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ENGLISH LITERATURE: FROM MENTOR TO STUDENT

Uslubiy qo‘llanma

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Mazkur uslubiy qo‘llanma ingliz adabiyotining anglo – sakson davridan boshlab XVIII asrgacha bo‘lgan tarixiy – adabiy taraqqiyot jarayonlarini tizimli va izchil yoritishga bag‘ishlangan. Unda ingliz adabiyotining shakllanish bosqichlari, yetakchi adabiy oqimlari, asosiy janrlari hamda Uilyam Shekspir ijodining muhim jihatlari ilmiy – nazariy va tahliliy yondashuv asosida bayon etilgan.

Uslubiy qo‘llanma “Filologiya va tillarni o‘qitish (ingliz tili)”, “Xorijiy til va adabiyoti (ingliz tili)”, “Tarjima nazariyasi va amaliyoti” yo‘nalishlari bo‘yicha tahsil olayotgan bakalavriat talabalari uchun mo‘ljallangan. Shuningdek, u ingliz adabiyoti fanidan dars olib borayotgan o‘qituvchilar va mustaqil tadqiqotchilar uchun ham metodik manba sifatida xizmat qiladi.

This methodological guide is devoted to a systematic and coherent presentation of the historical and literary development of English literature from the Anglo – Saxon period to the seventeenth century. It examines the major stages in the formation of English literature, its leading literary movements, principal genres, and key aspects of William Shakespeare’s works through a scholarly and analytical approach.

The guide is intended for undergraduate students majoring in Philology and Language Teaching (English), Foreign Language and Literature (English), Translation Theory and Practice, as well as other foreign philology–related programs. It may also serve as a methodological resource for instructors teaching English literature and for independent researchers.

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INTRODUCTION

English literature is a rich and diverse literary heritage that occupies a special place in the cultural development of humanity. Its emergence, stages of development, literary movements and schools, artistic and aesthetic views, as well as its outstanding writers, have been shaped over centuries and have exerted a profound influence on the global literary process. This educational and methodological guide covers the major stages of English literature, beginning with the Anglo – Saxon period, followed by the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, and the literary milieu of the seventeenth century. Particular attention is also given to the tragedies and historical plays of William Shakespeare.

The primary objective of this guide is to provide students with comprehensive knowledge of the development of English literature, its key historical and literary stages, leading genres, and artistic traditions, as well as to develop their skills in literary analysis. The guide presents literature as an integral part of social life and systematically examines the historical, social, and cultural factors that have influenced literary processes.

Each topic is designed to encourage students' independent thinking, broaden their historical and literary perspectives, and deepen their understanding of the genre – related, compositional, and stylistic features of literary works. Within the framework of the course topics, key terms, recommended readings, scholarly sources, concise analyses of significant works, and questions aimed at reinforcing acquired knowledge are provided.

This methodological guide serves to enhance the effectiveness of teaching English literature in higher education institutions, ensure students' systematic and coherent mastery of literary history, and foster the development of their analytical and creative abilities. The guide functions as a methodological support resource for literature instructors and as an essential academic material for students, combining theoretical knowledge with practical literary analysis.

KIRISH

Ingliz adabiyoti insoniyat madaniy taraqqiyotida alohida o‘rin egallagan boy va rang – barang adabiy merosdir. Uning yuzaga kelishi, rivojlanish bosqichlari, adabiy oqim va maktablari, badiiy – estetik qarashlari hamda yetuk ijodkorlari asrlar davomida shakllanib, jahon adabiy jarayoniga kuchli ta’sir ko‘rsatib kelgan. Ushbu uslubiy qo‘llanmada ingliz adabiyotining dastlabki davrlaridan – anglo – sakson adabiyotidan boshlab, O‘rta asrlar, Uyg‘onish davri, XVIII asr adabiy muhitigacha bo‘lgan jarayonlar, shuningdek, Uilyam Shekspirning tragediyalari va tarixiy dramalari atroflicha yoritiladi.

Qo‘llanmaning asosiy vazifasi talabalarga ingliz adabiyotining taraqqiyot yo‘li, muhim tarixiy – adabiy bosqichlari, yetakchi janrlari va badiiy an’analari haqida mukammal bilim berish, ularni adabiy matnni tahlil qilishga o‘rgatishdan iboratdir. Unda adabiyotning jamiyat hayoti bilan uzviy bog‘liqligi, adabiy jarayonlarga ta’sir etgan tarixiy, ijtimoiy va madaniy omillar izchil va tizimli tarzda bayon etiladi.

Har bir mavzu talabalarning mustaqil mushohada yuritishiga, tarixiy – adabiy tafakkurini kengaytirishga hamda badiiy asarning janriy, kompozitsion va uslubiy xususiyatlarini chuqur anglashga yo‘naltirilgan. Dars mavzulari doirasida asosiy terminlar, tavsiya etilgan adabiyotlar, ilmiy manbalar, muhim asarlarning qisqacha tahlillari va bilimlarni mustahkamlashga xizmat qiluvchi savollar keltirilgan.

Mazkur uslubiy qo‘llanma oliy ta’lim muassasalarida ingliz adabiyoti fanini o‘qitishda samaradorlikni oshirish, talabalar tomonidan adabiyot tarixini tizimli va izchil o‘zlashtirishni ta’minlash, shuningdek, ularning tahliliy va ijodiy salohiyatini rivojlantirishga xizmat qiladi. Qo‘llanma adabiyot o‘qituvchilari uchun metodik qo‘llab – quvvatlovchi manba, talabalar uchun esa nazariy bilimlarni amaliy tahlil bilan uyg‘unlashtiruvchi muhim o‘quv manba hisoblanadi.

THEORETICAL SECTION

THEME 1. "EARLY MEDIEVAL LITERATURE"

Plan:

1. The Historical and Cultural Context of Early Medieval Literature.
2. Major Works and Authors of the Early Medieval Period.
3. Thematic and Stylistic Features of Early Medieval Texts.

Key Words: old English, Anglo – Saxon, oral tradition, manuscript culture, monasteries, epic poetry, heroism, paganism and christianity, Beowulf, the dream of the rood, caesura, kennings, alliteration, wyrd (fate), moral values.

British literature encompasses the literary works of the United Kingdom, including the Isle of Man and the Channel Islands, with a primary focus on works written in English. This includes Anglo – Saxon (Old English) literature, as well as Anglo – Latin and Anglo – Norman texts that contributed to the early development of the English language and literature. Some notable works in Scots are also acknowledged, though these are mainly discussed in separate Scottish literature articles.

Literature in other languages of Britain is covered in a different context, including texts in Latin, Anglo – Norman, Cornish, Guernésiais, Jèrriais, Manx, Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, and others.

Irish writers have significantly influenced English and Scottish literature. However, although all of Ireland was politically part of the United Kingdom from 1801 to 1922, categorizing Irish literature as British can be controversial, though it sometimes includes works by authors from Northern Ireland.

The United Kingdom also has the highest per capita book publication rate in the world.

British Identity

The concept of British identity has evolved over time. The island that includes England, Scotland, and Wales has been known as Britain since at least the time of the Roman writer Pliny the Elder (c. 23–79

AD). English began to emerge as the dominant language following the Anglo – Saxon invasions around AD 450, whereas prior to that, the local population mainly spoke various Celtic languages.

The regions that now form the United Kingdom joined at different points in history. Wales became part of the Kingdom of England through the Acts of Union in 1536 and 1542. The Kingdom of Great Britain was created in 1707 through a treaty uniting England and Scotland, and in 1801 it merged with the Kingdom of Ireland to form the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland. Irish nationalism later led to the partition of Ireland in 1922, so the literature of the Republic of Ireland is considered separate from British literature, while Northern Ireland's literature is both Irish and British. In 1927, the Royal and Parliamentary Titles Act officially changed the name to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Celtic languages continued to be widely spoken in Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, and Ireland until relatively recent times, and they still survive, especially in some areas of Wales.

English – language works by Welsh writers, particularly those addressing Welsh themes, have been recognized as a distinct category since the XX century. This separate identity arose alongside the growth of modern Welsh – language literature.

As a colonial power, Britain spread the use of English worldwide. From the XIX century onward, and even earlier in the United States, significant English – language writers emerged outside Britain and Ireland, including some who later won Nobel Prizes.

The Arrival of the Anglo – Saxons (449–c. 1066) and Other Early Languages in Britain

Although the Romans left Britain in the early 5th century, Latin literature – mainly religious – continued, including works like Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum* (672/3–735) and Gildas's *De Excidio et Conquestu Britanniae* (c. 500–570).

At the same time, various Celtic languages were spoken widely. Important surviving texts from this period include *Y Gododdin* and the *Mabinogion*. Between VIII and XV centuries, Vikings and Norse settlers colonized parts of what is now Scotland. Some Old Norse poetry from this era survives, such as the *Orkneyinga Saga*, which

chronicles the history of the Orkney Islands from their capture by the Norwegian king in the 9th century until around 1200.

Old English literature, also called Anglo – Saxon literature, includes works written in Old English during the Anglo – Saxon period, from the arrival of the Saxons, Angles, and Jutes around 450 until shortly after the Norman Conquest, roughly 1100–1150. Surviving works cover many genres, such as epic poetry, saints' lives (hagiography), sermons, Bible translations, legal texts, chronicles, riddles, and more, with about 400 manuscripts still in existence.

Oral tradition was very strong in early English culture, so most works were intended to be performed. Epic poetry was particularly popular, with *Beowulf* being the most famous, considered England's national epic despite its Scandinavian setting.

Almost all Anglo – Saxon authors remain anonymous. Only 12 names survive from medieval sources, and just four of these – Cædmon, Bede, Alfred the Great, and Cynewulf – can be confidently linked to works in Old English. Cædmon is the earliest known English poet, and his sole surviving work is *Cædmon's Hymn*, likely written in the late VII century.

Chronicles combined historical and literary material, with the *Anglo – Saxon Chronicle* being a key example. The poem *The Battle of Maldon* commemorates the 991 battle in which the Anglo – Saxons failed to stop a Viking raid.

Anglo – Saxon England also engaged with classical antiquity. Some Old English poems are adaptations of late classical philosophical texts, the longest being King Alfred's (849–899) translation of Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy*.

"Beowulf"

The beautiful Anglo – Saxon poem "Beowulf" may be called the foundation – stone of all British poetry. It tells of times long before the Angles and Saxons came to Britain. There is no mention of England in it. The poem was composed around 700 by an unknown author. This was about seventy years after the death of Mohammed and in the same age as the beginning of the great Tang Dynasty in China. Three hundred years later, about the year 1000, the manuscript, which still survives, was written down by an unknown scribe. The poem presents the legendary history of the Anglo – Saxons, and its

author might have been descended from the original tribes of Angles, Saxons, and Jutes who invaded Britain from the European continent in the V century. Those people spoke Germanic language in which the poem is written. “Beowulf” is 3182 lines long, approximately 80 or 90 pages in book length. The narrative itself falls into two halves: the first part takes place in Denmark where, coming to the aid of King Hrothgar, Beowulf fights the monster Grendel and Grendel’s mother. The second part is set in Southern Sweden where, after the death of King Hygelac and his son, Heardred, Beowulf has ruled in peace and prosperity far 50 years before being called upon to combat a dragon that is terrorizing the country after having its treasure hoard looted. “Beowulf” blends a fairy – tale narrative with considerable historical material. (Sweedish and Danish kings really ruled in the VI century).

The manuscript of “Beowulf” is in the British Museum, in London. It is impossible for a non – specialist to read it in the original, so it was translated into modern English language in the XX century.

The story of Beowulf:

Once upon a time, many – many centuries ago, there lived a king of Danes named Hrothgar. He had won many battles and gained great wealth. He built a large and beautiful palace (Heorot) and he presented costly gifts to his warriors and gave splendid banques. But the joy of the king didn’t last long. In the dark fens nearby there lived a fierce sea – monster Grendel. He wanted to destroy the palace Heorot as he disliked noise. Grendel looked like a man but was much bigger, and his whole body was covered with long hair, so thick and tough that no weapon could harm him.

One night when the warriors in Heorot were asleep, Grendel rushed in, seized thirty men and devoured them. The next night the monster appeared again. The men defended themselves bravely, but their swords could not even hurt the monster. From that time no one dared to come to Heorot. For twelve years the palace stood deserted. The news of the disaster reached Beowulf, nephew of Hygelac, king of the Jutes. Beowulf was the strongest and the bravest of all the warriors. He was said to have the strength of thirty men. He decided to help Hrothgar. With fourteen chosen companions he set sail for the country of the Danes.

Hrothgar gladly welcomed Beowulf and gave a banquet in his honour. Late at night, when the feast was over, all went to sleep except Beowulf. Beowulf knew that no weapon could kill Grendel and decided to fight bare – handed.

Suddenly the man – eater rushed into the hall. He seized and devoured one of the sleeping warriors, and then approached Beowulf. A desperate hand – to – hand fight began. At first Beowulf's courage fled:

The demon delayed not, but quickly clutched A sleeping thane in his swift assault, At last the day came for Beowulf to sail home. Everybody regretted his departure. When Beowulf arrived in his own land, he gave all the treasures he had brought to Hygelac and the people. Beowulf was admired and honoured by everybody. After the death of Hygelac, Beowulf became the king of the Jutes.

For fifty years he ruled his country wisely and well until one day a great disaster befell the happy land: every night there appeared a fire – breathing dragon who came and destroyed the villages. Remembering his glorious youth, Beowulf decided to fight and save his people, but of all his earls only Wiglaf, a brave warrior and heir to the kingdom, had the courage to help him. In a fierce battle the dragon was killed, but his flames burnt Beowulf. Beowulf ordered Wiglaf to take as much treasure as he could carry and give it to the Jutes. In his last hour he thought only of his people, for whose hap piness he had sacrificed his life. Beowulf's victory over the monsters symbolized the triumph of a man over the powers of darkness and evil.

THEME 2. "MIDDLE ENGLISH LITERATURE"

Plan:

1. Historical and Cultural Background of the Middle Ages.
2. Major Genres, Authors, and Works of Medieval Literature.
3. Themes, Language, and Literary Devices in Medieval Texts.

Key words: Medieval period, Middle Ages, chivalry, courtly love, feudalism, epic poetry, religious literature, morality plays, allegory, symbolism, pilgrimage, manuscript, Latin, vernacular,

Chaucer, Dante, Beowulf, Sir Gawain, Arthurian legend, monastic culture.

Middle English literature refers to works written in English from the late XII century until around the 1470s. During this period, the Chancery Standard, a form of London – based English, became widely used, and the invention of the printing press helped standardize the language. Between the 1470s and the mid – XVI century, the language gradually transitioned into early Modern English. Literary styles themselves did not change dramatically until the Renaissance and Reformed Christianity began to influence writing during the reign of King Henry VIII. Middle English literature is often divided into three main categories: religious works, courtly love literature, and Arthurian tales, though much of Geoffrey Chaucer's work does not fit neatly into these groups. Notable religious writings include the Katherine Group, Julian of Norwich, and Richard Rolle.

After the Norman Conquest, Law French became the language of courts, parliament, and the elite. Over time, Norman French mixed with Anglo – Saxon, forming Anglo – Norman, while Anglo – Saxon evolved into Middle English. Around the turn of the XIII century, writers like Layamon began composing in Middle English. Popular entertainment of the time included romances and lyrical works. English gradually regained prestige and, by 1362, replaced French and Latin in courts and Parliament. Early Middle English works include the *Ormulum* and *Havelock the Dane*. In the XIV century, major literary works reemerged, most famously Chaucer's writings. By the late XV century, William Caxton printed most of his works in English, helping to standardize spelling, grammar, and vocabulary.

After the Norman Conquest, Old English continued to be used in some monasteries, but few literary works from this time survive. The new ruling class brought Law French, which became the standard language for courts, Parliament, and elite society.

As the Normans integrated with the local population, their language and literature mixed with Anglo – Saxon traditions. The Norman dialects of the elite developed into Anglo – Norman, while Old English gradually evolved into Middle English. Political control was no longer in English hands, so the West Saxon literary dialect

lost its previous influence. Middle English literature was therefore written in various regional dialects, reflecting the backgrounds and cultures of individual authors.

Although Anglo – Norman and Latin dominated high culture and administration, English literature continued to develop. Works like the *Ormulum* (c. 1150–1180) show a blend of Old English and Anglo – Norman influences, marking the beginning of the Middle English period. Around the early XIII century, Layamon wrote his *Brut*, based on Wace's Anglo – Norman epic of the same name.

Other transitional works, including romances and lyrical poetry, served as popular entertainment. Over time, English regained prestige, and in 1362 it replaced French and Latin in courts and Parliament. Early Middle English examples include the *Ormulum*, *Havelock the Dane*, and Thomas of Hales's *Love Rune*.

The Mercian dialect, prominent between the VIII and XIII centuries, was noted by John Trevisa in 1387 for its ability to bridge northern and southern dialects, making it easier for speakers across regions to understand each other.

Little lyrical poetry from the XIII century survives, and secular love poems are rare, though *Foweles in the frith* is a notable exception.

Late Middle English Literature

The XIV century saw a revival of major English literary works. Notable examples include the Pearl Poet's *Pearl*, *Patience*, *Cleanness*, and *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*; William Langland's allegorical *Piers Plowman*; John Gower's *Confessio Amantis*; and the works of Geoffrey Chaucer, widely regarded as the greatest English poet of the Middle Ages and viewed by his contemporaries as an English successor to Virgil and Dante. Interestingly, more manuscripts of *Prick of Conscience* survive than any other Middle English poem.

The *Kildare Poems* represent a rare example of Middle English literature from Ireland, providing insight into the development of Hiberno - English.

By the latter part of the XIV century, English was becoming established as a written language, gradually replacing French and Latin in many contexts. At the same time, literary subject matter

expanded from primarily religious and theological works to include secular themes. The production of books – both religious and secular - grew significantly, making this period one of the most important in the history of the English language.

In the XV century, Chaucer's successors, such as Lydgate, Thomas Hoccleve, and Skelton, have received less acclaim, though they are still studied. Scottish poetry also began to emerge with works like James I of Scotland's *The Kingis Quair*. Key Scottish poets included Robert Henryson, William Dunbar, and Gavin Douglas. Henryson and Dunbar introduced a sharp, sometimes satirical tone influenced by Gaelic bardic poetry, while Douglas's translation of Virgil's *Aeneid* is considered an early example of Renaissance humanism in English literature.

Religious drama flourished during this period, with many morality and miracle plays being produced; some scripts still survive. *Sidrak and Bokkus* is another example of late Middle English literature.

Caxton and the English Language

In the late XV century, William Caxton became the first English printer, producing most of his works in English. He translated numerous texts himself – 26 titles and printed up to 108 books, 87 of which were different works. The English language was still evolving rapidly, and the texts he printed reflected a variety of dialects and styles. Caxton, more a technician than a creative writer, faced challenges in standardizing the language, which he discussed in the preface to his *Eneydos*. His successor, Wynkyn de Worde, faced similar issues.

Caxton is credited with helping to standardize English through printing, contributing to a broader vocabulary, more consistent inflection and syntax, and a widening gap between spoken and written English. Richard Pynson, a French printer active in London from 1491, further advanced standardization by promoting Chancery Standard English and refining written style.

In the XV century **Sir Thomas Malory (1395 – 1471)** collected the romances of King Arthur and arranged them in a series of stories in prose, intelligible to any modern render. The words in Malory's sentences have a beauty of movement, which

cannot escape unnoticed. The stories began with the birth of Arthur and how he became king, then related all the adventures of King Arthur and his noble knights and ended in the death of these knights and of Arthur himself.

The work was published in 1485 by Caxton, the first English printer, at Westminster (London), under the title of "Sir Thomas Malory's Book of King Arthur and of His Noble Knights of Round Table". The book was more widely known as "Morte d'Arthur" (old French for "Death of Arthur").

This epic in twenty – one books reflects the evolution of feudal society, its ideals, beliefs and tragedies. Malory's romance is the most complete English version of stories about King Arthur.

The Medieval Romance

In the medieval period the term "romance" meant a long narrative in verse or prose telling of the adventures of a hero. These stories of adventure usually include knights, ladies in distress, kings, and villains. The material for the medieval romance in English was mainly drawn from the stories of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. This subject matter is sometimes called the "Matter of Britain".

Central to the medieval romance was the code of chivalry, the rules and customs connected with knighthood. Originally chivalry (from the French word "chevalier", which means "knight" or "horseman") referred to the practice of training knights for the purpose of fighting. The qualities of the ideal courtly knight in the Middle Ages were bravery, honor, courtesy, protection of the weak, respect for women, generosity, and fairness to enemies. An important element in the code of chivalry was the ideal of courtly love. This concept required a knight to serve a virtuous noblewoman (often married) and perform brave deeds to prove his devotion while she remained chaste and unattainable.

The code of chivalry and the ideal of courtly love were still in evidence during the Renaissance as well. Knights and courtiers who wrote on courtly themes included the Earl of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and Sir Walter Raleigh. Edmund Spenser and Sir Philip Sidney wrote highly formalized portraits of ideal love.

Medieval romance and its attendant codes of chivalry and courtly love faded in the Age of Reason during the XVIII century, but in the nineteenth century, Romanticism brought back the ideals of chivalry. Treatment of the romance themes of chivalry and courtly love are still the topics of literature. Historical fiction often attempts to recreate the world of the Middle Ages.

Fable and Fabliau

In urban literature fables and fabliaux were also popular. Fable is a short tale or prolonged personification with animal characters intended to convey a moral truth; it's a myth, a fiction, a falsehood. It's a short story about supernatural or extraordinary persons or incidents. Fabliaux are funny metrical short stories about cunning humbugs and the unfaithful wives of rich merchants. These tales were popular in medieval France. These stories were told in the dialects of Middle English. They were usually comic, frankly coarse and often cynical. The urban literature did not idealize characters as the romances did. The fabliaux show a practical attitude to life.

Pre – Renaissance Period in English Literature

In the XIV century the Norman kings made London their residence. It became the most inhabited and busy town in England. (The London dialect was the central dialect, and could be understood throughout the country). Even peasants who wished to get free of their masters went to London. But the life in the country was miserable especially with the so – called Hundred Years' War flamed by king Edward against France. There was another burden on people's shoulders – rich foreign bishops of the Catholic Church, who did not care of people's sufferings. The protest against the Catholic Church and the growth of national feeling during the first years of the War found the reflection in literature. There appeared poor priests who wandered from one village to another and talked to the people. They protested not only against rich bishops but also against churchmen who were ignorant and could not teach people anything. Among poor priests were then acknowledged poets William Langland and John Wyclif.

William Langland (1332 – 1400) was a poor priest. His parents were poor but free peasants. He denounced the rich churchmen and said that everybody was obliged to work. His name is remembered

for a poem he wrote, “The Visions of William Concerning Piers the Ploughman” (Piers – Peter). Nowadays the poem is called “Piers Plowman”.

“Piers Plowman” is an allegorical poem. In it Vice and Virtue are spoken of as if they were human beings. Truth is a young maiden, Greed is an old witch. The poem was very popular in the Middle Ages. It begins with a vision which the poet William had on the Malvern Hills. In a long and complicated succession of scenes Langland portrays almost every side of XIV – century life. In his dream the poet sees Piers the Ploughman, a peasant. Piers tells him about the hard life of the people. He sees the corruption of wealth, and the inadequacies of government. To him, the only salvation lies in honest labour and in the service of Christ. If Langland were not a mystic, he would have been a revolutionary. He is the nearest approach to Dante in English poetry, for despite his roughness, and the bleak atmosphere of much of his work, he has written the greatest poem in English devoted to the Christian way of life.

But modern poetry begins with one of the most prominent people of the Middle English period – Geoffrey Chaucer, diplomat, soldier and scholar.

Geoffrey Chaucer(1340 – 1400)

Geoffrey Chaucer is listed by most scholars as one of the three greatest poets in English literature (along with William Shakespeare and John Milton). He was born in London. His father, John Chaucer, was a wine merchant. In 1357 Geoffrey was listed as a page in the household of the wife of Prince Lionel, a son of Edward III. His service in that household indicates that his family had sufficient social status for him to receive a courtly education. Throughout the rest of his lifetime, Chaucer was in some way connected with members of the royal family. In 1366 Chaucer married Philippa Roet, a lady – in – waiting to the Queen. Chaucer rose socially through his marriage. In 1368 he became one of the King’s esquires, which in those days meant that he worked in the administrative department of the King’s government. One of his duties was to act as a government envoy on foreign Diplomatic missions. Chaucer’s diplomatic missions took him first to France and later to Italy.

Chaucer’s poetry is generally divided into three periods.

The French period. While in France Geoffrey Chaucer came in contact with French literature, his earliest poems were written in imitation of the French romances. He translated from French a famous allegorical poem of the 13th century, "The Romance of the Rose".

The Italian period. In 1372 Chaucer was sent to Genoa to arrange a commercial treaty. In Italy he became acquainted with Italian life and culture, with the classical authors and with the newer Italian works of Dante and Petrarch, with the tales of Boccaccio. In Chaucer's own writing, the French models of his earliest years gave way to this Italian influence. To the Italian period can be assigned "The House of Fame", a didactic poem; "The Parliament of Fowls" (birds), an allegorical poem satirizing Parliament; "Troilus and Criseyda", which is considered to be the predecessor of the psychological novel in England, and "The Legend of Good Women", a dream – poem.

The English, period. After his return to London, Chaucer became a customs official at the port of London. He gave up his job in 1386, and began composing his masterpiece "The Canterbury Tales", but it remained unfinished.

He died in 1400 and was buried in Westminster Abbey in a section, which later became established as the Poet's Corner. Chaucer was the last English writer of the Middle Ages and the first of the Renaissance.

"The Canterbury Tales"

"The Canterbury Tales", for which Chaucer's name is best remembered, is a long poem with a general introduction ("The Prologue"), the clearest picture of late medieval life existent anywhere. The framework, which serves to connect twenty – four stories, told in verse, is a pilgrimage from London to Canterbury. In the prologue thirty men and women from all ranks of society pass before the readers' eyes. Chaucer draws a rapid portrait of each traveller, thus showing his character. Chaucer himself and a certain Harry Bailly, the host (owner) of a London inn are among them. Harry Bailly proposes the following plan: each pilgrim was to tell two stories on the way to the shrine and two on the way back. The

host would be their guide and would judge their stories. Hewho told the best story was to have a fine supper at the expense of the others.

Chaucer planned to include 120 stories, but he managed only twenty – four, some of them were not completed. The individual stories are of many kinds: religious stories, legends, fables, fairy tales, sermons, and courtly romances. Short story writers in the following centuries learned much about their craft from Geoffrey Chaucer.

As it was already mentioned, Chaucer introduces each of his pilgrims in the prologue, and then he lets us know about them through stories they tell. His quick, sure strokes portray the pilgrims at once as types and individuals true of their own age and, still more, representative of humanity in general. He keeps the whole poem alive by interspersing the tales themselves with the talk, the quarrels, and the opinions of the pilgrims. The passage below is a part from the prologue, where the author introduces a plowman:

There was a Plowman with
him there, his brother
Many aload of dung one time
or other
He must have carted
through the morning dew.
He was an honest worker,
good and true, Living in
peace and perfect charity,
And, as the gospel bade
him, so did he, Loving
God best with all his
heart and mind And then
his neighbour as himself,
repined At no misfortune,
slacked for no content,
For steadily about his
work he went
To thrash his corn, to dig or to manure
Or make a ditch; and he
would help the poorFor

love of Christ and never
take a penny
If he could help it, and, as prompt as any,
He paid his tithes and full
when they were due On
what he owned, and on his
earning too

In "Canterbury Tales" Chaucer introduced a rhythmic pattern called **iambic pentameter** into English poetry. This pattern, or meter, consists of 10 syllables alternately unaccented and accented in each line. The lines may or may not rhyme. Iambic pentameter became a widely used meter in English poetry.

Chaucer's contribution to English literature is usually explained by the following:

1. "The Canterbury Tales" sum up all types of stories that existed in the Middle Ages.

2. He managed to show different types of people that lived during his time and through these people he showed a true picture of the life of the XIV century. (The pilgrims range in rank from a knight to a poor plowman. Only the very highest and lowest ranks – the nobility and the serfs – are missing.)

3. In Chaucer's age the English language was still divided by dialects, though London was rapidly making East Midland into a standard language. Chaucer was the creator of a new literary language. He chose to write in English, the popular language of common people, though aristocracy of his time read and spoke French. Chaucer was the true founder of English literature. Chaucer was by learning a man of the Middle Ages, but his attitude towards mankind was so broad – minded that his work is timeless. He is the earliest English poet who may still be read for pleasure today.

Literature of the XV century

Chaucer as a poet is so good that he makes the fifteenth century appear dull. His death was a great blow to English poetry. Almost two centuries passed before a poet equal to him was born. But folk poetry flourished in England and Scotland in the XV century. The

most interesting examples of folk poetry were ballads. Ballads and songs expressed the sentiments and thoughts of people. They were handed down orally from generation to generation. The art of printing did not stop the creation of folk – songs and ballads. They were still composed at the dawn of the XVIII century.

The original authors of ballads are unknown; in fact, a given ballad may exist in several versions, because many different people told and revised the ballad as it travelled from village to village. But when a version seemed just right, its teller would be urged to recite the story again and again without changing a thing.

Below you'll read some stanzas that represent the style of folk ballads.

Text: "The Wife of Usher's Well" (Traditional English Ballad)

There lived a wife at Usher's Well,
And a wealthy wife was she;
She had three stout and stalwart sons,
And sent them oer the sea.
They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely ane,
Whan word came to the carline wife
That her three sons were gane.
They hadna been a week from her,
A week but barely three,
Whan word came to the carlin wife
That her sons she'd never see.
'I wish the wind may never cease,
Nor fashes in the flood,
Till my three sons come hame to me,
In earthly flesh and blood.'
It fell about the Martinmas,
When nights are lang and mirk.
The carline wife's three sons came hame,
And their hats were o' the birk.
It neither grew in syke nor ditch,
Nor yet in ony sheugh;

But at the gates o’ Paradise,
That birk grew fair eneugh.
‘Blow up the fire, my maidens,
Bring water from the well;
For a’ my house shall feast this night,
Since my three sons are well.’
And she has made to them a bed,
She’s made it large and wide;
And she’s ta’en her mantle her about,
Sat down at the bed – side.
Up then crew the red, red cock,
And up and crew the gray
The eldest to the youngest said,
‘Tis time we were away.’
The cock he hadna craw’d but once,
And clapp’d his wings at a’,
When the youngest to the eldest said,
‘Brother, we must awa’.
‘The cock doth craw, the day doth daw,
The channerin’ worm doth chide;
Gin we be miss’d out o’ our place,
A sair pain we maun bide.’
‘Lie still, lie still but a little wee while,
Lie still but if we may;
Gin my mother should miss us when she wakes,
She’ll go mad ere it be day.’
‘Fare ye weel, my mother dear!
Fareweel to barn and byre!
And fare ye weel, the bonny lass
That kindles my mother’s fire!’

Folk Ballads

A folk ballad is a popular literary form. It comes from unlettered people rather than from professional minstrels or scholarly poets. That is why the ballad tends to express its meaning in simple language. (But the centuries – old dialect of many folk ballads may seem to readers complex). The ballad stanza consists of four lines

(a quatrain), rhyming **abcb,** with four accented syllables within the first and third lines and three in the second and fourth lines.

As regards to content, the ballads are usually divided into three groups: historical, heroic, and romantic ballads. Historical ballads were based on a historical fact, while heroic ballads were about people who were persecuted by the law or by their own families. Among the most popular ones were those about Robin Hood, who was an outlaw.

Robin Hood Ballads

The Robin Hood ballads, numbering some forty separate ballads, were written down at various times not earlier than the XIV and XV centuries. Robin Hood is a partly historical, partly legendary character. Most probably he lived in the second half of the XII century, during the reign of Henry II and his son Richard, the Lion Heart. The older ballads tell us much about the Saxon yeomen, who were famous archers and keen hunters. Being ill treated by the Norman robber – barons, they longed to live free in the forest with Robin as their leader. Robin Hood always helped the country folk in their troubles. Though sheriff put a big price on Robin's head, Saxons didn't betray him.

Thus, Robin was an outlaw and lived in Sherwood Forest. He was smart and clever "with a twinkle in the eye". Whenever the Sheriff or the king sent out a party of men to catch him, Robin fought with so much vigour that his enemies, amazed at his bravery, confessed themselves beaten and stayed with him in the forest. They became "the merry men of Robin Hood".

In the XVI century many new episodes were introduced into the ballads. They were arranged in series, the most popular of which was "The Jolly Life of Robin Hood and His Men in Sherwood".

Here is one of the best – known Robin Hood ballads in Modern English spelling.

Ballad

Come listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that loves mirth for to hear,
And I will you tell of a bold outlaw,
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the green – wood tree,
There was he ware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine might be.

The youngster was clothed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay,
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chanted a roundelay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood,
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he espy the same young man
Coming drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away;
And every step he fetch a sigh,
Alack and a well a day!

Then stepped forth brave Little John,
And Nick the millers son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

Stand off, stand off, the young man said,
What is your will with me?
'You must come before our master straight,
Under yon green – wood tree.

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin asked him courteously,
O hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me?

I have no money, the young man said,

But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she is now from me tane,
And chosen to be an old knights delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.

What is thy name? then said Robin Hood,
Come tell me, without any fail:
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
My name it is Allin a Dale.

What wilt thou give me, said Robin Hood,
In ready gold or fee,
To help thee to thy true – love again,
And deliver her unto thee?'

I have no money, then quoth the young man,
No ready gold nor fee,
But I will swear upon a book
Thy true servant for to be.

How many miles is it to thy true – love?
Come tell me without any guile:
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
It is but five little mile.

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint nor lin,
Until he came unto the church
Where Allin should keep his wedding.

What dost thou do here? the bishop he said,
I prethee now tell to me:
I am a bold harper, quoth Robin Hood,

And the best in the north country.

THEME 3: "RENAISSANCE LITERATURE"

Plan:

1. General Overview of English Renaissance Literature.
2. Historical Development Stages of English Humanistic Literature.
3. English Renaissance Theatre.

Key Words: Renaissance, humanism, revival of classical learning, individualism, secularism, Elizabethan age, Tudor dynasty, classical antiquity, sonnet, lyric poetry, drama, tragedy, comedy, chronicle play, Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Globe Theatre, blank verse, iambic pentameter

Renaissance literature refers to European works influenced by the cultural and intellectual movement known as the Renaissance. Originating in XIV – century Italy and lasting in England until the mid – XVII century, this literature spread across Western Europe. It is defined by humanist philosophy, a revival of classical antiquity, and the growing impact of printing in the late XV century.

Writers of the Renaissance drew inspiration from Greco – Roman sources, both in themes and literary forms. Their worldview was anthropocentric, emphasizing human experience and reason. Platonic ideas were adapted to Christian thought, and writers explored both sensory pleasures and critical thinking. The period also saw the emergence of new literary genres, such as the essay (e.g., Montaigne), and innovative forms, like the Spenserian stanza.

The Renaissance's influence varied by region. Catholic and Protestant countries experienced it differently, while areas dominated by the Eastern Orthodox Church or under Islamic rule were largely outside its scope. The movement emphasized self – actualization and understanding one's place in the world.

Renaissance literature began in Italy in the XIV century, with figures such as Petrarch, Machiavelli, and Ariosto. From there, its influence gradually spread to other European countries, continuing

into the XVII century. In England and Scotland, the Renaissance period lasted from the late XV to early XVII centuries. Key northern European figures include Erasmus in scholarship, William Shakespeare in drama, Edmund Spenser in poetry, and Sir Philip Sidney in prose and verse.

The invention of the printing press by Johannes Gutenberg in the 1440s played a major role in spreading Renaissance ideas. By allowing works to be printed in vernacular languages rather than only in Greek or Latin, it expanded readership and made Renaissance thought more widely accessible.

The English Renaissance differed from the Italian Renaissance in several ways. While visual art flourished in Italian cities such as Florence and Venice under masters like Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, and Raphael, literature and music were the dominant forms in England. The strong tradition of English literature was further reinforced by the printing press, and by the Elizabethan age, literary culture had fully matured.

Poetry and drama were the leading genres. Edmund Spenser's epic poem *The Faerie Queene* had a major influence on English literature, though later poets such as Shakespeare, Wyatt, and Surrey overshadowed him in popularity. Drama became especially prominent, with leading playwrights including Christopher Marlowe, William Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Thomas Kyd, and Thomas Nashe. The theater became widely popular, and Shakespeare, as both actor and playwright, played a central role. The works of Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Jonson were frequently performed on stage. Even Queen Elizabeth I contributed to the literary culture, writing occasional poems, while intellectuals such as Francis Bacon and Thomas More advanced thought and philosophy.

The Tudor period of the XVI century emphasized classical, pre – Christian sources rather than strictly religious literature. Writers drew inspiration from Greek and Roman works, reflecting the Renaissance fascination with beauty, knowledge, and human experience. Religion, which had dominated the Middle Ages, was no longer the central concern; science, art, and literature began to flourish, reaching a broader audience through the printing press. Books became widely

accessible, and writers increasingly focused on human experience, imagination, and creativity.

During this period, the appreciation for beauty extended not only to visual design but also to the elegance and musicality of language. Writers and readers valued wit, cleverness, originality, and depth of thought. The humanistic philosophy of the Renaissance placed man at the center, reviving interest in classical culture and emphasizing the present life rather than the afterlife, which had dominated the Middle Ages.

Education and the study of history, philosophy, literature, and the sciences became widely pursued. Classical texts, such as Virgil's *Aeneid*, gained renewed attention for their literary, political, and moral insights. Renaissance writers often reflected on political and social life. Shakespeare, for example, incorporated the political dynamics of Elizabethan England into his works, as seen in plays like *Titus Andronicus*, using drama to explore the conflicts and concerns of his time.

In short, the English Renaissance celebrated human creativity, classical learning, and a renewed focus on life, beauty, and the individual, laying the foundation for modern literature and thought.

Thomas Wyatt (poet)

Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503 – 11 October 1542) was a XVI century English politician, ambassador, and lyric poet credited with introducing the sonnet to English literature. He was born at Allington Castle near Maidstone in Kent, though the family was originally from Yorkshire. His family adopted the Lancastrian side in the Wars of the Roses. His mother was Anne Skinner, and his father Henry, who had earlier been imprisoned and tortured by Richard III, had been a Privy Councillor of Henry VII and remained a trusted adviser when Henry VIII ascended the throne in 1509.

Thomas followed his father to court after his education at St John's College, Cambridge. Entering the King's service, he was entrusted with many important diplomatic missions. In public life, his principal patron was Thomas Cromwell, after whose death he was recalled from abroad and imprisoned (1541). Though subsequently

acquitted and released, shortly thereafter he died. His poems were circulated at court and may have been published anonymously in the anthology *The Court of Venus* (earliest edition c. 1537) during his lifetime, but were not published under his name until after his death; the first major book to feature and attribute his verse was *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557), printed 15 years after his death.

Thomas Wyatt was born at Allington, Kent, in 1503, the son of Sir Henry Wyatt and Anne Skinner, the daughter of John Skinner of Reigate, Surrey. He had a brother Henry, assumed to have died an infant, and a sister, Margaret who married Sir Anthony Lee (died 1549) and was the mother of Queen Elizabeth's champion, Sir Henry Lee.

Wyatt was over six feet tall, reportedly both handsome and physically strong. In 1515, Wyatt entered Henry's service as "Sewer Extraordinary" and the same year he began studying at St John's College, Cambridge. His father had been associated with Sir Thomas Boleyn as constable of Norwich Castle, and Wyatt was thus acquainted with Anne Boleyn.

Following a diplomatic mission to Spain, in 1526, he accompanied Sir John Russell, 1st Earl of Bedford, to Rome to help petition Pope Clement VII to annul Henry VIII's marriage to Catherine of Aragon, in hopes of freeing him to marry Anne Boleyn. Russell being incapacitated, Wyatt was also sent to negotiate with the Republic of Venice. According to some, Wyatt was captured by the armies of Emperor Charles V when they captured Rome and imprisoned the pope in 1527, but he managed to escape and make it back to England.

From 1528 to 1530, Wyatt acted as high marshal at Calais. In the years following he continued in Henry's service; he was, however, imprisoned in the Tower of London for a month in 1536, perhaps because Henry hoped he would incriminate the queen. He was knighted in 1535 and appointed High Sheriff of Kent for 1536. At this time, he was sent to Spain as ambassador to Charles V, who was offended by the declaration of Princess Mary's illegitimacy; he was her cousin and they had once been briefly betrothed. Although Wyatt was unsuccessful in his endeavours, and was accused of disloyalty by

some of his colleagues, he was protected by his relationship with Cromwell, at least during the latter's lifetime.
Wyatt was elected knight of the shire (MP) for Kent in December 1541.

In 1520, Wyatt married Elizabeth Brooke (1503–1560). A year later, they had a son Thomas (1521–1554) who led Wyatt's rebellion some 12 years after his father's death. In 1524, Henry VIII assigned Wyatt to be an ambassador at home and abroad, and he separated from his wife soon after on grounds of adultery.

Wyatt's professed object was to experiment with the English language, to civilize it, to raise its powers to equal those of other European languages. His poetry may be considered as a part of the Petrarchism movement within Renaissance literature. A significant amount of his literary output consists of translations and imitations of sonnets by Italian poet Petrarch; he also wrote sonnets of his own. He took subject matter from Petrarch's sonnets, but his rhyme schemes are significantly different. Petrarch's sonnets consist of an “octave” rhyming *abba abba*, followed by a "sestet" with various rhyme schemes. Wyatt employs the Petrarchan octave, but his most common sestet scheme is *cddc ee*. Wyatt experimented in stanza forms including the rondeau, epigrams, terza rima, ottava rima songs, and satires, as well as with monorime, triplets with refrains, quatrains with different length of line and rhyme schemes, quatrains with codas, and the French forms of douzaine and treizaine. He introduced the *poulter’s measure* form, rhyming couplets composed of a 12 – syllable iambic line (Alexandrine) followed by a 14 – syllable iambic line (fourteener), and he is considered a master of the iambic tetrameter.

Wyatt's poetry reflects classical and Italian models, but he also admired the work of Geoffrey Chaucer, and his vocabulary reflects that of Chaucer; for example, he uses Chaucer's word *newfangleness*, meaning fickleness, in *They Flee from Me*. Many of his poems deal with the trials of romantic love and the devotion of the suitor to an unavailable or cruel mistress. Other poems are scathing, satirical indictments of the hypocrisies and pandering required of courtiers who are ambitious to advance at the Tudor court.

Wyatt's poems are short but fairly numerous. His 96 love poems appeared posthumously (1557) in a compendium called *Tottel's Miscellany*. Most noteworthy are 31 sonnets, the first in English. Ten of them were translations from Petrarch, while all were written in the Petrarchan form, apart from the couplet ending which Wyatt introduced. Serious and reflective in tone, the sonnets show some stiffness of construction and a metrical uncertainty indicative of the difficulty Wyatt found in the new form. Yet their conciseness represents a great advance on the prolixity and uncouthness of much earlier poetry. Wyatt was also responsible for the important introduction of the personal note into English poetry, for although he followed his models closely, he wrote of his own experiences. His epigrams, songs, and rondeaux are lighter than the sonnets, and they reveal the care and the elegance typical of the new romanticism. His satires are composed in the Italian terza rima, again showing the direction of the innovating tendencies.

Edmund Spenser

Edmund Spenser was an English poet best known for his epic and allegorical work *The Faerie Queene*, which celebrates the Tudor

dynasty and Queen Elizabeth I. He is regarded as one of the finest craftsmen of early Modern English poetry and is considered among the greatest poets in the English language.

Spenser was born around 1552 in East Smithfield, London, though the exact date of his birth remains uncertain. Little is known about his family, but he was probably the son of John Spenser, a journeyman clothmaker. As a boy, he studied in London at the Merchant Taylors' School and later attended Pembroke College, Cambridge, as a sizar. While at Cambridge, he became friends with Gabriel Harvey, with whom he maintained a literary dialogue despite differing poetic opinions.

In 1578, Spenser briefly served as secretary to John Young, Bishop of Rochester. The following year, he published *The Shepheardes Calender* and married Machabyas Childe. The couple had two children, Sylvanus (who died in 1638) and Katherine.

In July 1580, Edmund Spenser traveled to Ireland to serve under the newly appointed Lord Deputy, Arthur Grey, XIV Baron Grey de Wilton. During this period, he took part in the Siege of Smerwick massacre alongside Walter Raleigh. When Lord Grey was recalled to England, Spenser remained in Ireland, obtaining additional official positions and land in the Munster Plantation. Raleigh acquired nearby estates that had been confiscated after the Second Desmond Rebellion.

Between 1587 and 1589, Spenser acquired his main estate at Kilcolman, near Doneraile in North Cork, and later purchased a second property at Rennie, overlooking the Blackwater River. The ruins of these estates are still visible today. Nearby once stood a tree known locally as “Spenser’s Oak,” where legend claims he composed parts of *The Faerie Queene*; it was destroyed by lightning in the 1960s.

In 1590, Spenser published the first three books of *The Faerie Queene* in London, likely with Raleigh’s assistance. The work earned him a life pension of £50 from Queen Elizabeth I. He may have hoped that his poetry would secure him a place at court, but his next major work, *Mother Hubberd’s Tale*, satirically criticized prominent figures, including the Queen’s principal secretary, Lord Burghley (William Cecil), and thus strained his courtly ambitions. Spenser returned to

Ireland, where he was part of a literary circle that included his lifelong friend Lodowick Bryskett and Dr. John Longe, Archbishop of Armagh.

In 1591, Spenser published a verse translation of Joachim Du Bellay's sonnets *Les Antiquités de Rome* (1558), titled *Ruines of Rome: by Bellay*. His work may also have been influenced by Latin poems on the same topic by Jean (or Janis) Vitalis, published in 1576.

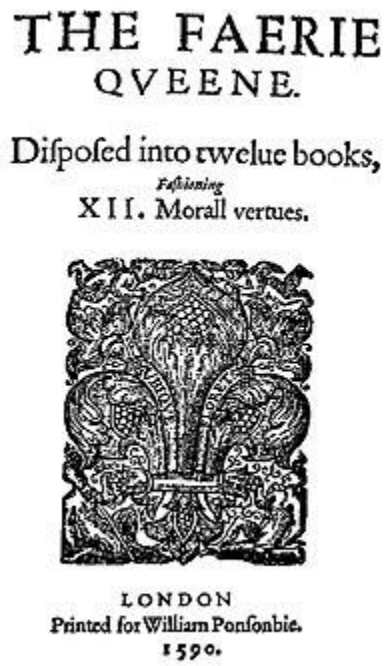
By 1594, Spenser's first wife had passed away, and he married a much younger woman, Elizabeth Boyle, a relative of Richard Boyle, 1st Earl of Cork. He dedicated the sonnet sequence *Amoretti* to her, and their marriage was celebrated in the poem *Epithalamion*. The couple had a son, Peregrine.

In 1596, Spenser wrote *A View of the Present State of Irelande*, a prose pamphlet in the form of a dialogue. Although circulated in manuscript, it was not published until the mid – XVII century, likely due to its controversial content. In it, Spenser argued that Ireland could not be fully "pacified" by the English unless its native language and customs were eradicated, even by force if necessary.

During the Nine Years' War in 1598, Spenser was forced to flee his Kilcolman estate after it was attacked by Irish forces led by Hugh O'Neill. His castle was burned, and according to Ben Jonson, one of his infant children may have died in the fire.

In 1599, Spenser traveled to London, where he died at the age of forty – six. Ben Jonson claimed he died "for want of bread," though this is likely inaccurate, as Spenser had a government – authorized payment and was due his pension. Spenser was buried near Geoffrey Chaucer in Westminster Abbey's Poets' Corner, a ceremony reportedly attended by fellow poets, including Shakespeare, who allegedly placed pens and verses in his grave. His second wife survived him and remarried twice. His sister Sarah, who had accompanied him to Ireland, married into the Travers family, whose descendants remained prominent landowners in Cork for centuries.

The Faerie Queene


THE FAERIE
QVEENE.

Diſpoſed into twelue books,
Fashioning
XII. Morall vertues.

LONDON
Printed for William Ponſonbie.
1590.

The epic poem *The Faerie Queene* frontispiece, printed by William Ponsonby in 1590.

Spenser's masterpiece is the epic poem *The Faerie Queene*. The first three books of *The Faerie Queene* were published in 1590, and the second set of three books was published in 1596. Spenser originally indicated that he intended the poem to consist of twelve books, so the version of the poem we have today is incomplete. Despite this, it remains one of the longest poems in the English language. It is an allegorical work, and can be read (as Spenser presumably intended) on several levels of allegory, including as praise of Queen Elizabeth I. In a completely allegorical context, the poem follows several knights in an examination of several virtues. In Spenser's "A Letter of the Authors", he states that the entire epic poem is "cloudily enwrapped in allegorical devises", and that the aim behind *The Faerie Queene* was to "fashion a gentleman or noble person in virtuous and gentle discipline".

Spenser published numerous relatively short poems in the last decade of the XVI century, almost all of which consider love or sorrow. In 1591, he published *Complaints*, a collection of poems that express complaints in mournful or mocking tones. Four years later, in 1595, Spenser published *Amoretti and Epithalamion*. This volume

contains eighty – eight sonnets commemorating his courtship of Elizabeth Boyle. In *Amoretti*, Spenser uses subtle humour and parody while praising his beloved, reworking Petrarchism in his treatment of longing for a woman. *Epithalamion*, similar to *Amoretti*, deals in part with the unease in the development of a romantic and sexual relationship. It was written for his wedding to his young bride, Elizabeth Boyle. Some have speculated that the attention to disquiet, in general, reflects Spenser's personal anxieties at the time, as he was unable to complete his most significant work, *The Faerie Queene*. In the following year, Spenser released *Prothalamion*, a wedding song written for the daughters of a duke, allegedly in hopes to gain favour in the court.

Ben Jonson

Ben Jonson (c. 11 June 1572 – 18 August 1637 [O.S. 6 August]) was an English playwright and poet whose work had a lasting impact on English poetry and stage comedy. He popularized the "comedy of humours" and is best known for his satirical plays, including *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), *Volpone, or The Fox* (c. 1606), *The Alchemist* (1610), and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), as well as his lyric and epigrammatic poetry. He is often considered the second most

important English dramatist of the James I era, after William Shakespeare.

A classically educated and widely read man of the English Renaissance, Jonson was also known for his love of controversy - personal, political, artistic, and intellectual. His influence on Jacobean (1603–1625) and Caroline (1625–1642) playwrights and poets was unmatched.

Jonson was born in or near London in June 1572, possibly on the 11th. He claimed that his paternal grandfather, who had served King Henry VIII, belonged to the extended Johnston family of Annandale in Dumfries and Galloway. The family coat of arms, featuring three diamond – shaped spindles, confirmed this lineage. The family name was originally spelled Johnstone or Johnstoun, but Jonson preferred the simplified spelling without the "t."

Jonson's father lost his property, was imprisoned, and suffered forfeiture as a Protestant under Queen Mary. After his release, he became a clergyman but died a month before Jonson's birth. Jonson's mother remarried a master bricklayer two years later. He attended school in St Martin's Lane, London, and later studied at Westminster School, funded by a family friend. At Westminster, he was taught by William Camden, the noted antiquarian, historian, and officer of arms, who became a lasting intellectual influence on Jonson. There, Jonson also met the Welsh poet Hugh Holland, forming a lifelong friendship; both would later contribute poems to Shakespeare's *First Folio* (1623).

After leaving Westminster School in 1589, Ben Jonson briefly attended St John's College, Cambridge, to continue his studies. However, due to an unwelcome apprenticeship to his bricklayer stepfather, he left after just a month. According to the historian Thomas Fuller, Jonson at one point built a garden wall in Lincoln's Inn as part of his apprenticeship.

Following this, Jonson went to the Netherlands and volunteered as a soldier with the English regiments of Sir Francis Vere in Flanders. England was allied with the Dutch in their struggle for independence and in the ongoing war with Spain. According to the *Hawthornden Manuscripts*, which record conversations between Jonson and the

Scottish poet William Drummond, Jonson once fought and killed an enemy soldier in single combat, taking his weapons as trophies.

Early in the XVII century, Jonson reportedly visited the antiquary Sir Robert Cotton at his residence in Chester. After his military service, he returned to England and began working as both an actor and playwright. He played the lead role of Hieronimo in Thomas Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy* (c. 1586), the first English revenge tragedy. By 1597, he was employed as a playwright by Philip Henslowe, a leading theatre producer, and in 1598 his play *Every Man in His Humour* established his reputation.

Jonson described his wife to Drummond as "a shrew, yet honest." Her exact identity is uncertain, though she may have been Ann Lewis, who married a Benjamin Jonson in 1594 at St Magnus – the – Martyr near London Bridge. The couple experienced personal tragedy: their first child, Mary Jonson, died in November 1593 at six months old, and their eldest son, Benjamin, died of the plague in 1603 at age seven, inspiring Jonson's elegy *On My First Sonne*. A second son, also named Benjamin, died in 1635.

During part of this period, Jonson and his wife lived apart for five years. Jonson stayed in the homes of patrons such as Esmé Stuart, 3rd Duke of Lennox, and Sir Robert Townshend, enjoying their hospitality while continuing his literary and theatrical work.

Career

By the summer of 1597, Ben Jonson had secured a regular position with the Admiral's Men, performing under Philip Henslowe at The Rose Theatre. According to John Aubrey, though Jonson may not have excelled as an actor, he proved far more valuable to the company as a playwright. Around this time, he began writing original plays for the company. In 1598, Francis Meres mentioned Jonson in *Palladis Tamia* as "the best for tragedy," though none of his early tragedies have survived. His undated comedy *The Case is Altered* may be his earliest extant work.

In 1597, Jonson co – wrote *The Isle of Dogs* with Thomas Nashe, a play so controversial that it was suppressed. Queen Elizabeth I's interrogator, Richard Topcliffe, issued arrest warrants for both authors. Jonson was imprisoned in Marshalsea Prison for "leude and mutinous behaviour," while Nashe fled to Great Yarmouth. Two

actors, Gabriel Spenser and Robert Shaw, were also imprisoned. In 1598, Jonson was briefly jailed again in Newgate Prison for killing Gabriel Spenser in a duel at Hogsden Fields (now part of Hoxton). Tried for manslaughter, he pleaded guilty but was granted leniency through the benefit of clergy: he recited a Bible verse, forfeited his possessions, and was branded with the Tyburn "T" on his left thumb. During his imprisonment, Jonson converted to Catholicism, likely under the influence of the Jesuit priest Father Thomas Wright.

Jonson's first major theatrical success came in 1598 with *Every Man in His Humour*, tapping into the growing popularity of comedies of humours pioneered by George Chapman. William Shakespeare was among the first actors to perform in it. He followed this with *Every Man out of His Humour* (1599), a more pedantic work modeled on Aristophanes. Though its stage reception is unclear, the published version was well received and went through multiple editions.

In the final years of Elizabeth I's reign, Jonson's plays were marked by controversy and rivalry. *Cynthia's Revels* (1600), performed by the Children of the Chapel Royal at Blackfriars Theatre, satirized John Marston and Thomas Dekker. Jonson continued the attack in *Poetaster* (1601), while Dekker retaliated with *Satiromastix*, caricaturing Jonson's boastful and self – promoting character. This period, known as the "War of the Theatres," eventually ended with reconciliation. Jonson later collaborated with Dekker on a pageant celebrating James I's arrival in England in 1603. Marston dedicated *The Malcontent* to Jonson, and Jonson, Marston, and George Chapman worked together on *Eastward Ho!* (1605), a play containing anti – Scottish sentiments that briefly landed Jonson and Chapman in jail.

THEME 4: TRAGEDIES AND HISTORICAL DRAMAS BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

Plan:

1. Shakespeare's life and career.
2. Periodization of Shakespeare's works.
3. The poet’s lyrics: poems and sonnets.
4. Historical chronicles.
5. Comedies and tragedies.

New Words and Key Terms. Shakespearean question, belief in human individuality, sonnet, "Dark Lady," secular love, historical chronicles, Roman tragedies, Hamletism, tragicomedy, Shakespearean realism, tragedy, tragicomedy, love, hatred, happiness, power, king, officials, trust, deception, cunning, murderer, jealousy, tragedy, misfortune.

The importance of William Shakespeare as a poet and playwright is immense. Very little concrete biographical information about him has survived. What is known about his life and literary career has largely been reconstructed from the observations, evaluations, and memoirs of his contemporaries.

William Shakespeare was born on April 23, 1564, in Stratford – upon – Avon, central England, as the third of eight children. His father, John Shakespeare, was a glove maker who also conducted business and gained considerable status, eventually serving on the town council and as Stratford’s mayor.

Stratford, situated on the Avon River, was a busy thoroughfare for travelers journeying between Birmingham, Oxford, and London. The town frequently hosted merchants, craftsmen, students, and distinguished visitors. Traveling acting troupes also performed there periodically, enriching Stratford’s cultural environment and influencing the young Shakespeare.

Shakespeare wrote primarily for the public theater, which at the time was located outside city centers since drama was not yet regarded as a prestigious art form. Audiences paid little attention to authorship. His name first appeared in print in 1593 when he dedicated his poem *Venus and Adonis* to his patron, the Earl of Southampton, followed by

The Rape of Lucrece. Although several of his plays such as *Richard III*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Taming of the Shrew* had already been performed, Shakespeare regarded *Venus and Adonis* as his first literary work.

Venus and Adonis is considered Shakespeare's first poetic work not merely because it was his earliest poem, but also because it belonged to a respected and widely recognized literary genre. His early plays were published anonymously since there were no copyright laws at the time. Once a playwright sold a script to a theater company, the rights belonged to the company rather than the author. Theater troupes usually avoided selling their plays to competitors to prevent rival performances.

However, the plague epidemic of 1592–1594 forced theaters to close, leaving many troupes in financial difficulty. This led them to sell numerous plays to publishers, including some of Shakespeare's works. In addition, popular plays were sometimes acquired by publishers through unauthorized or illicit means, resulting in some of Shakespeare's plays being published without his consent.

Shakespeare's name first appeared on the title page of a published play in 1597 with his comedy *Love's Labour's Lost*. The following year, Francis Meres included him in *Palladis Tamia: Wits Treasury*, praising Shakespeare as a playwright skilled in both tragedy and comedy and listing ten of his plays. By the mid – XVIII century, Shakespeare had come to be recognized as a classical author, and by the early XIX century, he was celebrated as the greatest poet in the English language.

During Shakespeare's lifetime, no biographies were written about him, as this practice was reserved for monarchs and high – ranking officials. The biography genre in England began to take shape only about fifty years after his death, when people recognized the value of preserving information about notable historical figures. One of the earliest collectors of such information was Thomas Fuller (1608–1661), a cleric whose work *The History of the Worthies of England* was published posthumously in 1662. Fuller had met some of Shakespeare's contemporaries and recorded their accounts.

John Aubrey (1626–1697), an Oxford – educated antiquarian, also gathered information on Shakespeare, though his memoirs

remained incomplete and were only published in the XVIII century. After Shakespeare's death, relatively little was known about his life. Systematic studies of his works and biography began in the XVIII century, with scholars like Nicholas Rowe (1674–1718) publishing collections of Shakespeare's plays accompanied by biographical notes, laying the groundwork for future biographies.

Extensive research into Shakespeare's life, works, historical context, and theaters eventually gave rise to the academic field known as Shakespearean studies. At the time, England's publishing industry was still developing: the first book had been printed only in 1475, less than a century before Shakespeare's birth. Printing techniques were rudimentary, the English language lacked standardized grammar, and publishers frequently misread or altered manuscripts. XVIII century editors were the first to attempt systematic corrections of textual errors—a process that continues today.

Shakespeare was highly regarded by his contemporaries. Friends and the first publishers of his collected plays, Heming and Condell, remarked that "his thoughts never lagged behind his pen, and he expressed himself so effortlessly that we never saw any corrections in his manuscripts." Ben Jonson also praised him, noting that "he wrote so easily that, at times, he had to be stopped."

The idea that Shakespeare, coming from a modest background and lacking a university education, could not have produced such remarkable works reflects a skepticism about the creative potential of individuals from humble origins. In London, Shakespeare immersed himself in classical literature and art, absorbed the vibrant literary culture of the city, and expanded his knowledge through wide reading. In essence, life itself served as his greatest teacher.

Shakespeare's literary career, which extended from the late 1580s to around 1612, is typically divided into three main periods. These divisions reflect shifts in themes, styles, and the social influences that shaped his writing.

The **first period**, covering the 1590s, saw Shakespeare writing not only poems and sonnets but also lighthearted comedies reflecting the characteristics of the Renaissance. These include *The Comedy of Errors*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *The Merry*

Wives of Windsor, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, and *Twelfth Night*. In addition, he wrote historical dramas, known as chronicles, based on England's past, such as *Henry VI*, *Richard III*, *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV*, and *Henry V*. Furthermore, he produced two of his most famous tragedies: *Romeo and Juliet* and *Julius Caesar*.

During the **second period** (1601–1608), Shakespeare's dramatic work reached new heights, characterized by profound humanistic ideas and reflections on the tragedies of the era. This period saw the creation of his great tragedies: *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear*, *Macbeth*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Coriolanus*, and *Timon of Athens*.

In the **third period** (1608–1612), Shakespeare turned to tragicomedies such as *Cymbeline*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Tempest*. A key feature of his work during this time was his tendency to resolve life's conflicts with an optimistic outlook, drawing upon romantic fairy tale plots. For example, *The Tempest* is an expression of the writer's faith in the future of humanity.

Poems and Sonnets

Shakespeare's literary career began with the narrative poems *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*, as well as a series of sonnets. Although the plots of both poems are derived from ancient history and mythology, they reflect the spirit of the Renaissance. *Venus and Adonis* (1593) vividly portrays human emotions and nature, depicting the love of the goddess Venus for Adonis, who remains indifferent to her advances and ultimately meets his demise during a hunting trip.

In *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594), Shakespeare condemns violence and lust. The poem tells the story of the Roman prince Tarquin, who violates Lucrece, the wife of his friend Collatinus. Unable to bear the shame, Lucrece takes her own life, and Tarquin is subsequently banished from Rome. The inner turmoil of Tarquin before committing his crime is reminiscent of Macbeth's internal struggle in Shakespeare's later tragedy.

In 1609, Shakespeare published a collection of 154 sonnets. While his early sonnets were influenced by the Italian Renaissance poet Petrarch, Shakespeare later expanded the form's thematic scope. His sonnets explore love, friendship, and the joys of life, reflecting

Renaissance ideals. The three central figures in his sonnets are the poet himself, his friend, and the "Dark Lady." Sonnets 1–126 express devotion to a friend, while Sonnets 127–154 depict love for a mysterious woman.

Historical Chronicles

Shakespeare drew material for his historical plays, known as chronicles, from *The Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland* by the XVI century historian Raphael Holinshed. Eight of his ten chronicles (*King John* and *Henry VIII* being exceptions) depict feudal wars, struggles for centralized power, and the fate of the state and its people.

Richard III (1592) tells the story of the ruthless Richard, who stops at nothing to seize the throne. He eliminates all obstacles in his way, including his nephews and his own brother, and even manipulates Lady Anne into marrying him. Ultimately, he faces defeat and death at the hands of Richmond.

Henry IV consists of two parts (published in 1598 and 1600) and depicts the struggle between the king and rebellious feudal lords. Having seized the throne by overthrowing Richard II, Henry IV struggles to maintain control. The historical records regarding his rise to power remain ambiguous.

Henry V (1599) focuses on the English – French war and portrays the king as a leader rallying his people against both internal and external enemies. While Shakespeare presents Henry V as a wise and fair ruler who prefers diplomacy over conflict, historical accounts suggest that the real Henry V was far less virtuous.

Shakespeare’s Comedies

Shakespeare’s comedies are known for their lively, multidimensional characters. His protagonists often possess a cheerful and witty nature.

In *The Taming of the Shrew* (1593), a farcical comedy, Shakespeare reworks the medieval trope of the "shrewish woman." Katarina, known for her sharp temper, is nicknamed "Shrew Katherine" by those around her. Petruchio, a young suitor, devises a clever scheme to humble her. Ultimately, Katarina’s rebellious nature is not a sign of true stubbornness but rather a protest against rigid

social norms. Surprisingly, her seemingly gentle sister Bianca turns out to be more headstrong.

A Midsummer Night's Dream (1595) is one of Shakespeare's most beautifully crafted comedies, celebrating the power of true love. The story follows Hermia, who loves Lysander, but her father insists that she marry Demetrius. Determined to be with her beloved, Hermia escapes into the forest, setting the stage for magical encounters.

Other notable comedies include *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1594), *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1597–1600), *Twelfth Night*, and *The Merchant of Venice* (1596).

THEME 5: XVII CENTURY ENGLISH LITERATURE: THE WORKS OF JOHN MILTON

Plan:

1. General Overview of XVII Century European Literature.
2. Social Life in England.
3. Major Literary Movements and Representatives of the Era.
4. The Three Unities in Drama.
5. John Milton's Works.

New Words and Key Terms

Realism, Baroque, Classicism, XVII – Century Aesthetics, Genres Inherited from Ancient Literature: Ode, Fable, Tragedy, Comedy, Drama, Poem in English Literature.

In XVII – century Europe, literature was dominated by three major movements: Renaissance realism, Classicism, and Baroque. These trends reflected the social, economic, cultural, and educational differences among European countries, while also influencing one another. All three movements were ultimately rooted in the Renaissance: Renaissance realism continued its humanistic traditions, Classicism adapted its ideals for specific purposes, and Baroque arose as a reaction against it.

The social upheavals of the XVII century intensified societal contradictions, and many leading writers, who were heirs to Renaissance traditions, used their works to critique social injustices. Renaissance realism maintained the humanist focus on life and human

experience, exemplified by writers like Lope de Vega, who contrasted the somber tone of Baroque literature with lively depictions of life and its pleasures, especially in his comedies.

Religious attitudes also shifted in the XVII century. While Renaissance thinkers often approached religion with skepticism, this era saw a rise in religious fervor. God was frequently portrayed as a powerful and fearsome figure, emphasizing human weakness and insignificance. Baroque literature, in particular, favored elaborate and refined language, moving away from simplicity. Baroque writers depicted solemn characters, expressed fascination with distant and exotic lands, and cultivated an aristocratic literary style. This approach appeared in literary currents such as Marinism in Italy, Gongorism in Spain, and Préciosité in France, conveying melancholic emotions and stylistic sophistication.

Classicism was a major literary movement that arose in early XVII – century France, reaching prominence during the reign of Louis XIV (1643–1715) when the monarchy consolidated absolute power. Supporters of absolutism believed that just as political life required order, literature too should follow strict rules. Cardinal Richelieu, through the newly founded French Academy, ensured that literature remained closely aligned with the state. Writers who strayed from Classicist conventions such as Pierre Corneille with his tragedy *Le Cid* faced harsh criticism.

Classicist authors generally endorsed absolute monarchy, seeing it as a source of national unity. Many were affiliated with the royal court and tailored their works to reflect the king's policies, while still aiming to express broader national values. The rationalist philosophy of the period, especially Descartes' view that reason is the ultimate measure of truth, strongly influenced Classicist literature. Consequently, Classicists emphasized reason as the guiding principle of art, often privileging it over emotion.

A central tenet of Classicism was the imitation of nature, though only in an idealized and refined form. While elements of realism were not entirely absent, they were carefully constrained. In his treatise *The Art of Poetry*, Boileau argued that literature should avoid depicting crude or vulgar reality and instead focus on the "beautiful" aspects of nature.

Classicist theory also enforced a strict hierarchy of literary genres. “High” genres, such as tragedy, epic, and ode, dealt with the actions of kings and nobility in an elevated style, whereas “low” genres, including comedy, satire, and epigram, focused on the lives of ordinary people with humor and wit. This rigid classification reflected the aristocratic values embedded in Classicist literature. Authors additionally prioritized clarity, logical organization, and a polished style; however, this strict formalism often constrained the depth and complexity of character development.

Drama played a crucial role in Classicist literature, following the principle of the three unities: unity of time (events should occur within a single day), unity of place (all action should take place in one location), and unity of action (the plot should follow a single storyline).

Classicism was rooted in the imitation of Ancient Greek and Roman literature. Renaissance humanists made great efforts to study and promote the cultural achievements of antiquity, but they often overlooked the national characteristics of medieval literature. As a result, Classicism did not gain widespread popularity outside France.

Classicist writers admired the highest achievements of Greek and Roman art, viewing them as universal and timeless models. However, their tendency to idealize abstract concepts, detach literature from contemporary realities, and rigidly categorize genres ultimately constrained the development of Classicist literature.

The leading writers of the XVII century were influenced by contemporary philosophers such as Francis Bacon, the founder of English materialism, as well as Hobbes, Campanella, and Descartes. The literature of this period captured the diverse realities of its time, producing major figures like John Milton, Pierre Corneille, Jean Racine, Molière, Lope de Vega, and Pedro Calderón. Their multi – faceted works, which often challenged outdated traditions, remain ideologically and artistically significant to this day.

XVII Century English Literature

In the 1620s and 1630s, class struggles in England intensified, and the feudal – absolute monarchy became an obstacle to the country's further development. A unique feature of the English bourgeois revolution was that it ended in 1688 with a compromise

between the bourgeoisie and the nobility. In contrast, the French bourgeois revolution completely abolished feudalism along with its administrative system and laws. After the compromise of 1688, the bourgeoisie removed its mask, and feudal oppression was replaced by capitalist exploitation. Therefore, progressive writers of the time did not merely express their hatred for medievalism and the Restoration but also harshly criticized their era.

Progressive writers who lived on the eve of the English Revolution and during the Restoration period continued the tradition of the great Renaissance thinkers, including Shakespeare, in creating dramatic tragedies. They also drew inspiration from Bacon.

In the 1630s and 1640s, as the revolutionary movement gained momentum and the struggle to establish a republic intensified, progressive writers called for rebellion. This was clearly reflected in Milton's journalism and in the pamphlets of Lilburne and Winstanley.

One of the prominent writers of this period was the playwright **Ben Jonson** (1573–1637), who emerged as a fierce opponent of absolute monarchy. In his tragedy *Catiline: His Conspiracy* (1611), Jonson used material from Roman history to advocate republican ideals against monarchy. In his comedies *The Silent Woman* (1609), *The Alchemist* (1610), and *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), he created satirical portrayals of the English ruling class.

During the 1640s and 1650s, when political struggles continued, strong democratic – spirited journalists such as **John Lilburne** (1618–1657) and **Gerrard Winstanley** (1609–1652) emerged.

During the Restoration period of the 1660s and 1670s, the two most critical writers of the time were **John Milton** and **John Bunyan**. Bunyan, who personally witnessed the moral corruption of the Restoration era, criticized the upper classes through characters in his allegorical novel *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678). In *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman* (1680), he satirized the "foolish man," while in *The Holy War* (1681), he depicted the Civil War of the 1640s and the victory of the revolutionary army over the feudal – absolutist monarchy.

John Milton (1608–1674)

One of the major figures of XVII century English literature, **John Milton** was born in 1608 in London to a notary's family. He

received his early education at St. Paul's School before attending the University of Cambridge. At the university, republican and Puritan ideas were widely spread, and Milton strongly opposed monarchical rule. His political views led to conflicts with university officials, and he was temporarily suspended from his studies. However, after returning to the university, he graduated with excellent results and earned a master's degree.

After graduation, he moved to his father's estate near London, where he devoted himself to literature. In 1638, he traveled across Europe, visiting France and spending a long time in Italy, where he immersed himself in its literature and art. Upon hearing news of the escalating revolutionary events in England, he immediately returned home and became actively involved in political life.

Milton initially started as a publicist and aligned himself with the Independents. Throughout the 1640s and 1650s, he tirelessly served the republican cause. His intense work led to his blindness, yet he continued his writings. He produced a series of militant pamphlets.

When the Stuart monarchy was restored in 1660, Milton faced the threat of execution. Royalists ridiculed and attacked him in their writings, but Milton did not surrender. He persistently exposed feudal reactionaries in his later works. His writings of the 1660s and 1670s are evidence of his unwavering spirit and belief in the future triumph of the republic. Milton passed away in 1674.

Milton's Early Works

The first phase of Milton's literary career spans the 1620s and 1630s. While studying at university (1626–1632), he began composing poetry. Though his early works lacked mature philosophical depth, his opposition to feudal – Catholic reactionaries was evident.

During his years at his father's estate in Horton, he continued folk literary traditions and opposed the decline of feudal literature by creating lively and intelligent characters. His lyrical drama *Comus* (1637) emphasizes the harmony of emotions and intellect.

The play's antagonist, **Comus**, symbolizes uncontrolled desires and debauchery. He tries to corrupt a pure and innocent maiden lost in the forest, but neither he nor his grotesque followers can break her resolve. Eventually, her brothers rescue her from Comus's grasp.

In *Comus*, Milton's poetic talent shines through his vivid descriptions of the forest and his heroine's courageous actions. The work contrasts noble morality with selfish and predatory behavior. The siblings symbolize virtue, while Comus represents aristocratic excess. The play serves as a political critique of feudal aristocracy's tyranny.

Milton's Political Works

Milton's literary evolution in the 1640s was closely linked to the political events of the time. He emerged as a polemicist, writing against feudal – absolutist reactionaries and their main supporters—the Episcopal Church. His essay on marriage defended the idea of equality, echoing the humanist ideals of the Renaissance.

One of his earliest treatises, *Areopagitica* (1644), addressed Parliament, advocating for press freedom and the preservation of every "seed of knowledge" found in good books. He linked truth and freedom, demanding "the liberty to know, to utter, and to argue freely according to conscience."

As his political stance evolved, Milton distanced himself from the Presbyterians, who proved ineffective in their fight against feudal absolutism. Instead, he allied with the more radical Independents, who actively opposed the royalists. These ideological shifts are reflected in his works *The Tenure of Kings and Magistrates* (1649) and *Eikonoklastes* (1649), both of which justified the execution of King Charles I.

Milton wrote *Eikonoklastes* on behalf of the Independents to expose the falseness of John Gauden's *Eikon Basilike*, a book that defended and praised King Charles I. In this work, Milton criticizes the Presbyterian faction of the bourgeoisie, who sought to preserve the king to secure their own position, thereby betraying the people. By calling for a civil war against tyranny, Milton's book struck a hard blow not only against the exiled royalists but also against European monarchies. Consequently, both internal and external reactionary forces launched fierce attacks against him. Salmasius responded with his book *Defensio Regia pro Carolo I* (1649), and Milton answered with *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* (1650). However, the opposition did not stop there; more pamphlets were published against Milton. In response to these reactionary accusations, he wrote *Defensio Secunda*

(1654) and *Autoris pro se Defensio* (1655), which further strengthened his reputation as a staunch defender of the republic. In *Defensio Secunda*, Milton warns General Cromwell of the dangers of personal dictatorship, emphasizing the need to abandon such ambitions for the sake of the revolution.

In the second half of the 1650s, Milton temporarily withdrew from political struggles and worked on his theological treatise, *De Doctrina Christiana*. In this work, contradictions in his worldview become evident he attempts to reconcile science with religion. However, departing from Calvinist dogma, he openly asserts that human beings possess free will in determining their destiny. Blind but still engaged in literary creativity, Milton continued writing sonnets. Following Cromwell's death, he returned to political pamphleteering, dedicating all his efforts to preserving the republican system. In *The Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* (1660), he outlines his plan for a new government, although his proposed electoral system was not as democratic as the one advocated by the Levellers.

Paradise Lost

The final stage of Milton's literary career (1660–1670s) coincides with the Stuart Restoration. During this period, he created his masterpieces: the epics *Paradise Lost* and *Paradise Regained*, as well as the tragedy *Samson Agonistes*. Milton remained faithful to republican ideals. In 1660, by order of the monarchy, his books *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* and *Eikonoklastes* were burned. He escaped execution by paying a heavy fine. His feelings during this time are reflected in *Paradise Lost*.

In *Paradise Lost* (1658–1667), Milton develops an epic narrative based on biblical stories. The poem consists of twelve books. It begins with the depiction of the defeat of angels who rebelled against God, led by Satan. Although condemned to Hell, Satan and his followers refuse to acknowledge their defeat and prepare for another battle against divine power.

The second major event in the poem revolves around the biblical story of Adam and Eve's fall. Satan, determined to corrupt the first humans, deceives Eve into eating the forbidden fruit from the Tree of Knowledge. Adam, out of love and loyalty to Eve, also partakes of the

fruit. As a result, they are expelled from Paradise and must now endure a life of toil and hardship thus begins human history.

The defeat of the English Revolution and the class struggles of the 1640s and 1650s shaped Milton's philosophical outlook. He concluded that social progress is arduous, requiring moral development and inner strength. Vissarion Belinsky described *Paradise Lost* as the "apotheosis of rebellion against authority." The revolutionary spirit of the poem is embodied in the proud, defiant, yet ultimately defeated Satan, who refuses to yield in his struggle against God. However, during the years of reaction, Milton shifts from inciting direct opposition to focusing on moral resilience and inner fortitude. His poem, though allegorical, reflects the revolutionary sentiments of the time.

Despite his ultimate condemnation, Milton portrays Satan with a degree of admiration, while Adam emerges as a more relatable and heroic figure – brave, wise, and noble. Unlike traditional religious interpretations, Adam does not reject Eve after her sin but instead strives to strengthen their bond. Milton, though a believer in reason, still holds faith in human willpower. While he denounces Satan's selfishness, he praises Adam's humanity. Through Adam and Eve's relationship, Milton envisions an ideal, devoted marriage. Although he frames their union as divinely ordained, his depiction of their love surpasses Puritan moralistic teachings.

Paradise Regained

Milton's second epic, *Paradise Regained* (1666), consists of four books and narrates the biblical story of Christ's temptation by Satan. Unlike *Paradise Lost,* this poem lacks a rebellious tone. While the first poem focuses on "the act of sin," *Paradise Regained* illustrates "the redemption of sin." The central idea is that steadfastness and perseverance open the path to salvation. While Adam and Eve succumb to Satan's deception and are expelled from Eden, Christ, as their descendant, resists Satan's temptations, ultimately triumphing and saving humanity.

The poem's religious theme limits its ideological scope, making it less dynamic than *Paradise Lost.* However, despite its theological nature, *Paradise Regained* retains a political undertone. The portrayal of Satan in this poem differs from the previous one he is no longer a

defiant rebel but a figure filled with uncertainty and doubt. His greed and self – interest reflect Milton's critical stance against contemporary rulers.

Samson Agonistes

In *Samson Agonistes* (1667), Milton creates a powerful portrayal of an active fighter who lives with hatred for his enemies, driven by the thirst for struggle and revenge. Based on the biblical story of Samson, Milton imbues it with new meaning.

The tragedy unfolds in a Philistine city where Samson, once a formidable warrior, has been betrayed and imprisoned. Blinded and in great suffering, he refuses to submit to his captors. His father attempts to buy his freedom, but Samson rejects this form of liberation. In the final scene, he is brought to a temple to entertain his captors. Using his immense strength, he pulls down the pillars of the building, crushing himself along with the Philistine elite, thus securing victory for his people through his self – sacrifice.

At the beginning of the tragedy, Samson appears broken and humiliated, forced to serve as a slave and jester. However, he ultimately avenges himself and fulfills his duty to his people. Through Samson's struggle, Milton symbolically portrays the resistance of progressive forces against monarchical tyranny and royalist reactionaries.

Written in the spirit of revolutionary classicism, *Samson Agonistes* adheres to the three classical unities: action, place, and time. The entire play unfolds within a single day in a single location. Through this work, Milton reaffirms his unwavering commitment to the republican cause, emphasizing the moral strength necessary to continue the fight against oppression.

THEME 6: THE XVIII CENTURY ENGLISH ENLIGHTENMENT LITERATURE. THE WORKS OF DANIEL DEFOE AND JONATHAN SWIFT

Plan:

1. Characteristics of XVIII century English Enlightenment literature.
2. The role of Daniel Defoe in XVIII century English literature.
3. The unique features of Daniel Defoe's works.
4. Life and works of Jonathan Swift.
5. The poetics of Jonathan Swift's works.

New Words and Key Terms:

Enlightenment, aesthetic principles, the founder of the novel genre in European literature, *Robinson Crusoe* trilogy, "the concept of a solitary man," *Gulliver's Travels*, satire on society, novel composition, realistic fantasy.

The XVIII century marked the start of a new historical phase, during which the spirit of the Enlightenment began to shape English literature. Broadly, the Enlightenment aimed to educate and cultivate the public, while more specifically it represented the intellectual movement of the era.

Enlightenment thinkers placed supreme importance on reason and intellect. They championed human rationality and moral virtue while criticizing ignorance and oppression. However, they sometimes overestimated the power of their ideas, believing in the ideal of a well – educated, just, and enlightened ruler who could govern society perfectly.

In literature, Enlightenment writers emphasized the educational and socially transformative role of art. They produced political and philosophical novels, moralistic plays, and philosophical novellas, often using literature as a tool for promoting ideological values. Their protagonists typically embodied qualities such as courage, diligence, and initiative, highlighting the virtue of benevolence. This ideological approach reflected the social and historical aspirations of the time, aiming to guide readers toward social improvement and moral progress.

Key figures of Enlightenment literature in England included novelists and writers such as Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, Samuel Richardson, and Henry Fielding, alongside folk poets like Robert Burns. In France, the movement produced influential intellectuals and literary figures, including Voltaire, Denis Diderot, Jean – Jacques Rousseau, and Pierre – Augustin Beaumarchais. Germany's Enlightenment fostered scholars, playwrights, and writers such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing, Friedrich Schiller, and Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

English writers often used satire to critique imperial wars and colonial policies, as seen in the works of Swift and Richard Brinsley Sheridan. However, the Enlightenment in England also revealed inherent contradictions: the ideal of a rationally and morally developed society clashed with the realities of bourgeois socio – economic life. This tension extended to English philosophy, reflected in the writings of thinkers such as Thomas Hobbes, Anthony Ashley Cooper (Earl of Shaftesbury), and Bernard Mandeville, whose works grappled with the limits and challenges of Enlightenment ideals.

The Works of Daniel Defoe

Daniel Defoe is one of the first representatives of early Enlightenment literature in England. He is recognized in world literature as the author of the immortal novel *Robinson Crusoe*. Defoe was a famous writer who laid the foundation for the novel genre in both English and European literature.

Defoe was born in 1660 into a merchant family. His father, James Foe, was a devout Puritan. The future writer was sent to a Puritan religious academy by his father. However, Defoe became interested in trade and remained a prominent businessman throughout his life. His commercial activities took him to many European countries, including Portugal, Spain, Italy, and France. During these travels, he also became involved in the social and political events of the time. In his literary career, through articles and pamphlets, he exposed the feudal aristocracy and the reactionary church. In addition to this, he wrote several works on economics, history, pedagogy, statistics, geography, philosophy, and medicine.

Defoe lived in an era of great discoveries. He wrote extensively about the lives of wandering travelers, merchants, and those who

dreamed of gaining wealth and fame through easy means. His works often depicted the experiences of bourgeois individuals who sought to discover new lands, explore new markets, and chart unexplored territories. However, the novel that brought him the greatest fame was *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

Robinson Crusoe and Its Background

Great Britain, surrounded by seas and oceans, was a country rich in various maritime adventures. This environment likely influenced Defoe in writing *Robinson Crusoe*. In 1713, English writer Richard Steele published an article in *The Englishman* magazine about Alexander Selkirk, a sailor who was abandoned on the Juan Fernández Islands off the coast of Chile by his ship's captain after a dispute. Selkirk survived on the island for four years and four months, during which he became almost completely wild.

In contrast, Defoe's Robinson Crusoe survives on an island for 28 years without losing his human qualities. The novel mainly focuses on a lonely man's struggle against the harsh forces of nature on a deserted island. In this struggle, the protagonist ultimately triumphs, transforming the wild island into a habitable place. Relying solely on his intelligence and perseverance, he proves that a person can survive even when separated from society. This idea aligns with the philosophical views of the XVIII century, which suggested that humans could exist independently of civilization.

Robinson Crusoe is particularly significant as a children's book. The detailed descriptions of Crusoe's labor inspire young readers. Throughout the novel, he appears in various roles stonemason, farmer, carpenter, shipbuilder, plowman, and hunter each offering young readers valuable lessons and enjoyment. Although Crusoe faces numerous difficulties, his strong will allows him to overcome them. Readers witness his gradual mastery of survival on the deserted island, making the story increasingly engaging. The novel's simple and captivating language fosters a sense of respect for labor and humanity among children.

The Success and Legacy of *Robinson Crusoe*

Following its publication, *Robinson Crusoe* gained immense popularity. Taking advantage of this success, Defoe wrote a sequel in the same year, *The Further Adventures of Robinson Crusoe*. In this

installment, the protagonist travels extensively, visiting places such as Madagascar, India, China, Siberia, Arkhangelsk, and Tobolsk. He even returns to the deserted island and establishes a colony.

Although the second book generated some interest, it did not achieve the same success as the first. Shortly afterward, Defoe wrote a third part, *Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe* (1720). However, this final installment, filled with religious and moral reflections as well as commercial advice, failed to captivate readers. Unlike the resourceful and adventurous Crusoe of the first novel, this version of the character became a tedious moralizer, diminishing the trilogy's appeal.

Among the three books, the first novel remains the most widely read and respected.

Themes and Character Analysis

In *Robinson Crusoe*, the XVIII century concept of the "natural man" is explored. The novel traces Crusoe's journey from a primitive state to bourgeois civilization, reflecting the belief that certain human traits remain unchanged over time.

On the deserted island, Crusoe has access to tools and materials developed by human civilization, including an axe, nails, a gun, gunpowder, fabric, thread, needles, ink, paper, barley, rice, and the Bible. Using these, he builds a shelter, engages in farming and animal husbandry, and makes clothing and food. Without these collective achievements of human society, he would not have survived for 28 years.

Defoe meticulously describes Crusoe's daily life, capturing his thoughts, emotions, and activities in a way that makes the character seem real and relatable. The novel's simple yet engaging narrative style enhances its readability.

Crusoe is portrayed as a powerful and resourceful individual. His initiative, determination, and energy are boundless. Even in the most difficult moments, he does not succumb to despair but instead finds ways to survive. As a representative of the progressive bourgeois class of his time, Crusoe embodies both strengths and contradictions. His capitalist mindset is evident in his commercial ventures and his treatment of people.

For example, after being captured by African pirates, he escapes with a young African named Xury, only to later sell him as a slave. This reveals his belief in the racial superiority of white people over black people. Similarly, when stranded on the island, Crusoe considers it his personal property. Initially, he hopes to capture a native to perform all the labor for him while he assumes the role of master. This materializes when he rescues a native from cannibals, names him Friday (without asking his real name), and turns him into a servant. Crusoe's first lesson to Friday is to address him as "Master."

However, as Crusoe observes Friday's intelligence and abilities, his attitude changes. He starts treating him more kindly and develops a genuine friendship with him.

Crusoe eventually establishes an agricultural and livestock – based economy on the island, reflecting the emerging capitalist worldview. He evaluates everything based on its usefulness and profitability, viewing trees as building materials and animals as food sources.

At times, Crusoe interprets his fate as divine punishment for disobeying his father's advice. He reads the Bible three times a day, reinforcing his belief that God has a plan for him. Despite his religious reflections, the defining characteristics of Crusoe are his diligence, resourcefulness, and entrepreneurial spirit.

Even in isolation, Crusoe dreams of returning to society. His determination and optimism make him a beloved character. He diligently records his daily life in a journal, demonstrating the vast potential of human creativity. Over 28 years, he continually improves his skills and knowledge, embodying the Enlightenment ideal of human progress.

The Enduring Impact of *Robinson Crusoe*

Defoe's novel remains one of the earliest examples of XVIII century Enlightenment literature. Its lasting appeal lies in its celebration of human labor and perseverance. Despite being a bourgeois character, Crusoe exhibits humanistic qualities. He risks his life to save Friday, Friday's father, a Spanish sailor, and a ship's captain. His relationships with these characters evolve into genuine friendships.

Robinson Crusoe is particularly significant as a children's book. The detailed descriptions of Crusoe's work inspire young readers, fostering an appreciation for labor and human resilience.

Jonathan Swift's Literary Legacy

One of the prominent figures of Enlightenment literature and a contemporary of Defoe was Jonathan Swift. A talented English writer and a great satirist, Swift was born in Dublin, Ireland, into a clergyman's family. His most famous work, which brought him worldwide recognition, is *"Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World by Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and Then a Captain of Several Ships"*, commonly known as *"Gulliver's Travels" (1726).*

In this novel, the protagonist embarks on a journey to several fantastical lands: the country of tiny people, Lilliput; the land of giants, Brobdingnag; the floating island of Laputa; the magical land of Glubbdubdrib; and the realm of intelligent horses, the Houyhnhnms. Through the fantastic settings, exaggerated situations, and mythical characters, the novel deeply reflects and critiques real – life social and political issues of the time. The power of Swift's satire and the timeless relevance of his masterpiece have kept it significant for centuries.

The Structure of *Gulliver's Travels*

The novel consists of four parts.

1. **Lilliput – The Land of Tiny People**

In the first part, Gulliver finds himself in Lilliput, where the inhabitants are twelve times smaller than ordinary humans. Symbolically, Lilliput represents England during Swift's time, and its internal political affairs mirror the real – life socio – political conditions of XVIII century Britain. The country is ruled by a king, ministers, military forces, and numerous laws, just like England. The officials in Lilliput are portrayed as self – serving rather than working for the public good.

2. The nation is divided into two rival parties: the High – Heels and the Low – Heels, which symbolize England's Tories and Whigs. Despite their constant conflicts, their policies remain fundamentally similar, with the only noticeable difference being the height of their heels—a satirical jab at the triviality of political divisions.

3. **Brobdingnag – The Land of Giants**

While Gulliver was a giant among the Lilliputians, he becomes tiny and powerless in Brobdingnag, where the inhabitants are twelve times larger than ordinary humans. This land represents a fair and just monarchy. The king of Brobdingnag is depicted as a wise and benevolent ruler who governs with intelligence and fairness. He condemns war and is appalled when Gulliver offers to teach them how to make gunpowder and cannons.

4. **Laputa, Balnibarbi, and Glubbdubdrib – The Land of Scientists and Sorcerers**

In the third part, Gulliver visits Laputa, a floating island inhabited by scientists and intellectuals who are lost in impractical theories and absurd inventions. Then, he travels to Balnibarbi, where he explores the Grand Academy of Lagado, witnessing bizarre experiments. In Glubbdubdrib, he meets powerful sorcerers who summon the spirits of historical figures. Eventually, he makes his way to Japan.

5. **The Houyhnhnm Land – A Society of Intelligent Horses**

The fourth part of the novel depicts a land where rational and noble horses, called Houyhnhnms, rule over primitive and savage human – like creatures known as Yahoos. Through this contrast, Swift critiques the moral corruption of English aristocrats. The Yahoos are depicted as greedy, deceitful, and violent creatures obsessed with shiny stones, even willing to kill each other for them.

One striking aspect of the novel is that upon returning to England from his final journey, Gulliver begins to recognize Yahoo – like qualities in his fellow countrymen. This reflects Swift's harsh and disillusioned view of human nature.

Swift's View of Society and Criticism

The final section of *Gulliver's Travels* led some critics to label Swift as misanthropic. However, this is far from the truth. Swift deeply cared for the common people and sympathized with their suffering. Although he was critical of the social system, he did not propose any concrete solutions, as no revolutionary force existed at the time to challenge the bourgeoisie.

In the third part of the novel, Swift contemplates the idea of a heroic leader who could overthrow oppressors and restore justice, but he ultimately expresses doubt about such a possibility. In the final

chapters, he presents an ideal society not through human figures but through the noble Houyhnhnms, suggesting his skepticism about humanity's ability to create a just world. This adds a melancholic undertone to his satire.

The Character of Gulliver

The character of Gulliver is one of Swift's greatest literary achievements. He represents the enlightened and educated individual of XVIII century England. He is honest, compassionate, and committed to truth and justice. His character serves as evidence against accusations that Swift was a misanthrope.

Throughout his journeys, Gulliver opposes war, supports local communities, and generously shares his knowledge. His humility and sincerity earn readers' admiration. Unlike many protagonists, Gulliver openly acknowledges his shortcomings without arrogance or pride. In many ways, he embodies Swift's own intellectual and moral values. His humanism and concern for the well – being of others contradict the false accusations made by bourgeois literary critics about Swift's supposed hatred of mankind.

Gulliver is highly intelligent and perceptive, carefully analyzing and reflecting on everything he experiences. He strongly opposes the oppressive ruling classes and admires the noble leaders of the past. His character reveals Swift's preference for a freer and more just society, making Gulliver a true champion of the people. Through him, Swift delivers sharp criticism against the corrupt government officials, deceitful scholars, and immoral aristocrats of England.

TOPIC 7: LITERATURE OF THE MATURE ENLIGHTENMENT ERA. THE WORKS OF HENRY FIELDING (1707–1754)

OUTLINE:

1. Henry Fielding – a major figure of Enlightenment literature.
2. Artistic features of *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews* and *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*.
3. The distinctive characteristics of Henry Fielding's works.
4. The influence of his works on later literature.

New Words and Key Terms: Enlightenment, the novel genre in English literature, *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews*, *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*, novel composition, characters, realistic novel, comic novel.

Henry Fielding was one of the most prominent figures of English Enlightenment literature, a talented playwright, a masterful novelist, and a gifted publicist. He stood out in XVIII century English literature for his democratic orientation and humanitarian ideas. Fielding defended the interests of common people and fought against oppression and injustice.

Through his famous works such as *Jonathan Wild*, *Joseph Andrews*, and *Tom Jones*, as well as numerous comedies, he enriched English literature.

The essence of Fielding's works lies in his sympathy for the impoverished working class and his sincere desire for their happiness. Through his satire, he exposed the exploitative policies, corruption, and hypocrisy of the ruling class. His writing captivates readers with its realism, sincerity, and sharp humor.

A.S. Pushkin considered Fielding to be on par with the French playwright Molière. N.V. Gogol acknowledged being inspired by his realism. N.G. Chernyshevsky also showed great interest in Fielding's works.

Fielding was born into an impoverished aristocratic family. He studied at Eton College and later attended Leiden University in the Netherlands. Upon returning to London, he began his literary career.

Initially, Fielding was involved in playwriting, producing over twenty satirical comedies within a decade. Among them were *Don*

Quixote in England (1734), *Pasquin* (1736), and *The Historical Register for the Year 1736* (1737).

Later, he pursued legal studies and became a lawyer in 1740. At the same time, he continued his literary career, writing poetry, essays, and satirical pieces. As a journalist, he published magazines such as *The Champion* and *The True Patriot.*

Throughout his life, Fielding remained committed to writing despite facing hardships. He worked tirelessly to support his family, which took a toll on his health. In 1754, after his condition worsened, he traveled to Lisbon for medical treatment but passed away there.

"Don Quixote in England"

Fielding began writing this play while still a student at Leiden University. In the play, the noble knight Don Quixote of the Renaissance era is transported to XVIII century England, where he witnesses the corrupt electoral system of the English Parliament.

In this comedy, Don Quixote remains a symbol of virtue, generosity, and humanism, just as in Cervantes' novel.

"The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews"

Long and descriptive titles were characteristic of XVIII century literature, and Fielding's novels were no exception. The full title of this novel is *The History of the Adventures of Joseph Andrews and His Friend, Mr. Abraham Adams.*

The novel was written as a response to Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* and aimed to expose the hypocrisy of bourgeois morality. The protagonist, Joseph, is Pamela's brother, who works as a servant in the household of the wealthy widow Lady Booby. Joseph is in love with a simple servant girl, Fanny.

However, Lady Booby tries to seduce him. Additionally, the housekeeper, Mrs. Slipslop, also attempts to pursue him. Despite their advances, Joseph remains loyal to Fanny.

Unlike Richardson's characters, Fielding's protagonists do not compromise their principles. While Pamela eventually marries her master, Joseph distances himself from Lady Booby to stay true to his moral values.

At the end of the novel, Pamela reappears. She opposes her brother Joseph's marriage to the poor Fanny, considering her to be of a lower class. Through this, Fielding exposes Pamela's hypocrisy.

On the other hand, Fanny is portrayed as a hardworking, sincere, and loyal girl, serving as a direct contrast to Pamela.

The novel vividly depicts the moral decay of the bourgeoisie, corruption, and hypocrisy with great realism.

Fielding's novel attracts readers with its lively humor, sharp wit, and engaging narrative. He interacts directly with the reader throughout the novel, which was a new feature in English Enlightenment literature.

"The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling"

Fielding's works sharply contrasted with the moral values of the English bourgeois Puritans, which had satisfied Richardson. His progressive worldview and democratic approach distinguished him fundamentally from Richardson. *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749) is considered the pinnacle of Fielding's literary career. This novel brought him worldwide recognition as the founder of the realistic novel.

In this novel, Fielding once again presents a broad panorama of English life. The story features representatives of different social classes and professions, each portrayed with distinct characteristics.

The novel's events begin in Somersetshire, in the house of Mr. Allworthy, a wealthy landowner and judge without children. Living with him is his hypocritical and deceitful spinster sister, Bridget.

One day, upon returning from London, Mr. Allworthy finds a newborn baby abandoned in his home. He takes the child in and names him Tom. Meanwhile, his sister Bridget marries Captain Blifil, and their son, Blifil, grows up alongside Tom in the same household. Both boys receive the same education, but their characters prove to be completely opposite.

Tom is honest, sincere, and kind – hearted, while Blifil is hypocritical, spiteful, and malicious. Blifil appears pious, well – mannered, and intelligent in public, but in reality, he is deceitful.

Both Tom and Blifil fall in love with Sophia, the beautiful daughter of the wealthy landowner Mr. Western. While Tom's love for her is genuine, Blifil is only interested in marrying Sophia for her

wealth and dowry. Sophia, a cheerful and noble – hearted girl, loves Tom and despises Blifil. Seeing this, Blifil begins slandering Tom and falsely accuses him in front of Mr. Allworthy, leading to Tom's expulsion from the house.

After Tom leaves, Sophia also refuses to marry Blifil and runs away from home. The two lovers search for each other for a long time. Their adventures and experiences throughout the novel provide a vivid depiction of various aspects of English society.

Eventually, they reunite in London, where Blifil has also arrived. In the climax of the story, a secret is revealed Tom is actually the son of Bridget, Mr. Allworthy's sister. As in Fielding's earlier works, this novel ends with the reunion of the protagonists. Mr. Allworthy welcomes Tom back and declares him his rightful heir. Mr. Western, having changed his mind, consents to Sophia and Tom's marriage. In the end, justice prevails, and the hypocritical Blifil is disgraced.

Through Tom's character, Fielding expresses his positive outlook on life and human nature. Tom is depicted as someone who loves life and embraces it wholeheartedly.

Fielding's novel captivates readers with its realism. Each character is uniquely individual. Sophia is a beautiful and virtuous girl who remains steadfast against temptation, including the dazzling luxury of high society and the advances of Lord Fellamar. Mr. Allworthy is a generous and kind – hearted man, always seeking justice. Mr. Western, on the other hand, is overly obsessed with hunting and firearms. Partridge, Tom's companion, provides comic relief with his humorous and carefree personality. Every character speaks in a manner suited to their social class and occupation.

Tom Jones is a celebration of human life, noble aspirations, and the struggles for goodness.

Fielding laid the foundation for the realistic novel in XVIII century English literature. He referred to his novels as "comic epics in prose." He compared the comic novel to a comic epic, arguing that the novel is similar to an epic poem, except that it lacks verse. Unlike comedy, the novel encompasses a broader scope of events.

Fielding's innovation, the "comic epic in prose," differs from the serious novel in that its plot is more engaging. A key feature of the

comic novel is its goal of reflecting "human nature." Therefore, the novel presents a blend of different events and characters.

Fielding likened the novelist to a historian. He believed that, in addition to knowledge and talent, a writer must have direct experience with life and be able to interact with people from all social classes. He argued that there are no entirely evil people in the world. A person should not be considered bad simply because they are not entirely good. He firmly believed that in life, just as on stage, "a single person can play both the villain and the hero." Someone who impresses us today may disappoint us tomorrow.

Fielding emphasized that one of the novelist's primary tasks is to create characters. However, he insisted that an artist should not merely copy nature but capture its essence.

Fielding's artistic method represents a major achievement in XVIII century realistic fiction. In defending his works, he challenged the rigid rules of classicism.

Fielding belonged to the most democratic wing of Enlightenment literature. His novels are narrated in the author's voice, using a diverse storytelling style. In this regard, Fielding's writing differs from that of his predecessors, such as Daniel Defoe, Jonathan Swift, and Samuel Richardson.

His writing style is light, rich, and captivating. He mesmerizes the reader, leading them through the story effortlessly.

Fielding's works showcase his vast knowledge and extraordinary talent.

The great English poet Lord Byron called Fielding "the Homer of human nature in prose." The master of historical novels, Sir Walter Scott, described Fielding as "England's first novelist." The renowned proletarian writer Maxim Gorky highly praised Fielding's genius, calling him "the creator of the realistic novel, a brilliant observer of his country's life, and an extraordinarily sharp – witted writer."

SAMUEL RICHARDSON (1689 -1761)

Samuel Richardson introduced a new genre to literature the epistolary novel (letter – novel). His biography is not particularly rich. Richardson was born into a carpenter's family in Derbyshire, England. After receiving primary education, he moved to London and started working at a printing house. He honed his craft there and

eventually married the daughter of the printing house owner. Later, he became the owner of the business and grew wealthy.

Richardson entered the literary world by chance. At the request of his friends, he decided to compile a collection of letters addressing various life situations. This collection revealed his great literary talent, prompting him to write a novel in the form of letters. Soon, three novels by the writer were published, making Richardson a well – known figure in the literary world.

Richardson sought to morally educate society through his novels. As a result, his works often contain didactic elements.

The novel *Pamela, or Virtue Rewarded* follows the story of Pamela, a poor farmer's daughter who works as a servant in the house of a wealthy lady, Mrs. B. After her employer passes away, the lady's son, Mr. B., begins to pursue Pamela, using threats, deception, gifts, and even false accusations. However, the virtuous girl resists his advances. Seeing Pamela's unwavering resolve, Mr. B. abandons his immoral intentions, reforms himself, and eventually marries her.

The innovation in Richardson's novel was that he chose an ordinary girl from the lower class as his protagonist. The novel portrays a noble and hardworking girl standing against the immoral actions of a wealthy man. According to the writer, Pamela's marriage to Mr. B. was a reward for her virtue. The events of the novel unfold through Pamela's letters to her parents, which allow Richardson to reveal her inner world. The book was widely read across Europe at the time, demonstrating Richardson's literary mastery.

However, the novel also attracted some criticism, with various parodies being written in response. This was largely due to Richardson's somewhat limited worldview. While the novel depicted an ordinary girl's moral superiority over a wealthy man, it ultimately reinforced the idea of social hierarchy, as Pamela readily accepted Mr. B.'s marriage proposal once he repented.

Pamela, the novel's protagonist, is a strong – willed, virtuous girl from the lower class. She became one of the most beloved literary characters of the time. Richardson skillfully explored her psychological depth, earning praise from thinkers such as Diderot and Lessing.

Pamela gained immense popularity and was reprinted five times within a single year. Notable writers, literary critics, and ordinary readers especially women enthusiastically read and commented on the book.

In *Clarissa Harlowe*, Richardson presents the story of Clarissa Harlowe, a wealthy young woman who inherits a large fortune from her grandfather. Envious of her fortune, her brother and sister, along with her parents, seek to get rid of her.

A nobleman named Robert Lovelace frequently visits the Harlowe household. The family hopes to marry their eldest daughter, Arabella, to Lovelace, but he has his sights set on Clarissa instead. Meanwhile, Clarissa's parents attempt to force her into marriage with a man named Solmes, whom she does not love. When she refuses, Lovelace pretends to offer her protection.

After much hesitation, Clarissa runs away with Lovelace, believing she has no other choice. However, Lovelace deceives her, drugs her, and takes advantage of her. Although he later repents and offers to marry her, she refuses. In the end, Clarissa, broken by injustice, depravity, and violence, dies in solitude. Lovelace, tormented by guilt, leaves on a journey and is later killed in a duel by Clarissa's stepbrother in Italy.

Clarissa became a sensation. Even Richardson himself did not anticipate such overwhelming popularity. Unlike *Pamela*, this novel deeply explores the inner lives of its characters. It takes a more realistic approach, as its resolution is not one of reconciliation but rather of tragedy and resistance. If Richardson had followed his earlier approach, Clarissa would have forgiven Lovelace and married him. However, this time, the author avoided such a conclusion, choosing instead to stay true to life's harsh realities.

Readers initially expected *Clarissa* to have a happy ending similar to *Pamela* and even suggested that Richardson alter the ending. However, the writer rejected these proposals, maintaining the tragic conclusion of the novel. Clarissa remains independent in her moral stance; although she is physically defeated, she remains victorious in spirit. This is particularly emphasized by the ultimate punishment of Lovelace.

The novel highlights the social injustice faced by women in England at the time. Clarissa's suffering was not unique many women found themselves in similar circumstances, powerless against male dominance and family pressure. Like Pamela, Clarissa embodies virtue, but moral strength alone is not enough to protect a woman in an unjust society. Although she fights for her honor as fiercely as Pamela, she ultimately falls victim to violence and deceit. Nevertheless, Clarissa never compromises her principles; she refuses to marry the man who violated her, as she cannot respect such a person. This moral integrity enhances the realism of the novel.

Richardson's protagonists are constantly surrounded by deceitful and corrupt individuals. Church officials who betray their morals and selfish scoundrels who will do anything for money frequently oppose the virtuous characters. These antagonists serve as catalysts for the protagonists' personal growth and development.

Richardson's novels had a profound impact on his contemporaries. His ability to evoke strong emotions and explore human psychology was widely recognized. His influence extended to writers such as Rousseau, Voltaire, Goethe, and Lessing.

Rousseau's *Julie, or the New Heloise*, Voltaire's play *Nanine*, Goethe's *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, and many other works were inspired by Richardson's writing.

Diderot praised Richardson's psychological depth and the realism of his characters.

By the late XVIII century, Richardson's novels were introduced to Russian readers. His influence was evident in Russian literature as well, with works such as P. Lvov's *The Russian Pamela* and Karamzin's *Poor Liza* drawing inspiration from Richardson's heroine.

TOBIAS GEORGE SMOLLETT (1721–1771)

Smollett, in terms of his creative direction, was largely aligned with Fielding. Like Fielding, he enriched XVIII – century realistic novel – writing with his remarkable works. Although there were some disagreements between Smollett and Fielding, both of them relentlessly exposed the oppressive aspects of the English system that were alien to the common man.

Tobias George Smollett was born into a Scottish noble family. However, like Fielding, he had to earn his living through his own efforts. After completing his education at a "Grammar" school, which was equivalent to a secondary school, he enrolled in the medical faculty at a university. However, his passion for writing was overwhelming. Smollett joined the British navy as a surgeon and traveled as far as the coast of South America. He later incorporated his experiences from this military expedition into his works.

Neither his medical profession nor his writing improved Smollett's financial situation. He wrote poetry, medical treatises, comedies on British history, travelogues, and various other works. He also published a literary criticism journal and a newspaper called "Britannia."

Like Fielding, Smollett gradually came to understand that the inequalities in the English social system made the ideals of the Enlightenment such as equality and justice impossible to achieve in XVIII century England. A democrat by worldview, Smollett fiercely criticized all the vices of the bourgeois world, which was based on private property. Because of this, he emerged as a defender and advocate for the helpless and homeless.

In the history of English literature, Smollett is known as the author of several novels, including *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748), *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle* (1751), *The Adventures of Ferdinand Count Fathom* (1753), *The Adventures of Sir Launcelot Greaves* (1762), and *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (1771).

Like Fielding's protagonists, Smollett's characters wander through cities and villages as adventurers. This allowed him to portray the life and customs of XVIII century England in a broader scope. He sought to evoke not laughter but a sense of pity for the misfortunes of life, urging readers to despise the corruption and immorality of society. In all his works, Smollett aimed to tell the raw truth, exposing human selfishness, greed, resentment, and depravity. Believing that human nature was inherently inclined toward vice, Smollett's fierce satire and biting irony bear resemblance to Swift's style. Unlike Fielding's works, Smollett's novels lack optimism.

The Adventures of Roderick Random

Smollett's novel *The Adventures of Roderick Random* has an autobiographical character. The protagonist, Roderick Random, is a young Scotsman who loses his father at an early age. His grandfather refuses to leave him an inheritance. Growing up in hardship, Random goes to London in search of fortune, where he experiences various adventures. He joins a warship as a surgeon's assistant, travels to South America with the British navy, and participates in colonial wars. After the military expedition ends in failure, he moves to France, where he fights against the English in the French army. Eventually, fate brings him back to London, where he is imprisoned. Desperate to escape his dire circumstances, he takes on various jobs. The entire story is narrated from the protagonist's perspective.

The people surrounding Random are ruthless, envious, cruel, and treacherous. They have no sympathy for the poor. Everyone acts in their own self – interest. *The Adventures of Roderick Random* openly depicts the injustices within the British navy. Despite being a great naval power, England subjected its sailors, doctors, and other lower – ranking personnel to treatment no better than that of prisoners. Humiliating sailors and mocking the sick were part of daily life in the navy. Smollett portrays these abuses convincingly through the character of Captain Oakum. The brutal conditions on British warships where human dignity was trampled are depicted in a realistic manner.

The novel also illustrates the harsh realities of English society: fathers disown their sons for marrying poor women, pregnant daughters – in – law are cast out in the winter, corrupt teachers deprive poor children of education, and women are oppressed by the ruthless laws of the time. Smollett witnessed these injustices firsthand and incorporated them into his novel.

At first, Roderick Random is naïve and inexperienced, but as he struggles to survive in a cruel world, he begins to mimic the very people he despises. The law of an unjust and merciless society compels him to adapt in order to survive.

The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle

Smollett's second novel, *The Adventures of Peregrine Pickle*, also follows the hero's numerous adventures. However, unlike

Random, Peregrine Pickle does not struggle for survival. He is the spoiled son of a wealthy family who, due to his wealth, becomes more and more corrupt. Like the upper – class figures around him, Peregrine Pickle is selfish and depraved. He, too, worships money and looks down upon the poor. His reckless lifestyle soon leads to financial ruin. In an attempt to restore his status, he enters politics and aspires to become a member of Parliament. However, his political ambitions fail, and he ends up in prison.

The novel features a variety of characters, humorous episodes, and biting satire. The critique of English society in *Peregrine Pickle* is even harsher than in *Roderick Random*. The novel caricatures the electoral system, Parliament, and the state apparatus. The protagonist, initially depicted as a negative character, gradually undergoes change as the novel progresses.

Surrounding Peregrine Pickle are figures such as his servant Pipes and his uncle Trunnion, who embody positive human qualities. In depicting the old sailor Trunnion, Smollett employs grotesque, fantastical, and exaggerated elements, which were characteristic of his writing style.

The Expedition of Humphry Clinker

Unlike his earlier works, Smollett's novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* is written in the epistolary style, similar to Richardson's approach.

The story follows the wealthy landowner Matthew Bramble, who embarks on a journey across England and Scotland with his family, including his sister Tabitha, his nephew Jerry Milford, his niece Lydia Milford, and their servant Winifred Jenkins. Unlike Smollett's previous novels, the focus is not on the characters' adventures but rather on their internal reflections and observations.

Bramble's critical remarks about English society reflect Smollett's characteristic sharp social satire. Just as in his earlier works, the author expresses his deep resentment toward the existing social order. His satire grows sharper, resembling the cutting edge of Swift's wit.

Smollett’s Legacy

Smollett’s works are often filled with "crudeness and ugliness," but the fault lies not with the writer, but with the English social system he depicted.

He created a gallery of negative characters, drawing his protagonists directly from real life. Although most of his characters and their actions are portrayed negatively, his novels tend to conclude with a positive resolution. This was a hallmark of XVIII century English novel – writing traditions.

Despite his shortcomings, Smollett contributed to the development of the realistic novel genre in England. Walter Scott called Fielding and Smollett the "two fathers of the English novel." The significant influence of their works can be seen in the writings of major XIX century English artists, such as Dickens and Thackeray.

PRACTICAL SECTION

Task 1. Answer these questions.

1. What can you tell about Britons and their language?
2. When was Britain conquered by Rome and what was its result?
3. Why did Angles, Saxons and Jutes fight with one another?
4. What can you tell about "scribes"?
5. Why is the Anglo – Saxon poem "Beowulf" called the foundation – stone of all British poetry?
6. Name the main heroes of the poem "Beowulf".
7. Characterize Beowulf.
8. Why did Wiglaf put the blame for Beowulf's death on cowardly earls?
9. What is the merit of the poem?
10. Does the poem "Beowulf" remind you of any Russian or Uzbek epic poems?

Task 2. Choose the most correct answer for each question.

1. Which work is considered the most famous epic poem of early medieval English literature?

A) Sir Gawain and the Green Knight
B) Beowulf
C) The Canterbury Tales
D) The Faerie Queene

2. Who does Beowulf fight in the epic poem?

A) Sir Gawain
B) The Green Knight
C) Grendel
D) King Arthur

3. Which literary device is commonly used in Anglo – Saxon poetry?

A) Sonnet
B) Kennings (metaphorical expressions)
C) Blank verse
D) Allegory

4. Which of the following is a collection of early medieval English manuscripts?

A) The Canterbury Tales
B) The Exeter Book
C) The Divine Comedy
D) Paradise Lost

5. The Wanderer and The Seafarer belong to which literary genre?

A) Chivalric romance
B) Epic poetry
C) Elegy
D) Tragic drama

6. In which language was most early medieval English literature written?

A) Latin
B) Old English
C) Middle English
D) French

7. Which of the following is considered a historical source?

A) The Anglo – Saxon Chronicle
B) The Canterbury Tales
C) The Faerie Queene
D) Piers Plowman

8. What symbolic meanings can be found in Beowulf?

A) Grendel represents evil, while Beowulf symbolizes heroism.
B) The sea represents lost time.
C) The characters reflect the connection between heaven and earth.
D) All of the above.

9. Why is Caedmon's Hymn significant?

A) It is the earliest recorded religious poem in English.
B) It is the first royal poem written in English.
C) It describes the history of kings.
D) It reflects the influence of the Roman Empire.

10. Which of the following is NOT a major theme of early medieval English literature?

A) Heroism and honor
B) Christianity and devotion
C) Romantic love
D) Fate and loss

THEME: 2

Task 1: Multiple Choice Questions

1. Who is the author of The Canterbury Tales?
   a) Geoffrey Chaucer
   b) William Langland
   c) Thomas Malory
   d) John Gower
2. Beowulf is an example of which type of poetry?
   a) Lyric Poetry
   b) Epic Poetry
   c) Allegorical Poetry
   d) Romance
3. Which of the following is a key theme in Sir Gawain and the Green Knight?
   a) Industrial Revolution
   b) Chivalry and Honor
   c) Political Satire
   d) Colonialism
4. What is the main subject of Piers Plowman?
   a) A knight’s adventure
   b) Religious and social allegory
   c) A tragic love story
   d) Viking invasions
5. Le Morte d'Arthur by Thomas Malory focuses on:
   a) The life of William the Conqueror
   b) King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table
   c) The Battle of Hastings
   d) The history of the Anglo – Saxons

Task 2: True or False

1. Beowulf is the earliest known epic poem in the English language. (True / False)
2. Geoffrey Chaucer wrote Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. (True / False)
3. Medieval literature was primarily written in Latin, Old English, and Middle English. (True / False)
4. The Canterbury Tales is a collection of poetry that includes only religious themes. (True / False)

5. The mystery plays and morality plays were performed during the medieval period for religious and educational purposes. (True / False)

THEME: 3

Task 3: Short Answer

1. Name one major difference between Old English and Middle English literature.
2. What was the role of the church in medieval literature?
3. How does Sir Gawain and the Green Knight reflect the ideals of chivalry?
4. Why is The Canterbury Tales considered an important work in English literature?
5. Name two characteristics of medieval epic poetry.

Task 1. Question–Answer (Short Answer Questions)

1. What historical and cultural factors contributed to the emergence of Renaissance literature in England?
2. Explain the main features of Renaissance humanism and their reflection in literary works.
3. How did the Renaissance period differ from the Middle Ages in terms of literary themes and worldview?
4. Analyze the role of classical (Greek and Roman) literature in shaping Renaissance writing.
5. Why is William Shakespeare considered a central figure of English Renaissance literature?

Task 2. Multiple – Choice Test

1. The Renaissance period in England is generally dated to:
   a) XII–13th centuries
   b) XIV–XV centuries
   c) XVI–early XVII centuries
   d) XVIII century
2. The main philosophical idea of Renaissance literature was:
   a) Religious asceticism
   b) Humanism
   c) Feudal loyalty
   d) Romanticism
3. Which genre developed significantly during the Renaissance?
   a) Epic poetry

b) Drama
c) Gothic novel
d) Science fiction

4. William Shakespeare's works are best known for:
   a) Strict moral instruction
   b) Idealized medieval heroes
   c) Complex characterization and psychological depth
   d) Purely religious themes
5. Which classical influence was most important for Renaissance writers?
   a) Norse mythology
   b) Biblical texts only
   c) Greek and Roman literature
   d) Eastern philosophy

Task 3. Analytical & Creative Task

Option A: Text Analysis

Choose one Renaissance literary work (a Shakespeare play, a sonnet, or a poem by Sir Philip Sidney) and analyze it by answering the following:

- Identify Renaissance humanist ideals in the text.
- Discuss the portrayal of the individual and personal ambition.
- Explain how classical influences are reflected in the work.

Option B: Comparative Task

Compare Renaissance literature with Medieval literature focusing on:

- Themes and worldview
- Representation of the individual
- Literary forms and language

Option C: Creative Writing

Write a short paragraph (150–200 words) imagining yourself as a Renaissance writer. Describe your view of human potential, knowledge, and creativity using Renaissance ideals.

THEME: 4

Task 1. Match the play with the theme (B1–B2 level)

Instructions: Match each Shakespearean play with its central theme.

Plays	Themes
1. Hamlet	A. Political ambition and downfall
2. Macbeth	B. Jealousy and betrayal
3. Othello	C. Madness and revenge
4. King Lear	D. Family betrayal and blindness
5. Richard III	E. Ruthless rise to power

Task 2. Quote Interpretation

Instructions: Read the following quotes and answer the questions.

Quote: *"To be, or not to be: that is the question." (Hamlet)*

- What do you think Hamlet is questioning here?
- How does this quote reflect the theme of the play?

Quote: *"O, beware, my lord, of jealousy! It is the green – eyed monster." (Othello)*

- Who says this and why?
- What does the metaphor "green – eyed monster" imply?

Task 3. Character Comparison Essay

Instructions: Write a short essay (150–200 words) comparing two tragic heroes from Shakespeare's plays. Consider their strengths, flaws, and how these led to their downfall.

Suggested pairs:

- Hamlet vs. Macbeth
- Othello vs. King Lear

Prompt:

Compare the internal conflicts of Hamlet and Macbeth. How do their decisions shape the outcomes of their lives and the lives of those around them?

Task 4. Speaking/Group Discussion

Topic: *Is Shakespeare still relevant today?*

Discussion Questions:

- What modern issues are reflected in Shakespeare's plays?
- Could any of these characters exist in today's world?
- How would Macbeth behave if he were a modern politician?

Task 5. Creative Roleplay

Instructions: Choose a scene from a tragedy (e.g., Hamlet seeing the ghost, Othello accusing Desdemona, Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking) and act it out in modern language.
Variation: Rewrite the scene as a text message conversation or short email exchange.

Task 6. Fact or Fiction? (B1–B2 level, True/False activity)

Instructions: Read the statements and say whether they are true or false. Correct the false ones.

1. Hamlet is the king of Denmark.
2. Othello is manipulated by Iago.
3. Macbeth kills King Duncan in a battle.
4. King Lear divides his kingdom based on love.
5. Richard III is portrayed as a kind ruler.

THEME: 5

Task 1: Multiple Choice (Comprehension Test – B2)

Instructions: Choose the correct answer.

1. What is the title of Milton’s most famous epic poem?
   A) Paradise Regained
   B) Samson Agonistes
   C) Paradise Lost
   D) Areopagitica
2. What is the main theme of *Paradise Lost*?
   A) Political freedom
   B) The fall of man and original sin
   C) The resurrection of Christ
   D) Classical mythology
3. Which of the following is true about John Milton?
   A) He was a Romantic poet.
   B) He supported the monarchy.
   C) He went blind later in life.
   D) He wrote only prose.

Task 2: Quote Analysis (C1)

Quote from *Paradise Lost* (Book I):

“Better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven.” – Satan

Questions:

- Who says this and in what context?

- What does the quote reveal about the speaker's character and mindset?
- Do you agree or disagree with this perspective? Why?

Task 3: Short Essay (C1)

Prompt:

Discuss how Milton reflects XVII – century religious and political turmoil in *Paradise Lost* or *Areopagitica*. Provide examples from the text.

Length: 200–250 words

Criteria: Critical thinking, historical awareness, use of quotations, coherence.

Task 4: Matching Task (B2)

Instructions: Match the Milton work with its description.

Works	**Descriptions**
1. *Paradise Lost*	A. A speech defending the freedom of the press
2. *Areopagitica*	B. A drama based on the biblical story of Samson
3. *Samson Agonistes*	C. An epic poem about the fall of man

Task 5: Discussion Questions (B2–C1)

- How does Milton portray the character of Satan in *Paradise Lost* – as a villain, a hero, or something in between?
- Why do you think *Areopagitica* is considered an early argument for freedom of speech?
- If Milton were alive today, how might he respond to modern censorship?

Task 6: Creative Writing (C1 – Optional)

Prompt:

Imagine you are Satan after being cast out of Heaven. Write a monologue expressing your ambitions, regrets, and motivations (200 words). Try to imitate the elevated, poetic style of Milton.

Task 7: True/False (Quick Check – B2)

Instructions: Say whether the following statements are true or false.

1. Milton wrote *Paradise Lost* before he became blind.

2. *Paradise Lost* is written in rhyming couplets.
3. Milton was a supporter of Oliver Cromwell's republican government.
4. *Areopagitica* defends censorship in publishing.
5. Satan is portrayed as an entirely evil and simple character.

THEME:7

Task 1: Comparative Essay – "Two Faces of Enlightenment" (C1 Level)

Prompt:

Write an essay (180–220 words) comparing how *Daniel Defoe* in **Robinson Crusoe** and *Jonathan Swift* in **Gulliver's Travels** reflect Enlightenment ideas.

Focus on:

– Reason and logic
– Individual vs society
– Attitudes toward colonialism or civilization

Goal: Develop critical thinking; understand Enlightenment contrasts - realism (Defoe) vs satire (Swift).

Assessment focus: Argument clarity, comparative structure, text evidence, vocabulary

🔍 **Task 2: Quote Analysis – "What Do They Really Mean?" (B2–C1 Level)**

Instructions: Read the quotes below and answer the questions.

Quote A (Defoe, *Robinson Crusoe*):

"It is never too late to be wise."

Quote B (Swift, *Gulliver's Travels*):

"I cannot but conclude the bulk of your natives to be the most pernicious race of little odious vermin that nature ever suffered to crawl upon the surface of the earth."

Questions:

1. What do these quotes tell us about each author's view of human nature?
2. Which one aligns more with Enlightenment optimism, and why?
3. Do you agree with either of them? Explain briefly.

Goal: Encourage interpretation, contrast tone, and moral stance of authors.

Task 3: Creative Rewrite – "Modern Crusoe or Satirical Swift?" (B2–C1 Level)

Instructions: Choose ONE of the following options:

Option A (Defoe):

Rewrite *Robinson Crusoe's* shipwreck and survival story as if it happened in **the 21st century** (on a deserted island with a mobile phone, tech skills, survival apps, etc.).

Option B (Swift):

Imagine Gulliver lands not in Lilliput, but in **modern – day social media society** (e.g., "Influenceland"). Write a short satire (150 words) about what he sees and how he reacts.

Goal: Foster creativity, show understanding of themes, and apply satire/realism in a modern context.

GLOSSARY

A

Aestheticism - A XIX – century literary movement emphasizing beauty and art for art's sake.

Allegory - A narrative in which characters and events symbolize abstract ideas or moral qualities.

Alliteration - The repetition of initial consonant sounds, common in Old English poetry.

Allusion - An indirect reference to a historical, literary, or biblical figure or event.

Anglo -Saxon Literature - Literary works produced in England before the Norman Conquest (1066).

Arthurian Legend - Medieval stories centered on King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table.

Assonance -The repetition of vowel sounds within nearby words.

Autobiography -A literary work written by an author about their own life.

Authorial Voice -The distinctive style or tone used by an author in a text.

Augustan Age -A period of XVIII century English literature marked by classical ideals and satire.

Almanac - A popular early modern publication combining calendars and practical knowledge.

Anthology - A collection of literary works by different authors.

Antithesis - The juxtaposition of contrasting ideas in balanced phrases.

Apostrophe - A direct address to an absent person or abstract idea.

Aural Imagery - Descriptive language that appeals to the sense of hearing.

Authorial Intent - The purpose or meaning the author aimed to convey.

Age of Enlightenment - An intellectual movement stressing reason and logic in literature.

Anonymity - The state of authorship being unknown, common in medieval literature.

Adaptation - A rewritten version of a literary work in a new form or context.

Age of Reason - Another term for the Enlightenment period.

Affective Fallacy -Judging literature based on emotional response rather than textual analysis.
Anecdote - A short, often illustrative story within a larger narrative.
Apprentice Novel - A narrative focused on a character's moral and social development.
Authority - The power or credibility of a narrator or text.
Aristocracy - A ruling social class frequently depicted in early English literature.
Alliterative Revival - A XIV century return to alliterative verse forms.
Ancestral Epic - A heroic poem celebrating tribal or national origins.

B

Ballad - A narrative poem, often derived from oral tradition and dealing with dramatic events.
Ballad Meter - A poetic form with alternating iambic tetrameter and trimeter.
Baroque - A literary style marked by complexity, ornamentation, and emotional intensity.
Beowulf - The most significant epic poem of Old English literature.
Bildungsroman - A novel focusing on the psychological and moral growth of the protagonist.
Blank Verse - Unrhymed iambic pentameter, widely used by Shakespeare and Milton.
Byronic Hero - A rebellious, introspective, and morally complex character type popular in Romantic literature.
Biblical Allusion -A reference to stories, figures, or themes from the Bible.
Bard -A poet, traditionally one who recites epic or heroic poetry.
Book of Common Prayer - A foundational Anglican religious text influencing English prose.
Burden (Refrain) - A repeated line or phrase in a song or poem.
British Romanticism - A late XVIII early XIX century movement emphasizing emotion and nature.
Bible Translation - The rendering of biblical texts into English, shaping early English literary style.

C

Carpe Diem - A literary motif encouraging readers to “seize the day,” common in Renaissance poetry.
Catharsis - The emotional purification experienced by an audience through tragedy (Aristotelian concept).
Chivalric Romance - A medieval narrative featuring knights, adventure, and courtly love.
Classicism - A literary movement emphasizing harmony, proportion, and adherence to classical models.
Couplet - Two successive rhyming lines of verse, often forming a complete thought.

D

Dactylic Meter - A poetic meter in which each foot consists of one stressed syllable followed by two unstressed syllables.
Dark Ages Literature - Literary works produced in early medieval Europe, often with religious or heroic themes.
Dramatic Irony - A situation in which the audience knows something that the characters do not.
Drama - Literature intended for performance on stage, emphasizing action and dialogue.
Dream Vision - A medieval poetic genre where a dream reveals allegorical or moral truths.
Dramatis Personae - A list of characters in a play, usually provided at the beginning of the text.
Denouement - The resolution or conclusion of a narrative or dramatic plot.
Didactic Poetry - Poetry designed to instruct or impart moral lessons to the reader.

E

Elegy - A reflective poem lamenting the death of a person or the passing of time.
Epic - A long narrative poem celebrating heroic deeds or significant events.
Epistolary Novel - A novel written in the form of letters or correspondence.
Epigram - A brief, witty, and often satirical statement or poem.

Epic Simile - An extended comparison, often used in classical and Renaissance epics.
Euphuism - A highly ornate style of English prose popular in the Elizabethan era.

F

Fabliau - A short, comic, often bawdy narrative poem popular in medieval French and English literature.
Fable - A short story conveying a moral, often with animals as characters.
Feminist Criticism - Literary analysis focusing on women's roles, representation, and gender dynamics.
Fantasy - A genre involving imaginative worlds, magical elements, and unreal settings.
First – Person Narrator - A narrator who tells the story using "I" or "we," presenting a personal perspective.
Foil - A character who contrasts with another character, highlighting particular traits.
Frame Story - A narrative that contains another story or stories within it.
Free Verse - Poetry without consistent meter or rhyme, allowing flexible expression.
Function (Literary) - The role a literary element plays within a text, such as thematic or symbolic purpose.

G

Gawain Poet - The anonymous medieval poet who wrote *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*.
Genre - A category of literary works characterized by similarities in form, style, or subject matter.
Georgian Poetry - Early XX – century English poetry, preceding modernism, emphasizing nature and simplicity.
Gothic Novel - A genre featuring horror, mystery, and supernatural elements, emerging in the XVIII century.
Graphic Novel - A narrative work in comic – strip format with literary and artistic elements.
Green World - A literary concept where natural or forest settings allow for transformation and resolution (e.g., Shakespearean comedies).

Grotesque - A style emphasizing distortion, exaggeration, or bizarre imagery for effect.
Guise - A literary technique involving disguise or assumed identity, often for thematic purposes.
Guidebook Literature - Instructional or advisory texts in prose, common in Renaissance England.

H

Heroic Couplet - Two rhymed lines of iambic pentameter, widely used in the XVII–XVIII century English poetry.
Heroic Epic - A long narrative poem celebrating the deeds of a hero, often reflecting national ideals.
Heroic Ideal - The set of virtues and qualities admired in literary heroes.
Historical Drama - A play based on historical events or figures.
Historical Novel - A prose narrative set in a past historical period, often featuring real events or characters.
Hyperbole - Deliberate exaggeration for emphasis or effect.
Hypallage - A figure of speech in which the natural relationship between words is reversed.
Humor - Literary use of wit, irony, or comic elements to entertain or critique.
Humanism - An intellectual movement emphasizing human values, potential, and reason, prominent in the Renaissance.
Hagiography - A biography of a saint or venerated person, often idealized for moral instruction.

I

Iamb - A metrical foot in poetry consisting of an unstressed syllable followed by a stressed syllable.
Iambic Pentameter - A line of verse with five iambic feet, widely used in English poetry, especially by Shakespeare.
Imitation - The literary practice of modeling one work after another, often classical texts.
Interlude - A short play or performance presented between the acts of a larger drama.
Irony - The expression of meaning through language that signifies the opposite of the literal meaning.

Italics - Typeface used for emphasis or to indicate titles, foreign words, or internal thought in literature.
Ironic Hero - A protagonist whose traits or actions produce unintended consequences or highlight contradictions.

J

Jacobean Drama - English drama written during the reign of King James I (1603–1625), often dark and complex.
Jamesian Prose - Prose style or writings produced during the Jacobean period.
Jargon - Specialized language used by a particular profession or group, sometimes employed in literature for effect.
Jest - A humorous or playful remark, often appearing in Renaissance and Elizabethan drama.
Journey Motif - A narrative device where characters undergo a physical or spiritual journey symbolizing personal growth.
Jubilant Tone - A cheerful or celebratory mood in literary expression.
Judgement Theme - Exploration of moral or divine judgment in literature.
Juvenalian Satire - A harsh, biting form of satire criticizing corruption or immorality, named after the Roman poet Juvenal.
Justice Theme - A literary motif dealing with law, fairness, and the consequences of actions.

K

Kenning - A figurative compound expression used in Old English and Norse poetry (e.g., "whale – road" for sea).
King Arthur Legend - Medieval stories about King Arthur, Camelot, and the Knights of the Round Table.
Künstlerroman - A novel focusing on the development of an artist or creative personality.
Kingly Drama - Plays depicting kings and political power, often highlighting moral and ethical dilemmas.
Kith and Kin - A recurring literary motif referring to family, social bonds, and community relationships.

M

Magic Realism - A literary style blending realistic narrative with fantastical or magical elements.

Masque - A form of festive courtly entertainment in Renaissance England combining poetry, music, and dance.

Metaphor - A figure of speech in which one thing is described as if it were another, implying comparison.

Metaphysical Poetry - XVII – century English poetry characterized by complex imagery and philosophical themes (e.g., John Donne).

Mock Epic - A parody of classical epic conventions, often humorous or satirical.

Monologue - A speech by a single character expressing thoughts aloud, often revealing inner feelings.

N

Narrative - A story or account of events, real or imagined, presented in prose or poetry.

Narrator - The voice or persona that tells the story, which may be first – person, third – person, or omniscient.

Naturalism - A literary movement emphasizing observation and the influence of environment and heredity on human behavior.

Neoclassicism - An XVIII – century literary movement emphasizing order, reason, and classical ideals.

Novella - A short novel or long short story, often focused on a single character or event.

Novel of Manners - A novel that emphasizes social customs, behaviors, and conventions, often satirical.

O

Ode - A lyrical poem expressing elevated emotions, often in praise of a person, object, or event.

Omniscient Narrator - A narrator who knows the thoughts, feelings, and actions of all characters.

Oxymoron - A figure of speech combining contradictory terms (e.g., “bittersweet”).

Oral Tradition - Literature passed down by word of mouth, especially in early English literature.

Objective Correlative - A set of objects, situations, or events that evoke a particular emotion in the reader.

P

Pastoral - Literature idealizing rural life and nature, common in Renaissance poetry.
Parable - A short story with a moral or spiritual lesson.
Paradox - A statement that appears contradictory but reveals a deeper truth.
Parody - A humorous or satirical imitation of a literary work or style.
Personification - Attributing human qualities to non – human entities or objects.
Plot - The sequence of events that make up a narrative.

Q

Quatrain - A stanza of four lines, often with a specific rhyme scheme.
Quest - A journey or adventure undertaken by a hero in search of a goal.
Quibble - A play on words or a pun, often humorous.
Quixotic Hero - A character pursuing idealistic and impractical goals, inspired by Don Quixote.
Quotation - The repetition of a passage from a literary or historical source.
Queen Elizabethan Drama - Plays written during the reign of Elizabeth I, characterized by poetic language and historical themes.

R

Renaissance - The cultural and literary revival in Europe from the XIV to XVII centuries emphasizing humanism.
Rhetoric - The art of effective or persuasive speaking and writing.
Rhyme - The repetition of similar sounds at the ends of words, especially at line endings.
Romanticism - A late XVIII–early XIX – century literary movement emphasizing emotion, nature, and imagination.
Round Character - A complex character with multiple facets and depth.
Resolution - The final part of a narrative where conflicts are resolved.

S

Satire - Literature that criticizes human folly or social injustice using humor, irony, or exaggeration.
Scop - An Old English poet or bard who recited heroic poetry orally.
Sonnet - A 14 – line poem with a specific rhyme scheme, commonly used in English Renaissance poetry.
Stanza - A grouped set of lines in a poem, often separated by a space.
Subplot - A secondary plot within a story that complements or contrasts with the main plot.
Symbol - An object, character, or event representing a larger concept or idea.

T

Theme - The central idea or underlying message in a literary work.
Tone - The author's attitude toward the subject or audience.
Tragedy - A drama or narrative with a serious theme ending in disaster for the protagonist.
Tragic Flaw - A weakness or error in judgment leading to the downfall of a tragic hero.
Trochee - A metrical foot with a stressed syllable followed by an unstressed syllable.
Trilogy - A series of three related literary or dramatic works.

U

Ubi Sunt - A literary motif questioning the fate of past generations.
Utopia - An idealized, perfect society, often portrayed in literature as a critique of reality.
Unreliable Narrator - A narrator whose credibility is compromised, intentionally or unintentionally.
Understatement - A figure of speech presenting something as smaller or less important than it is.
Urban Literature - Literary works focusing on city life and its social issues.
Unity of Action - A principle from classical drama emphasizing a single main plotline.

V

Verse - A line of poetry or a stanza, also used to refer to poetry in general.

Villanelle - A 19 – line poetic form with repeated lines and a strict rhyme scheme.
Visionary Literature - Works depicting imagined or mystical experiences, often allegorical.
Voice - The distinctive style or personality of a narrator or author.
Vignette - A short, descriptive literary sketch focusing on a moment or character.
Volta - The turn of thought or argument in a sonnet, especially in Petrarchan form.

W

Wergild - "Man – price," a theme in Anglo – Saxon law and literature reflecting compensation for a slain person.
Wit - Clever or humorous intellectual expression in literature.
Wordplay - The playful use of words, puns, or linguistic cleverness.
War Epic - A long poem focusing on heroic deeds in war.
Wycliffite Bible - Early English translation of the Bible, influencing literary prose.
Whimsy - Playful, fanciful, or imaginative elements in literature.

Z

Zeugma - A figure of speech where one word governs multiple others, often creating a stylistic effect.
Zoomorphism - Attributing animal qualities to humans or inanimate objects.
Zodiac References - The use of astrological signs as symbolic elements in literature.
Zeitgeist - The spirit, mood, or cultural climate of a particular historical period.
Zany Character - A comic or eccentric figure used to entertain or satirize.
Zolaesque Naturalism - A style of literature influenced by Émile Zola, emphasizing detailed social and environmental forces on humans.

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ENGLISH LITERATURE: FROM MENTOR TO STUDENT

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