

ENGLISH LITERATURE
(2nd/3rd ELECTIVE)

SASTRI IIIrd YEAR
Paper - III

**THE SILENT SONG
(POEMS 1-15)**



Directorate of Distance Education

Rashtriya Sanskrit Vidyapeetha
Accredited at A level by NAAC
Tirupati - 517 501 (A.P.)

COURSE: SASTRI THIRD YEAR
ENGLISH LITERATURE – PAPER III
POETRY
(The Silent Song)

STRUCTURE:

Unit one – London

Unit Two – The Stolen Boat

Unit Three – Kubla Khan

Unit Four – Ode to the West Wind

Unit Five – Ode to the Nightingale

Unit Six – Ulysses

Unit Seven – Last Ride Together

Unit Eight – Dover Beach

Unit Nine – Journey of the Magi

Unit Ten – I think continually of those who were Truly Great

Unit Eleven – Because I could not Stop for Death

Unit Twelve – Mending Wall

Unit Thirteen – A Gift of India

Unit Fourteen – Elkana

Unit Fifteen – Advice to Fellow Swimmers

INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE:

In this course you are going to experience, analyze and evaluate some very famous poems ranging from the British poets to Indian poets. You can also know poets belonging to different periods and different movements. You will be

acquainted with the romantic poets Blake, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley and Keats. Among the Victorian poets you will study Tennyson, Browning and Arnold. T.S. Eliot and Stephen Spender are the two modernist poets whom you are going to read. Emily Dickinson and Robert Frost are the two American poets you will learn about. We have Indian poets too in this course. Sarojini Naidu, Nissim Ezekiel and Kamala Das are ones prescribed for you in the syllabus.

OBJECTIVES OF THE COURSE:

This course, as you would have realized from the given syllabus, is a course in poetry. At the end of the course you should be able to

- Understand the Genre Poetry
- Appreciate the various style in writing poetry
- Understand various compulsions personal, social and literary behind each poem
- Evaluate various poems

UNIT- I: LONDON

William Blake

STRUCTURE:

1.0 Objectives

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Birth and education

1.1.2 Marriage and early career

1.1.3 Later life and career

1.1.4 Death

1.1.5 Romantic Revival

1.2 Summary of the poem

1.2.1 The Chartered Street of London

1.2.2 Mind Forg'd Manacles

1.2.3 The Church

1.2.4 The Hapless Soldiers

1.2.5 The Harlots

1.3 Title Justification

1.4 Summing up

1.5 Questions

1.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will help you to understand the poem London. At the end of the unit, you should be able to

- Describe the outline of the poem.
- Explain the woeful stories of infants, men, chimney sweepers and harlots.
- Recognize the concept of romantic revival as used by Blake in the poem.
- Obtain the knowledge of London society at that time.

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

1.1.1 BIRTH AND EDUCATION:

William Blake was born in England in 1757. He was born in a middle-class family. He was the third of seven children. Blake's father was a hosier. He never attended school, being educated at home by his mother. The Bible was of profound influence on Blake, would remain a source of inspiration throughout his life.

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| SAQ What influenced Blake in his childhood? |
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Blake began engraving copies of drawings of Greek antiquities purchased for him by his father. With in these drawings Blake found his first exposure to classical forms, through the work of Raphael, Michelangelo, and Marten Heemskerck. Blake's early work displays influence of Ben Jonson and Edmund Spenser. On 4 August 1772, he became apprenticed to engraver James Basire of Great Queen Street. At the age of 21, he became a professional engraver. In 1778 he became a student at the Royal Academy near the strand.

1.1.2 MARRIAGE AND EARLY CAREER:

Blake married Catherine in 1782. In addition to teaching, Catherine was trained as an engraver by Blake. She became a perfect companion to him throughout her life. She helped him to print his illuminated works and maintaining his spirits throughout numerous misfortunes. At this time George Cumberland, one of the founders of the National Gallery, became an admirer of Blake's works. Blake's first collection of poems, "Poetical Sketches", was published around 1783. Blake illustrated Original stories from Real Life by Mary Wollstonecraft. They seem to have shared some views on sexual equality and the institution of marriage, but there is no evidence proving it without doubt that they actually met. Blake experimented with the method of relief etching. This method was called illuminated printing. It involved writing the text of the poem on copper plates

with pens and brushes using an acid resistant medium. Relief etching became an important commercial printing method.

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| SAQ What did Blake write poetry on? |
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1.1.3 LATER LIFE AND CAREER:

Blake's marriage to Catherine remained a close and devoted one until his death. Blake taught her to write, and she helped him to colour his printed poems. Blake returned to London in 1802 and began to write and illustrate Jerusalem, his most ambitious work. Blake hated slavery and believed in racial and sexual equality. Several of his poems and paintings express a notion of universal humanity. He rejected all forms of imposed authority. Blake's views on what he saw as oppression and restriction of rightful freedom extended to the church. His spiritual beliefs are evidences in Songs of Experience. Later in his life Blake began to sell a great number of his works.

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| SAQ What was expressed in several of his poems? |
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1.1.4 DEATH:

On the day of his death, Blake worked relentlessly on his Dante series. He died in the year 1827. Before his death he promised his wife that he would accompany her for his life time. A great irony of life.

1.1.5 ROMANTIC REVIVAL:

Though quite unknown during his own times, Blake was a pioneer of the Romantic Revival in England. It is quite appropriate that we should know what are 'romance' and 'romantic revival' before we learn about Blake's 'London'. 'Romance' in normal day to day usage means 'love'. But when we talk of 'romance' and the 'romantic' in literature we not only mean love but also a sense of 'wonder', 'adventure', 'non rational', 'mysterious' 'supernatural' etc.

The later half of the 18th century marked a change in the mood, temper and attitude of the people. This change was heralded by the French Revolution, which stood for liberty, equality, fraternity and brotherhood. Under the influence of French revolution all narrow, rigid conventions and rules were questioned, all restrictions and suppressions opposed and the freedom of the individual, his mind and imagination were asserted.

So, in Romantic poetry we find the poet's revolting against all forms of oppression – social, political, economic and expressing their own subjective experiences, feelings and emotions. They were deeply influenced by nature. You will come across many other aspects of Romantic Revival in the following units.

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| SAQ Can you give the names of two more romantic poets, who you have studied in your previous years? |
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1.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The poem “London” is a lyric. A lyric is a short poem expressing an emotion or a state of mind or process of perception. “London” presents a picture of the city of London. William Blake does not project the ‘the greatness’ of the city of London but exposes the seamy side of London. He becomes the mouth piece of his society bringing to light the humiliation, the suffering and the depression faced by the down-trodden in the city of London. So, in the poem you will come across pathetic characters like the chimney sweepers, the soldier, the harlot and the infant. Each has a different tale of woe.

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| SAQ Whose woeful tales are presented by the poet in the poem London? |
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1.2.1 THE CHARTERED STREETS OF LONDON:

As it has been already said Blake was a vehement critic of his society. He had love for London but he hated the rules laid in the city as they helped the rich

and not the poor. The poet was walking through the chartered streets where trade and business was done. These streets were located near the river Thames, which flows by the city of London. The corporation of the city had divided the streets and the markets into different trading zones and allotted them to the rich. So, the streets and the market were not free for the poor. So, while walking in the chartered streets, the poet noticed marks of weakness and woe in every poor man's face.

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| SAQ What did the poet notice in each face that he met? |
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The poet felt sad for the society. He felt that the people were not happy in London city. Normally a place of business always teems with bustle and activity, but there was weakness and woe in London chartered streets. By these lines you can understand that the people were not leading a happy and satisfactory life in London. The rich dominated the poor in the chartered streets. The rules did not protect the poor but exploited them. This made them unhappy.

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| SAQ Why were the poor in miserable condition in the society? |
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1.2.2 MIND FORG'D MANACLES OF THE SOCIETY:

The poet as he walked along heard, only cries – cries of weakness, woe, disappointment and despair. In every such cry he heard the manacles or chains created by man. The term 'mind forg'd manacles' reminds us of Rousseau's call during French revolution "Man is born free but is found in chains every where". The rulers instead of taking care of their subjects, turned tyrants and imposed the manacles of restrictions causing misery and suffering to the poor.

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| SAQ Who created manacles? |
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1.2.3 THE CHURCH:

The church was no better. The church, whose duty was to serve the poor, did not care for them. Many poor boys were forced to work as chimney sweepers in appalling conditions. The blackened face and skin of the chimney sweeper, the speaker felt, was a black mark on the church. The cry of the chimney sweeper suggested the failure of the church.

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| SAQ What did the cry of the chimney sweeper suggest? |
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1.2.4 THE HAPLESS SOLDIERS:

The soldiers fought for the king. They were injured in the battle. They shed their blood. They suffered and groaned. But their services were not recognized by the king. They were left to their fate to suffer and to die. The blood of the soldiers was symbolic of ingratitude of the king. It was a taint on the king and his administration that should have cared for them but did not.

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| SAQ Were the soldiers happy? |
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1.2.5 THE HARLOTS:

The poor girls in London were in wretched condition. They did not have either money or independence or livelihood. They were forced to become harlots for survival. Once they become harlots they curse marriage which was denied to them. It was a curse for them to have children as it increased their wretchedness. They cursed children born out of marriage, for that status had been denied to them and their children. Marriage appeared a hearse for them. The miserable condition of the girls who became harlots was well portrayed by Blake in this stanza.

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| SAQ What two things were cursed by the harlots? |
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The poem, obviously, is written in simple language yet it is very forceful. The poet has a keen eye to observe the suffering in the society. He lists out a series of woeful figures in London to suggest suffering and oppression. The poet's use of words is selective and is very energetic. For instance look at the phrases, "chartered street", "mind forg'd manacles", "blackening church" and "marriage hearse".

1.3 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poet presents the London society of his time with all its gloomy colours. As London is the theme of the poem the title 'London' suits well. Further as it has oppression at various levels, London itself turns into a symbol of Urizen which in Blake's mythology stands for all things which are oppressive and tyrannical

1.5 SUMMING UP:

“London” is a fine piece of lyrical poetry by Blake. The poem presents picture of oppression and suffering created by man himself. The poem reflects the romantic notion of rebelling against all oppression. Blake employs simple but very forceful language to present such a picture.

1.6 QUESTIONS: (15 marks)

1. Give an appreciation of the poem London?
2. How do infants, chimney sweepers, soldier, and harlot fare in London? What does it tell about the society?
3. Show how London turns out to be a symbol of Urizen?
4. Show ‘London’ to be a lyrical romantic poem?

UNIT –2: THE STOLEN BOAT (From The Prelude, Book I)

William Wordsworth

STRUCTURE:

2.0 Objectives

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 Personal Life

2.1.2 Influences

2.1.3 Works

2.2 Summary of the poem

2.2.1 Finding the Boat

2.2.2 Troubled Pleasure

2.2.3 Moving of the Huge-peak

2.2.4 Life at Home

2.2.5 Spirit of Universe

2.3 Title Justification

2.4 Summing Up

2.5 Questions

2.0. OBJECTIVES:

This unit will make you to understand the philosophy employed by Wordsworth in the poem “The Stolen Boat”. At the end of the unit, you will be able to

- Acknowledge poet’s profound awareness of Nature.
- Comprehend the nature of the poet as a small boy.
- Know the traits of romantic revival as displayed in the poem.
- Realize the importance of Nature in man’s life.

2.1. INTRODUCTION:

You are going to study about another British poet. In the long and distinguished history of English poetry Wordsworth occupies very important

position. He is unique in many ways. He launched the Romantic age in English Literature in 1798 along with another poet Coleridge. His master piece is “The Prelude”, an autobiographical poem, from which the present poem is extracted. The poem was first titled “The Growth of a Poet’s Mind” and refers to very important experiences of Wordsworth’s life and how they have shaped his poetry and philosophy of life. The poem was revised and expanded a number of times. It was not published during his life time.

2.1.1 PERSONAL LIFE:

William Wordsworth was born in 1770 at Cockernmouth, Cumberland. He was educated at the grammar school of Hawkshead and St.John’s college, Cambridge. He married Mary Hutchinson in 1802. In 1807, he moved to Rydal Mount, and remained one till his death in 1850.

2.1.2 INFLUENCES:

Wordsworth’s personality and poetry were shaped by certain strong influences which he had felt. The first and the foremost one was the beautiful landscape of his home country which made him not only a lover of nature but also in course of time become aware of the wisdom and spirit of universe expressed through nature. His visit to France in 1791 led to his being influenced by the spirit of French revolution. His close and enduring friendship with S.T. Coleridge marked a definite phase in this development as a poet. Together they published “Lyrical Ballads” in 1798 which brought in the Romantic Revival in English poetry. He and his sister Dorothy were bound to each other by mutual affection and shared love of Nature.

2.1.3 WORKS:

Wordsworth’s earlier poems include “An Evening Walk” and “Descriptive Sketches”. He wrote a major part of the “Lyrical Ballads”. By 1805 he finished

the first draft of “The Prelude” which he went on revising it for the rest of his life. Wordsworth proposed to compose a long poem “The Recluse” and he wrote “The Prelude” and “The Excursion” as part of this work, which he did not complete.

2.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

“The Prelude” is an autobiographical and philosophical poem. It is written in blank verse. It was originally titled “The Growth of the Poet’s Mind” which is retained even now as a sub title. Wordsworth spent 35 years “polishing the style and qualifying some of its radical statements about the divine sufficiency of the human mind in its communion with nature”. ‘The Prelude’ was intended to be the prologue to a long three-part philosophical poem Wordsworth planned “The Recluse”. The work is a poetic reflection on Wordsworth’s own sense of his poetic vocation as it developed over the course of his life. ‘The Prelude’ narrates many memorable experiences of the poet. One such memorable experience is given for you in the poem.

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| SAQ What does the Prelude present? |
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2.2.1 FINDING THE BOAT:

One of the basic aspects of Romantic revival is love for nature or return to nature. Wordsworth was as it has already been said a great lover of Nature. Through out his life, he returned to the folds of Nature for solace and inspiration. In the present poem, the poet describes his childhood experience of Nature. On a summer evening the poet found a little boat, which was tied to a willow tree on the banks of a lake. Unnoticed by any one he untied it and stepped into the boat. He pushed the boat from the shore. The poet enjoyed rowing the boat, but he felt it to be a trouble and an act of stealth.

2.2.2 TROUBLED PLEASURE:

Wordsworth employs a paradox “troubled pleasure” to express the emotion of the boy. The poet combines contrasting emotions because the boy’s pleasure in rowing the boat was troubled by the feeling of guilt.

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| SAQ What made the feel boy guilty – is it rowing the boat or stealing the boat? |
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The boy did not steal the boat. As there was nobody he thought that he could take the boat for rowing. Even then his conscience made him sad that he stealthily took the boat with out permission. There was joy of adventure in the experience. So, the joy was a troubled joy. The boat was moving easily. The mountains surrounding were echoing its movement. The water was making circles on either side of the boat. Soon they melted into one line of moon light reflected in the water. The boy was proud of his skill in rowing. He thought of reaching chosen point without turning back.

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| SAQ Was the boy lonely or in the company of any body? |
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2.2.3 MOVING OF THE HUGE PEAK:

While rowing the boat the boy noticed a summit of craggy ridge. The boundary of it appeared to him was the grey sky and the stars only. The boat was moving like a fairy. It went on heaving through the water like a swan. As the boy was looking at the summit of craggy ridge, all of a sudden a huge peak rose behind the crag. The crag appeared to be an enormous being. It towered between the boy and the stars. It seemed to him as if it had life and power of its own. Like a living thing it appeared to move towards him.

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| SAQ Who was moving towards the boy? Is it really a living thing? Did it really move? |
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The boy was stricken to see the huge being coming towards him. He considered it to be both powerful and mysterious. With trembling hands he turned the boat. He came to the willow tree again. He left the boat in the cave and returned home. According to Wordsworth nature is very powerful. There is a hidden mystery in Nature. He would like to say that one can not understand the mysteriousness of nature. In reality a peak can not rise and move on its own. The movement is symbolic of the spirit of nature. It operates independently. The boy felt that the peak rose and strode after him. The movement of peak is nothing but the spirit of the Universe that follows him.

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| SAQ Do you accept the idea that a peak could rise and move? |
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2.2.4 LIFE AT HOME:

The boy was young. He did not have mature knowledge to philosophize on it. But he knew that nature had life of its own. For many days the spectacle of the huge peak remained fresh in his mind. For several days the boy felt mighty forms moving in his mind. They are symbolic of Spirit of nature. The figure was of unknown modes of being in his mind. There was a blank feeling which he called solitude. His mind was blank and did not recall any pleasant memories like images of trees, of sea, of sky or no colours of green fields. The huge peak became a trouble to his dreams. These forms seemed to be lifeless. Even then they troubled him very much. This was the boy's first experience of the Nature.

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| SAQ How was the boy's mind? |
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| a. Happy b. Blank c. Perplexed |
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2.2.5 SPIRIT OF UNIVERSE:

As a boy, Wordsworth did not fully understand what that experience meant. But now as an adult and as one who understands the workings of Nature, Wordsworth addresses Nature as “wisdom and spirit of the Universe”. Wordsworth has a keen eye towards nature. His perception of nature is extremely different from others. He presents nature as a teacher, philosopher and path-finder. Nature is the main theme of his works. The experience of the poet turned out to be a spiritual experience. The journey that he made in the boat left him with visions of huge and mighty forms moving slowly through his mind. They brought an awareness of the wisdom and spirit of the universe. The spirit of nature is the eternity of thought. It gives form to every thing. It disciplines man, purifies his soul, arouses in him a fear and reverence till man understands the wisdom of universe. To Wordsworth whoever loves Nature can have the same experience and also apprehend the grandeur of Nature and Universe.

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| SAQ Who gives wisdom according to the poet? |
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2.3 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem presents the poet as a young boy. The boy was allured to take the boat for a riding. While riding the stolen boat he felt a conscious overseeing power of Nature on him. So, he abruptly ended his journey and came back. His agitated mind cannot be solaced. He was tormented every moment. His pains had taken the shape of huge and mighty forms. This experience though he did not understand fully was a definite stage in his spiritual journey. Thus the title ‘ The Stolen Boat’ serves the poem better than any other as the fear and awe and the realization of the spirit of Nature are occasioned by ‘The Stolen Boat’.

2.4 SUMMING UP:

As it has been presented in the earlier paragraphs, the poem is an autobiographical poem, giving expression to the poet’s realization of the spirit of Nature.

2.5 QUESTIONS: (15 Marks)

1. What is the singular experience of Wordsworth described in ‘The Stolen Boat’?
2. How did the singular experience strengthen his faith in the wisdom of the universe?
3. What romantic element do you find in the poem ‘The Stolen Boat’?

UNIT – 3:KUBLA KHAN

S.T. Coleridge

STRUCTURE:

3.0 Objectives

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 Birth and Early Childhood

3.1.2 Friendship with Wordsworth

3.1.3 As a poet

3.1.4 Death

3.2 Summary

3.2.1 Introduction to the poem

3.2.2 Xanadu

3.2.3 Kubla Khan

3.2.4 The Dome of Pleasure

3.2.5 The Chasm

3.2.6 The Fountain

3.2.7 The Voice of the Spirits

3.2.8 The Tomb of imagination

3.3 Critical Evaluation

3.4 Title Justification

3.5 Summing up

3.6 Questions

3.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will make you to understand the poem. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Appreciate the technique used by Coleridge
- Comprehend the supernatural mechanism employed by Coleridge.
- Get an idea on the imaginary land Xanadu.
- Obtain the knowledge of legendary figure Kubla Khan.
- Realize the difference between Coleridge and Shelley.

3.1 INTRODUCTION:

3.1.1 BIRTH AND EARLY CHILDHOOD:

You have already studied two poets of romantic revival. Samuel Taylor Coleridge is another romantic poet. Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born on October 21, 1772 at St Ottery. His father was a vicar and a school master. He had read 'The Bible' and 'The Arabian Nights' before he turned five. When he was nine years old his father died and was sent to the charity school of Christ's Hospital, London. One day he spent some time on the banks of a river. He caught pneumonia, and throughout his life he suffered from some disease or the other, particularly rheumatism. He spent eight years in Christ's Hospital. While other boys played games, he kept indoors and read voraciously the works of Homer, Virgil and Shakespeare and the sonnets of Bowles. He gained the respect of his school master for his erudition, but was teased by fellow students for not joining the boyish games and pranks. At nineteen, he entered Cambridge University as a charity student. He got into debts and ran away from college to enlist himself in the army under the false name Silas Tomkyn Comberbache. After serving for three months, he was discharged and returned to college but left the University. At the university he was introduced to political and theological ideas then considered radical, including those of the poet Robert Southey about a utopian commune like society called Pantisocracy.

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| SAQ What is the utopian society liked by Coleridge? |
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3.1.2 FRIENDSHIP WITH WORDSWORTH:

In 1797 he met Wordsworth and the greatest literary friendship in the history of English Literature was established. These two poets, along with Southey ushered in the Romantic revival in English literature. “The Lyrical Ballads”, a volume of poems for which Wordsworth and Coleridge had collaborated, was published 1798. Later he parted ways with Wordsworth over personal as well as literary issues.

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| SAQ Who was the companion of Coleridge in writing poetry? |
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3.1.3 AS A POET:

Coleridge went to Germany and learnt the German language and Metaphysics. In 1799, he first met Sarah Hutchinson and fell in love with her. Early in the nineteenth century Coleridge’s health broke down. To ease the physical pain he took opium and became an addict. Coleridge’s fame as a poet rests on “The Ancient Mariner”, “Kubla Khan”, “Christabel”, “Frost at Midnight” and “Dejection: an ode”. Coleridge was not only a poet, but also a journalist, a critic, a philosopher and a dramatist.”.

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| SAQ What did he learn in Germany? |
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3.1.4 DEATH:

In 1819, Coleridge got the greatest shock of his life when his promising son Hartley, for reasons of intemperance was expelled from the Oxford

Fellowship. His health became worse; and he took more and more opium till he breathed his last on 25th July 1834.

3.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

3.2.1 INTRODUCTION TO THE POEM:

Kubla Khan is one of the finest Romantic poems in English literature. To be away from the realistic world and dealing with the non-natural and supernatural are common romantic traits. While composing together “The Lyrical Ballads” Wordsworth and Coleridge have divided between themselves certain areas for poetic expression. While Wordsworth chose to deal with natural scenes, Coleridge decided to deal with non-natural, supernatural and non-rational themes. Kubla Khan reflects this choice.

Though the poem is shorter it is very well known . It has a strange dreamy imagery and can be read on many levels. The poem is a recall of dream by Coleridge. The poet took opium to forget his pain, while he was reading about the legendary Kubla Khan. In his sleep he saw a dream and in the dream he saw Xanadu, the kingdom of Kubla Khan with all the images flashing across his mind. Soon he woke up and tried to put them down on a paper. He wrote whatever he could recollect. He could not complete it as he was disturbed by a visitor; he lost his memory. However, it is now acknowledged that Coleridge had composed previous drafts of ‘Kubla Khan’, perhaps a reflection of his desire to flag the power of imagination.

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| SAQ Who saw Xanadu in dream? |
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3.2.2 XANADU

Xanadu is located somewhere in Central Asia. It is presented as a world where one can get all improbabilities. In the poem it is an imaginary place far

from the dreariness of every day life. You too can visit Xanadu in imagination while you read the description of the place in the poem. ‘A sunless sea’ and ‘the woman wailing for a demon lover’ are some such expressions which reflect non-rational aspects of Xanadu. The concept of the poem delights you and thrills you.

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| SAQ What did the woman do? |
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| S.A.Q. Where was Xanadu located? |
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3.2.3 KUBLA KHAN:

Kubla Khan was a legendary king. He was the king of Xanadu a kingdom in central Asia. He was a grandson of Cenghis Khan, a great conqueror. The poem starts with an order issued by Kubla Khan. He orders his subjects to build a ‘pleasure dome’ in Xanadu. Kubla Khan wants to build it as a symbol of his glory. Xanadu is a fertile land. The sacred river Alph flows across the land passes through caverns and flows into the sea. The sea is a dark unlit one, where there is an ever lasting night.

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| SAQ Where is the river flowing and up to where? |
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3.2.4 THE DOME OF PLEASURE:

Kubla Khan wishes to build a pleasure dome in his kingdom, Xanadu. The land is fertile land girdled with the walls and towers. There are bright gardens

with full of aromatic flowers and winding streams. The forests of the land are as ancient as the hills. It has green pastures too.

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| SAQ How were the forests in Xanadu? |
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3.2.5 THE CHASM:

There is a chasm in the hill which is deep and enchanting so called romantic. This chasm slanted across the hill-side covered by many cedar trees. Coleridge describes this enchanting place in a paradox. He calls it a savage place, holy and enchanted place. For him no other place could combine the contrasting qualities like Xanadu. It is such a strange place that woman wails for her demon lover. In general the captured women curse the demon their captor. Contrary to that the woman wails for her lover. It seems that the demon has used a spell on the woman.

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| SAQ How was Xanadu according to Coleridge? |
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3.2.6 THE FOUNTAIN:

There is a ceaseless confusion from the chasm. The earth seems to breathe heavily there. A mighty fountain comes out suddenly. In the middle of it with a river originates. The fountain throws up pieces of rocks and falls into the river Alph. The pieces of rock springing from the chasm appear like rebounding hale or the grain and chaff under the thresher's flail. The sacred river flows with a mazy movement for five miles through the wood and dale. At last it reaches the ocean which is lifeless.

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| SAQ Give the name of the river originates from the fountain? |
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3.2.7 THE VOICE OF THE SPIRITS

In ancient days people believed that the ancestral spirits warn people of dangers and protect them. Kubla Khan, amidst the tumult of the chasm, hears the voices of his ancestors. They prophesize war as the forthcoming danger for him. It is a bad omen for him. The shadow of the pleasure dome again appears on the waves of the flowing river. The waves seem to move creating music. The dome is a miracle as it is sunny pleasure dome built with blocks of ice.

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| SAQ Who warn Kubla Khan of war? |
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3.2.8 THE ABYSSINIAN MAID

The poet ruminates if he could recollect the song and symphony of the Abyssinian Maid whom he has seen in a vision. In the vision, the maid was playing, dulcimer a musical instrument on Mount Abora. (This mount is a reference taken from Milton’s “Paradise Lost Book”, IV.)

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| SAQ Where did the poet see the maid? |
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3.2.9 THE TOMB OF IMAGINATION:

The poet thinks of reviving the symphony of the Abyssinian maid because, the song would fill him such delight that could build the dome in his imagination.

The dome would not be built on land but in air, in his imagination and through his poetry so that whoever hears his poet would see the pleasure dome of Xanadu. When they look at the poet in his creative imagination they would comment that the poet is in a poetic frenzy, his eyes flashing his hair lifted and with a halo round his head. The poet imagines that he would appear to them as one who is fed with honey dew and drunk the milk of Paradise.

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| SAQ How would the poet appear when in poetic frenzy? |
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3.3 CRITICAL EVALUATION:

‘Kubla Khan or A Vision in A Dream, A Fragment’, is short but widely known poem. It has strange, dreamy imagery and can be read at many levels. You feel a romantic aura when reading of the poem is finished. Coleridge himself calls the poem a drug induced reverie. The first stanza of the poem is most ornately patterned part of the poem. The paradise that Kubla Khan created is a delightful playscape.

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| SAQ What is created by Coleridge? |
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3.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem is about the legendary hero Kubla Khan and his kingdom of Xanadu. It has strange, dreamy imagery and can be read at many levels. The three hours of profound sleep made the poet to produce the poem, the interruption made him to forget what his dream was. Though there are many symbols through out the poem, Coleridge selected the name of the King to his poem for it creates the aura of distant past and unnatural, non-rational activities.

3.5 SUMMING UP:

The poem has resulted from a dream which Coleridge saw. And in the poem the poet tries to replicate the vision for his readers.

3.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Present a brief note on Kubla Khan?
2. Can you support the vision of Coleridge, a dream vision?
3. Summarise the poem Kubla Khan in your own words?
4. What kind of a dome did Kubla Khan want to build, is there any similarity between the dome of the poet and the dome of Kubla Khan?
5. Give a critical evaluation of the poem?

10 Marks

6. Describe the land of Xanadu?
7. Describe the fountain and Chasm in your own words?

UNIT – 4: ODE TO THE WEST WIND

P.B. Shelley

STRUCTURE:

4.0.Objectives

- 4.1. Introduction
 - 4.1.1. Early Days
 - 4.1.2. Marriage
 - 4.1.3. Stay in Italy
 - 4.1.4. Death
- 4.2. Ode
- 4.3. Summary of the Poem
 - 4.3.1 West Wind as a preserver and destroyer
 - 4.3.2 West Wind in sky scape
 - 4.3.3 West Wind in sea scape
 - 4.3.4 Prayer
 - 4.3.5. Message of the Poet
- 4.4 Autobiographical element
- 4.5 Imagery
- 4.6 Title Justification
- 4.7 Summing Up
- 4.8 Questions

4.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will help you to understand the summary of the poem. At the end of the unit you should be able to

- Acknowledge the poetic form ode.
- Learn the images used by the poet in the poem.
- Obtain the knowledge of the autobiographical element in the poem.
- Get an idea of Shelley's revolutionary ideas.

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

You are going to study a few details of P.B. Shelley in the following lines.

4.1.1 EARLY DAYS

Percy Bysshe Shelley, the wild and wayward romanticist of nineteenth century had a short and ill fated life. He was the eldest son of Timothy Shelley, a rich landlord, who later succeeded to a baronetcy. Percy inherited from his mother large beautiful eyes, long flashy hair, delicate features and slender figure. He had his early education at home in the company for his sisters and for three years he studied at Sion House, Brentford from where he went to Eton in 1804. At Eton, he was known as “Mad Shelley” and “Shelley, the Atheist” for his disregard for the customs, rules and regulations of school and his erratic behavior. He entered University College; Oxford in 1810 and in 1811 was expelled for publishing a pamphlet, “the Necessity of Atheism”.

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| SAQ Why was Shelly called “Mad Shelley”? |
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4.1.2 MARRIAGE:

After falling out with his father, he went to London and lived on an allowance from his sisters. He eloped with Harriet Westbrook and married her at Edinburgh in September 1811. During the next two years, they shifted from place to place, Shelley was a man with revolutionary ideals and in 1813, he spent most of his time in the house of another revolutionary, William Godwin, from whom he seemed to have learned much. There, he fell in love with Godwin’s daughter by his first wife, Mary Wollstonecraft, and despite the pleas of his wife, he eloped with her to Switzerland. When he came back he received a large estate after the death of his grandfather. In 1813, he wrote ‘Queen Mab’ and in 1814 ‘Alastor’ or ‘The Spirit of Solitude’ was written.

4.1.3 STAY IN ITALY:

His wife Harriet committed suicide and Shelley was deeply affected. Later he married Mary. He left England in March 1818 never to return. He roamed about in Italy and there wrote all his best works, 'The Revolt of Islam', originally called 'Loan and Cynthna', 'Epipsy-chidion', 'Hellas', 'Adonais', 'The Cenci', 'Prometheus Unbound', 'The Witch of Atlas', 'To a Skylark', 'Ode to the West Wind' and 'To Liberty'.

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| SAQ Where did Shelley write his best works? |
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4.1.4 DEATH:

Under tragic circumstances he was drowned and died. A fortnight later, Shelley's body was washed ashore and was burnt according to the Quarantine Law of Italy on a pyre in the presence of Byron and Leigh Hunt, fellow poets.

4.2. ODE:

The Ode is a long lyric serious in subject and treatment. The ode as a literary form has a long history. It originated in Greece in the songs of the chorus. The prototype of the ode as a poetic form was established by Pindar. Pindaric ode has triad stanza structure – strophe, anti-strophe and epode. When the ode was adopted into English, some poets used the Pindaric prototype and some others used the later form Horatian ode, which was in the recurring stanza form. The romantic poets used what came to be called English Irregular ode. English irregular ode has no fixed form. It takes shape according to the subject and mood in it. Wordsworth's 'Immortality Ode', Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind' and all the five odes of Keats come under this category.

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| SAQ How does an English ode take shape? |
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4.3 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The English poets of Romantic period were very subjective. This quality of romantic poetry can be seen in Shelley's 'Ode to the West Wind'. This poem originated in the poet's feeling of despair and his wish and hope to overcome it. The poem consists of five stanzas and is addressed to the west wind. In the first three stanzas, the poet describes, the effect of the power of the West Wind on the earth, sky and sea. In the last two stanzas he gives vent to his subjective emotions which include his prayer to the wind.

4.3.1 WEST WIND AS A PRESERVER AND DESTROYER:

In the first stanza the poet deals with the double function of the Wild West Wind, as the destroyer and preserver. Like an enchanter the West Wind drives away the dead autumnal leaves. The leaves are of different colours. They are yellow, black and hectic red. They are pale and pestilence-stricken multitudes. Like a charioteer the West Wind carries the "winged seeds" to their "wintry bed".

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| SAQ What are carried to their wintry bed? |
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The seeds lie under the earth each like a corpse in its grave. They will be awakened to life by the West Wind's "azure sister", the Spring. The seeds will then become plants to bear sweet buds; which will spread sweet fragrance all over

the world. The West Wind blows as it pleases. It destroys leaves and preserves the seeds. It is wild and uncontrollable.

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| SAQ Who acts like a destroyer and preserver? Who is the sister of west wind? |
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4.3.2 WEST WIND IN THE SKY SCAPE:

The second stanza describes the commotion created by the West Wind in the sky. The poet imagines a huge tree whose roots are in the earth and whose branches are in heaven. The clouds are leaves of this bough of heaven and earth. Just as the West Wind scatters leaves on the earth, it scatters clouds across the sky. The scattered clouds look like untidy hair of Maenad, the wild priestess of Bacchus, the God of wine and revellery.

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| SAQ How are the clouds? |
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The clouds which bring rain and lightening are spread from horizon to zenith indicating an approaching storm. As the West Wind blows across the darkening evening sky, the poet calls it the funeral song of the dying year because; in England autumn comes towards the end of the year. The cloud-filled night sky looks like the tomb of the dying year.

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| SAQ What is dying? |
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4.3.3 WESTWIND IN THE SEA SCAPE:

In the third stanza, the Wind is pictured as awakening the Mediterranean from its summer dreams. It seems the sea is in its summer dreams as the

crystalline streams near Pumice Island in Baiae's bay are lulling it to sleep. In the dream, the sea dreams of the palaces and towers which were destroyed by volcanoes.

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| SAQ Who is in summer dreams? |
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The ruins of the palaces under the water are covered by blue green mass. The waters of the Atlantic are almost level. The powerful West Wind blows over it ruffling it up. The Atlantic blooms with "sapless foliage" under its waters. As the West Wind blows, these sea weeds and plants shed their leaves as if they are "grey with fear" to hear the voice of the West Wind.

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| SAQ Who is trembling with fear? |
| (A) The sea water (B) the ruined palaces (C) the foliage |

4.3.4 PRAYER:

The poem shifts its focus in the fourth stanza. The poet turns subjective. The poet makes a comparison between himself and the West Wind. He hopes if he were only a dead leaf he might bear the mightiness of the west wind, if he were a cloud he might fly with it and if he was a wave he might pant under its power and share the strength of the west wind. Because, the poet is like the West Wind in spirit. But he is less free than the West Wind.

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| SAQ What three forms did the poet like to have in order to feel the strength of the west wind? |
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In his boy hood days the poet wandered with the West Wind in spirit. He was untamed and swift. He never doubted his ability to outstrip the speed of the West Wind. Now the poet is sad. He feels humiliated. The adversities of life have

made him miserable so he cries out “I fall upon the thorns of life, I bleed”. So, he prays to the West Wind to lift him as a wave, leaf, a cloud so that he may become like the West Wind “tameless, and swift and proud”.

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| SAQ What is the prayer made by the poet to the west wind? |
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4.3.5 .MESSAGE OF THE POET:

In the last stanza, the poet continues his prayer to the West Wind. He compares himself to the forest. The poet feels that his thoughts are going waste. For the time being nobody seems to pay heed to his ideas of freedom. They seem to be dead. He has a hope that in future his thoughts may come alive again like the buried seeds. He prays to the West Wind to scatter his thoughts over the Universe as it travels across it just as the Wind scatters autumnal leaves. By doing so the poet wants the West Wind to proclaim to the unawakened world his prophecy “if winter comes can spring be far behind?”

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| SAQ What, according to the poet, are dead? |
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Just as in Nature, winter is inevitably followed by spring, evil days can not persist for long; they have to be followed by prosperous days. Pain and suffering will certainly be followed by joy. This is the message the poet wants the west wind to spread among the unawakened.

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| SAQ What is the message? To whom it is for? |
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4.4 SUBJECTIVE ELEMENT:

Romantic poets, as it has been said, are subjective poets. They drew inspiration from their personal lives and experiences. Shelley felt the impact of the West Wind by the wood of the Arno in Italy. While walking he watched how the west wind drove the dead leaves. He also saw how the congregated clouds rising from the south-west to usher in the yearly storm with which the autumnal rains begin in October in Italy. These forces of Nature, and especially the west wind entered his soul and inspired him to compose this poem.

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| SAQ Where did the poet experience the power of west wind? |
| |

In the West Wind the poet finds a concrete image and symbol for his optimism. When young, the poet was full of hope and energy. But the hard and bitter experiences of life have bled him of hope, energy and power. In the West Wind and its dynamic activities the poet finds a source of limitless power, energy and hope.

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| SAQ Was the poet full of hope in his boyhood days? |
| |

4.5 IMAGERY:

Of all the romantics Shelley is the greatest myth maker. In his “Ode to the West Wind”, he creates myths about the power of the west wind. He uses images to create his myths. The images alternate between the functions of the wind as destroyer and preserver. Shelley’s imagination is never content with one image. Like the musician he must vary his notes, though his song is the same.

The west wind is called as the breath of autumn’s being.

The leaves are like dying like sick people.

The wind is like a chariot has carried the seeds to their wintry bed.

The seeds are like corpses.

The seeds come to life when they listen to clarion of the West Wind just as a trumpet rouses people to action.

The plants feed in the air like flocks.

The clouds are like leaves shaken from the boughs of Heaven and ocean.

The scattered clouds look like the hair of Maenad, who is at her prayers.

The sounds of the west wind are like music at funeral.

The year is dying and the night sky is it's tomb.

The sea blooms and oozy winds below grow grey with fear and tremble to listen to the west wind.

The poet becomes a leaf, a cloud, a wave and as a boy shared the impulse of the west wind.

The life is chains and the poet is on thorns and is bleeding.

The west wind is the fierce spirit, his spirit and an impetuous one.

The poet's thoughts are like dead leaves and want a new birth.

The message of if winter comes, spring be far behind would be spread all over the universe.

If we analyse the imagery of the poem, we find that the poem carries three sets of images in the first three stanzas. The first stanza has images of autumn. The second stanza has images of the sky and the third has images of the sea. The important images used in the above three stanzas are brought together in the fourth when the poet wants to be a wave, cloud and a leaf. The final stanza retains the suggestion of power referred to in the first three as the poet prays to the West Wind to spread his prophecy. The poem ends with a rhetorical question (a statement put in the question form to say something forcefully) Thus all the images of the poem together to convey a universal meaning.

Pick out the important images and their suggestions and write them down:

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4.5 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

P.B. Shelley presents a new ideal of life through the West Wind. He recollects his childhood experiences and at the same time feels that he does not have his former power, energy and hope. He hopes that he with the inspiration of the West Wind he will regain the energy of which the West Wind stands as a symbol. Thus the West Wind stands as a powerful symbol through out the poem. The title is therefore is apt.

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| SAQ Is the title a suitable one for the poem? |
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4.6. SUMMING UP:

In this unit, you have learnt about one of finest of lyrics in English literature. You have seen how the poet in his despair turned to the West Wind the preserver and destroyer, for help. He implores the Wind carry his dead thoughts across the world so that there can be germination of these ideas.

4.7 QUESTIONS: (10 Marks)

1. Why does the poet call the West wind, both a destroyer and preserver?
2. How does the poet describe the clouds driven by the west wind?
3. Describe the Mediterranean in summer?
4. What is the poet's prayer to the west wind?
5. How does the poet compare himself with the west wind?

(15 Marks)

1. Trace the evolution of thought in Shelley's Ode to the West wind?
2. Give an appreciation of imagery in the poem Ode to the West wind?
3. Write an essay on the autobiographical element in the poem Ode to the West Wind?

UNIT- V: ODE TO THE NIGHTINGALE

John Keats

STRUCTURE:

5.0 Objectives

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 The Childhood

5.1.2 Love for poetry

5.1.3 Meeting Leigh Hunt

5.1.4 Influence of Spencer

5.1.5 Poetic Excellence

5.1.6 Death

5.2 Summary of the Poem

5.2.1 The Immediate Effect of the Song

5.2.2 Description of warm south wine

5.2.3 Tragedy in human life

5.2.4 Imaginary journey into the forest

5.2.5 Description of the world of Cuckoo

5.2.6 Love for death

5.2.7 Immortality of the Nightingale

5.2.8 Struck with reality

5.3 Lyricism in the poem

5.4 Romantic Element

5.5 Sensuous poetry

5.6 Title Justification

5.7 Summing Up

5.8 Questions

5.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will make you to understand the theme of the poem. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Learn the trends of romantic revivalism.
- Grasp the sensuousness used in the poem.
- Understand the symbols used by the poet.
- Acknowledge the genius of the poet.

5.1 INTRODUCTION:

In this unit we are going to study one of the finest of odes in English literatures – “Ode to the Nightingale”.

5.1.1 THE CHILDHOOD

From the biographical details you will understand Keats had a very humble beginning. His father Thomas Keats was man in charge of horses in livery stable, in Moorgate, London. His father died when he was ten. Soon after his father’s death his mother married a man called Rawlings, and ran away. The sensitive young boy was deeply affected by this. This tragedy was followed by the death of his grandmother who had become the guardian of John Keats. After some days his mother, who was old and decrepit, returned to her children in 1809. The young Keats devoted himself to serving her and at the same time studied hard reading every book he could lay hands on. But his mother died of tuberculosis and Keats realized that the deadly disease was in the family, his uncle passed away from the same illness a little earlier.

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| SAQ What deadly disease was in the family? |
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5.1.2 LOVE FOR POETRY:

Now fourteen years old Keats had to look for some way of earning a living. He became apprenticed to an apothecary named Hammond in Edmonton. He pursued his studies diligently and soon qualified to be apothecary himself, but his heart was not really in his medical studies. He began to read poetry and at this stage there were two influences which affected him deeply. One was the poetry of Leigh Hunt, and other that of Spenser. You will notice that the former was a contemporary and the later was an Elizabethan.

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| SAQ Where was his interest? Did he like being an apothecary? |
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5.1.3 MEETING LEIGH HUNT

In 1816 Keats first met Hunt, and for the next three years he was in close touch with him. Hunt's 'Story of Rimini' served as a model to him. In the radical journal called 'The Examiner' which he and his brother edited Keats' early efforts favourably. He also gave him advice telling him that he should check "the tendency to notice every thing too indiscriminately and without an eye to natural proportion and effect".

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| SAQ Who influenced Keats very much? |
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5.1.4 INFLUENCE OF SPENSER

From Spenser he learnt many things particularly his of striking expressions and epithets which bring out the essential quality of thing he was describing. Keats studied all the great masters of English verse assiduously, and also his contemporaries, but he refused to become a slave to any. He liked Milton but not his dogmas.

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| SAQ What aspect of Milton did Keats disliked? |
| |

5.1.5 POETIC EXCELLENCE

In his master pieces Keats shows his conscientiousness as an artist. The verse forms, the rhyme schemes, the metrical patterns, the precision of the imagery, the arrangement of vowel and consonant sounds – to all these he paid the closest attention.

5.1.6 DEATH

In his short and tragic life his love for Fanny Brawne was a powerful influence. His vision of Beauty, desirable and desired, took concrete form in this girl whom he loved very passionately. He first met her in 1818 and it is not without significance that his best poems were written in 1819. It must be said to her credit that, though she knew that he was dying of tuberculosis, she agreed to a secret betrothal with in 1819. He moved to Brawne household for a month, in September he sailed for Italy, dying in Rome, in February, 1821 in his 26th year.

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| SAQ Who did Keats love? Did his love affect his poetry? |
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5.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The poem is of eight stanzas. Each stanza presents a different picture of life for you. Every stanza has a unique pattern and finally produces a perfect concordance. The poet in this poem addresses the nightingale. His feeling is intensely personal. While speaking he contrasts his own pain and suffering with the joyous song of the nightingale.

In the spring of 1819, Keats was living in a house in Hampstead near London. He was living with his friend Charles Brown. A nightingale built a nest in the plum tree. Keats sat under the tree for two or three hours. He felt a tranquil and continual joy in her song; when he came in to the house, Brown saw some papers in his hand. He thrust them behind some books. Keats composed the eighty lines into eight regular stanzas in a single morning. It was written on two half sheets. Keats' 'Ode to a Nightingale' was gracefully welcomed and acknowledged by critics, hushing the anxiety of criticism which he had and reassuring him that he had arrived at a form that agreed with his particular genius.

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| SAQ Where was Keats when he listened to the song of the bird? |
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5.2.1 THE IMMEDIATE EFFECT OF THE SONG:

Keats is in pain, his heart is aching and a kind of numbness is troubling his senses as if he had taken poison or a doze of opium. He is in the state of complete forgetfulness, a state of intoxication of mind. After the description of the pain and aching mood, he explains it further. The mood is not because he is feeling jealous of the bird's happiness. He is too happy in the happiness of the bird. The happy song of the bird has enthralled the poet and the happiness is unbearable to him. The nightingale is described in very intimate terms "thou" and "singing" suggesting that Keats is trying to identify himself with the bird with effort and in spite of happiness there is a consciousness of sadness. The bird is singing in a cluster of trees and spreading its melodious voice as if praising the beauties of summer season effortlessly and happily.

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| SAQ What are immediate effects on Keats after listening to the song of the nightingale? |
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5.2.2 DESCRIPTION OF WARM SOUTH WINE:

Keats wishes to escape through wine, the cool wine that has been kept under the earth. The wine, Keats imagines, will taste like flowers and pleasing to the eye as the green region in villages, merry like the dance of the people in the May sun, in short, as delightful as the Provençal merriment and wine. Keats in the next lines goes on to long for such a cup full of genuine and red coloured wine that looks like the water from the fountain of muses on mount Helicon. He imagines having a cup of wine with bubbles bursting at its surface and wishes to drink it in excess. The mouth, he imagines, has become red because of continuous drinking. He intends to drink it because he wants to escape from the world

without being seen. He wants to go into oblivion away with the bird. The bird's song haunts him and tempts him to go to a region away from the earth.

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| SAQ What kind of wine did he want to taste? |
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5.2.3 TRAGEDY OF HUMAN LIFE:

In this stanza Keats expresses his desire to mix his identity with that of the nightingale. He wants to forget the miseries of human life which have not touched the bird among the trees. The bird does not know, the poet feels, the tiredness and hectic rush of the work and fidgety tone of the people. Keats is too conscious of reality to quite forget in spite of his wish to do the same. In human world, people are afflicted with pain. They do nothing but hear each other cry in pain. Disease seems to overpower old people. The young too are affected by disease and die prematurely. In such a world thinking brings no solace but sorrow. Every thing appears temporary. Even beauty is transient and love too vanishes soon.

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| SAQ What do people do in this world? |
| |

5.2.4 IMAGENARY JOURNEY INTO THE FOREST:

Keats imagines that he will have happiness when he shall also be away like the bird in the sky. He drives away the troubling thoughts of suffering and wants to fly to the bird. Now, he does not want the help of Bacchus. Do you remember Bacchus? He is the God of wine and revelry. Keats decides to fly with the viewless wings of poetry. His dull brain always perplexes and brings him back to the problems of the earth. Night is lovely and the moon is there shining in a corner surrounded by stars. The poet imagines that he is with the nightingale in a grove of trees. There it is complete darkness in the grove with some checkered shade falling through the leaves blown by the breeze, through the grassy ways.

The last lines of the fourth stanza with their evocation of ‘verdurous glooms’ lead directly into the fifth stanza which is the outstanding example of Keats’s characteristic bower image and express sensation of smothering in leaves and flowers.

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| SAQ With who does Keats imagines he is going? |
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5.2.5 DESCRIPTION OF THE WORLD OF CUCKOO:

The poet completely forgets the human world. The poet imagines that the bird is in the middle of a forest. The forest is thick. The massy ways lead him to leafy and dim places where there are flowers of different colours though one cannot see them in the dark. He rightly and logically says that he cannot see the flowers that are at his feet, but can be tell the flower from its fragrance with which the May season is blessed. Every thing, the grass, the bushes and the wild fruit tree, white bush of hawthorn and creeping eglantine are sweet. The violet flowers which fade so quick are covered in green leaves. The musk rose, May’s first flower full of juice is the visiting place of flies in summer season. The fifth stanza appears to be written in rapture. Because he is very happy, he wishes to die and feels it is richer to die among flowers and at such a happy moment. Thus this descriptive stanza is intimately related to the following stanza. By the use of long vowel sounds Keats is creating an effect of onomatopoeia.

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| SAQ What flowers do you find in the forest, the world of cuckoo? |
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5.2.6 LOVE FOR DEATH:

Keats has been unconsciously concerned with death. In the dark he listens to the songs of the bird. He confesses that he has been half in love with death always. The thought of death reassures him and comforts him. It is a very

romantic wish of Keats. He says that he has been saying soft and tender epithets to Death in his inspired poetry and invoked death many times. More than ever before, death appears so sweet a sensation that to die among this sweet surroundings and listening to the ecstatic song appears beautiful. To die at this midnight hour without pain, when the bird is singing outside the window on a tree would be an enchanting experience. Keats is here feeling ecstatic to think of death and death without pain and he welcomes it. But it is only half of the poet's self that participates in the song of the bird, the other half thinks immediately of life beyond death. Very sadly in a tone of contrast between the bird's continual ecstasy and the temporary participation of himself he says that the nightingale will go on singing but it is actually of no use to the poet after death. He will become a piece of clod after death.

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| SAQ With what is he in love? |
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5.2.7 IMMORTALITY OF THE NIGHTINGALE:

The poet thus becomes aware of the contrast between the bird's immortality and mortality of human beings and it makes him sad. In this mood he addresses the bird as an immortal bird, which is beyond death. The bird is beyond the struggling life of human beings. The bird is eternal and immortal. Keats takes a romantic flight into the past. He assumes that the song he hears that night was heard even before, by emperor and his clown also, by the rich and the poor alike. Perhaps, it is the same song which was heard by Ruth standing in a foreign land sick for home. It must have been heard by beautiful damsels held captive by magicians in charmed castles in far away forlorn islands. The word 'forlorn' tolls him back to reality from the flight of fancy.

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| SAQ What was the condition of Keats? |
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5.2.8 STRUCK WITH REALITY:

The poet wakes up from his romantic dream to the harsh realities of life. He declares that fancy or imagination cannot deceive as it is supposed to do. The full throated music of the nightingale becomes a plaintive anthem and gradually fades away. He is out of the beautiful vision he has experienced with the nightingale. Once the charm of the song is broken he is left all alone with a question whether he had experienced a dream or vision.

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| SAQ What did the poet do when he came back to the realistic world? |
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Summarized thus the poem may seem to the reader a very ordinary performance. But Keats is one of the great English poets who does not lend himself to be summarized. Such is the magic of language he uses, and the picture each word evokes, that no summary can do justice to it.

5.3 LYRICISM IN THE POEM:

The term 'lyricism' refers to intense expression of the personality of the poet as well as the musicality of the poem. It also includes the picturesqueness of the poem. It has already been told that Keats was suffering from consumption and knew that his death was near when he heard the song of the nightingale. The poet draws a contrast between himself and the bird. He is in a state of misery and the bird is in the state of ecstasy. This makes the poet generalize on the human world stricken with pain, suffering and impermanence of love and beauty to the eternal world of happiness and joy of the bird. The poet wishes to die a painless death listening to the song of the bird. But even there he becomes aware of the contrast. As he dreams of the people who must have heard the eternal song of the bird, he

is tolled back to the world of reality. The transient human world and the eternal joyous world of the bird are very concretely and sensuously contrasted.

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| SAQ What brought ecstasy to the poet? |
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5.4 ROMANTIC ELEMENT:

You have already come across some aspects of romanticism like revolting against oppression, love of nature, expressing personal feelings. Romanticism also includes a flight into the past and a flight into the dream world but romantic poets are not escapists who would like to run away from the reality. In 'Ode to Nightingale', the poet wishes to escape away into the world of the bird being intensely aware of the pain and suffering in his own life as well as human life. In his dream he even fantasies the world of magic castles and casements with captive princes, but he returns to the world of reality.

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| SAQ What aspect of Romanticism is exhibited by Keats chiefly in the poem? |
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5.5 SENSUOUS POETRY:

Keats' typically distinguished feature as a poet is his sensuous response to nature and art. In Keats you will see the purity of the elemental response, pure sensations, which constitute beauty and truth and were the source of joy to the poet. Keats apprehends nature through all his senses, not merely the visual. For instance, tasting of wine in the poem is made to experience through all our senses. Country green – visual, song – auditory, touch – sun burnt mirth, the sense of smell is used to suggest the various flowers in the abode of the Nightingale. At the end of the sixth stanza the poet make you to hear the sounds of murmur of bees.

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| SAQ Describe sensuousness? |
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5.6 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

‘Ode to a Nightingale’ is occasioned by a song of nightingale which Keats heard. In the Nightingale the poet finds a complete contrast to himself. The world of Nightingale becomes a symbol of a permanent state of joy and happiness which the poet yearns for. He tries to reach the nightingale through imagination but gets back to the world of reality. So the title is apt for the poem.

5.7 SUMMING UP:

Summarized thus the poem may seem to the reader a very ordinary performance. But the poem itself turns like the song of the nightingale an eternal one, passing on year after year, generation after generation, the rich sensuous poetry of Keats.

5.8 QUESTIONS:(15 Marks)

1. Bring out the contrast between the world of nightingale and the world of reality?
2. Give an appreciation of the lyricism in the Ode to a Nightingale?
3. What romantic element do you find in the poem Ode to a Nightingale?
4. Summarise the experience of the poet in Ode to a Nightingale?
5. Who is immortal in this poem, the poet or the nightingale? Give the reasons.
6. What autobiographical elements do you find in the poem nightingale?
7. Describe the journey made by Keats into the cuckoo land?

8. What do you understand by reading the poem Ode to a Nightingale?

UNIT – VI: ULYSSES

Alfred Tennyson

STRUCTURE:

6.0 Objectives

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Birth and early life

6.1.2 Poetry and honours

6.1.3 Art of poetry

6.2 Victorian Period

6.3 Summary of the poem

6.3.1 Introduction to Ulysses

6.3.2 Ulysses at Ithaca

6.3.3 Ulysses in his past

6.3.4 Life, according to Ulysses

6.3.5 Telemachus

6.3.6 Call to his Mariners

6.4 Dramatic Monologue

6.5 Ulysses as a dramatic monologue

6.6 Summing up

6.7 Questions

6.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will make you to understand the poem Ulysses. At the end of the unit you should be able to

- Apprehend the Victorian period
- Make a study of Dramatic Monologue.
- Differentiate the ideas of the two kings, Ulysses and Telemachus
- Comprehend the Victorian quest for knowledge as presented in the poem.

6.1 INTRODUCTION:

You have studied about many romantic poets. Now you are going to read a Victorian poet. He is Lord Alfred Tennyson. You have come across a poet Laureate previously can you recall his name? He is William Wordsworth. Another Poet Laureate of Britain is Alfred Tennyson. He was one of the most popular of all English poets.

6.1.1. BIRTH AND EARLY LIFE:

Tennyson was born in Somersby, a rector's son, and the fourth of twelve children. Tennyson was the first student of Louth Grammar School for four years. He entered Trinity College, Cambridge in 1828. There he joined Cambridge

Apostles, a secret society. At Cambridge he met Arthur Henry Hallam, who became his best friend.

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| SAQ Who was the best companion to Tennyson? |
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6.1.2. POETRY AND HONOURS:

His first publication was a collection of his boyish rhymes and those of his elder brother, “Poems by Two Brothers” published in 1827. In 1829 he was awarded the Chancellor’s gold medal at Cambridge for one of his first pieces on Timbuctoo. Later he published a solo collection. At first the critics called his poetry over sentimental, but soon every one was attracted to it. In the spring of 1831, Tennyson’s father died. So he left Cambridge and returned to the rectory. His friend Hallam came to stay with him during the summer and became engaged to Tennyson’s sister. In 1833 he published his second book of poetry. This received severe criticism. Again for ten more years he did not publish any book though he wrote many. Hallam died. It devastated Tennyson. He then produced a body of poetry that has come to be seen as among the world’s finest and best poems. In 1842 he published two volumes of poems. They met with immediate success. In 1850 he was appointed Poet Laureate in succession to William Wordsworth and in the same year produced his master piece, “In Memoriam”. In the same year he married Emily Sellwood. Later he produced his master pieces such as ‘Maud’ and ‘Becket’.

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| SAQ What is the highest honour received by Tennyson? |
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Queen Victoria was an ardent admirer of Tennyson’s works. Her admiration made him the Baron Tennyson. He was the first English poet raised to Peerage. He wrote up to his eighties. He died on 6th October 1892. He was buried at Westminster Abbey. Through out his career some anthologists have noted

subtle anti-American undertones in his work. Tennyson never denied the underlying themes when questioned about them.

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| SAQ Who was an ardent admirer of Tennyson's works? |
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6.1.3 THE ART OF POETRY:

Tennyson used a wide range of subject matter, ranging from medieval legends to classical myths. He also handled rhythm masterfully. He used the musical qualities of words and the meanings in a sensitive way. Tennyson was a craftsman who polished and revised his manuscripts extensively. He reflects the Victorian period in his maturity, in his feeling for order and in his tendency towards moralizing and self indulgent melancholy. He also reflects a concern common among Victorian writers in being troubled by the apparent conflict between religious faith and scientific progress. He published the poem 'Ulysses' in 1842. The poem was written in 1833. The narrator, Ulysses, describes his discontent and restlessness upon returning to his kingdom, Ithaca. He travelled far. Facing old age, Ulysses yearns to explore again, despite his reunion with his wife Penelope and son Telemachus. The tales of Ulysses are first recorded in Homer's 'Iliad' and 'Odyssey'. Many authors, later on, have incorporated the character into their works.

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| SAQ Who are the other authors that mentioned Ulysses in their works? |
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6.2 VICTORIAN PERIOD:

Lord Tennyson as it has already been told was a Victorian poet. To understand the trends of Victorian period you are given a few details of the

period. This is not a full portrayal of the period, but it helps you to understand the poet's nature and difference in style. You can study about it at length in your other paper. Victorian period started in the year 1830 or 1832 after the passing of the first reform bill and the accession of Queen Victoria. It extended to the death of Queen Victoria. The works that were produced in this period were either imaginative or didactic. The literary works dealt with contemporary social, economic, religious and intellectual issues. Among the notable poets were Alfred, Lord Tennyson, Robert Browning, Elizabeth Barrett Browning, Mathew Arnold, and Gerard Manley Hopkins. Among this galaxy of poets you will study the poems of Tennyson, Robert Browning and Mathew Arnold.

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| SAQ What do the poetry in this period deal with? |
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6.3 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

You will learn the adventures of Ulysses and you will come across his ambitions also in this part.

6.3.1 INTRODUCTION TO ULYSSES:

Ulysses was the king of Ithaca. He took an active part in the Trojan War. The war went on for many years. Then the Greeks came to know that they might not conquer Troy. Ulysses thought of a plan. According to it the Greeks would pretend to give up their battle. They left a big wooden horse as a present to the Trojans for their valour outside the gates of Troy. The Trojans celebrated the victory and dragged the wooden horse into the city. There were Greek warriors inside the wooden horse at night they came out and opened gates for their army. They destroyed the city. They brought Helen back to Greece. While sailing back a god was against Ulysses. So, he had to face a lot of problems. After a strenuous

journey he reached Ithaca and was united with his wife Penelope and son Telemachus.

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| SAQ Who were the participants in Trojan War? |
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6.3.2 ULYSSES AT ITHACA:

When the poem begins Ulysses has returned to his kingdom, Ithaca. He had a long and eventful journey home after fighting the Trojan War. He is discontented with his life at Ithaca. He feels himself to be an idle king among the unproductive crags, matched with an aged wife, Penelope. He dislikes very much the idea of ruling over subjects who know nothing more than hoard, sleep and feel. He does not want to be a king to such savage race and administer imperfect laws to them. Ulysses contrasts his present restlessness and boredom with his heroic past full of adventure. He declared that he could not rest from travel. He admits that he would like to taste the drink of life up to the lees.

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| SAQ What did he not like to do in Ithaca? |
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6.3.3 ULYSSES IN THE PAST:

He has made adventurous journeys in the past. His name has become a synonym for unquenchable spirit of exploration and entrepreneurship of the day. He has enjoyed greatly and suffered greatly, on the shore or in the sea alone or with the company. He has seen many manners, climates, councils and governments. He has been honoured by everyone. He has enjoyed the delight of battle with his friends and companions. Tennyson in the compact three lines

speaks about the Victorian quest for knowledge. According to Mathew Arnold, a famous critic and poet, “these three lines by themselves take up nearly as much time as a whole book of the Iliad”. The unseen world is like horizon for Ulysses. It gleams and allures him. When he moves to meet it fades away. In fact, the horizon refers to learning and the margin fading indicates that there is no end to learning. Though much has been learnt much is still to be learnt. So the learner must have to move forever and but would never reach the arch of knowledge. It is inevitable that the thirst for learning will never be satisfied.

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| SAQ How did the unseen world appear to Ulysses? |
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6.3.4. LIFE, ACCORDING TO ULYSSES:

For Ulysses to be an idle king is dull. Taking rest or leading uneventful life at Ithaca he fears will blunt his personality as rusting blunts a sword. Life for him is not mere breathing. Life is made in adventurous activities and in quest for knowledge. There is so much to know and learn in this world that life after life is not sufficient. He contemplates his old age and approaching death. The time is precious for Ulysses as he is in the wane of his life. Every hour can be a bringer of new things. The spirit in him may be grey but it is yearning for more knowledge. The surface of the sea is the boundary for the sinking star. When the star sinks, it does not stop at any point. It goes beyond the boundary to unknown and unfathomed regions. Like a sinking star Ulysses too would like to explore the new world. He wishes to make a journey beyond the utmost bound of human thought in pursuit of knowledge.

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| SAQ What is the boundary of knowledge? |
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6.3.5 TELEMACHUS:

Ulysses turns his attention to his son, Telemachus. Unlike Ulysses he is at home in ruling his kingdom. He discharges his duties perfectly. He is well versed in the arts of a king. He knows well how to control a savage race. He can perform well his common duties like following the office of tenderness, and praying household gods. By then Ulysses has determined to go on another journey. His son Telemachus then would inherit the throne which Ulysses feels burdensome. While Ulysses thinks Telemachus will be an adequate king, he seems to have little empathy for his son. Ulysses says about his son, “he works his work, I mine”. In this stanza, the father and the son are contrasted in attitude and character. Ulysses and Telemachus symbolize two powerful attitudes working in Victorian England. Telemachus represents a large section of people in the society who were conservative in attitude and were happy to protect the existing systems and interests. On the other hand, Ulysses symbolizes the spirit of adventure and quest for limitless knowledge.

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| SAQ In what way is Telemachus different from his father? |
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6.3.6 CALL TO HIS MARINERS:

In his unquenchable thirst for adventure and knowledge, Ulysses decides to go exploring the newer world. He invites his mariners, who have toiled and

wrought with him. They are his loyal men. They have never worried about the adversities in life. Age is an impediment for them. Yet even old age has its share of hard work and honour. If death comes nothing would be left behind. Death is inevitable. Before death they can undertake a project which is worthy of people who have fought with gods in Trojan War.

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| SAQ What does Ulysses want his mariners do before their death? |
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Ulysses is not happy with what he has. He wants to pursue knowledge and is unafraid of perils of the sea. His ambition is to sail beyond sunset and the baths of the Western stars or Gibraltar. He wanted to go to Happy Isles and see the great Achilles. He knew that they might meet with death in this adventurous journey. In their journey, Ulysses hopes they may reach the Happy Isles where souls of the good find rest and see Great Achilles there. He knows for sure that they have achieved a lot and still have to achieve lot more. They don't have the strength of earlier days but have heroic hearts and strong will to struggle, search and find the truth. They never would yield to either death or old age.

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| SAQ Where would Ulysses go on his new voyage? |
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This poem was written soon after the death of Tennyson's friend Arthur Hallam. Tennyson wrote it to overcome his personal grief. But as the poem developed, it took an independent course and does nowhere refer to the grief and the sense of loss felt by the poet.

6.4 DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE:

Dramatic monologue is a lengthy speech by a single person. It is not a component of a play. It is a type of a lyrical poem that was perfected by Robert Browning. In the dramatic monologue a single speaker, who is not the poet,

speaks. He speaks about a critical issue at a critical moment in his life. He may speak to one or more persons. You feel the presence of the listener from what the speaker says. The listener does not speak. The speaker unintentionally reveals his motives and ideas to you.

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| SAQ How many speakers are there in a dramatic monologue? |
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6.5 ULYSSES AS A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE:

In ‘Ulysses’ Tennyson introduced Ulysses’ intension of exploring the world and acquiring knowledge. He speaks at length how he is leading a life of boredom and how he has led an adventurous life previously. He clearly makes a distinction between his past and present in the first part of the poem. Later, he introduced his son Telemachus, for whom he fondly used the words “my son, mine own Telemachus”, “when I am gone, he works his work, I mine” and “there lies the port”, he might be pointing the persons and places while he is talking to his listeners. But some critics have commented that ‘Ulysses’ can not be called a dramatic monologue for it is not very clear whether he is addressing some one at all or only talking to himself.

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| SAQ Who is the speaker of the poem Ulysses? |
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6.6 SUMMING UP:

In this unit you have studied a poem ‘Ulysses’, written by Tennyson. The poem tells about Ulysses the king of Ithaca who is dissatisfied with his uneventful dull life as the king after Trojan War and decided to go on a journey in search of adventure and knowledge.

6.7 QUESTIONS: (15 Marks)

1. Bring out the character of Ulysses with special emphasis on his attitude to life?
2. Write an appreciation of the poem Ulysses?
3. How can you say that Ulysses is a dramatic monologue?
4. What similarity do you find in Tennyson's Ulysses and the Greek warrior Ulysses?

UNIT – VII: THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER

Robert Browning

STRUCTURE:

7.0 Objectives

7.1 Introduction

7.1.1 Early life and Career

7.1.2 Marriage

7.1.3 Poetry

7.1.4 Later Life

7.1.5 Poetic Style

7.2 Summary of the poem

7.2.1 Rejection and Request

7.2.2 Acceptance and Riding

7.2.3 Heavenly Moment

7.2.4 Failure in life

7.2.5 Optimistic View of the lover

7.3 Last Ride Together as a Dramatic Monologue

7.4 Title Justification

7.5 Summing Up

7.6 Questions

7.0 OBJECTIVE:

You will understand the motive of the lover in the poem. At the end of the unit you would be able to

- Appreciate the technique of dramatic monologue.
- Agree Browning as a master of dramatic monologues.
- Acknowledge the importance of last ride.
- Comprehend the attainment of perfection in Heaven.

7.1 INTRODUCTION:

Now you read a few biographical details of Robert Browning in the following paragraphs.

7.1.1 EARLY LIFE AND CARRER:

Robert Browning was born in Camberwell, in London. His father was a man of both fine intellect and character, who worked as a well paid clerk for the Bank of England. By twelve, Browning had written a book of poetry, which he destroyed when no publisher could be found for it. After being at one or two private schools, and showing dislike of school life, he was educated by a tutor. Browning was a rapid learner and by the age of fourteen was fluent in French,

Greek, Italian and Latin as well as his native English. He became a great admirer of the Romantic poets, especially Shelley. Following the precedent of Shelley, Browning became an atheist and vegetarian, both of which he later shed. At age sixteen, he attended University College, London, but left it after his first year.

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| SAQ How did Browning receive his education? |
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7.1.2 MARRIAGE:

In 1845 Browning met Elizabeth Barrett. Gradually a significant romance developed between them, leading to their secret marriage in 1846. From the time of their marriage, the Brownings lived in Italy. A son was born to them. In these years Browning was fascinated by and learned hugely from the art and atmosphere of Italy. He would, in later life, say that Italy was his university.

7.1.3 POETRY:

Browning's poetry was obscure. In Florence he worked on the poems that eventually comprised his two Volume "Men and Women". In 1868 he wrote the long blank verse poem "The Ring and The Book", and achieved really significant recognition. It was his most ambitious project. It was published separately in four volumes. His other poems were "Dramatic Romances", "Bells and Pomegranates", "Christmas Eve and Easter Day". His last volume of poems is "Asolando".

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| SAQ What is the last volume of poems by Browning? |
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7.1.4 LATER LIFE:

In the remaining years of his life, along with travelling extensively and frequenting London literary society again, Browning managed to publish no less

than fifteen new volumes. However, Browning's later work has been undergoing a major critical re-evaluation in recent years, and much of it remains of interest for its poetic quality and psychological insight. He died at his son's home in Venice. He was buried in Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey; his grave now lies immediately adjacent to that of Alfred Tennyson.

7.1.5 POETIC STYLE:

Browning fame today rests mainly on his dramatic monologues, in which the words not only convey setting and action but also reveal the speaker's character. Unlike a soliloquy, the meaning in a Browning dramatic monologue is not what the speaker directly reveals but what he inadvertently "gives away" about himself in the process of rationalizing past actions, or special pleading of his case to a silent auditor in the poem. Rather than thinking loudly, the character composes a self defense which the reader as juror is challenged to see through.

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| SAQ Browning is a master of _____. |
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|------------------------|
| (A) Dramatic Monologue |
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| (B) Soliloquy |
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| (C) Drama |
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Ironically, Browning's style, which seemed modern and experimental to Victorian readers, owes much to his love of the seventeenth century poems of John Donne with their abrupt openings, colloquial phrasing and irregular rhythms. But he remains too much the prophet-poet. His is a modern sensibility, all too aware of the arguments against the vulnerable position of one of his simple characters. There is ample cause for celebrating life in Browning's poetry.

7.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

In most of his poems Browning seems to suggest that man rarely attains total success. But he always should aim at the highest and the noblest things of life. "The Last Ride Together" is a story about a lover whose love is not reciprocated. The lover overcomes his grief and seeks happiness in a last ride with the beloved. He is different from the desperate lover of the Romantic period. He knows men are failures in many walks of life. Browning presents robust

optimism in this poem through the lover. The poem is taken from the collection “Dramatic Romances”.

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| SAQ Is the lover dejected? |
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7.2.1 REJECTION AND REQUEST:

The lover is the speaker of the poem. That he has failed in love becomes clear when he introduces the first line of the poem. The lady love had given him hopes of love earlier, but at present she changed her mind. He was dejected. He asked her to take back the hope that was given by her. Out of depression he requested her for a last ride together with him.

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| SAQ Who gave him hopes of love? |
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7.2.2 ACCEPTANCE AND RIDING:

The mistress raised her brow, may be she was surprised by the request and out of pity accepted his request. For a few seconds when she was thinking over it, it was as if time had put his life and death in balance; once she agreed, life came back to him. Obviously, they would be riding on the same horse. They went on riding together. He would have another day of self satisfaction and he would be god-like. He hoped if the world ended that day they should remain for ever together. Through out the poem the speaker projects his admiration for his beloved. His chief ambition was to go on riding for ever. It was in the hands of Heaven, whether they would ride together or not for ever.

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| SAQ What did he project throughout the poem? |
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7.2.3 HEAVENLY MOMENT:

As they rode the lover experienced a blend of ecstatic joy and fear. It was as if nature too showered benedictions on them because she leaned on him. She placed her head on his breast. The lover felt that the Heaven was near him. He knew that the moment would live for ever in him. His disappointed soul was smoothed away by her act. He put behind his past hopes and disappointments alike. He wanted to live in the present alone. So that 'thoughts' like if only he had done this or that in the past, he might have gained her love appeared useless and futile.

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| SAQ What gave him lot of pleasure? |
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7.2.4 FAILURES IN LIFE:

As the speaker rode with his beloved, his spirit felt elated and began to see life newly and differently. He realized that life was meant for failure for many. Nothing attained perfection on this earth. Every one, in different walks of life have to meet with failure. He was not alone in failure. The action, which was done, was petty and the undone was vast. There was sea of difference between the past where people hoped to do many things and what they achieved in the present. The lover hoped in the past his beloved would love him, but he was satisfied to ride with her.

There is no coordination between the brain and the hand. All the thoughts do not convert into actions. The will is often rejected by the flesh. No man could work out his schemes to his fullest satisfaction. The soldier and the statesman too were failures, the lover argues, because they may get nothing more than a flag on the dead body and a place in West Minister Abbey respectively. The poet too was a failure. He might know what was best for men, might have expressed them beautifully in rhyme. But he did not have the sublimity which was described. In contrast, the lover felt he lived in one when he rode with his beloved. A sculptor

was also a failure as he had to become a slave to his art. He might have carved a beautiful sculpture of Venus but he had not enjoyed the beauty of girl in real life. A musician had to spend a life time on learning the notes with which he had to please a friend. No one knew what was fit for them.

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| SAQ Who have failed according to the poet? |
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7.2.5 OPTIMISM OF THE LOVER:

The lover was optimistic. His love was rejected yet he was not disappointed. He knew that nothing attained perfection on the earth. The experience that one would gain on this earth would be like an arch. It became perfect circle when you go to Heaven. What could not be attained in the earth would be attained in Heaven. The human beings could not combine all the efficiencies at the same time. Along with the poet, the lover too looked upon life as existing beyond the grave. He looked forward to his life in Heaven, where he and his lady love would ride together for ever. He has a firm belief that he would get success in Heaven. The speaker feels if the life on earth is so good, the life in heaven would be certainly better. There was no doubt about it. The poem reflects not only the optimism in the lover but of Browning too.

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| SAQ How is experience on the earth? |
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7.3 THE LAST RIDE TOGETHER AS A DRAMATIC MONOLOGUE:

You have studied what a dramatic monologue is in the previous chapter. The lover is the speaker of the poem. You will understand that the words spoken

by the lover are felt carefully by someone. But the listener is a passive one. He never speaks. The lover spoke about his unrequited love. He has asked her for a last ride and she has accepted. He then narrates at length what he has thought about life. The lover is an optimist. From the state of depression he changes to an optimistic note that the failure is common for every one. He expects that life to become eternal after riding with the lady love. It is obvious that the poem is beautiful love lyric as it is an exquisite dramatic monologue.

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| SAQ. Give at least two points to say that the poem is a dramatic monologue? |
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7.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

Robert Browning has seen life in different perspectives. His ideals are well reflected in the poem. The lover is depressed when he is rejected. The last ride makes him to think in a positive way. Browning and the lover look at life and come to accept failures in life. All this is caused by the last ride. So the title the ‘Last Ride Together’ is suitable for the poem.

7.5 SUMMING UP:

The present unit has explained for you a popular poem of Browning ‘The Last Ride Together’. It has also illustrated to you the optimism of Browning reflected through the character of the lover, who is the speaker of the poem.

7.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Consider The Last Ride Together as a dramatic monologue?
2. Write an appreciation of The Last Ride Together as a moving poem?

3. What is Browning's philosophy of life expressed in The Last Ride Together?
4. Who else are failures in life according to the poet?
5. How was the poet transformed from a depressed lover to optimistic young man?

UNIT – VIII: DOVER BEACH

Mathew Arnold

STRUCTURE:

8.0 Objectives

8.1 Introduction

8.1.1 Life and career

8.1.2 Marriage

8.1.3 As a Companion

8.1.4 As a Poet

8.2 Introduction to Dover Beach

8.3 Theme of the Poem

8.4 Summary of the poem

8.4.1 Description of Dover Beach

8.4.2 Need for religion

8.4.3 Philosophy of life

8.5 The structure of the poem

8.6 Loss of faith and Arnold

8.7 Title Justification

8.8 Summing Up

8.9 Questions

8.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this unit you will come across the beauty of the ‘Dover beach’. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Understand the problem of the modern world as understood by the poet.
- Get an idea on Arnold’s views on nature and life.
- Realize the importance of Dover Beach in the poem.
- Come across a Greek dramatist, who Arnold uses to present his ideas.

8.1 INTRODUCTION:

You will study one more poet from the range of Victorian poets, Matthew Arnold.

8.1.1 LIFE AND EARLY CAREER:

Matthew Arnold was born in Laleham, Middlesex in the year 1822. He was the second child of his parents. While young he was attracted to the Oxford movement. In 1836 Arnold was sent to Winchester College but he returned soon in 1837. He won an open scholarship to Balliol College, Oxford. During his residence at Oxford his friendship ripened with Arthur Hugh Clough, who was his school mate. Arnold’s poem won the Newdigate Prize. He was elected Fellow of Oriel College, Oxford in 1845. In following year he became Private Secretary Lord Lansdowne, Lord President of the Council. In 1849, he published his first

book of poetry, 'The Strayed Reveller'. In 1850, when Wordsworth died Arnold published his "Memorial Verses" on the poet in "Fraser's Magazine".

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| SAQ Name some of the prizes received by Arnold? |
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8.1.2 MARRIAGE:

Wishing to marry, but unable to support a family on the wages of a private secretary, Arnold sought the position of, and was appointed as Her Majesty's Inspector of Schools. Later got married to Frances Lucy and became the father of six children. In 1852 Arnold published his second volume of poetry, "Empedocles on Etna, and Other Poems". Next year he published "Poems, A New Edition". Arnold was elected Professor of Poetry at Oxford. He shifted to prose there on. In 1865, he published "Essays in Criticism: First Series" and "Second Series". In 1861 he composed an elegy "Thyrsis" on the death of his close companion, Clough. "Culture and Anarchy" is his major work on social criticism.

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| SAQ On whose death did he wrote Thyrsis? |
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8.1.3 AS A COMPANION:

Critics comment that Arnold was the most delightful of companions. He was a familiar figure at the Athenaeum Club. He attended frequent dinner-out, and good guest at country houses. He was fond of fishing and shooting. He was a lively conversationalist, affecting a combination of foppishness and Olympian grandeur. But, a reading of his poetry will reveal to you that inside this happy and lively exterior he had concealed a worried soul torn by conflicting ideas and emotions. He read constantly, widely and deeply.

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| SAQ Where was he a familiar figure? |
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8.1.4 AS A POET:

Arnold is sometimes called the third great Victorian poet, along with Alfred Tennyson and Robert Browning, whom you have studied in the previous chapters. Arnold was keenly aware of his place in poetry. Arnold's poetry continues to have scholarly attention lavished upon it, in part because it seems to furnish such striking evidence for several central aspects of the intellectual history of the nineteenth century. Though he was successful in writing criticism and prose he was highly praised for his poetry only. Arnold's poetic vision is simple, lucid, and straight forward.

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| SAQ What kind of literary arts are practiced by the poet? |
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8.2 INTRODUCTION TO DOVER BEACH:

In 1867, he wrote the poem 'Dover Beach'. It depicts a nightmarish world from which the old religious verities have receded, expresses his view that human love is mankind's only defense against the dark. It is sometimes held up as an early, if not the first, example of the modern sensibility. The influence of Wordsworth, both in ideas and in diction, is unmistakable in Arnold's best poetry. So he called himself as a "Wordsworthian". Arnold valued natural scenery for its peace and permanence in contrast with the ceaseless change of human things. His descriptions are often picturesque and marked by striking similes.

'Dover Beach' consists of four stanzas, each containing a varying number of lines. The first stanza has fourteen lines, the second six, the third eight and the fourth nine. As for the metrical scheme, there is no apparent rhyme scheme, but rather a free handling of the basic iambic pattern. In stanza three there is a series

of open vowels. A generally falling syntactical rhythm can be detected which continues into stanza four. In this last stanza you can find seven lines of iambic pentameter.

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| SAQ Do the natural scenes get importance in the poem? |
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8.3 THEME OF THE POEM:

‘Dover Beach’ is a melancholic poem. Matthew Arnold uses the means of pathetic fallacy to rouse melancholy. He attributes the human feeling of sadness onto an inanimate object like the sea. At the same time he creates a feeling of pathos. You can feel sympathy for the suffering lyrical speaker, who suffers under the existing conditions. The repetition of “is” in the lines 1-4 is used to illustrate the nightly seaside scenery. Exclamations are used at various points of the poem with quite opposite effects.

In the first stanza, the lyrical speaker calls his love to the window to share with him the serenity of the evening. First, she is asked to pay attention to the visual, then to the aural (sound) impression of outwardly beautiful sea side scenery at night. Through out the poem the sea is used as an image and a metaphor, to express the fears and dilemmas entertained by the lyrical speaker in the modern world where religion has lost its relevance and there is no other faith or system to sustain troubled souls.

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| SAQ Why does he call his beloved to the window? |
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8.4 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

Arnold wrote this poem in 1851 during his honeymoon. Along with his wife he went to Dover Beach noted for its liveliness and romantic beauty. The poem is a dramatic monologue. The poet addresses in the poem his wife apparently in praise of Dover Beach. Arnold presents the poem with suggestive and felicitous expressions.

8.4.1 DESCRIPTION OF DOVER BEACH:

Dover is a port on the South Eastern Coast of England. The sea is very narrow there. On one side of the shore is England and the other is a French shore. The night that is described in the poem is a calm moonlit night. The poet asks his lady love to come to the window to share the sweetness of the air. He directs her to the visual impression of the beach. One could see the lights gleaming on the sea – shore of France and the glimmering white cliffs of Dover Beach. Then the poet calls her attention on to the aural experience. He asks her to listen to that roar of the waves. The waves bring the pebbles to the shore, when they go again they take them and bring them back when they return to the shore. The roar of the waves is referred to as grating roar of the sea suggesting a shift in the poet’s attitude towards the natural scene out side. The speaker no longer feels the tranquility in the natural scene. It shows that the poet is projecting his feelings on to natural objects – an instance of pathetic fallacy. In the “grating roar” he is reminded of “eternal note of sadness”.

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| SAQ How was the night? |
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8.4.2 NEED FOR RELIGION:

The lyrical speaker says that he is not the only one to listen to the eternal note of sadness. The Greek Dramatist Sophocles too has viewed as life full of

sadness and misery. He has heard human misery in the ebb and tide of the Aegen Sea. In the saying Sophocles too has heard the eternal note of sadness on the Aegen Sea, Arnold implies that sadness, suffering and misery have always been at the centre of human existence. Human beings are like pebbles being flung and sucked by the sea. The faith in God and religion was like a girdle protected human life so that in spite of misery they used to feel secure, stable and a purpose to life. But Arnold feels such 'sea of faith' is receding away leaving him and others like him like "naked shingles" on the shore all alone without any spiritual support.

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| SAQ Which Greek dramatist was mentioned in the poem? |
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8.4.3 PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE:

Now the world has become a 'dark world' emptied all meaning and where "ignorant armies clash by night". The world which was beautiful once had grace. Now people are confused because religion and faith have withdrawn from their lives. They need some other faith to cling to. The speaker in utter despair stretches out his hand to his wife telling her "true love" to one another is the only solution.

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| SAQ How could salvation be achieved? |
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The third and final stanza begins with a dramatic pledge by the poet. He asks his love to be true and faithful to him. On the contrary, as he accentuates with a series of denials, this world doesn't not contain any basic human values.

8.5 THE STRUCTURE OF THE POEM:

The structure of the poem gives the immediate impression of being inconsistent and built upon no particular rules. There are three stanzas, none of which are alike, with no particular rhythm or rhyme pattern. The verses lead onto one another by theme although they appear to be quite unconventionally

structured. Thus the end of the first stanza – occupied with sadness – bring in the misery of stanza two; and insecurity of the end of the second verse invites the beginning of the following verse. The unity of the poem is in this way complete and its impact on the reader stretches far beyond these lines.

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| SAQ What feeling is felt at the last stanza? |
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8.6 LOSS OF FAITH AND ARNOLD:

The 19th century saw different movements and currents of thought – the most noteworthy among them was Darwin’s Evolution theory which questioned the dogmas and values of Christianity which had been till then accepted unquestionably. This led to intellectuals questioning about the existence of God, soul and immortality. Some retained faith in religion; some became agnostics while quite a few like Arnold tormented themselves over question of belief and faith. Traditionally God and religion were believed to be sources of all values. Now with the very existence of God in question Victorians thought there would be a collapse of values. This predicament of modern man is given best expression to in “Dover Beach”. So, Arnold presents ‘true love’ as one possible support in the world devoid of faith. Arnold also thought (though not suggested in the poem) that poetry might take the place of religion as it has order.

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| SAQ What is Arnold’s reaction to religion in the poem? |
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8.7 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem begins with the description of the beauty of Dover Beach. ‘The Dover Beach’ becomes the occasion for the poet to discuss the problems troubling him – loss of faith and its consequences. It makes him arrive at the conclusion that

true love alone may sustain human beings in this world full of misery and suffering. Thus, the title appears apt for the poem.

8.8 SUMMING UP:

Many critics consider Arnold to be the bridge between romanticism and modernism. His symbolic landscape was typical of the romantic era, while his skeptical and pessimistic perspective was typical of the modern era. Arnold's 'Dover Beach' presents the reader with a virtual journey through time. Lamenting the transition from an age of certainty into an era of questioning and change the poem reflects the modernist tendencies.

8.9 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Give an appreciation of the poem Dover Beach?
2. Apprehend the philosophical attitude of Arnold?
3. What trait of religion is given in the poem Dover Beach?

UNIT – IX: THE JOURNEY OF THE MAGI

T.S. Eliot

STRUCTURE:

9.0 Objectives

9.1 Introduction

9.1.1 Early life and education

9.1.2 Later Life in England

9.1.3 Poetry

9.1.4 Death

9.2 Summary of the poem

9.2.1 Andrews

9.2.2 The description of the journey

9.2.3 The Unfriendly Towns and Dirty Villages

9.2.4 The white horse and the three trees

9.2.5 Satisfactory watching of the Baby

9.2.6 Death or Birth

9.3 Symbols used in the poem

9.4 Title Justification

9.5 Summing up

9.6 Questions

9.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this unit you will learn the struggle made in the journey. At the end of the unit you should be able to

- Acknowledge the Biblical theme of the poem
- Obtain the knowledge of the Journey of the Magi
- Appreciate the symbols used by Eliot
- Learn the imagery employed by Eliot.

9.1 INTRODUCTION:

A few biographical details of the poet are given below. By reading this you will come across the conditions in which he wrote the poem.

9.1.1 EARLY LIFE AND EDUCATION:

Eliot is the most familiar poet, dramatist, essayist, and critic of the twentieth century and has won acclaim all over the world as a writer. Eliot was born in 1843 as the last child of six children. Eliot was a student at Smith Academy. He studied Latin, Greek, French and German. He was sent to Milton Academy by his parents. There he met Scofield Thayer, who would later publish 'The Waste Land'. He studied at Harvard, where he earned a B.A. and read Arthur Symons's "The Symbolist Movement" in Literature. He got his post graduation in the following years. When the First World War broke out he went to London and then to Oxford. On 26th June, 1915, he married Vivienne in a register office.

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| SAQ Which movement influenced him a lot? |
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9.1.2 LATER LIFE IN ENGLAND:

In 1927, Eliot took two important steps in his self-definition. On June 29th he converted to Anglicanism and in November he dropped his American citizenship and became a British Subject. By 1932, Eliot had been contemplating a separation from his wife for some time. When Harvard University offered him the Charles Eliot Norton professorship for the 1932 and 1933 academic year, he accepted, leaving Vivien in England. Upon his return in 1933, Eliot officially separated from Vivien. She died in 1947. Eliot's second marriage was happy one. On January 10th, 1957, he married Esme Valerie Fletcher. She has been his secretary at Faber and Faber.

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| SAQ Which country's citizenship did Eliot take? |
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9.1.3 POETRY:

Eliot had tried his hand in every literary form. At first he edited the "Harvard Advocate". While he was working at Lloyd Band he published his important poem "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock". He served as an assistant editor to 'Egoist'. It was the periodical of the Imagist Movement. In 1919 he published "Poems" and "The Sacred Wood" followed in 1922, it was a volume of critical poems. In 1922, "The Waste Land" won 2,000 dollar Dial award and brought Eliot fame. He established his own magazine "The Criterion". In 1925 a collection of his works "Poems" and in 1932 "Selected Essays" were published. He was dramatist too. He published a serious play, "Sweeney Agonistes" which was followed by "The Rock". His poetic drama, "Murder in the Cathedral", made him to reach great heights as a dramatist. For a poet of his nature, Eliot's poetic output was small. Eliot was aware of this very early in his career. Typically Eliot first published his poems in periodicals or in small books or pamphlets consisting of a single poem and then adding them to his collections.

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| SAQ Give the title of Eliot's poetic drama? |
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9.1.4 DEATH:

Eliot died of emphysema in London on January 4th, 1965. For many years, he had health problems owing to the combination of London Air and his heavy smoking, often being laid low with bronchitis or tachycardia. His body was cremated and according to Eliot's wishes the ashes taken to St Michael's Church in East Coker, the village from which Eliot's ancestors immigrated to America.

9.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The story of the 'Journey of the Magi' is taken from the Gospel according to St. Matthew in the New Testament of the Bible. Eliot is recalling the journey of the three wise men to witness the birth of Jesus Christ in Bethlehem. It also depicts Christ's life through the signs the Magi see. The poem covers Eliot's journey from being an atheist to becoming a member of the Christian faith as well. The poem begins with words which echo words of a 16th century sermon on the Magi, or three wise men, who according to tradition brought gifts to the infant Jesus. It concentrates on the physical difficulties of the journey. One of the three wise men presents this poem as a dramatic monologue.

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| SAQ Where were the wise men going? |
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9.2.1 ANDREWS:

The three wise men saw a star. It foretold the birth of the Saviour Jesus Christ. They started on a journey. The first five lines of the poem are lifted, with some poetic alternations, from Lancelot Andrews Nativity Sermon, preached to

King James on Christmas day. Andrews used as his text for the sermon the first two verses of the Gospel. In that sermon Andrews said the Magi readily undertook, “a wearisome, irksome, troublesome, dangerous, unseasonable journey”, to follow the star to see Christ the Child.

9.2.2 THE DESCRIPTION OF THE JOURNEY:

The journey was rough and hard. The time of the journey was uncomfortable for the Magi. It was winter. The ways in which the three wise men travelled were deep. The camels were tired and sore-footed and they were disobedient too. As the journey turned to be hard the men regretted coming on such a travel. It seemed that the wise men were coming from the places which were warmer than this. So, they recalled those places where they were served sherbet in cool palaces.

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| SAQ How was the journey? |
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9.2.3 THE UNFRIENDLY TOWNS AND DIRTY VILLAGES:

The camel men too were tired of the journey. They were cursing and grumbling. They ran away wishing to have liquor and women. The Magi continued their journey. The night fires went out leaving them cold at night. There was no shelter for the wise men. The people of the cities were unfriendly. The villages were dirty. They charged high prices for food and shelter. The wise men considered it a very hard time to continue their journey. This stanza will help you to understand that places and towns that were crossed by Magi were unholy and dirty. They were not comfortable. As the shelters were heavily priced the wise men thought of travelling all night. While they were making such a tiresome journey, their inner voices warned them against this. The voices said that journey was a folly.

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| SAQ How were the villages and towns? |
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9.2.4 THE WHITE HORSE AND THE THREE TREES:

At the dawn they reached a temperate valley. The place gave them solace. It was wet with snow, there was vegetation and a stream too was running. There was a water mill too. There were three trees. The three trees represent the crucifixion of Christ. Christ was crucified along with two other robbers. The trees are symbols representing Christ's forthcoming death. The journey was made to celebrate the birth of Christ. But they first saw symbols indicating the crucifixion of Christ. The following line which refers to the "old white horse" indicating the second coming of Christ. The expression is a reference to Book of Revelations XIX where Christ is also referred to as 'the faithful' and 'true'.

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| SAQ How many trees were there in the valley? What do they stand for? |
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9.2.5 SATISFACTORY WATCHING OF THE BABY:

In the valley they came to a tavern. It had vine leaves all over. And in six men were playing with dice. Eliot uses it as an image to refer to how Judas Iscariot, one of Christ's followers betrayed him for 30 pieces of silver. At the tavern the wise men could not get any information. So, they continued their journey. In the evening they reached the right place. They saw Baby Jesus. At first they were not impressed. They considered him to be an ordinary baby in swaddling clothes. They were disappointed so the Magus the speaker comments it was 'satisfactory'.

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| SAQ Which word indicates to us that the Magi were not impressed? |
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9.2.6 DEATH OR BIRTH:

The wise men contemplated on their journey. Why did they make such a hazardous journey? The Magi came to see the birth, but they experienced death also. They became spiritually restless. They have seen the Birth of Christ. But they experienced death. They had thought earlier, birth and death were different. The sight of Christ made them conscious of their sins. The old faith or dispensation died and they accepted the new faith or dispensation. Since the wise men had accepted the new dispensation, they appear alien or foreign to their own people. They wanted to die so that they could be born perfectly into the new faith.

9.3 SYMBOLS USED IN THE POEM:

Symbols suggest the hidden meanings. They help to present the reality as felt by the poet. The first section represents a spiritual journey. This part of the poem shows how a spiritual seeker encounters many obstacles in a true journey of faith. The Magi stand for all spiritual seekers and cold time, unfriendly cities; dirty villages are all obstacles in the quest. The way is not easy and all along there are inducements to give up the trip altogether; faith does not come easily and conversion to the new faith happens only when they are willing to push away those voices that proclaim it all to be folly.

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| SAQ What do the Magi stand for? |
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The second section of poem represents the enlightenment and conversion. The section opens at dawn, the time of enlightenment. In a temperate valley which suggests faith. There is a place with warm with flowing water and it has beaten the darkness. At the evening, the conversion is complete; the Magi find the place of Christ's birth.

The third section then shows that all that has happened long before. The spiritual journey and the conversion it led to are now long past events. The Magus says that he would do journey again. But the birth the wise men went to see turned into something like death, the death of their old faith. And they are no longer at ease among the old ways of being.

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| SAQ What do the Magi want to do again? |
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| SAQ. The Birth turns out to be death. Whose death? |
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In addition to the above sustained symbolism, there is other various other symbols in the poem which refer to incidents in Christ's life. The three trees suggest to three crosses and Christ's crucifixion. The white horse galloping indicates to the Second Coming of Christ. The hands dicing could be a suggestion of Judas betraying Christ or Roman Soldiers dyeing for the Robe of Christ. The vine leaves over the lintel bring to mind the blood of Pascal lamb put by the Hebrews on the door posts of their homes, a ritual of Hebrews. Christ is also referred to as Pascal lamb. Thus the blood refers to the blood of Christ.

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| SAQ What are the two significations of blood in the poem |
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9.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

“Journey of the Magi”, the first in the series of poems Eliot later grouped together as the “Ariel Poems”. The poem is a dramatic monologue. One of the Magi long after their spiritual journey recollects about it. The poem thus presents “The Journey of the Magi”. It was published shortly after Eliot’s conversion. The

poem also reflects Eliot's state of mind, in transition between his old and new faiths.

9.5 SUMMING UP:

In the 'Journey of the Magi' three Magi set out to see the birth of Christ. They leave behind their riches and comforts. After a long tiresome journey full of struggle they see baby Christ. It was followed by the birth of new faith in the place of the old faith. You have also learnt about the symbolism in the poem.

9.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Bring out the significance of each of the symbols in the poem The Journey of the Magi?
2. Consider the poem Journey of the Magi as a spiritual quest?
3. Summarize the poem Journey of the Magi?
4. Bring out the different stages of Journey made by the Magi?
5. What do you understand by the Journey of the Magi?
6. Give a detailed account of the Journey of the Magi?

UNIT – X: I THINK CONTINUALLY OF THOSE WHO WERE TRULY GREAT

Stephen Spender

Structure

10.0 Objectives

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 Early Life

10.1.2 Poetry

10.1.3 Later Life

10.2 Summary of the Poem

10.2.1 Description of great soul

10.2.2 Ancient Delights

10.2.3 The Impact left

10.3 Images used in the poem

10.4 Summing up

10.5 Questions

10.0 OBJECTIVES:

In this unit you will learn about the usage of powerful images through the poem. At the end of the unit you should be able to

- Present the summary of the poem
- Make a study of the truly great people
- Asses the style of Spender as a modern poet
- Give a picture of the truly great

10.1 INTRODUCTION:

You are going to read about a modern English poet in this unit Stephen Spender. Stephen Spender is an English poet, critic, novelist and essayist. Unlike the ancient poets he introduces novel themes in his poetry. You will find about imagery of fire in this poem. He concentrates on the themes of social injustice and the class struggle in his works.

10.1.1 EARLY LIFE

Spender was born on 28th February, 1909 in London. His father was a journalist and mother was a painter and a poet too. Spender went to Gresham's school, but was unhappy there and was shifted to University College School, Hampstead. He described this school as the gentlest of all schools. Spender studied at University College, London and went up to University College, Oxford as a young adult. He was made an honorary fellow of Oxford University in 1973. He did not finish his degree at London University and lived for sometime in Germany. He made friendship with W.H. Auden, C.Day Lewis, and MacNeice.

10.1.2 POETRY:

His early poetry, "Poems" was published in the year 1933 was inspired by social protest. His convictions found further expression in "Vienna", a long poem in praise of the 1934 uprising of Viennese Socialists, in "Trial of a Judge", an anti-Fascist drama in verse. His auto-biography, "World with in World" is a recreation of much of the political and social atmosphere of the 1930s. He wrote about his disillusionment with communism in the essay "The God that Failed". His constant ill health made him to receive B certificate during the war. He loved Jews. His mother and his second wife were partly Jewish. With two more partners he founded "Horizon" magazine and served as its editor from 1939 to 1941. Later he served as an editor for "Encounter" magazine from 1953 to 1966.

10.1.3 LATER LIFE:

Spender was Professor of English at University College, London. And then became Professor Emeritus. He was made a CBE in 1962 and knighted in 1983. He died on July 16th 1995.

10.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

Spender in the poem speaks of the caliber of a great soul. The truly great soul inspires. The birth and death of truly inspired soul is described in suggestive imagery by the poet. The poem is rich in its portrayal of imagery and vitality of rhythm.

10.2.1 DESCRIPTION OF GREAT SOUL:

Spender begins his poem by describing the qualities of truly great people. He asserts that the really great people remember the soul's history when they are in their mother's womb. Echoing Plato's theory, the poet says the soul comes from heaven which is its home. It comes through corridors of light and music. As it moves the place echoes with singing and it is filled with light.

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| SAQ What do the truly great remember? |
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The truly great would sing with the lips which were touched with fire of inspiration. They could define the spirit of music. The spirit of music is clothed from head to foot in song. Thus the truly great serve the God eternally. The truly great can collect life from hopes. The hopes are symbolically presented with the season of spring and flowers. They are cherished as the best of their desires.

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| SAQ How do they sing? |
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10.2.2 ANCIENT DELIGHTS:

Man has very ancient history starting even before the formation of the earth. The knowledge of it is enlightening. It is the ageless spring that always inspires the truly great just as the fountains of Halcyon inspires poets. The truly great would never forget the precious history of mankind. The precious history helps us to enjoy the beauty of the simple morning and a grave evening with a new fervour. It also stops the humdrum activities of every day materialistic life from smothering the flowering of the genius. The truly great thus inspired by the past inspire others to lead a life of peace.

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| SAQ What had inspired the truly great man? |
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10.2.3 THE IMPACT LEFT:

The truly great people were really great souls, who have fought for life. They are born of the sun and they would travel towards the sun. This voyage would show you how great the souls are. They have their influence every where near the snow, near the sun and in nature at large. They struggled for existence when they were alive. When they died their impact is clearly seen every where. The air which is vivid bears their signature in honour. The wavy grass carries their names and whispers them to the listening sky. It is obvious that they have left their foot prints on the sands of time.

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| SAQ Bring out two places where the impact of the truly great is visible? |
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10.3 IMAGES USED IN THE POEM:

The entire poem is brimming with rich images. The images of fire, the sun, light and the song are recurrent. Musical and rhythmical words have given grandeur to the poem. Some of the images are direct in suggesting their meaning, where as some symbols are metaphorical. Fire is used to inspire the reader. The

world of light and singing represents the Heavenly atmosphere. The body clothed from head to foot refers to happiness. The truly great know that man is a soul. He is trapped in his body like a tree and the desires of the body are like blossoms, which are falling down. The precious history is the earth, which has a prehistoric existence. The springs are hopes for the truly great man. In the last stanza you are told about the graves of the great souls. They are covered by wavy grass. As they travelled towards Heaven, they left their signature in the vivid air. The sun from which the truly great are born is the power. They will travel towards power to gain it in fullest sense. The poem is remarkable for the force of its imagery and the vigour of its rhythm.

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| SAQ Can you find out some more images from the poem? |
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10.5 SUMMING UP:

Stephen Spender was a man of letters. His greatness is reflected in his poems. The poem is a tribute to truly great men. The poem describes the quality of the truly great people.

10.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Give an appreciation of the poem ‘ I think continually of those who are truly great’?
2. Bring out the imagery shown by Stephen Spender?
3. Describe the birth and death of the great as expressed by Spender?

UNIT – XI: BECAUSE I COULD NOT STOP FOR DEATH

Emily Dickinson

STRUCTURE:

11.0 Objectives

11.1 Introduction

11.1.1 Childhood and Education

11.1.2 Poetry

11.1.3 Death

11.1.4 Style and Themes

11.2 Summary

11.2.1 Invitation by Death

11.2.2 The Journey in the carriage

11.2.3 The Status of the poet

11.2.4 A House in the Ground

11.2.5 Immortality and Eternity

11.3 Symbols used in the poem

11.4 Title Justification

11.5 Summing Up

11.6 Questions.

11.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit gives you a chance to learn more about the American literature.

At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Appreciate the symbols in the poem.
- Assess poet's love of death.
- Comprehend the journey made by the poet.
- Obtain the knowledge of immortality and eternity, as seen by the poet.

11.1 INTRODUCTION:

Do you like the word "Death" or do you hate it? Have you seen any body wait for death and go along with it happily? This feeling is portrayed by Emily Dickinson in her poem "Because I Could Not Stop for Death". Read more about

the author and the poem. Emily Dickinson is considered one of the most original and influential poets of the 19th century. In this unit, you are going to study a few biographical details of her, followed by an analysis of the poem.

11.1.1 CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION:

Emily Dickinson was born on December 10, 1830 in Amherst as the eldest daughter of Edward Dickinson, a successful lawyer. According to her biographers young Emily was a well behaved girl. She had a great affinity to music. Emily attended Amherst Academy. There she learnt English and Classical literature, Latin, botany, geology, history, mental philosophy, arithmetic and others. From a young age Emily was exposed to the deepening menace of death, especially through the deaths of those who were close to her. The death of a close friend and second cousin affected Emily greatly. She entered into a state of melancholy that her parents send her to Boston for a month. This trip restored her health and spirits. She continued her studies later. She attended the academy at Mount Holyoke Female Seminary in South Hadley.

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| SAQ Which school did she attend first? |
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11.1.2. POETRY:

With the deaths of close ones she started to withdraw more and more from the outside world and began to review poems. In the first half of the 1860s, after she had largely withdrawn from an active social life and regularly refused to leave the Homestead, proved to be Dickinson's most productive writing period.

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| SAQ What made her live away from the society? |
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The forty fascicles she created from 1858 through 1865 she held nearly eight hundred poems. No one from her inner circle was aware of the existence of

these books until her death. Only two were printed at her life time. Later her sister Lavinia published them in three series. “The Single Hound”, “Further Poems” and “Bolts of Melody”. Her “Letters” were published in 1894.

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| SAQ. When were her poems published? |
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11.1.3. DEATH:

As death succeeded death, the poet found herself all alone. She was affected with ill health and confined to the bed. On May 15th, 1885 after a few days of worsening symptoms, Emily Dickinson died at the age of 55.

11.1.4. STYLE AND THEMES:

Dickinson’s poems fall into three distinct periods, the works in each period having certain general characters: Poems written before 1861, those written between 1861 and 1865, and those wrote after 1866. Dickinson wrote in the ballad form with lyrical style. She practiced slant rhyme. In addition to using the short lines, her poems are all quite short. They typically begin with a declaration or definition in the first line, which was followed by a metaphorical change of the original premise in the second line. Biographers have often thought much of Dickinson’s poetry as being biographical in nature. Religion and faith often make their way into her themes. Most of the poems deal with the themes of death and immortality.

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| SAQ What are the main themes of the poems of Emily Dickinson? |
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11.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

“Because I could not Stop for Death” is an extract from a series of poems title “The Chariot”. The poem presents life as a journey and death as an ‘encounter’ a ‘meeting’ in this journey called life. The poet imagines an encounter with death. This rouses in her thoughts on life, death and immortality. The poem, acclaimed as a masterpiece by critics, presents the poet’s calm acceptance of death. The poem has in all six stanzas with four lines each called quatrain. In each quatrain, the first line has eight syllables, the second six syllables, the third eight syllables and the fourth has four..

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| SAQ How did she accept death? |
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11.2.1 INVITATION BY DEATH:

The poet imagines meeting death. ‘Death’ is projected as a messenger, a gentleman who calls on her. It is indeed surprising that the poet sees the experience as nothing frightening, just meeting a gentleman. The poem opens with a startling claim by the poet that Death called on her as she could not stop for him. She then imagines her body being taken in a carriage. Along with the poet and Death, rides Immortality.

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| SAQ Who are riding in the carriage? |
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11.2.2 THE JOURNEY IN THE CARRIAGE:

The carriage is moving slowly as the Death is in no haste. As the Death invites the poet with civility, she puts away all her labour and leisure and goes along with it. The poet puts her work away because Death is so kind and gracious. The poet ironically presents the fact that Death can take away anybody anytime

whether they are busy or otherwise. The poet then describes the situation further. The carriage is moving leisurely. In these lines she like Keats is half in love with death. You might have remembered the prayer made by Keats to death to take away his breath without any pain at midnight as he listened to the song of the nightingale.

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| SAQ Who is the driver of the carriage? |
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On their journey they cross the school where the children are playing at leisure in the ring. The carriage moves on. Then it advances through the fields filled with grain. At last, they pass by the setting sun. Thus the poet describes the journey of life. The carefully selected images of school full of children playing; fields filled with grain are symbols of early life and mature adulthood. But the setting sun symbolizes old age as well as movement towards death and immortality.

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| SAQ Describe the places where the carriage passed? |
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11.2.3 THE STATUS OF THE POET:

The poet tells they passed by the setting sun. This image as it has already been said is a symbol for movement towards death. The poet as she is taken away by death is no longer alive yet she feels the chill of the evening as she is wearing dress made of thin and fine silk. As you can see, the poet is dead but yet she seems to be alive to the world around her because in death she is immortal.

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| SAQ Was the poet dead or alive? |
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11.2.4 THE HOUSE:

The carriage carrying the poet, death and immortality reaches the grave yard; the poet sees her grave and calls it a “house”. The house looks like a swelling of the ground. The top of the grave, the decorated cornice looks like a mound.

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| SAQ What is the house she refers to and where is it? |
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11.2.5 IMMORTALITY AND ETERNITY:

The sixth stanza places the speaker centuries after her death in future. Then the poet is speaking from her cosmic home in eternity. She feels that what has happened centuries ago when she first has realized that she is moving with death and immortality, looks as if it has happened a day ago. In her cosmic home, time is experienced very differently. The horses’ heads are toward eternity reveals that Immortality the third rider in the carriage was more real than all the early images she has experienced that day.

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| SAQ What did the horses’ heads reveal to us? |
| |

Thus, for Emily Dickinson death is a pleasant companion for he seems bring along with him Immortality. Death is not the termination of life and existence. Life transcends death. The poem thus reflects the robust optimism of Dickinson.

11.3 SYMBOLS USED IN THE POEM:

Emily Dickinson uses haunting images throughout the poem. She uses controlling adjectives like “slowly” and “passed” to create a tone that seems rather placid. The phrases “We passed the school, we passed the setting sun” set a slow, quiet, calm and dreamy atmosphere. Dickinson’s masterpieces live on complex ideas that were evoked through symbols, which carry her readers

through the poem. Through the symbols Dickinson brings to light the mysteriousness of life. School represents childhood. Fields of grazing grain indicate maturity of life and the setting sun the old age. In addition to these three stages, the final stage of eternity is symbolized in image of the horse the last two lines of the poem.

11.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem is about the poet's idea of life, death and immortality. Death for the poet is no frightening prospect but only a stage in journey which would take her to Immortality. Death does not end life. So, the poet says she could not stop for death.

11.5 SUMMING UP:

Emily Dickinson's "Because I could not Stop for Death", is a remarkable masterpiece. It has a haunting power. The tone, the symbols, and the imagery exude creativity. The poem talks of Immortality in death. Indeed it acquires immortality through its creativity.

11.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Describe the journey of the poet?
2. Appreciate the poem "Because I Could Not Stop for Death"?
3. How does the poet present death?
4. Write a note on Emily Dickinson's view of life, death and eternally as expressed in Because I Could Not Stop for Death?

UNIT – XII: MENDING WALL

Robert Frost

Structure:

12.0 Objectives

12.1 Introduction

12.1.1 Life and marriage

12.1.2 Writing Poetry

12.1.3 Frost as a Poet

12.2 Summary of the poem

12.2.1. Reasons for the gaps in the wall

12.2.2. The preparations to mend the wall

12.2.3. No need for the wall

12.2.4. Wall in and Wall out

12.2.5. Reflection of the neighbour

12.3. Irony in the poem

12.4. The theme of Frost's poetry

12.5. Title Justification

12.6. Questions

12.0. OBJECTIVES:

In this unit you will be exposed to Frost's philosophy of co-existence and love. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Identify the theme of the poem.
- Understand the precept of Robert Frost.
- Present the reasons given by Frost why we should not mend the wall.

12.1. INTRODUCTION:

Robert Lee Frost is an American poet. He uses frequently themes from rural life in New England, America. A popular and often quoted poet, Frost was honoured frequently during his life time, and received four Pulitzer Prizes.

12.1.1. LIFE AND MARRIAGE:

Robert Frost was originally a native of California and was born in the year 1874. His father was a former teacher and later an editor of the San Francisco

Evening Bulletin. His father died in 1884. The family then moved to Lawrence, Massachusetts. After finishing his scholastic education, he joined Dartmouth College. Before completing the course he went to work in a cotton mill. He got married in 1894. After a two year course at Harvard, he did farming for some time in New Hampshire. He migrated to England with family in 1912.

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| SAQ Where did Frost work before completing his education? |
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12.1.2 WRITING POETRY:

Even as a school boy he wrote poetry. His favourite subject was country life as he saw it in New England. He made friends in England and got acquainted with several English poets. His first volumes of poetry were first published in England: ‘A Boy’s Will’ and ‘North of Boston’. He was recognized in U.S.A with his second publication. He became very popular as a poet and lecturer. As his reputation increased he was awarded 44 honorary degrees by colleges and universities including Oxford and Cambridge universities. Poems flowed from his pen. “Mountain Interval”, “New Hampshire” and “West Running Brook” were published during the years 1916 and 1928. New Hampshire won Pulitzer Prize for him. His “Collected Poems” won Pulitzer Prize again. He made a hat trick by winning Pulitzer Prize for the third time for his “A Future Range”. “A Witness Tree” won the fourth Pulitzer Prize.

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| SAQ How many Pulitzer prizes did Frost win? |
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“A Masque of Reason” and “A Masque of Mercy” were two poems written in blank verse. In these two poems we find a discussion of ethics and man’s relation to God by biblical characters in modern settings. “Steeple Bush” is

a collection of lyrics. 'In the Clearing' is another collection. He went on writing till he died.

12.1.3 FROST AS A POET:

The most accessible of modern poets, Frost is one of the best loved. Frost looks upon life as a mystery. Poetry may supply some clues to understand the mystery of life. He is not autobiographical or introspective. Some times he looks inward, but he aims at outward aspects of life and the mind. He values solitude, a time to reflect and a time to be silent. He is not a sentimentalist. Frost's poems display a feeling for natural objects as well as a sense of kinship with nature. His handling of language and cadence is so careful that art lies in the concealment of art.

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| SAQ How did Frost look upon life? |
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12.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

Like many of Frost's poems, 'Mending Wall' is set in the country side, focusing on two men who have met to mend the wall that separates their land. This is an annual job in which they repair the damage that nature inflicts upon the man-made structure - wall. There is a great irony in the way the two men are *brought together* by a task that will *keep them apart*, and the lexical choices stress that they never actually work together.

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| SAQ What is the task of the two men? |
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12.2.1 REASONS FOR THE GAPS IN THE WALL:

'Mending Wall' shows two men who work constantly mending the fence or wall that separated their properties. The speaker notices gaps in the wall. He

gives reasons for the gaps. Something in the nature does not love walls. Or the hunters to satisfy their dogs may have made gaps in the walls. The ground might have swollen due to snow and the fence is broken or the hunter's dogs might have made boulders to move when they moved along it. The speaker meets his neighbour and reminds him that it is the time to complete the task. Whenever he comes across a gap he mends it from his side while the neighbour mends from his side. It is not a proper wall. It is just a wall or fence made by keeping a stone on a stone. When the spring time comes it has become a ritual for them to mend the wall.

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| SAQ Give the reasons for the gaps in the wall? |
| |

12.2.2 THE PREPARATIONS TO MEND THE WALL:

After informing the neighbour who lives beyond the hill, they start the work. On a particular day they meet to put the stones back in position one by one. They do not cross their boundaries. They stand on either side of the wall. They go on keeping the fallen boulders one by one. It is a difficult work for them, because the stones are not of equal size. They do not balance. Some are round and some are in the shape of a loaf. The speaker has to use a spell to make them to stand at least till he is looking at them. The fingers of the speaker and his neighbour are hurt by handling those rough stones.

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| SAQ Why are the stones falling again and again? |
| |

It is a sharing experience. Both men are working hard together to keep each other away. For the speaker, who doesn't like the wall, it is just another outdoor game with a person on either side of the wall. This physical activity amounts to nothing more.

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| SAQ What does the speaker think about the activity of mending the wall? |
| |

12.2.3 NO NEED FOR THE WALL:

The poet asserts that there is no need for the wall. Because the neighbour has pine grove where as the narrator's is apple orchard. The narrator is sure that the apple trees will never cross and eat the cones under the pines. Each of them knows well what they have. The neighbour does not speak much. He only says his precept 'good fences make good neighbours'. By this he would like to tell it is good for each man to be in his limits and to know his rights.

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| SAQ Present the precept of the neighbour. |
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12.2.4 WALL IN AND WALL OUT:

It's spring and the poet is in a mischievous mood likes to question the neighbour's attitude. He tells him he does not know how walls could make good neighbours. If they have a live stock like cows it may trespass into each other's territory and thus raising a controversy. But there are no cows. He thinks of asking the neighbour what they are walling in and walling out. The refrain of the line "some thing there is that doesn't love a wall", makes you to understand how intense the feeling of the speaker is. He does not like the wall at all. He wants to tell his neighbour may be elves are making gaps. But he knows it is not elves.

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| SAQ Why don't they need a wall in between their properties according to the speaker? |
| |

12.2.5 REFLECTION OF THE NEIGHBOUR:

The neighbour too is firm in his idea. He follows his principle sincerely. His father has advised him, one could have good neighbours by keeping good fences. He goes on mending the wall, carrying a boulder in each hand. He looks like an old-stone age savage with his stone weapons. He looks like one in dark ages when there was no civilization at all. The neighbour is a conservative. He refuses to discuss about the wall. The speaker treats this as the neighbour's ignorance, and a refusal to move forward and acknowledge that the times have changed.

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| SAQ Who has advised the neighbour to maintain good fences? |
| |

12.3 IRONY IN THE POEM:

There is a great irony in the way the two men are brought together by a task that will keep them apart. The speaker is clearly aware of this irony, and of the essentially pointless nature of the task. Frost's description of every detail in this poem is quite interesting, very pleasant to read and extremely imaginable. He leaves the reader to decide for himself what deductions he is to make from the reading.

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| SAQ For what are the speaker and his neighbour working together? |
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12.4 THE THEMES OF FROST'S POETRY:

According to Robert Frost, "A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom". The poem 'Mending Wall' too starts with a delightful game of mending the broken wall, but at the end the game becomes the source for Frost to express his philosophical outlook on the society. Most of Frost's poems satisfy this test. He never forgets pain, care and craftsmanship which temper the delight and help to achieve wisdom. Between the starting point and the terminal point there are certain processes, feeling, observation, thinking, relating and expressing. Robert Frost did not propound any poetical theory or explain his technique to the readers. He was not a product or initiator of any literary movement.

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| SAQ According to Frost how should a poem end? |
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To some extent Robert Frost is a paradox. He combines contraries in his poetry. At first glance his poetry appears to be conservative and orthodox. He makes use of traditional forms, blank verse and rhyme. He uses colloquial speech of New England. Frost's tone is modern. He strikes no attitudes. He makes it clear that he is determined not to be poetical. Frost regards himself as a farmer. His verse springs from the farmer's world. His rustic characters are men of few words like the neighbour.

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| SAQ What is the special quality of the neighbour? |
| |

12.5 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem is about mending the wall. The poet brings his philosophy of life through this simple act of mending a wall. He presents the need for social coexistence in the world. The vision of Frost is equal to the vision of Tagore, who presented the concept of Universal family. The title is apt for the poem, where one can mend a wall and also one's mend the life.

12.6 SUMMING UP:

'Mending Wall' deals with a very common happening in the country. From the simple idea the poet takes you to a noble idea of social co existence.

12.7 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Give an appreciation of the poem Mending Wall?
2. What is the theme of the poem Mending Wall?
3. What philosophy is employed by Frost in the poem Mending Wall?

UNIT – XIII: A GIFT OF INDIA

Sarojini Naidu

STRUCTURE:

13.0 Objectives

13.1 Introduction

13.1.1 Early life and marriage

13.1.2 In freedom struggle

13.1.3 Poetry

13.2 Summary of the poem

13.2.1 About the poem

13.2.2 Sacrifice

13.2.3 The wounded soldiers

13.2.4 The Wailing mother

13.2.5 Memorial Thanks

13.3 The patriotic feelings in the poem

13.4 Title Justification

13.5 Summing up

13.6 Questions

13.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit will help you to understand the poem A Gift of India. At the end of the unit you should be able to

- Learn the patriotic feeling expressed by Sarojini Naidu
- Acknowledge the sacrifice made by the Indian soldiers
- Comprehend the woe of Mother India at the loss of Indian soldiers.
- Obtain the knowledge of characteristics of Sarojini's poetry.

13.1 INTRODUCTION:

You have studied the poets from various parts of the world, now you will study about an Indian poet, who belongs to Andhra Pradesh. Called affectionately as the Nightingale of India, Sarojini owed a lot to India. Her patriotism makes you too feel like her. The love for India is the theme of her many poems.

13.1.1 EARLY LIFE AND MARRIAGE:

Bharatiya Kokila, Sarojini Naidu was a child prodigy, freedom fighter and poet. Naidu was the first Indian woman to become the President of the Indian National Congress and the first woman to become the governor of a state in India.

She was born in Hyderabad as the eldest daughter of scientist and philosopher Aghornath Chattophadyaya. Her mother was a poet. Her father was the founder of Nizam College. He was the first member of Indian National Congress in Hyderabad. Sarojini learnt to speak Urdu, Telugu, English, Persian and Bengali. Her favourite poet was P.B.Shelley.

She attained national fame for entering Madras University at the age of twelve. At sixteen she travelled to England to study first at King's College London and subsequently at Girton College, Cambridge. At the age of seventeen she met Dr. Muthyala Govindarajulu Naidu and fell in love with him and married him. He was from Andhra Pradesh.

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| SAQ List out the institutes where Sarojini was educated? |
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13.1.2 IN FREEDOM STRUGGLE:

She joined the Indian Independence Movement, in 1905 after the partition of Bengal. During that period she came into contact with many great personalities of freedom movement. From 1915 to 1918 she lectured all over India on welfare of youth, dignity of labour, women's emancipation and nationalism. After meeting Nehru in 1916, she took up the cause of the indigo workers of Champaran. In 1925 she was elected as the President of the Congress. She was arrested many times. After Independence she became the Governor of Uttar Pradesh. She died in the same post in 1949.

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| SAQ When did she join the Indian independence movement? |
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13.1.3 POETRY:

In 1905 the first volume of her collection of poem was published as “The Golden Threshold”. Two more volumes “The Bird of Time” and “The Broken Wing” were also published. Later “The Magic Tree”, “The Wizard Mask” and “A Treasury of Poems” were published. Her poetry presents a kaleidoscopic view of Indian scenes, sights, sounds and experiences. She has a wonderful vision of colour and rhythm. One of the most pleasing and noble characteristics of her poetry was the passionate love for mankind.

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| SAQ What is the main theme of her poems? |
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13.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

13.2.1 ABOUT THE POEM:

The Gift of India is taken from Sarojini Naidu’s volume of ‘The Broken Wing’, where the feeling of patriotism is a significant thematic concern. It is a deeply moving patriotic poem written in August, 1915 during the World War I. It was first presented at the Hyderabad Ladies’ War Relief Association.

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| SAQ When was the poem written? |
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‘The Gift of India’ pays a glowing tribute to the Indian soldiers who laid down their lives fighting in various battle fields for the British cause. In this poem, Sarojini Naidu identifies herself with Mother India and extols the supreme sacrifice of her heroic sons in the war front. She also exhorts the British to gratefully remember the martyrdom of her sons. The poem is in four stanzas of six lines each.

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| SAQ With whom does Sarojini Naidu identifies herself with? |
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13.2.2 SACRIFICE:

Mother India speaks at this moment with anguish. She has gifted every thing for the British. She has given them gifts of grain, gold and clothes. India has flung to the east and west priceless treasures. When the First World War broke out many Indians urged by Gandhi went to participate in it. They are the priceless treasures that India has given the British. They have left womb of mother India and has gone to participate in the war. In other sense they have responded to the drum beats of duty only to meet with the doom.

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| SAQ What gifts were given by Mother India to British? |
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13.2.3 THE WOUNDED SOLDIERS:

The second stanza describes how the dead soldiers sleep in the alien graves with pale brows and broken hands. The soldiers who have gone to participate in the war are brutally injured and killed. The poet uses many expressions to present their condition. They are like pearls in the foreign graves. Some of them have been drowned in the Persian sea and the poet says that they are sleeping on the waves. They are like shattered shells on the Egyptian sands. They look like flowers which are ruined by fate. They are ailing in the green meadows of France and Flanders which have turned into red by their blood.

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| SAQ How are the dead soldiers? |
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13.2.4 THE WAILING MOTHER INDIA:

In the third stanza the mother India sincerely feels that none can measure the depth of her grief for the dead soldiers nor could anyone estimate the agony of waiting for the return of the living soldiers. She is proud too, because her sons have fought with dauntless ranks in the foreign land. The banners of victory are torn for Mother India. The victory is made at the expense of human life. The banners are red because they are dipped in the blood of the Indian soldiers.

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| SAQ Why are the banners of victory torn for Mother India? |
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13.2.5 MEMORIAL THANKS:

In the last stanza mother India envisions that when terror and tumult of the war cease and give place to peace and when the British want to thank the comrades who laid down their lives and honour their heroic deeds, they should remember the blood of her martyred sons too.

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| SAQ What should be remembered? |
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13.3. THE PATRIOTIC FEELINGS IN THE POEM:

The poem is fraught with maternal grief of Mother India. The poem gives expression to love and reverence for the dead soldiers who have laid down their lives for a noble cause. At first the poet brings out the greatness of the sacrifice made by the Indians in the First World War. Later the pathetic condition of the

dead soldiers is described at length. At the end of the poem the poet warns the British to say memorial thanks to the soldiers who have sacrificed their lives for a their cause.

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| SAQ Why was Mother India sad? |
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13.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

In the poem Sarojini Naidu talks about the gifts given by India to Britain during the First World War. Among all the gifts the gift of Indian soldiers was priceless. Sarojini Naidu identified herself with Mother India and wails for the soldiers who have died in the war. In her anguish she demands the recognition of this priceless gift. Thus 'The Gift of India' is a suitable title for the poem.

13.5 SUMMING UP:

Sarojini Naidu talks of the gifts given by India to the British. She asks the British Empire to remember the deeds of her sons who fought with dauntless ranks in the war. She tells them that the soldiers have met with their doom for the cause of others. The poem is replete with the patriotic feelings.

13.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Describe the pathetic condition of the Indian soldiers in the First World War?
2. Bring out the impact of the patriotic feeling expressed in the poem The Gift of India?
3. Summarise the poem The Gift of India?

UNIT – XIV: FOR ELKANA

Nissim Ezekiel

STRUCTURE:

14.0 Objectives

14.1 Introduction

14.1.1 Early career

14.1.2 Poetry

14.1.3 Death

14.2 Summary of the poem

14.2.1 Domestic situation

14.2.2 The Evening

14.2.3 The wife

14.2.4 The request for dinner

14.2.5 Discipline

14.2.6 Logical presentation

14.2.7 Acceptance

14.3 The Greatness of Ezekiel as a poet

14.4 Title justification

14.5 Summing up

14.6 Questions

14.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit makes you to understand the poem. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Produce the situation in your own words
- Present the character sketch of the poet and his wife
- Appreciate the intelligence of the young boy.

4.1 INTRODUCTION:

You have studied about Sarojini Naidu, a patriotic poet. You are going to see another Indian poet who presents a domestic situation in his poem 'For Elakana'. Nissim Ezekiel is a poet, playwright and an art critic. He is considered one of the foremost Indian writers in English of his time.

14.1.1 EARLY CAREER:

Ezekiel was born in Mumbai and his father was a botany professor and his mother principal of a school. He belonged to Mumbai's Jewish Community known as Bene Israel. In 1947, Ezekiel did his Master's Degree from the

University of Mumbai. He taught English Literature at Juter College, Mumbai and published literary articles. He went to London to study philosophy. After three years he came back. He married Daisy Jacob in 1952. He joined The Illustrated Weekly of India as an assistant editor in 1953 and stayed there for two years. Soon, after his return from London, he published his second book of verse “Sixty Poems”. For the next ten years, he worked as a broadcaster on arts and literature for All India Radio.

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| SAQ To which community does Ezekiel belong? |
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14.1.2 POETRY:

He published his book “The Unfinished Man” in 1960. He became art critic of The Times of India and edited Poetry India. “The Exact Name”, the fifth book of poetry was published in 1965. During this period he had a short tenure as visiting professor at University Leeds and University of Chicago. His works include Three Plays and a few poetical collections. He has edited “An Emerson Reader”, “A Martin Luther King Reader”, “Indian Writers in Conference” and “Writing in India”. The dominant passion of his life was poetry, a vocation which he took seriously with a deep sense of commitment.

14.1.3 DEATH:

Nissim Ezekiel passed away on 9th January, 2004. He suffered from Alzheimer’s disease during the last years of his life. Ezekiel is undoubtedly one of the most famous Indian poets in English responsible for spearheading modernism in Indian poetry in English. He has made significant contributions as playwright, prose writer, critic, translator and teacher. The greatest contribution of Ezekiel to Indian English literature is his colloquial style.

14.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

14.2.1 DOMESTIC SITUATION:

The family life is a precious one for every one. The poem “For Elkana” deals with the same theme. It shows how love rather than discipline that holds a family together. It also points to the difference between attitudes of children of yesteryears and that of today’s children. The modern children always make their parents obey them. They never obey their parents. This poet expresses through his son Elkana and his actions.

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| SAQ Who is Elkana? |
| |

14.2.2 THE EVENING:

On an April evening the wife and husband, obviously the poet and his wife, sat in the garden enjoying the breezes from the lawn. To break their silence, they started to speak. The wife started to talk on the matters that she had surveyed.

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| SAQ Where were the poet and his wife sitting? |
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14.2.3 THE WIFE:

She commented on a broken widow-pane. She said accusingly that if any other householder in the neighbourhood had it, he would have got it repaired. She was irritated with her husband’s indifference towards all these things. He accepted the accusation in goodhumour because in their home the wife was the law maker. She could criticize her husband. The poet knew the wife was always right. So, he was unwilling to dispute with her. To evade an answer he started to look somewhere else, when she was talking.

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| SAQ Why was the poet unwilling to dispute with her? |
| |

14.2.4 THE REQUEST FOR DINNER:

The voice of the poet's wife spread slowly in the garden. Their son, who was seven years old, listened to it. The voice of his mother reminded him of something else. He came to them. The boy stood with his legs apart and with the raised chin started to speak in a masterly determination. He demanded his dinner immediately.

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| SAQ Who made the request for dinner, the poet or his son? |
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14.2.5 DISCIPLINE:

The parents wanted to discipline the child. They agreed about it in an unusual silent rapport. The mother looked at the father to discipline the child. But the father was not ready to take up the duty. So he looked away. So, the mother told the son firmly to wait for five minutes. But the son has his own views about the matter.

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| SAQ On what point did the poet and his wife agree? |
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14.2.6 LOGICAL PRESENTATION:

The little boy was very firm in his decision. He wanted his dinner then only. The father intruded in between and tried to console his son that the dinner would be ready soon and he would get his dinner in five minutes. The little one was rather stubborn he said he would not be hungry after five minutes. He wanted

his dinner when he was hungry. The father was delighted by the argument and approved of it. The father identified himself with the boy. He loved himself and so his son.

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| SAQ What logic did the boy present? |
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14.2.7 ACCEPTANCE:

The logic of the son was accepted by the parents. If he was not given dinner then, he would not be hungry later. There was no meaning in eating when he was not hungry. So his rejection was accepted. The wife too was delighted to listen to clever logic of the young one. They went into the house with a feeling of joy and love.

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| SAQ Who accepted the logic of the child? |
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14.3 THE GREATNESS OF EZEKIEL AS A POET:

Nissim Ezekiel is considered to be the foremost among modern Indian poets writing in English. His poems show a consistent preoccupation with the beauty as well as the complexity of present day civilization as he perceived it in the Indian scene. The poem 'For Elkana' is a poem on domestic situation dealt with humour and understanding. He presents the modern children's attitude and the mother's deep concern over every thing in an approving way. Though he satirizes the characters mildly, he shows how a happy family would accept every issue. It is held together not by discipline but by love. The husband is not angry with his wife, though she scolds him. The son's violation of discipline is happily accepted and is joyfully allowed to establish his own rule on the parents. For him

the parent must take care of him and his needs. The poet too is amused by the logic given by the young boy.

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| SAQ What is the theme of the poem? |
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14.4 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

The poem is written about Elkana who is the son of the poet. The poem is about their rejoicing relationship. The poet might have dedicated this poem for Elkana. The poem does not carry any trivial preaching or grave issues. It is about a boy and his parents held together by love. The title For Elkana shows that the poem is written for Elkana.

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| SAQ Can you suggest any other title to the poem? |
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14.5 SUMMING UP:

One of the finest Indian poets writing in English, Nissim Ezekiel has won acclaim as a poet all over the world. He has created 'For Elkana' from a causal situation in his garden. The characters are vital and the situation is light and humorous. The poem throws light on the modern children who can put their parents in discipline. The intelligence and the sharp wit of the young Elkana is praise worthy.

14.6 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Bring out the central idea of the poem For Elkana?
2. Give an appreciation of the poem For Elkana?
3. Give a short account of the speaker's life?

UNIT – XV: ADVICE TO THE FELLOW SWIMMERS

Kamala Das

STRUCTURE:

15.0 Objective

15.1 Introduction

15.1.1 Introduction

15.1.2 Early life

15.1.3 Awards and positions

15.1.4 Conversion to Islam

15.2 Summary of the poem

15.2.1 Swimming in the sea

15.2.2 The sages

15.3 Title Justification

15.4 Summing up

15.5 Questions.

15.0 OBJECTIVES:

This unit brings you certain Indian philosophical trends. At the end of the unit you will be able to

- Understand the philosophy embedded in the poem.
- Give the synopsis of the poem
- Assess the symbols used by the poet
- Get an idea on the individual self

15.1 INTRODUCTION:

The last author that you are going to read about is Kamala Das, who is well-known Indian woman writer in English. She writes in two languages, English and Malayalam. She is considered one of the outstanding Indian poets writing in English. Much of her writing in Malayalam comes under the pen name Madhavikutty.

15.1.1 EARLY LIFE:

She was born on March 31 in 1934 in Malabar in Kerala, India. Her father was an editor of the widely circulated Malayalam daily. Kamala Das spent her childhood between Calcutta and Nalapatt her ancestral home at Ponnayoorukulam in South Malabar region. Like her mother Kamala Das also excelled in writing poetry. She began writing poetry at an early age. She did not start writing professionally till she was married and became a mother. When Das wished to begin writing, her husband supported her decision to augment the family's

income. She worked rigorously and became ill. She viewed her ill health optimistically. She lives at presently with her younger son Jayasuriya in Pune.

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| SAQ Which state did Kamala Das belong to? |
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15.1.2 WORKS IN ENGLISH:

Her first book, “Summer in Calcutta” was a promising start. She published her autobiography, ‘My Story’, which created a lot of interest and controversies though not for literary value. This book was translated into several foreign languages. Some more publications of her are “Alphabet of Lust”, a collection of short stories, “Padmavathi the Harlot and Other Stories”, “Summer in Calcutta”, “The Descendants”, “The Old Playhouse and Other Poems” and “Only the Soul Knows How to Sing”.

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| SAQ What is the auto biography of Kamala Das called? |
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15.1.3 AWARDS AND POSITIONS:

Kamala Das has received many awards for her literary contribution. Some of them are Asian Poetry Prize, Kent Award for English Writing from Asian Countries, Asan World Prize, Ezhuthachan Award, Sahitya Academy Award, Vayalar Award, Kerala Sahitya Academy Award. Her works are translated in to French, Spanish, Russian, German and Japanese. She worked as the Vice Chair Person in Kerala Sahitya Academy and Chair person in Kerala forestry Board, President of Kerala Children Film Society, Orient editor of Poet Magazine and poetry editor of Illustrated Weekly of India.

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| SAQ How many awards did Kamala Das receive? |
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15.1.4 CONVERSION TO ISLAM:

Born into a conservative Hindu Nair family having Royal ancestry, she embraced Islam in 1999 at the age of 65 and assumed the name Kamala Suraiya. Like the themes of her stories her conversion too, kicked up much heat and dust in social and literary circles. People wondered how a person of such rebellious thoughts, writings and life could conform to conservative Islam. She took active part in politics in India. In 1984, she contested election to enter parliament, but lost.

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| SAQ What name did Kamala Das assume when she embraced Islam? |
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15.2 SUMMARY OF THE POEM:

The poem “Advice to Fellow Swimmers” is a short lyric poem replete with ideas. The poem is rich for its philosophical ideas. The ultimate aim of overcoming one’s own desires serves as the theme of the poem. Kamala Das presents life with different symbols in this poem. The central idea of the poem is an advice given to the fellow human beings. She symbolically calls them swimmers. For her life is swimming. Those who lead life are swimmers.

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| SAQ Who are the swimmers? |
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15.2.1 THE ADVICE:

The advice of the poet begins thus. Every one should learn how to swim in a river. The river is the private self. The swimmers should not enter the river

which does not have an ocean to join and whose ultimate purpose is flowing alone. Life must not be led without a destination. If the river has no ocean to flow in, it does not reach any where. If it flows without aim it is purposeless. It causes suffering. Purposeless life is mechanical, dull and weary, resulting in sad memories, which are like the scum in a stagnant river.

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| SAQ What should the swimmers learn when they enter the river? |
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15.2.2 SWIMMING IN THE SEA:

She advises the fellow swimmers to swim in the sea. The tides in sea are the various obstacles one faces in course of one's self realization. The first tide one meets is one's own body. The desires of the body are like pests. The pest irritates and hurts. It causes uneasiness and makes the person restless. Pests have to be controlled. In the same way, desires of the body must be controlled. If not, they will cause agony. Man must work hard to overcome the body.

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| SAQ What is the first tide? |
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15.2.3 THE SAGES:

The sages of the ancient days have advised us how to overcome the desires of the body. They have asked us to do penance and prayer. Then we can control our body. We experience happiness controlling the desires. It makes one to overcome the limitations of the flesh and thus over come the fear of sinking which is nothing but death and achieve full freedom of the soul.

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| SAQ What did the sages teach us? |
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The imagery of the poem is very remarkable. Though not original, the imagery is used very effectively. An individual and one's struggle to lead one's life is metaphorically presented as swimmers and swimming. The desires of the body are at once a pest as well as the first tide in the sea. Sinking is nothing but death. Facing the first tide and overcoming it removes fear of sinking and leads one to liberation.

15.3 TITLE JUSTIFICATION:

Kamala Das is an iconoclast of her generation by talking about her sexual desires. She gave an advice to the fellow swimmers, her fellow human beings who are suffering in the river of life. You have already studied what advices are given by Kamala Das. Das used symbols like sea, river, pest and swimming to advise her fellow beings.

15.4 SUMMING UP:

Kamala Das often is known for her open and uninhabited expression of sexuality. But this poem "The Advice to Fellow Swimmers" proves that she, as a poet goes, beyond her 'womanhood' and deals with the philosophical ideas.

15.5 QUESTIONS: 15 Marks

1. Bring out the central idea of the poem Advice to Fellow Swimmers?
2. What is the advice given by Kamala Das to Fellow Swimmers?

