectives, presenting intricate depictions of persons negotiating the intricacies of race, gender, sexuality, and class. Works like Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* provide significant understandings of the complexities of Black identity and the pursuit of self-discovery and belonging in a prejudiced and exclusive society.

Community and Resilience: Black American literature venerates the fortitude, tenacity, and communal connections established within Black communities, providing as a testament to the potency of unity and collaborative efforts in confronting hardship. Black American writers pay tribute to the enduring customs of fortitude and defiance that have supported Black communities during generations of hardship and subjugation, by recounting tales of affection, familial bonds, and defiance. Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and Langston Hughes's *The Weary Blues* honor the unwavering resilience of Black America, confirming the lasting connections of kinship, companionship, and society that surpass the constraints of race and situation.

Intersectionality: Black American literature frequently interacts with many social identities, such as gender, sexuality, and class, providing intricate examinations of overlapping oppressions and identities. Black American writers shed light on the intricate realities of lived experiences, where Black women face the challenge of balancing the constraints of both race and gender, while LGBTQ+ individuals strive for acknowledgment and inclusivity. These writers explore the complexities that arise when multiple forms of marginalization and privilege intersect. Works like Audre Lorde's *The Black Unicorn* and Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* provide thought-provoking insights into the intersection of race, gender, and sexuality. These works encourage readers to grapple with the intricate nature of identity and the pursuit of social equality in a dynamic and diverse society.

Cultural Heritage and Tradition: Black American literature utilizes many cultural practices such as oral storytelling, folklore, music, and spirituality to safeguard cultural heritage and reinforce cultural self-esteem. Black American writers exalt the liveliness and tenacity of Black culture, amalgamating the elements of tradition and novelty to forge novel modes of artistic manifestation and societal critique, ranging from the spirituals of the antebellum South to the cadences of jazz and hip-hop. Black American writers, shown by August Wilson's *Fences* and Toni Morrison's *Song of Solomon*, honor the enduring spirit, artistic ingenuity, and defiance that have molded the Black American journey. These literary works beckon readers to delve into the profound richness of Black culture and tradition.

5. Conclusion:

British, American, and African literatures engage in a complicated discourse about power relations, identity, and colonial legacies, despite their geographical and historical differences. Class strife, cultural conventions, and reflection are common topics in British literature, but American works usually address independence, self-reliance, and the contradictions between individualism and community. African literature, which arose from the battle for autonomy and the effects of colonisation, challenges cultural erasure, identity reclamation, and the search for authentic voices. While widely different, these traditions cross in their exploration of universal human themes such as alienation, belonging, and the desire for meaning, transforming them from independent entities into elements of a rich tapestry reflecting the richness and complexities of the human experience.

Activity: Read the short story *The Lesson* by Toni Cade Bambara and then reflect on Imagine what kind of society it is in which some people can spend on a toy what it would cost to feed a family of six or seven.

Movements in literature

1. Introduction:

Literary movements are distinct periods in literature characterized by shared principles, styles, themes, and cultural contexts that reflect the attitudes and preoccupations of their time. Spanning from the classical to the contemporary, these movements have been influenced by historical events, philosophical ideas, and the interplay of cultures and societies. Each movement—whether it be Romanticism with its emphasis on emotion and nature, Modernism's break with tradition and exploration of fragmented perspectives, or Postmodernism's skepticism towards grand narratives—offers a lens through which to understand the evolution of literary expression and the ways in which writers respond to the world around them.

2. Before Romanticism:

British Literary Movements	American Literary Movements
17th Century:	**17th Century:**
- **The Renaissance/Early Modern Period (Late 16th - Early 17th Century):** Extending into the early 17th century, this period is marked by the works of Shakespeare, exploring human nature, power, and beauty through drama and poetry.	- **Colonial Literature:** Early American writings were primarily religious and practical texts reflecting the Puritan settlers' experiences, beliefs, and governance structures. Notable works include sermons, diaries, and narratives like those by Anne Bradstreet, America's first published poet.
- **The Metaphysical Poets:** Poets like John Donne and Andrew Marvell, known for their elaborate conceits, intellectualism, and direct emotional expression.	- **Early Native American Literature:** Oral traditions rich in myth, legend, and ritual, reflecting the diverse cultures of Native American peoples. Written records from this period are rare and often mediated through European settlers' perspectives.
- **The Restoration and 18th Century:** Marked by the Restoration of the monarchy in 1660, this period saw a rise	**18th Century: The Enlightenment and Revolutionary Period:** Reflecting the influence of the Enlightenment in

British Literary Movements	American Literary Movements
in satire, the development of the novel, and the refinement of neoclassical poetry and drama. Key figures include John Dryden, Alexander Pope, and Jonathan Swift.	America, this era includes political writings, pamphlets, and speeches central to the American Revolution and the early years of the Republic. Figures like Thomas Paine, Benjamin Franklin, and early presidents contributed significantly to its literature.
- **The Augustan Age:** Characterized by a return to classical ideals, satire, and political commentary, with Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift critiquing society through their works.	- **The Age of Reason and Rationalism:** Focused on reason, science, and democracy, literature from this period emphasized argumentative essays, speeches, and documents advocating for independence and constitutional governance.
- **The Rise of the Novel:** With Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding, the novel emerged as a prominent literary form, exploring themes of society, morality, and the human experience.	- **Early American Fiction:** While less developed than in Britain, early American fiction began to emerge, reflecting the new American experience. Charles Brockden Brown is often considered America's first novelist, with works like "Wieland" reflecting elements of the gothic and the complexities of the new nation.
- **The Sentimental Novel and Pre-Romanticism:** Late in the century, literature began to shift towards Romantic ideals, focusing on emotion, nature, and the individual. This set the stage for the Romantic movement that would dominate the early 19th century.	

3.Romanticism and Afterwards:

Romanticism (late 18th - early 19th century)	Characterized by an emphasis on emotion, nature, and individualism. This period was a reaction against the Enlightenment and the Industrial Revolution, valuing subjective experience and the sublime in nature. Notable figures include William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge.	Similar to its British counterpart in its focus on emotion, nature, and individualism. However, there was a stronger emphasis on the American frontier and democracy. Key figures include Edgar Allan Poe and Nathaniel Hawthorne.
Victorian Era (19th century)	Characterized by a critique of societal norms, industrialization, and the British Empire. Authors: Charles Dickens, the Brontë sisters, Thomas Hardy.	American literature of the same period was marked by transcendentalism and realism, with figures like Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, and Mark Twain.
Modernism (early 20th century)	A break with traditional forms, reflecting the disillusionment of World War I. Notable figures: Virginia Woolf, T.S. Eliot, James Joyce.	American modernism was similarly experimental and reflective of new realities, including urbanization and war. Authors: F. Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner.
Post-World War II and Contemporary	Postmodernism with a focus on metafiction and fragmentation. Key authors: Salman Rushdie, Ian McEwan, Zadie Smith.	Postmodern influences are strong, with cultural and ethnic diversity becoming prominent. Authors: Toni Morrison, Thomas Pynchon, Don DeLillo.

As you can notice from the table, a discernible shift began to emerge starting from Romanticism, where the movements between British and American literary spheres started to converge to some extent. The Romantic period, spanning from the late 18th to the mid-19th century, marked a pivotal moment in the literary landscapes of both Britain and America. While distinct cultural and historical contexts influenced their respective literary traditions, Romanticism's emphasis on individualism, nature, and emotion facilitated a mutual exchange of ideas and themes between British and American writers. This cross-pollination of literary movements saw the emergence of parallel themes and styles, blurring the boundaries between British and American literature and laying the groundwork for future transatlantic literary dialogues and movements (Galens, 2002) .

4. Conclusion:

British and American literary movements have evolved over time, with British works addressing class conflicts and societal norms, while American literature explored freedom and self-reliance. In the 20th century, British Modernists like Woolf and Joyce fractured narratives, while American giants like Fitzgerald and Hemingway captured the disillusionment of the Jazz Age. Both grappled with modernity's complexities, and postmodernism blurred lines, with both nations questioning grand narratives. Today, diverse voices emerge in both camps, critiquing dystopian futures and confronting colonialism's legacy. Their influence is undeniable, with American detective novels influencing Christie and Faulkner's prose echoing in Morrison's work. These movements form a rich tapestry, revealing the universality of human emotions and the power of shared cultural dialogue.

Activity: Choose two movements from the aforementioned table and write 300-500 words stating the differences between them in both British and American literature.

Literary Theory and Literary Criticism

1. Introduction:

In the prior sessions, we talked about the various literary forms and genres, the distinction between prose and poetry, and the nuanced differences and exceptions to the supposedly rigid classification of literature into prose and poetry. We're going to talk about several approaches to literature in this lesson. And thus we have finally reached the point when we must confront literary theory and criticism. We will soon discover their connections to literature, language, and culture.

2. Literary Criticism:

When it comes to the evaluation of works of literature, there is a thin line that separates literary criticism and the use of theoretical approaches to literature. Generally, during the course of history, the word "criticism" has gradually come to be associated with a pejorative connotation. It's extremely offensive when considered in context, we nearly always seem to put a negative spin on it when we use the word criticism in the. The literary criticism in question is in no way insulting, nor does it have an unfavourable tone.

The term "criticism" is more of an all-encompassing umbrella phrase that we use to refer to a variety of responses to literature. The entirety of our readings and our reactions to the many works of literature are included in this definition of "criticism." Consequently, when you read a piece of art, you are engaging in the activities of interpreting and analyzing that work. Even though it is an informal type of criticism, yet, whenever you read something and then debate it with your friends, relatives, parents, or anybody else, you are engaging in some form of criticism. Even though it is informal, criticism is still criticism. When you write on something, you have to have read about it somewhere else first. Newspapers, periodicals, journals, and reviews of books are all considered to be part of criticism. You've probably come across an entire book devoted to analyzing one piece of literature; this counts as criticism as well.

In order to gain a more in-depth grasp of literary criticism and to enhance our existing comprehension of it, we can define it as an interpretation, analysis, classification, and evaluation related to the literary work in question. Literary criticism is typically presented in the form of an analytical essay, but it can also be rather lengthy and take the shape of a book review or even a full book on its own.

What does literary criticism accomplish? As stated previously, it analyses a specific text from numerous angles. It relates it to the surrounding society, the prevailing ideas, and the distinct time periods in which a particular piece was composed.

2.1. <u>Who is a Critic? Understanding the Art of Informed Evaluation:</u>

Let's take a stab at defining a literary critic right now. Obviously, then, everyone who writes or reads criticism about works of literature is a literary critic. Everyone has an opinion on art, whether formal or informal, verbal or written, and you and I are literary critics since we are currently responding to literature in a formal fashion. The word "critic" originally meant "one who judges or decides," and its use in this sense can be traced back to its Greek core word, which was borrowed into Latin, and then into English, where it eventually came to imply the same thing. So, during the 17th and 18th centuries, the term has come to denote an individual or a group of people who are knowledgeable about and appreciative of the arts and literature. An expert in weighing the strengths and weaknesses of works of literature is known as a critic.

A literary critic is a person who writes about literature. Someone who analyzes the merits of works of literature is called a literary critic. One who creates written works is called a writer. Everyone who reads something critically does so because they bring their own knowledge and perspective to bear on what they read. This means that every reader also has the capacity to critique works of literature.

To elaborate, a literary critic is also someone who forms an opinion on the work's worth, who takes a stand for a particular interpretation, and who seeks to decipher the complex web of meanings and palimpsests inside the text. The role of the literary critic is thus to provide an explanation, perhaps to a nonspecialist.

By "nonspecialist," I refer to a reader who is not particularly well-versed in the field. A literary critic's role is to aid readers in comprehending works of art from various points of view; this includes providing an evaluation of the work's aesthetic and semiotic qualities as well as an examination of the larger cultural context in which the work was created.

One could even say that the goal of a literary critic is to arrive at a rational and comprehensible comprehension of an artistic work while also making comparisons between it and other civilizations' ones. Assuming that there is a piece of literature about the same topic that has been published in a different culture: How do distinct cultural outputs create that piece of literature? What are the benefits and drawbacks of

reading each text? What steps can be taken to bring them both together? When you compare it to other literary pieces published at various times or written within the same era, these are the questions that come to mind.

3. <u>**Literary Theory:**</u>

The next topic is literary theory. Using an imagery of a filter or a hole is helpful for grasping literary theory. Hence, a literary theory can be compared to a magnifying glass. Obviously, everything seems pink when viewed through a pink tinted filter or a slightly pink tinted filter. So, this is something that literary theory seeks to investigate. Literary theory is, of course, also a form of criticism; nevertheless, it is a more specialized form of literary criticism in the sense that it endeavours to examine a piece of art through a certain filter and from a specific point of view.

It is debatable whether or not it is worthwhile to look at a literary text through a particular perspective. This is due to the fact that when we try to look at a diverse piece, such as a literary text through a particular theory, it is similar to limiting the variety to some kind of particularity. However, it is still can be done. The literary theory significantly contributes to our comprehension and enrichment of literature and society in varied ways. These theories enable us to observe society through the lens of literature, recognizing that a literary work is a cultural expression, a reflection of societal norms and values.

Analyzing a literary piece in relation to its society using specific theoretical frameworks unveils insights about both the text and the broader social context. Hence, employing such lenses can prove advantageous. These diverse perspectives offered by different theories allow readers to scrutinize society from various angles, although each perspective comes with its own set of strengths and weaknesses.

In the subsequent slides, we'll delve deeper into literary theory. Traditionally, literary criticism encompassed a holistic view of artworks until roughly the 1970s. However, post-70s and 80s, literary theories have largely supplanted traditional literary criticism (Barry, 2002). Positioned uniquely, literary theory diverges from criticism. While criticism primarily responds practically to a literary piece, literary

theory reflects more introspectively, delving into the philosophy behind literary criticism itself.

For instance, in Marxian literary theory, the analysis of a work of art involves considering it through the lens of Marxist philosophy. This involves dissecting the piece to reveal its characteristic features and the material conditions contributing to its creation. This scrutiny encompasses examining characterizations, the prevalent exploitation, and the resulting social structures. Similarly, a postcolonial perspective entails scrutinizing the relationships between characters based on power dynamics—viewing them from dominant, subaltern, and power-centric positions.

In essence, literary theory encapsulates these multifaceted approaches. While a basic understanding suffices for now, it's a complex realm that merits deeper exploration. As we progress in our conversation, literary theory introduces a methodical way to approach a literary text. This approach often leads to uncovering specific meanings tailored to the chosen perspective. It's important to note that focusing on a particular perspective limits the interpretations to the applied viewpoint. This aspect serves both as a restriction and a potential advantage in analyzing literature.

4. **Types of Literary Criticism:**

Within literary criticism, diverse types exist, encompassing practical, theoretical, descriptive, and prescriptive criticism (Ríos, 2012, p.4). Although these terms involve technical nuances, their detailed exploration will be reserved for upcoming classes. Broadly speaking, we can categorize these approaches into two formal methods: practical and theoretical criticism, which encapsulate theory, and descriptive and prescriptive criticism, each offering distinct lenses through which to understand a literary work. Practical and theoretical criticism take a comprehensive view of an individual text. They aim to grasp the essence of literature, exploring the intricate connections between literature, society, character evolution, and related elements, as we've previously addressed. Descriptive and prescriptive criticism operate differently. Descriptive criticism involves detailing the method used to critique a work, focusing on the process itself. On the other hand, prescriptive criticism involves imposing personal arguments on a literary text, deliberating on how

the work ought to have been composed or not composed. In essence, descriptive criticism outlines the critique process, while prescriptive criticism advocates for a particular way a literary work should or should not have been created (2012, pp5-6).

5. **Conclusion:**

Throughout this class, we've explored diverse aspects: from literary criticism and its origins to understanding the critic's role. We've discerned the distinctions between literary criticism and theory, acknowledging their capacity to enrich our grasp of art while potentially limiting a work's inherent significance and diversity.

In our upcoming session, we'll delve into captivating literary theories that transcend the realm of literature, impacting both art and society. These theories have wielded extraordinary influence, reshaping society and literature in remarkable ways. Until then, I encourage you to continue pondering these concepts. Let's reconvene in the next class for an engaging discussion.

Activity: write two paragraphs in which you discuss the difference between the literary criticism and the literary theory

The Psychoanalytic Theory

1. Introduction:

Greetings, today's session will delve into Psychoanalysis and its application in Literary Criticism, split into two segments. Initially, we'll explore fundamental psychoanalytic concepts and the influential figures in this field, such as Sigmund Freud and his successor, Carl Gustav Jung.

In the latter part, we'll shift focus to Lacanian psychoanalytic theory. Moreover, we'll examine select literary texts through a psychoanalytic lens to complement our discussion. To simplify, psychoanalytic criticism involves employing psychoanalysis techniques to interpret literature.

2. Understanding Psychoanalysis: Key Concepts

Psychoanalysis serves as a therapeutic approach aiming to remedy mental disorders by exploring the interplay between conscious and unconscious elements within the mind. The traditional method involves encouraging patients to freely express themselves, allowing repressed feelings, emotions, desires, and fears—thought to underlie conflicts—to surface into their conscious awareness rather than remaining buried in the unconscious.

For instance, consider the 2012 James Bond film, "Skyfall," which illustrates a similar approach. James Bond undergoes a deeply traumatic experience, getting shot while on duty. To reintegrate into his role as an agent, he must undergo a series of tests—both physical and psychological—to prove his capability and readiness for the job. This process mirrors the notion of bringing latent issues to the forefront, addressing them for reintegration and healing. In the psychological assessment of Bond within the film, a method employed is known as free association, a classic psychoanalytic technique. This involves the tester presenting random words aimed at eliciting an emotional response. Despite Bond swiftly and accurately responding to certain words like "gun" or "car," he noticeably hesitates and encounters difficulty when faced with the word "Skyfall." This hesitation stems from Bond's deep personal

connection to Skyfall, his childhood home. This instance highlights Bond's struggle in associating himself with the stimulus word "Skyfall."

This method is rooted in the understanding of how the mind operates, particularly in relation to instincts and notably, sexuality. These theories were developed by an Austrian psychologist named Dr. Sigmund Freud. Bond's response to the word "Skyfall" showcases how deeply personal experiences can influence one's reaction to specific stimuli, as influenced by Freudian psychoanalytic theories.

2.1. Freud's theories:

Dr. Sigmund Freud, an Austrian psychologist who lived from 1856 to 1939, pioneered theories and methods that have had a significant impact on how we perceive ourselves. However, contemporary scholars and theorists increasingly question the comprehensive therapeutic value of Freud's methods. They point out methodological inconsistencies and limitations within Freud's life work. Despite these critiques, Freud remains a substantial cultural influence, profoundly shaping our understanding of the human psyche. Central to Freud's work is the concept of the unconscious—a realm of the mind beyond consciousness yet substantially affecting our daily behaviors and thoughts(Sheppard, 2021).

In psychoanalytic literary criticism, "depression" holds a key Freudian significance. It signifies the repression, forgetting, or neglect of unresolved conflicts, unacknowledged desires, or traumatic past events. This process forces these elements out of conscious awareness into the unconscious—a psychological defense mechanism aimed at protecting the psyche from unnecessary trauma. Fundamentally, psychoanalysis suggests that when certain deep-rooted emotions, fears, memories, or desires become too challenging to confront, individuals may attempt to cope by repressing or banishing them from their conscious mind into the unconscious. However, it's crucial to note that this doesn't eradicate these unwanted feelings; they persist within the unconscious and frequently find ways to resurface in the conscious mind, ultimately succeeding in doing so(Sheppard, 2021) .

Consider the film "The Machinist," featuring Christian Bale, where the protagonist struggles with severe insomnia and undergoes an alarming weight loss.

Throughout the movie, Bale's character is haunted by an unidentifiable but deeply unsettling feeling. It's only towards the film's conclusion that it's revealed he was involved in a hit-and-run accident, neglecting the victim at the scene. His repression of this event and avoidance of responsibility led to a cascade of traumatic experiences, manifesting as the unresolved and unsettling feelings haunting him throughout the film.

Projection, a significant Freudian concept, involves attributing negative aspects of oneself to others, often without recognizing these qualities as one's own. In this process, one disowns and externalizes their own undesirable traits or desires. For instance, a student who adamantly believes that everyone in their class aims to cheat during an exam might be projecting their own inclination to cheat onto their peers. This individual is unable to admit their own tendency to cheat, leading them to project these negative feelings onto those around them. A psychoanalyst, following Freudian principles, might argue that the student's paranoia about others cheating stems from their innate desire to cheat on the exam themselves.

In Freud's later career, he proposed a three-part model of the psyche—dividing it into the ego, superego, and id. The id, akin to the unconscious, operates as a primitive life force governed by the pleasure principle. It disregards consequences. For instance, if someone were entirely driven by the id, when hungry, they'd seek the nearest source of food without considering accessibility or societal norms regarding food consumption. The ego corresponds to the conscious mind, while the superego represents the conscience itself, forming the basic structure of personality according to Freudian theory. The id operates without concern for affordability or societal norms, driven solely by immediate desires and primal instincts. It's closely tied to the unconscious mind, focusing solely on fulfilling desires regardless of consequences (Freud, 2018, p.19).

In contrast, the ego adheres to the reality principle. Even in the face of intense hunger, it considers external factors and alternative circumstances. Unlike the id, it's more attuned to reality, balancing desires with practicalities and societal norms (2018, p.19). The ego might consider factors like affordability or the possibility of stealing food. In contrast, the superego is linked to conscience and moral codes. For instance, someone driven by the superego might choose starvation over theft.

Dream work involves transforming real events or desires into dream images. This includes displacement, symbolically substituting one element for another, and condensation, combining multiple elements into a single dream image. These terms will be explored further with Jacques Lacan. Dreams and literature both represent characters, motivations, or events in a literary manner, translating abstract ideas into vivid images. Abstract concepts like fear or love find concrete expression in dreams. Both communicate indirectly through concrete representations of time, space, or action, avoiding direct statements. However, the interpretation of symbols can vary significantly across cultures and personal experiences. What might symbolize one thing in Freudian terms could hold entirely different cultural or religious meanings for others.

Freudian interpretation tends to be more intricate than simplistic. Freud viewed dreams as a release mechanism, a means through which repressed fears, desires, or memories find an outlet into the conscious mind. Emotions deemed unacceptable by the conscious mind are thus disguised and enter dreams. Condensation, as mentioned earlier, is one method employed in this process. It involves merging multiple themes into a singular dream symbol. For instance, disparate thoughts or elements from various aspects of life might amalgamate into a single element within a dream. For example, even if you maintain a strict separation between your work and personal life, characters from your workplace might intertwine with those from your personal life within a dream (Freud, 2015).

2.2 <u>Jung's Individuation Theory:</u>

We delved so far into various Freudian terminologies. Now, we'll explore the concepts put forth by Carl Gustav Jung, once a disciple and protege of Sigmund Freud before their eventual parting. Jung notably diverged from Freud, especially in his later career, and played a pivotal role in developing what is known as archetypal criticism. Archetypal criticism focuses on archetypes—narrative designs, action patterns, character types, themes, and images—that recur across a wide array of literary works spanning different times and locations. These archetypes can be identified in texts from the 16th century or the 20th century, in works from India or Australia. Additionally, archetypes are prominently featured in myths, dreams, and societal rituals (Jung, 2014).

These recurring images and patterns are believed to stem from fundamental and universal forms ingrained in the human psyche. When these patterns and images are embodied in literary works, they are thought to evoke strong emotional responses in readers. Consider archetypes for characters, such as the hero archetype. This classic character trope represents individuals traditionally perceived as brave, strong, heroic, and noble. Heroes of this archetype are prevalent across various cultures, showcasing their universality and enduring presence in literary narratives.

Characters like Hercules represents an archetypal hero figure, mirroring universal traits present in narratives across cultures. The same for Achilles from Greek mythology. These comparisons illustrate how archetypal themes transcend cultural boundaries, recurring in diverse mythologies (Jung, 2014) .

The theme of death and rebirth is considered the primary archetype, deeply rooted in the cycle of seasons and the organic human life cycle. This theme is prevalent in primitive rituals depicting the ritual sacrifice of a king, symbolizing cyclic rebirth. Stories of gods dying and being reborn repeatedly echo this archetype. This thematic pattern appears in a wide range of texts, from the Bible to Dante's *Divine Comedy* in the 14th century, even to Coleridge's *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* from 1798. Despite spanning different eras and genres, these texts rely on the recurrence of the same thematic pattern.

While Jung was initially a disciple of Freud, his psychological theories notably diverged. Jung's archetypal criticism differs significantly from Freud's psychoanalytic criticism. Jung focused not on the personal unconscious but on what he termed the collective unconscious—a shared reservoir of racial memories and primordial images known as archetypes. While Freud viewed literature as a manifestation of disguised wishes, Jung saw it as an expression of these archetypes from the collective unconscious. Jung believed that great authors tap into these archetypal images buried within the collective human memory, offering readers access to deeply relevant symbols for both individuals and humanity as a whole.

2.2.<u>1Hamlet As An Archetype:</u>

The king has been assassinated by his brother, and the king's wife has remarried the new king, resulting in Hamlet's mother being married to Hamlet's uncle. During the play, Hamlet is visited by the spectral manifestation of his deceased father, who urgently urges his son to seek vengeance for his murder. The spectre desires Hamlet to assassinate his uncle as retribution for the regicide.

While it may appear that Hamlet faces no apparent obstacles in carrying out this task, the play consistently portrays Hamlet as continuously finding justifications to evade the actual act of seeking revenge for his father's demise. Now, we ponder the reason. What is the reason for Hamlet's hesitancy to eliminate his uncle and pursue retribution for his father's demise? Hamlet's lack of squeamishness is evident; he does not possess an aversion to the concept of murder. Hamlet demonstrates a propensity for eliminating multiple characters throughout the duration of the play.

Therefore, what is the underlying reason behind his consistent pattern of providing justifications? Furthermore, it is crucial to comprehend that the information conveyed by the ghost to Hamlet merely validates his preexisting suspicions regarding the murder of his father. However, he consistently procrastinates his intentions for vengeance. What is the reason for this? Psychoanalytic critique provides a concise and straightforward solution in this context.

According to Freud, Hamlet is unable to seek revenge for this atrocity because he feels terrible about his own desire to commit the same crime. Now, I want to direct your focus towards the concept of the Oedipus complex that we previously examined in the initial module. According to Freud, Hamlet has an Oedipus complex, which refers to his suppressed and unconscious attraction towards his mother, as well as his desire to eliminate his father.

Therefore, Hamlet's uncle has just fulfilled Hamlet's long-standing desire. Hamlet successfully eliminates his father and takes control of his mother, effectively addressing the challenge of seeking revenge for his father's demise. Curiously, Freud goes beyond that point and establishes a connection between the circumstances of Hamlet and those of Shakespeare himself. He suggests that this play was written

shortly after the passing of Shakespeare's father in 1601. At this moment, Shakespeare's own childhood emotions for his father may have been reawakened. According to Freud, it is well-known that Shakespeare's own son, who died young, was named Hamlet, which is the same as the name of the character in Shakespeare's play, Hamlet. The outline of a conceptualization of the play, proposed by Freud, was subsequently expanded upon by his British counterpart, Ernest Jones, in his publication "Hamlet and Oedipus" in 1949 (William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Research Guide, n.d.).Consequently, we wrap up our concise conversation about Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung and proceed to the subsequent noteworthy individual in psychoanalytic literary evaluation, Jacques Lacan.

2.3.<u>Lacan's Mirror Stage:</u>

 Lacan, who lived between 1901 and 1981, also had a considerable amount of influence on psychoanalytic theory and criticism. Lacan was a French psychoanalyst whose work had a tremendous and extraordinary impact on many aspects of recent literary theory. Like Freud, Lacan began his career by obtaining a medical degree and then training in psychiatry during the 1920s (Tsialides, 2021).

Lacan's Mirror Stage theory is a foundational concept in psychoanalytic thought, proposing that a crucial developmental milestone occurs when infants recognize themselves in a mirror. Introduced in the mid-20th century, Lacan's theory suggests that this recognition of one's own image in a mirror marks the moment when the infant begins to form a sense of selfhood and identity. According to Lacan, the mirror stage occurs between 6 and 18 months of age. During the mirror stage, the infant perceives their reflection as a unified and coherent image, despite the fragmented and disorganized nature of their physical and psychological experience.

This moment of self-recognition generates a sense of wholeness and mastery, as the infant identifies with the idealized image reflected back to them. However, Lacan also emphasizes the inherently illusory nature of this self-recognition, as the reflected image presents an idealized and externalized version of the self, rather than an accurate representation of internal reality (Tsialides, 2021).

The mirror stage is significant for Lacan because it inaugurates the formation of the ego—the part of the psyche responsible for mediating between the individual and the external world. Through the mirror stage, the infant gains a sense of separation from the mother and begins to develop a coherent sense of identity, albeit one that is based on an illusory and idealized image. This process of identification with the mirror image lays the groundwork for future experiences of selfhood and subjectivity, shaping the individual's relationship with themselves and with others throughout their life.

3. **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, psychoanalytic theory, pioneered by figures like Sigmund Freud and expanded upon by thinkers like Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan, has had a profound impact on the understanding of human psychology and behavior. Central to psychoanalytic theory is the exploration of the unconscious mind, the influence of early childhood experiences, and the dynamic interplay of various psychological forces.

Activity: Apply Carl Jung's individuation on Ernest Hemingway' A Cat in the Rain in an a brief essay

Feminism

1. **Introduction:**

    Feminism, as a social and political movement, has been instrumental in transforming society standards, questioning gender stereotypes, and promoting the rights and equal treatment of women. Feminism emerged throughout the late 19th and early 20th centuries and has since experienced substantial development, including multiple waves and a range of perspectives. This essay seeks to examine the fundamental tenets of feminism, tracing its historical progression, highlighting prominent people, and assessing its current significance in combating gender disparity and advocating for societal equity.

2. **Historical Evolution of Feminism** :

    The origins of feminism may be linked to the suffrage movements of the late 19th and early 20th centuries, during which women advocated for the right to vote and engage in political activities. The initial phase of feminism, known as first-wave feminism, was largely concerned with attaining legal entitlements, such as the right to vote and own property, for women. During this period, prominent figures like as Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and Emmeline Pankhurst emerged as influential advocates for women's suffrage and equal rights.

    The second-wave feminism originated during the 1960s and 1970s, focusing on a range of significant concerns including reproductive rights, job discrimination, and gender roles. Noteworthy publications such as Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* brought attention to the dissatisfaction and cultural pressures experienced by women during the period following World War II. In addition, the second wave of feminism witnessed the rise of intersectional feminism, which acknowledged the interdependence of gender with ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, and other aspects of identity (Walters, 2005) .

    Simone de Beauvoir, a prominent French existentialist philosopher and writer, exerted significant influence in creating feminist philosophy and movement during the 20th century. In her seminal publication, *The Second Sex*, released in 1949, she questioned established beliefs about femininity, contending that women have been consistently marginalised throughout history and have been defined primarily in relation to males. De Beauvoir famously asserted that the state of being a woman is

not innate, but rather a result of societal influences, emphasising the significance of women's ability to act independently and make their own decisions. She analysed and evaluated the system of male dominance, delved into the intricacies of female selfhood, and championed the emancipation and parity of women. De Beauvoir's contributions to feminist thinking have been crucial in shaping the perspectives of future generations of feminists, stimulating profound contemplation on the subjects of gender, power, and oppression. The impact of her work remains influential in feminist discussions, underscoring the significance of challenging established social conventions and promoting gender equality and human rights.

The emergence of third-wave feminism in the 1990s aimed to acknowledge the shortcomings and criticisms of the second wave, while also advocating for diversity, inclusivity, and intersectionality. This wave highlighted the significance of human initiative, varied encounters, and the necessity of confronting systematic oppression in all its manifestations (Walters, 2005) .

3. **Principles of Feminism**

Feminism fundamentally promotes gender parity and the destruction of patriarchal structures that sustain the subjugation and bias against women. Core tenets of feminism encompass:

1. Gender equality: feminism aims to attain parity in social, political, and economic realms for individuals of all genders, questioning the idea that gender determines one's entitlements and prospects.

2. Intersectionality: a term coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw. It refers to the acknowledgment of the interconnectedness of various social identities. Feminism aims to confront and tackle the simultaneous presence of multiple systems of discrimination, which are influenced by elements such as race, class, sexuality, disability, and others.

3. Bodily autonomy is a key principle of feminism, which supports women's rights to exercise control over their own bodies. This includes making decisions about reproductive rights, having access to healthcare, and being free from violence and coercion.

47

4. Gender Justice: Feminism seeks to confront and change societal norms, attitudes, and institutions that sustain gender-based violence, discrimination, and injustice, in order to achieve gender justice.

5. Patriarchy: A social system in which men hold primary power and dominate roles of political leadership, moral authority, and social privilege, often to the exclusion or detriment of women.

6. Consciousness-Raising: coined by Betty Friedan is a feminist practice aimed at raising awareness about gender inequality, discrimination, and oppression through shared experiences, dialogue, and reflection, often leading to collective action and social change.

4. **The contemporary significance of feminism**

Feminism remains an active and dynamic movement in the 21st century, adapting to changing social, political, and economic difficulties. The persistence of global issues such as wage equity, reproductive rights, violence against women, representation in media and politics, and gender-based discrimination underscores the continued importance of feminist activity and lobbying.

Feminist movements have broadened their scope to encompass contemporary concerns like as cyberbullying, environmental justice, and the influence of globalisation on women's work and migratory patterns. Feminist progress and increased awareness of gender inequity and social injustice have been facilitated by grassroots organising, digital action, and the formation of intersectional coalitions.

5. **Conclusion:**

The fight for human rights and gender parity has a guiding light in feminism, which is both hopeful and resilient. Empowering marginalised voices, challenging oppressive systems, and envisioning a more just and equitable future for all genders are ongoing goals of feminism, which is being advanced through intersectional solidarity, collective action, and visionary leadership. In this complicated new century, feminism is more important than ever for creating a future where people of all gender identities and expressions can live free from oppression and prejudice.

Activity: answer the following questions:

• Who is often credited with writing the groundbreaking feminist book "The Second Sex," which explored existentialist feminist philosophy?

- Which wave of feminism emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, focusing on issues such as reproductive rights, workplace equality, and gender roles?

- The term "intersectionality" in feminism was coined by whom?

The Reader-Response Theory

1. <u>Introduction:</u>

Greetings, The subject matter for the day is the reader-response criticism. This is the theory or approach that gained significant attention during the 1960s. This relates to the emphasis of post-structuralism on the reader's active construction of a text as opposed to its inert consumption. Thus, the reader is the central figure in this context, as the name implies; the emphasis is on the readership. According to reader response criticism, a text lacks significance until a reader interprets or encounters it.

In this analysis, the critic scrutinises the methods by which various readers, or interpretative communities as they are known in academia, derive significance from ancestral reading practices and personal reactions. The notion posits that each reader approaches a text from their own perspective, incorporating their personal beliefs, practices, and way of life. This influence can manifest in various forms of media, including films, works of art, and literary texts. Furthermore, our individual beliefs, understanding, and preconceived notions influence our interpretation and comprehension of the text.

In result, personal reactions and inherited reading styles are the factors that ultimately determine how we interpret a given text. A German philosopher and critic named Edmund Husserl was a prominent proponent of the reception theory. It was Husserl who introduced the doctrine of phenomenology to us.

2. <u>Phenomenological Foundations</u>

Phenomenology, the operative term in this context, can be traced back to the philosophical contributions of Edmund Husserl. Husserl, a German philosopher and critic who lived from 1859 to 1938, established the groundwork for this. The term "phenomenon" pertains to appearance. Thus, phenomenology, according to Edmund Husserl, is a philosophical concept that removes the focus of an investigation from the material world.

Husserl highlights the intricate nature of the term "phenomenon," which pertains to the manner in which we perceive an object. His point is that perception alters the object's appearance, and thus there are multiple perspectives on the same object. The concept that there are multiple perspectives on an object can be applied to the text that we examine. An additional influential theorist in reception theory is

(Zahavi, 2003). While also a German philosopher and critic, Hans Robert Jauss authored the extensive article *Literature History as a Challenge to Literary Theory*, (1970) which stands as one of his most significant works. In this section, he argues that the reception history of a work by readers was crucial to determining its aesthetic status and significance.

Thus, once more, the emphasis is placed on the readers, whose reception is fundamental to the aesthetic status and significance of the work. Reader response criticism comprises a range of literary approaches that investigate and attempt to elucidate the heterogeneity, and at times, even divergence, of reader reactions to works of literature. At this juncture, it is frequently acknowledged that Louise Rosenblatt revolutionised the methodologies with the publication of Literature as Exploration in 1938 (1988).

She summed up her position in her 1969 essay Towards A Transactional Theory of Reading as follows: "A poem is what the reader ascends through with the aid of the text and experiences that are pertinent to the text." (1988, p16) The notion that a poem assumes an engaged reader is especially disconcerting to individuals who wish to emphasise the impartiality of their interpretations, she further asserts. Until now, we have been discussing formalism, formalists, and what they discussed; the emphasis was on the structure of poems and literary works.

Thus, they discussed the poem itself; formalists, if you recall, placed great emphasis on deliberating on the text or the poem in its physical form as an artistic creation. Should the reader lack interest in the emotional experience that a literary work evokes? The 1954 book The Verbal Icon by William K. Wimsatt and Monroe C. Beardsley contains an application of the term "affective fallacy," which was previously examined in the context of formalism and new criticism.

This is the context in which the notion that the reader's reaction is pertinent to the meaning of a literary piece is defined as irony. Now, we proceed to Stanley Fish, a prominent advocate of reader response criticism. Thus, bear in mind that Louise Rosenblatt, Edmund Husserl, and Hans Robert Jauss have all been discussing this topic. It is essential to examine a text or an object from multiple perspectives.

Stanley Fish, whose early work is widely regarded as establishing or inaugurating contemporary reader response criticism, also expressed dissent towards the principles of formalism. He argues in his 1970 work, "Literature in the Reader Effective Stylistics", that literature exists and signifies through reading, just as Fish

does, and that its force is an emotional one. Thus, his proposition is that literature exists, signifies itself through reading, and exerts an affective force.

3. Formalism and Affective Fallacy

Furthermore, the affective fallacy can be defined as the failure to differentiate between the nature of a text and its function. In the late 1970s and 1980s, reader response criticism underwent an expansion that was partially influenced by developments in other fields, particularly psychology and psychoanalytic theories. This expansion encompassed an examination of the reader as the subject, who was perceived as a composite of diverse social practices that were socially defined and positioned by their surroundings.

Recent scholarly contributions, such as those by critic Norman Holland, have broadened the scope of reader response theory. This represents a divergence from the previously maintained standpoint, which emphasised the fundamental importance of the reader-text relationship irrespective of the context in which the text operates. Fish has expounded upon his theories concerning interpretive strategies, which have since been disseminated within interpretive communities, in a number of essays he authored in the 1980s and beyond.

4. Reader As Active Participant

Thus, reader response criticism posits that the act of reading is akin to a conversation between the reader and the text, which acquires significance solely when the two engage in dialogue. Therefore, engagement, dialogue, and active participation are required between the reader and the texts. The concept as a whole transforms the function of texts from that of an autonomous entity to that of something that is exclusively possible through the reader's reading and mental engagement.

Thus, the reader becomes an active participant in interpreting the text, rather than a passive recipient; thus, the notion of interpretative communities is born. Furthermore, this type of critique delves into the analysis of the manner in which specific words and phrases within the text engage the reader. The reader's pronunciation or speech of words, as well as the sounds and shapes they produce, can significantly alter the text's meaning. This is a central tenet of reader response criticism: that each sound and word is interpreted uniquely by the reader.

Additionally, none of these factors can modify the text's meaning in a way that was previously unconsidered. What are the current theoretical assumptions, then? Literature is considered to exist solely in the reader's mind; meaning is a process

rather than a fixed and definitive value or meaning; and there is no singular correct meaning. Literary meaning and values are dialogic and transactional; a dialogue is perpetually in progress, and an exchange or transaction is perpetually taking place between whomever it is, namely the readers and the texts.

Furthermore, these dialogues are the result of the reader's interaction with the texts; these transactions are taking place between the reader and the texts. A perpetual tension exists between the implied reader, whose identity is determined by the response-inviting structures of the texts, and the actual reader, whose identity is presumed and generated by the work.

Numerous components of the text are areas of uncertainty. An additional significant concept that warrants your attention is indeterminacy, which pertains to the way in which an active reader interprets and completes tasks based on the sequential arrangement of printed words. It is noteworthy that an engaged reader deliberately completes these undefined elements of the texts; this is an extremely intriguing detail that warrants your attention. Assuming you are the consumer of a text that contains a deliberate sense of indeterminacy, it is your responsibility to fill in the gaps and the indeterminacy.

Thus, this is a topic that everyone investigates: how do meanings emerge from the interaction between the text and the reader? Does the manner in which the reader pronounces the sounds and structures of the words as they appear on the page contribute to or detract from the text's meaning? Furthermore, how might we analyse a literary work to demonstrate that the reader's reaction mirrors or is similar to the subject matter of the narrative? These are the primary inquiries that ought to guide the attention of literature students when examining reader response criticism.

5. <u>Conclusion:</u>

In conclusion, the following are the fundamental ideasthe reader's interpretative communities, phenomenology, and the central notion that the reader is paramount in reader response criticism, as opposed to the formalists' assertion of the texts' autonomy. Edmund Husserl, Hans Robert Jauss, Wayne Booth, Stanley Fish, Wolfgang Iser, and Louise Rosenblatt are the main figures in this regard.

Activity: reflect on how does reader-response theory challenge traditional approaches to literary criticism?

Modernism

1. **Introduction:**

The term modernism is widely used to identify features in the subjects, forms, concepts and styles of literature, and the other arts in the early decades of the present century, but especially after World War I (1914-1918). The specific features signified by modernism vary with the user, but many critics agree that it involves a deliberate and radical break with some of the traditional bases not only of Western art, but culture in general. Modernism is a term frequently used in discussion of 20th century literature. The 20th century English Literature is a complex and elusive phenomenon. Diverse dimension of literary movements can be discerned in poetry, fiction, drama and literary criticism in the twentieth century.

As a literary movement, modernism gained prominence during and especially, just after the First World War; it flourished in Europe and America throughout 1920s and 30s. Modernist authors sought to break away from tradition and conventions through experimentation with new forms, devices and styles. They incorporated the new psychoanalytic theories of Freud and Jung into their works and paid attention to language. Their works reflected the pervasive sense of loss and despair in the wake of the Great War. Hence they emphasized on historical discontinuity and the alienation of humanity. Modernist works are called avant-garde (Ayers, 2008) .

2. **Modernist Literature: Fragmentation and Integration**

Although modernist authors tended to perceive the world as fragmented, many—like T. S. Eliot and James Joyce—believed they could counter that disintegration through their works. Such writers viewed art as potentially integrating, restorative force, a remedy for the uncertainty of the modern world. To this end, even while depicting disorder in their works, modernists are injected order by creating patterns of allusion, symbol and myth. The period of high modernism is the period between 1910 and 1930 and the writers of the period are T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, Ezra Pound, Virginia Woolf, Gertrude Stein etc. They emphasized on subjectivity. They did not give importance to omniscient external narration and stressed techniques.

The year 1922 alone was signalized by the simultaneous appearance of such monuments of modernist innovation as James Joyce's Ulysses, T. S. Eliot's The

Waste Land and Virginia Woolf's Jacobus Room, as well as many other experimental works of literature. The catastrophe of the War had shaken faith in the continuity of Western civilization and raised doubts about the adequacy of traditional literary modes to represent the harsh and dissonant realities of the post-war world.

T.S. Eliot wrote in a review of Joyce's Ulysses in 1923 that the inherited mode of ordering a literary work , which assumed a relatively coherent and stable social order, could not accord with 'the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history'. Like Joyce and Ezra Pound in his Cantos, Eliot experimented with new forms and a new style that would render contemporary disorder, often contrasting it to a lost order and integration that had been based on the religion and myths of the cultural past.

In *The Wasteland* (1922), for example, Eliot replaced the standard flow of poetic language by fragmented utterances, and substituted for the traditional coherence of poetic structure a deliberate dislocation of parts, in which very diverse components are related by connections that are left to the reader to discover or invent. Major works of modernist fiction, following Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) and his even more radical *Finnegan's Wake* (1939), subvert the basic conventions of earlier prose fiction by breaking up the narrative continuity. Departing from the standard ways of representing characters, and violating the traditional syntax and coherence of narrative language by the use of stream-of-consciousness and other innovative modes of narration. Gertrude Stein, often linked with Joyce, Pound, Eliot and Woolf as a trail-blazing modernist—experimented with writing that achieved its effects by violating the norms of Standard English syntax and sentence structure. These new forms of construction inverse, prose and narrative were emulated and carried further by many poets and novelists.

Modernism is a cultural phrase, emphasizing the Now, and ignore history. The 'modern' is not a historical period or a particular practice. It is timeless and permanent and cannot be contained within historical narrative. Like anything anarchic Modernism can never really die. It has taken the form of paralogical science and is totally blended with the system. Modernism searches for the real and struggles for meaning. It considers fragmentation and alienation as something terribly bad. While classic realist texts present characters as unified and coherent, modern writers present

split heroes and focus on the loss of meaning and angst experienced by modern man. They view with anguish the disintegration of the principles of traditional humanism. Modern writers like Eliot, W.B.Yeats and Franz Kafka expose the meaninglessness of moderate man.

3. **Characteristics of Modernism:**

•High degree of complexity in structure

• Reworks traditions

• Works are intensely self-reflexive, exploring the process of their own composition

•Are often fragmented and non-linear, breaking up time-frames and plots (in fiction)

•Is city-based

•It is also located in the context of the world wars, and of advanced military technology.

•A great deal of experimentation with language and form

• An interest in subjectivity and the working of the human consciousness

•Some critics identify a sense of apocalypse and disaster in modernism

•Often rejects realism, and the idea that art has to capture reality

•Modernist fiction 'defamiliarizes' or makes strange what is common 'Make it new' is the modernist slogan

•Highly elitist because it was complex and used allusions and classical

•references that called great erudition – which was available only to certain classes of people.

4. **Formal/ Stylistic Characteristics of Modernism:**

•Free indirect speech: also known as free indirect discourse, is a narrative technique used in literature, particularly in fiction and narrative writing. It is a way of presenting a character's thoughts, feelings, or speech indirectly, blending the narrator's voice with the character's perspective. In essence, it allows the reader to experience a character's

inner thoughts and emotions while maintaining a certain level of narrative distance. Here's an example to illustrate the difference between these forms: **Direct Speech**: "She said, 'I'm going to the store.'" **Indirect Speech**: She said that she was going to the store. **Free Indirect Speech**: She was going to the store.

•Stream of consciousness : is a narrative technique used in literature that attempts to depict the continuous flow of thoughts, feelings, and sensations experienced by a character in a seemingly unfiltered and uninterrupted manner.

•Juxtaposition of characters: The juxtaposition of characters is a literary and storytelling technique that involves placing two or more characters side by side in order to highlight their differences or similarities.

•Wide use of classical allusions: Classical allusions are references to the culture, mythology, literature, and history of ancient Greece and Rome, particularly in literary works.

• The use of Literary devices: personification, hyperbole….etc

• Parataxis : Parataxis is a literary and rhetorical device in which words, phrases, clauses, or sentences are placed side by side, often with little or no conjunctions or punctuation to connect them. Example: "The sun rose, the birds sang, the world awakened."

•Pun

•Satire

•Irony

•Antiphrasis : Antithesis is a rhetorical device used in language and literature to create a contrast or opposition between two opposing ideas, concepts, or terms within a sentence or across sentences.

• Unconventional use of metaphor

•Symbolic representation

•Discontinuous narrative

•Metanarrative : is a comprehensive and all-encompassing narrative or story that seeks to provide a unified interpretation of history, culture, society, or human existence.

•Multiple narrative points of view (Polyphony).

5. **Thematic Characteristics of Modernism:**

•Breakdown of social norms

•Realistic embodiment of social meanings

•Separation of meanings and senses from the context

•Despairing individual behaviours in the face of an unmanageable future

•Spiritual loneliness

•Alienation

•Frustration

•Disillusionment

•Rejection of outdated social systems

•Rejection of history

•Objection to religious thoughts

•Substitution of a mythical past

•Two World Wars' effects on humanity

6. **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, modernism emerged as a multifaceted cultural movement that profoundly influenced literature, art, music, and architecture during the late 19th and

early 20th centuries. Rejecting traditional forms and conventions, modernist creators sought to capture the complexities and uncertainties of the rapidly changing world. Through techniques such as stream of consciousness, fragmentation, and experimentation with form, modernist literature challenged conventional narrative structures and delved into the subjective experiences of characters. In art, modernists like Picasso and Kandinsky revolutionized visual expression, breaking away from representational norms to explore abstraction and new modes of perception. Modernist music, epitomized by Stravinsky's *The Rite of Spring*, shattered traditional tonality and embraced dissonance and rhythmic complexity. In architecture, the Bauhaus movement epitomized modernist principles of functionality, simplicity, and innovation. Despite its diverse manifestations, modernism remains a pivotal chapter in cultural history, reflecting the tumultuous and transformative era from which it emerged and leaving a lasting legacy of experimentation and innovation in the arts.

Activity: reflect on how the utilization of the stream of consciousness method enhances the reader's engagement with the text.

Postmodernism

1. ## Introduction :

Postmodernism, as a critical approach and philosophy, emerged in the mid-20th century and has exerted a profound influence on various creative fields, including visual arts, architecture, and literature, since the 1950s. At its core, postmodernism stands as a rejection of the notion of overarching or "grand" theories that purport to provide all-encompassing explanations for the complexities of human existence and culture. One of the major tenets of postmodernism involves a decisive break from the Freudian perspective, which sought to interpret nearly all aspects of human experience through the lens of sexuality. Instead, postmodernism encourages a more nuanced and diverse understanding of human psychology.

2. ## Embracing Complexity and Diversity

Likewise, postmodernism challenges the sweeping reductionism of Marxism, which often reduced societal dynamics to mere economic forces. While recognizing the importance of economic factors, postmodernism underscores the intricacies of cultural, social, and historical contexts that shape human lives and experiences. This perspective prompts a more holistic and context-aware examination of the world.

Another key feature of postmodernism is its emphasis on the local and the native over the universal. It encourages a celebration of diverse cultural expressions and experiences, advocating for the recognition and preservation of local identities and traditions. Postmodernism posits that there is no single, all-encompassing narrative that can adequately represent the complexity and richness of human culture. Instead, it promotes the idea that multiple narratives and perspectives coexist and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the world.

It believes that human knowledge is always fragmentary and limited. There can never be 'objective' knowledge because the structures that enable knowing are derived from subjective conditions like human emotions. It offers fragments and contingency, fluidity and multiples in place of fixity, completeness and unitariness. In literature, postmodernism is characterized by a notable inclination to interrogate the very legitimacy of narrative itself. It challenges the traditional structures and conventions of storytelling, often blurring the lines between fact and fiction, and

questioning the reliability of the narrator or the authenticity of the narrative voice. Postmodern literature embraces a fundamental skepticism toward the idea of offering any universal or absolute truths, recognizing the subjectivity and relativity inherent in human perception and interpretation.

One of the defining features of postmodern literature is its embrace of multiple points of view. It welcomes a mosaic of perspectives, allowing for the exploration of diverse experiences, ideologies, and cultural backgrounds. This multiplicity of viewpoints often serves to deconstruct the idea of a single, authoritative narrative, emphasizing that reality is complex and multifaceted, and no one perspective can capture its entirety. The term "postmodernism" is often applied to literature and art that emerged in the aftermath of World War II, particularly from the late 1940s onward. This period was marked by profound shifts in Western culture and consciousness. The trauma and disillusionment caused by the two World Wars, with the unprecedented horrors of Nazi totalitarianism and mass extermination, deeply affected Western morale. The emergence of the atomic bomb and the realization of its destructive potential brought the world to the brink of total annihilation, creating a profound sense of existential dread (Butler, 2002) .

Furthermore, the progressive devastation of the natural environment and growing concerns over issues like pollution and overpopulation added to the sense of crisis during this era. The post-World War II period was marked by a heightened awareness of the fragility of human existence, the potential for cataclysmic events,

and the limitations of human knowledge and control.

In response to these existential challenges, postmodern literature and art embraced a spirit of experimentation and skepticism. It reflected the uncertainty and disorientation of the times by challenging conventional forms and narrative structures, as well as exploring themes of alienation, absurdity, and the limits of human understanding. Postmodernism in literature became a means of grappling with the complexities and uncertainties of the post-World War II world, offering a lens through which to explore the fragmented nature of contemporary existence.

Postmodernism involves not only a continuation, sometimes carried to an extreme, of the counter-traditional experiments of modernism, but also diverse attempts to break away from modernist forms which had, inevitably, become in their turn conventional, as well as to overthrow the elitism of modernist art by recourse to the models of "mass culture" in film, television, newspaper cartoons and popular music.

3. <u>Deciphering Postmodernism: Blurred Boundaries</u>

Many of the works of postmodern literature – by Jorge Luis Borges, Thomas Pynchon, Roland Barthes and many others-blend literary genres, cultural and stylistic levels, the serious and the playful, that they resist classification according to traditional literary rubrics. To Jean-François Lyotard, French philosopher and sociologist Modernism and Postmodernism are cultural phases, continuous with one another and both emphasize the Now, and ignore history. The 'modern' is not a historical period or a particular cultural practice. It is timeless and permanent and cannot be contained within historical narration.

Many people are confused by the term postmodern. It has become a term that is bandied about in intelligent conversation, while many people use it loosely to mean almost anything new and innovative. Postmodernism is related to the term "modernism". "Post" means to come after. In other words, postmodern thought is that which comes after or develops from modernistic thought. For postmodernism, by contrast, fragmentation is a liberating phenomenon suggesting our escape form fixed systems of belief. Modernism laments fragmentation while postmodernism celebrates it. The second difference between them is a matter of tone or attitude.

While modernism stresses on strict technical innovations, postmodernism rejects the distinction between 'high' and 'popular' art and believes in excess, gaudiness and mixture of qualities. Baudrillard, another postmodern theorist says that in contemporary life the influence of TV, advertising and media have led to a loss of the distinction between real and imagined. In order to understand postmodernism, first we have to understand what modernism was reacting against. The postmodern is rightly associated with a society where consumer life styles and mass communication dominate the lives of its society. Postmodernism proclaims that the bad is good in the

sense that both terms 'good' and 'bad' have lost their worth in the postmodernism proclaims order.

The contemporary situation has to be faced for what it is. The only truth in this world is that disorder is the only possible end. While Modernism considers psychic fragmentation and alienation as something terribly had and wounding postmodernism celebrates it as it is the only reality. Postmodernism believes that the split personality is not something to be afraid of but something which part of late capitalist experience. It also believes that truth itself is dead since the subject no longer exists. Modernism, on the other hand, does not abandon its search for truth. Postmodernism also deconstructs the idea of the unified subject. The subject is only a psychical meaning and is only a means of fulfilling the function of media, experience, sexual trend or fashion. One of the main characteristics of postmodern thinking is that the world is seen as a much more complex and uncertain place. Reality is no longer fixed or determined. All truth within a postmodern context is relative to one's viewpoint or stance. The world is a representation. In other words, it is a fiction created from a specific point of view only, and not a final truth. This is an uncomfortable viewpoint for many people and there is a much misunderstanding about this idea of postmodernism. Postmodernism is essentially still in is infancy. It is an attempt to think beyond the confines of the past.

4. **Derrida's Deconstruction and Cultural Fluidity**

Jacques Derrida, the French philosopher and one of the chief exponents of post structuralism, coined a term called "deconstruction" which means a philosophical method of looking for weak points in modern thinking and established ways Of perception. An undertaking in some Postmodernism writings is to subvert the foundations of our accepted moods of thought and experience so as to reveal the "meaninglessness" of existence and the underlying 'abyss' , or 'void', or 'nothingness' on which any supposed security is conceived to be precariously suspended.

Postmodernism in literature and the arts has parallels with the movement known as post structuralism in linguistic and theory: post-structuralists undertake to subvert the foundations of language in order to show that seeming-fullness dissipates, for a rigorous inquirer, into a play of conflicting indeterminacies, or else to show that

all forms of cultural discourse are manifestations of the ideology, or of the relations and constructions of power, in contemporary. As a term Postmodernism is difficult to define as it covers a wide range of disciplines and general areas of thought. These include art, architecture, literature and technology. There are however a number of central characteristics that help us to understand the foundations of the postmodern.

Firstly, like modernism, postmodernism rejects all boundaries. This rejection also includes the boundaries between different forms and genres of art. The art development of bricolage and pastiche are examples of this. Secondly, there is a concentration on fragmentation and discontinuity as well as ambiguity. The postmodern focuses on a de-structured, de-centered humanity. What this really means is that the idea of disorder and fragmentation, which were previously seen as negative qualities, are seen as an acceptable representation of reality by postmodernists.

Modernism considered the fragmented view of human life as bad or tragic, while postmodernists rather celebrate this seemingly meaningless view of the world. It is an acceptance of the chaos that encourages a play with meaning. Postmodernism also accepts the possibility of ambiguity. Things and events can have two different meanings at the same time. A more rigid rational and logo-centric or linear approach tries to avoid or reduce ambiguity as much as possible. Postmodern thought sees simultaneous views not a contradictory but as an integral part of the complex patterning of reality.

5. **Characteristics of Postmodernism:**

Irony, playfulness and humour:
Postmodern authors were certainly not the first to us irony and humor in their writing, but for many postmodern authors, these became the hallmarks of their style. Postmodern authors will often treat very serious subjects—World War II, the Cold War, conspiracy theories—from a position of distance and disconnect, and will choose to depict their histories ironically and humorously.

Pastiche:
Many postmodern authors combined, or "pasted" elements of previous genres and styles of literature to create a new narrative voice, or to comment on the writing of their contemporaries. Thomas Pynchon, one of the most important postmodern

authors, uses elements from detective fiction, science fiction, and war fiction, songs, pop culture references, and well-known, obscure, and fictional history.

Intertextuality:

An important element of postmodernism is its acknowledgment of previous literary works. The intertextuality of certain works of postmodern fiction, the dependence on literature that has been created earlier, attempts to comment on the situation in which both literature and society found themselves in the second half of the 20th century: living, working, and creating on the backs of those that had come before. J.M. Coetzee, a postmodernist used this feature in his fiction.

Metafiction:

Many postmodern authors feature metafiction in their writing, which, essentially, is writing about writing, an attempt to make the reader aware of its ficitionality, and, sometimes, the presence of the author. Authors sometimes use this technique to allow for flagrant shifts in narrative, impossible jumps in time, or to maintain emotional distance as a narrator.

Historiographic Metafiction:

This term was created by Linda Hutcheon to refer to novels that fictionalize actual historical events and characters. Historical metafiction is a literary genre or technique that blends elements of historical fiction with metafiction. Metafiction is a style of writing that draws attention to the fact that the story is a work of fiction and often explores the relationship between fiction and reality. In the case of historical metafiction, the focus is on historical events and periods.

Temporal Distortion:

Temporal distortion is a literary technique that uses a nonlinear timeline; the author may jump forwards or backwards in time, or there may be cultural and historical references that do not fit: Abraham Lincoln uses a telephone in Ishmael Reed's Flight to Canada. This technique is frequently used in literature, but it has become even more common in films.

Techno-Culture and Hyperreality:

In his essay of the same name, Frederic Jameson called postmodernism the "cultural logic of late capitalism." According to his logic, society has moved beyond capitalism into the information age, in which we are constantly bombarded with

advertisements, videos, and product placement. Many postmodern authors reflect this in their work by inventing products that mirror actual advertisements, or by placing their characters in situations in which they cannot escape technology.

The Characteristic	Modernism	Postmodernism
View of Truth	Objective, universal truths	Subjective, multiple truths
Fragmentation	Unified, coherent narratives	Fragmented, decentered narratives
Self-Reflection	Limited self-awareness	Self-aware and self-referential
Authority	Respect for authority and experts	Distrust of authority
Style	Clarity, precision, and simplicity	Irony, pastiche, intertextuality
Cultural Hierarchy	Hierarchical cultural values	Celebrates diversity and pluralism
Innovation	Valued innovation within established forms	Embraces hybridity and experimentation
Optimism	Optimistic about progress	Skeptical of progress and utopias
Role of the Author	Objective, authoritative author	Author as a construct, playful approach

6. **Conclusion:**

In conclusion, postmodernism is a complex and multifaceted cultural and intellectual movement that has significantly impacted various fields, from art and literature to philosophy and architecture. It emerged as a response to the modernist ideals of universal truths and grand narratives, favoring instead a more fragmented, skeptical, and self-aware approach to understanding the world. Postmodernism

challenges established conventions, questions the concept of truth, and celebrates diversity and individuality

Activity: choose a distinction between modernism and postmodernism and support it with literary texts.

Film Studies

1. Introduction

Today's lesson will focus on Film Theory and its fundamental characteristics as a relatively new area of academic investigation. The origins of film theory may be traced back to Vachel Lindsay's Art of The Moving Picture in 1915 and Hugo Munsterberg's The Photo Play a Psychological Study in 1916. Both of these works examined this emerging medium within the framework of other creative forms, such as theatre, painting, and other artistic creations.

Lindsay draws comparisons between film and several art forms, including architecture, sculpture, and poetry. Munsterberg extends his argument by emphasising the distinct characteristics of cinema, namely by examining the psychological reactions of the audience and the artistic qualities of the film. It is important to acknowledge that these investigations, conducted between 1915 and 1916, were groundbreaking contributions to the discipline of film theory.

2. Exploring Early Film Theory

One prominent film theory is the Arthurian theory, which examines the effect of directors on a film. This theory is often associated with the study of directors as the central figures who shape the ideas and direction of a film. It is commonly linked to the French New Wave critics and the foundation of a journal called Cahiers Du cinema. However, in actuality, its origins predate the emergence of the French New Wave film directors.

In 1910, the British magazine Bioscope introduced the Arthurian idea, which selected certain directors as deserving of special recognition and academic investigation. In Germany, the word "Autorenfilm" was used to refer to director and novelist Alexandre Astruc. In his article "la camera stylo", he introduced the word "camera pen" as a translation of the French phrase "camera stylo." In 1948, a demand arose for a novel language in the realm of film production. Astruc suggests that the camera should be employed in a manner similar to how authors use their pens, hence the term "camera stylo" (Sebag & Durand, 2024, 162) .

3. Cinema and Modernism:

Cinema and modernism are both prominent subjects in the fields of literary studies and academic research. Modernism emerged as a prominent movement following the conclusion of the First World War. It represents a departure from

Victorian Bourgeois morality, rejecting the optimism of the 19th century. A profound sense of pessimism characterizes the modernist era, which depicts a culture in disarray.

Another important theory to be familiar with is that of Walter Benjamin, who authored the influential essay titled "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." (1935). In this article, Benjamin astutely noted that the camera functions like a surgeon's scalpel, revealing the hidden aspects of perception known as the optical unconscious. There are two phrases that Austruc introduces: camera stylo and camera as a scalpel. The camera stylo refers to the idea of using the camera as a pen or a tool for artistic expression. On the other hand, the camera as a scalpel metaphorically compares the camera to a surgeon's scalpel, suggesting that it might reveal hidden aspects of reality. Walter Benjamin is the author of that phrase (Sebagn&Durand,2024,162).

3.1. <u>The expressionistic Cinema</u>

Nowhere does the impact of modern technology and artistic movements resonate and spread more powerfully than in the realm of cinema. Now, let's examine the influence of modernism on the emerging art genre. Take, for instance, the case of German expressionism and modernism. The impact of expressionism, or the expressionistic movement, was strongly evident in cinematic art. The film "The Cabinet of Dr. Caligari" directed by Robert Wiene in 1919 is widely regarded as a prominent example of this artistic style. The story revolves around a deranged doctor who manipulates a sleepwalker, known as a somnambulist, to carry out criminal acts on his behalf. Wiene showcases his performers adorned with excessive makeup and positions them within deformed settings and angular architecture. This characteristic was a prominent aspect of both expressionistic theatre and expressionistic cinema. Dr. Caligari's film exemplifies the stylistic elements of expressionism, such as chiaroscuro, which involves the contrast between light and shadow, the use of oblique angles, peculiar distortions, and the notion that danger is around every corner.

Furthermore, it is important to acknowledge how expressionists perceive the city as a menacing aspect and effectively portray morally problematic individuals. Notable expressionistic films from this era include Nosferatu (1922) and The Last

Laugh (1924), as well as Fritz Lang's Metropolis. Metropolis, released during this time, combined elements of German expressionism, French poetic realism, and American pulp, ultimately contributing to the development of film noir.The year is 1927. Directors such as Fritz Lang, Karl Freud, Billy Wilder, and F.W. Monroe brought expressionism to America, with significant outcomes.

Now, let us familiarise ourselves with the concept of a plot in a movie before delving into the main movements. The plot serves as the fundamental structure on which all stories are constructed. Text refers to the spoken, written, or visual representation of a story. Narrative, on the other hand, pertains to the manner in which a story is conveyed. Film encompasses these various components, rendering it a more intricate kind of art. Most narratives inside films mirror the fundamental human encounters of birth, development, embarking on journeys, confronting temptations, achieving victories, enduring losses, experiencing love and heartbreak, and deriving life lessons.

4. <u>Intertextuality:</u>

Now, let's proceed to discuss the concept of intertextuality. The main topics I will discuss are intertextuality, ideology, and semiotics, and their connection to film theories. These are literary notions that have also gained popularity in the field of film studies. Intertextuality, as established by Julia Kristeva, is widely characterised as the process in which one text is influenced and shaped by other writings.

According to Kristeva, the significance we derive from a text is not determined by its connection to the mind from which it appears to have emerged, but rather by its connection to other texts. It is crucial to comprehend the relationship between a specific text and other texts when engaging in intertextuality. Another significant figure to be acquainted with is the Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin, who posited that all human speech is inherently dialogic .

Consequently, each spoken statement serves as a valuable addition to a continuous conversation, so mirroring the preceding discourse. According to Kristeva, every work is composed of a mosaic of quotes, which implies that it alludes to something external. All text involves the assimilation and conversion of other text. A text is not an isolated entity, but rather a compilation of quotations that allude to several other works.

Cinema is inherently dialogic as it draws references from other films and writings. Films are interpreted based on their similarity to other films and writings,

70

and they draw upon a collective cultural legacy. Movies thrive on preexisting resources and expressive formats. It is important to distinguish intertextuality from plagiarism. Intertextuality involves referencing and alluding to other works, specifically targeting an audience that is knowledgeable in cinema, or what I refer to as the cinematically literate audience. It is important for both a cinematically educated audience and a visually literate audience to be aware of this information.

5. Cinema and Ideology:

Let's discuss the relationship between cinema and ideology, and how ideology is present in various works of art. Therefore, film, in addition to literature and art, serves as a medium for expressing ideas. A film, as commonly understood, is the culmination of the creators' views and opinions, encompassing political, social, and cultural stances. Ideology can manifest itself either in an overt manner or be deeply ingrained, giving it the appearance of being inherent or instinctive. At times, filmmakers openly express their ideological stance by taking a firm political or ethical viewpoint.

Ideology can manifest in both visible and invisible forms, as well as in conscious and unconscious ways. Its existence is contingent upon specific temporal and spatial contexts, which hold significant importance. The temporal and spatial context in which a text is located shapes an ideology.

6. Semiotic Cinema:

In the realm of semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, the application of semiotics to film analysis gained significant momentum starting in the late 1960s. This was largely influenced by the politicisation of theory and criticism, particularly in the French journal Cinétique, as well as in Cahiers du Cinéma and the British newspaper Scream. Known as the second semiotics, it is founded on a synthesis of semiotics, Althusser's Marxist ideas, Lacan's mirror image theories, and post-Freudian theories (Psychoanalysis and Film Theory Part 1: A New Kind of Mirror by Paula Murphy,n.d.)   .

Consequently, these discussions gradually gain significant influence among a community of cinema educators at American institutions and in the scholarly publications they contribute to. The primary focus of the second semiotics was to recognise and subsequently analyse the ideological frameworks and systems of society that are implied in narrative cinema, followed by their deconstruction.

71

Furthermore, it is important to synchronise this ideological emphasis with Lacan's psychoanalytic theory regarding the initial stage of a child's development, specifically the mirror stage that we partially revert to when observing images on the screen.

7. Conclusion:

The evolution of film studies has been marked by groundbreaking contributions from scholars such as Lindsay and Munsterberg, who laid the foundation for the discipline with their comparative analyses of film with other art forms and their exploration of psychological and artistic dimensions of cinema. Additionally, the emergence of prominent film theories like the Arthurian perspective, initially introduced by Alexandre Astruc, has further enriched the field by emphasizing the role of directors in shaping cinematic narratives. These foundational works, spanning from the early 20th century to the present, continue to inform and inspire contemporary film scholarship, highlighting the enduring relevance and interdisciplinary nature of film studies in understanding the complexities of cinematic expression and cultural significance.

Works Cited

Ayers, D. (2008, April 15). Modernism. John Wiley & Sons.

Barry, P. (2002, September 7). Beginning Theory. Manchester University Press.

Butler, C. (2002, October 10). Postmodernism: A Very Short Introduction. OUP Oxford.

Dani, A. H., & De Laet, S. J. (1996, January 1). History of Humanity: From the third millennium to the seventh century B.C.

Eagleton, T. (2008, January 1). Literary Theory. U of Minnesota Press.

Eagleton, T. (2013, May 29). The English Novel. John Wiley & Sons.

Fish, S. (1970). Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics. New Literary History, 2(1), 123

Freud, S. (2015, March 18). The Interpretation of Dreams. Courier Dover Publications.

Freud, S. (2018, March 21). The Ego and the Id. Courier Dover Publications.

Galens, D. (2002, January 1). Literary Movements for Students. Gale Cengage.

Golban, P. (2022, December 28). ENGLISH LITERATURE ADVANCING THROUGH HISTORY 4 – The Eighteenth Century. Transnational Press London.

Jauss, H. R., & Benzinger, E. (1970). Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory. New Literary History, 2(1), 7.

Jung, C. G. (2014, March 1). Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Volume 7. Princeton University Press

Kopley, E. (2021, June 10). Virginia Woolf and Poetry. Oxford University Press.

Price, S. D. (2013, January 1). The Little Black Book of Writers' Wisdom.

Psychoanalysis and Film Theory Part 1: A New Kind of Mirror by Paula Murphy. (n.d.).

Ricks, C. (2021, January 1). Along Heroic Lines. Oxford University Press.

Ríos, S. (2012, December 6). Decision Theory and Decision Analysis: Trends and Challenges. Springer Science & Business Media.

Rosenblatt, L. M. (1988, January 1). Writing and Reading.

Sebag, J., & Durand, J. P. (2024, January 7). Filmic Sociology. Palgrave Macmillan.

Sheppard, R. (2021, July 15). Sigmund Freud. "The Rosen Publishing Group, Inc."

Tsialides, A. (2021, December 5). The Image of a Voice.

Walters, M. (2005, October 27). Feminism: A Very Short Introduction. OUP Oxford.

William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Research Guide. (n.d.). http://hamletguide.com/essays/freud.html

Zahavi, D. (2003, January 1). Husserl's Phenomenology. Stanford University Press.