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FOUR YEAR DEGREE COURSE

(CBCS in Accordance with NEP 2020)

ENGLISH NOVELS

Block 1

Fourth Semester

Discipline Specific Core Course

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMME

Padmanath Gohainbaruah School of Humanities

KRISHNA KANTA HANDIQUI STATE OPEN UNIVERSITY

Subject Experts

1. **Professor Bibhash Choudhury, Department of English, Gauhati University**
2. **Professor Lalan Kishore Singh, Deaprtment of English, Gauhati University**
3. **Dr. Merry Baruah, Department of English, Cotton University**

Course Coordinator(s): Dr. Chayanika Roy, Assistant Professor, KKHSOU and **Dr. Pallavi Gogoi**, Assistant Professor, KKHSOU

SLM Preparation Team

UNITS	CONTRIBUTORS
1	**Arkupal Ra Acharya**, USTM, Meghalaya
2 & 3	**Dr. Pallavi Gogoi**, KKHSOU
4 & 5	**Dr. Chayanika Roy**, KKHSOU
6 & 7	**Dr. Labiba Alam**, Former Research Scholar, Gauhati University

Editorial Team

Content : In- house editing

Language, Structure, Format & Graphics : **Dr. Pallavi Gogoi** & Dr. Chayanika Roy,

Assistant Professors, KKHSOU

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Head Office: Patgaon, Rani Gate, Guwahati-781017; Web: www.kkhsou.in
City Office: Resham Nagar, Khanapara, Guwahati- 781022

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ENGLISH NOVELS
BLOCK 1
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COURSE INTRODUCTION: ENGLISH NOVELS

This learners will get an opportunity to study seven novels roughly covering the period stretching from the 18th century to the 20th century. The learners are supposed to read and study these representative novels of English literature in order to comprehend the issues addressed and learn the proper modes of analysing the works of fiction in the contexts of the different social and historical background of the authors in question. Thus, this course intends not only to introduce the learners to the various theoretical aspects of narrative fiction but also to the contextual relations of the texts of the novels to the age out of which they actually emerged.

BLOCK INTRODUCTION:BLOCK 1

The first block of the course on English Novels consists of seven units. The first unit deals with the the various factors leading to the rise of the English novel and shall provide a basic idea regarding the influential figures associated with it. The second unit introduces the learner to Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* which continues to be one of the most interesting and wonderful adventure stories in the early development of the novel as a literary form. The third unit will deal with Robinson Crusoe's sense of adventure, excitement and engrossing experiences of struggle for survival on an island, lurking with unforeseen dangers and an uncertain future. The fourth unit deals with Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* locating the novel in its specific socio–political context of the eighteenth century. The fifth unit shall reflect upon the significant aspects of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*, best known as a 'novel of manners', which provides a detail description of the ordinary lives of the 18th century English people as well as their intricate expressions of love, morality, courtship, marriage, etc. The sixth unit contains Emily Bronte's *Wuthering Heights* and provides the learners a fair idea regarding the novelist and the context of the novel. The seventh unit deals with a detailed study of the novel *Wuthering Heights*, thereby highlighting the major themes, characters, style and the reception of the novel.

After going through these units, you will be acquainted with the issues related to the rise of the English novel and appreciate a few important novelists. While going through a unit, you may also notice some text boxes, which have been included to help you know some of the difficult terms and concepts. You will also read about some relevant ideas and concepts in "LET US KNOW" along with the text. We have kept "CHECK YOUR PROGRESS" questions in each unit. These have been designed to self-check your progress of study.

UNIT 1: RISE OF THE NOVEL

UNIT STRUCTURE

1.1 Learning Objectives
1.2 Introduction
1.3 Rise of the English Novel in the 18th Century
1.4 18th Century Novels: A Glimpse
1.5 Let us Sum up
1.6 Further Reading
1.7 Answers to Check Your Progress
1.8 Model Questions

1.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the history of the novel as a form
- trace the development of the novel in the 18th century
- highlight the conditions that led to the rise of the novel
- identify certain important novels and novelists of the 18th century
- explain the themes and conventions of the novels of the 18th century

1.2 INTRODUCTION

Stories are common to all fictions, including novels. The novel, however, is a new and still burgeoning literary form. Motor-cars definitely have wheels but the ox-cart, as pointed out by Walter Allen, is not its ancestor. The novel presents a total world with rocks and trees and humans. These humans interact in a given social context entrenched in values. The author's life and living, his experiences and beliefs refract the social and moral world as a prism. The men in the world he creates and offers give us his view of life and living and its future or fate. These men had been traditionally called characters and their life in the story may be looked at as 'an extended metaphor of the author's view of life'. It creates a holistic understanding in the reader on the mores and manners. The novel, in sum, is a social world created by the author. There are no encoded classical definitions or precedents.

Cervantes' *Don Quixote,* heralded the dawn of the European novel and its influence was crucial in the development of the English novel as a study of Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* would make clear, especially on the conscious aesthetic considerations which go a long way in the determination of the shape and form of the subsequent novelistic endeavour.

1.3 RISE OF THE ENGLISH NOVEL IN THE 18th CENTURY

After reading the following section, the students will gain a considerable idea on the evolution of the novel as a major literary form tracing its beginnings and analysing the causes for its rise in the 18th century.

Ian Watt in his pioneering *The Rise of the Novel* (1957) indicates, the "realism of the novel allows a more immediate imitation of individual experience" than do other literary forms, and "this surely explains why the majority of readers in the last two hundred years have found in the novel the literary form which most closely satisfies their wishes for a close correspondence between life and art."

The English novel as we know it today was born in the eighteenth century England and there are many factors that led to its rise. Perhaps the most important social phenomenon of the age was the rapid rate at which country people were moving to the cities, especially London. It is said the population of London doubled, from around 350,000 to 700,000, between 1650 and 1750. This rapid urbanisation and the rampant growth of the city had its fair share of positives and drawbacks: there was a faster and wider dissemination of ideas and an easier access to reading material resulting in the development of a more commercial society.On the other hand, there were the problems of urban crime (existing since Renaissance England, but never so rampant), unhygienic living and housing conditions, lack of space, illness and death.

Such exciting and dangerous times were perfect for the evolution of Daniel Defoe (1660-1731), often considered the first significant English novelist and his *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), the first English novel. Defoe, through his life and works, portrays perhaps all the factors that paved the

way for the emergence and popularity of the English novel. Foremost of these include a focus on the individual and a fascination for the individual's daily affairs seen clearly in Defoe's *The Fortunes and Misfortunes of the Famous Moll Flanders*,1722; as well as the treatment of narrative in measured time**;** thus the novel deals with events in a more specific temporal frame than that of the heroic romance. Other elements include: the portrayal of real people in real settings, which include descriptions of everyday affairs such as eating, drinking, falling in love, feeling sad, etc. A growing sense of independence: resulted in a break from traditional ideas and beliefs, especially those received from authoritative sources. There was an emphasis on interior scenes and urban experiences and, finally, an unprecedented attention to the interests and aspirations of women.

It is in Defoe's works that we see the most significant fact about the English novel; that it is the ultimate expression of the middle class**.** No other literary genre was produced for and consumed by the rapidly expanding middle class as much as the novel.

In 1740, the increasing population of potential novel readers were chiefly interested in family life, the details of everyday living, and the problems of morality being *lived out* which only the novel could provide. Richardson's *Pamela: Or, Virtue Rewarded* in 1740 satisfied these interests, and the book was extremely popular and Ian Watt considers this an important moment in the rise of the English novel as this book powerfully made the claim for the novel to be taken seriously. Another important aspect of *Pamela* was that the narrative is carried forward through letters for the most part reiterating the importance of individuality and attention to detail in the 18th century.

The 18th century was called the Age of Reason advocating rationalism as its official philosophy, but it hardly affected the actual lives of most people and this is reflected through the content of the novels of the age. Most of the protagonists of the English novel then were either outlaws or rebels such as Moll Flanders and Clarissa Harlowe from Richardson's *Clarissa, or, The History of a Young Lady* (1747-1748). These works portray the lives of one or two central characters, further reinforcing the focus on the individual.

Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759-1767) is an important novel of the time focussing on individuality. The book is also considered the germ of the later psychological novel.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is considered the first English novel?

Q 2: What are the conditions that led to the popularity of the novel in the 18th century?

Q 3: What are some of the features of the early novel?

Thus, this shift to interiority tremendously helped the novel as a genre to grow. Besides this, the novel also depended on an easy prose style, a departure from the exalted language of the romances. The simplicity of language helped achieve that "common touch" that 18th century readers connected to. Another reason why novels and fiction sold so well in this age was the Licensing Act of 1737, aimed at the theatre, which in effect, forced Fielding to turn from drama to the novel; it also gave rise to bland theatre, thus winning a greater readership for periodicals such as *Spectator Papers* by Addison and Steele, which led to a wealth of well-written journals. Thus we see that the novel, through its characters and themes, protested against the conditions of society and yet depended on them for its existence and the concerns of previous authors (Milton for example with his spiritual concerns) were forgotten. People were more interested in how to get along, live successfully and morally, and come to terms with the rapidly changing times. For this, they sought help from the novelists rather than the philosophers or the poets. It is with these novelists, their feet planted in middle-class mores and conventions that the readers identified with.

The Castle of Otranto (1765) by Horace Walpole (1717-1797), is a significant moment in the history of the English novel as this was the first gothic novel. It was tremendously popular and marked the movement of the readers' tastes towards the more exotic, violent and passionate; anticipating the Romantic Movement.

"Another early sign of Romanticism is a different sort of novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), by Oliver Goldsmith (1728 or 1730-1774), regarded as the harbinger of the novel of sensibility, another signal of the Romantic "temperament" (Watt).

The **gothic** and the **sentimental** would go on to dominate the novel reading public of the end of the century. These later audiences liked wild settings with mysterious ruins and castles. "These "wild" settings became increasingly common in novels and were a staple feature of the Romantic novel to come." (Allen) The concept of "nature" would go on to be the primary focus of the Romantic poets, but examples of which we find in Romantic novels too, such as those of Sir Walter Scott.

"These novels of social concern illustrate an important phenomenon: The novel was beginning to occupy a position formerly held by the drama. While a few excellent satires can be found near the close of the century—such as Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (pr., pb. 1773) and Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The Rivals* (pr., pb. 1775) and *The School for Scandal* (pr. 1777)—generally, the burgeoning concern for human rights and social reform is to be found most fully developed in the novel, though a number of poems also reveal such concerns. In *English Literature from Dryden to Burns* (1948), Alan D. McKillop argues that the novel "entails a critical or analytical attitude toward characters represented under actual or conceivable social conditions" and that the "critical attitude is directed toward both individual character and the social situation." He suggests that the novel was coming ever closer to the real lives of its readers as the eighteenth century came to a close. Despite the excesses of the sentimental novel and the novel of terror, the central trend of prose fiction was an attempt to grasp and come to terms with the world as it had to be dealt with every day" (Eagleton).



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Which novel is considered the first Gothic novel?

Fanny Burney (1752-1840) is an example in case. Her novels steeped in domestic life "contain a great deal of sensible advice—either by demonstration or by declaration—for their readers, especially young women." (Mackay) A wide readership to her books points towards women's participation in novel reading and writing and it is Burney who paved the way for perhaps the most famous female novelist of all time, Jane Austen (1775-1817).

The reason why the Industrial Revolution had greater importance among the lower and middle classes was because *individual lives* were deeply and directly affected. This fact is supremely significant in the development of the English novel, because the novel focuses solely on the inner lives of people. Whether there are "detailed delineation of the thoughts and emotions of a character" as in the novels of Samuel Richardson or "a clear demonstration of a character's motives by action" as is evident in the works of Henry Fielding, the novel is entirely dependent on individual people, both in their relationships with oneself and with the world, in understanding the meaning of the world and of life.

The nineteenth century novel often contained a varied assortment of local voices from across the socio-economic fabric whereas the eighteenth century novels were more globally engaged rather than domestically. The eighteenth century novels had characters like Crusoe and Lemuel Gulliver who were world explorers, pointing towards Britain's colonial locations the New World that Britain was increasingly engaging with. Also, the nineteenth century novels had a multi-lingual collection of different and overlapping narratives whereas the eighteenth century novels in contrast were fairly slim in its range of voices as it focussed on one or two central characters reiterating its emphasis on the individual.

1.4 18th CENTURY NOVELS: A GLIMPSE

This section aims to introduce you to some representative novels of 18th century England. As a student of English Literature, you are expected to read more on these novels that have shaped the genre of the novel and has made it what it is today.

1. *Robinson Crusoe (1719)*

Robinson Crusoe was published on 25 April 1719 and is often considered one of the earliest English novels. It is didactic and epistolary and is based on the life of Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish castaway who lived for four years on a Pacific island; *Robinson Crusoe* was very well received with four editions coming out in 1719 itself. The novel marks the beginning of realistic fiction as a genre and is often considered the first novel.

2. *Moll Flanders (1722)*

Moll Flanders was another novel by Daniel Defoe, first published in 1722. The original printing did not have an author, as it was an apparent autobiography. It was attributed to Defoe after his death. The novel is based partially on the life of Moll King, a London criminal whom Defoe met while visiting Newgate Prison.

3. *Gulliver's Travels (1726)*

Gulliver's Travels, or *Travels into Several Remote Nations of the World. In Four Parts. By Lemuel Gulliver, First a Surgeon, and then a Captain of Several Ships* was an English prose satire which is now considered one of the greatest English novels; in a 2015 list of 100 best novels of all time, *Gulliver's Travels* is listed, as "a satirical masterpiece".

4. *Pamela (1740)*

Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded is an epistolary novel by English writer Samuel Richardson, first published in 1740. It tells the story of a 15-year-old maid named Pamela Andrews. Although a best-seller, *Pamela* was widely criticised for its "immorality" and disregard for social classes.

5. *Shamela (1741*)

An Apology for the Life of Mrs.Shamela Andrews, Shamela, as it is popularly called, is a satirical novella in the epistolary form by Henry Fielding although he denied the work was his. It was written as an attack on *Pamela*, copying its style and composition.

6. *Clarissa (1748)*

Clarissa, or, the History of a Young Lady is an epistolary novel by English writer Samuel Richardson, published in 1748. It tells the tragic story of a heroine whose quest for virtue is continually thwarted by her family and is regarded as one of the longest novels in the English language and as Richardson's masterpiece.

7. *Tom Jones (1749)*

The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling, or simply *Tom Jones*, is a comic novel by English playwright and novelist Henry Fielding. It is both a *Bildungsroman* and a picaresque novel. It was first published on 28 February 1749 in London. W. Somerset Maugham in his 1948 book *Great Novelists and Their Novels* rated *Tom Jones* among the ten best novels of the world. This work is considered Fielding's masterpiece and was highly popular in its day.

8. *Tristram Shandy (1760-67)*

The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy, Gentleman (or *Tristram Shandy*) by Laurence Sterne was published in nine volumes, beginning in 1759 till 1767. The novel claims to be the biography of the titular character, Tristram Shandy. It is often considered the harbinger of the modern psychological novel and one of the greatest novels ever written.

9. *The Castle of Otranto (1764)*

The Castle of Otranto published in 1764 was the first ever gothic novel by Horace Walpole which marked a change in the reading tastes of the 18th century audience as it turned more towards the exotic and the extraordinary. It marked the beginning of the gothic genre which went on to dominate the novels at the end of the 18th century also influencing the likes of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.

10. *The Vicar of Wakefield*

The Vicar of Wakefield – subtitled *A Tale, Supposed to Be Written by Himself* – is a novel by Oliver Goldsmith (1728–1774) considered

the first novel of sensibility. It was one of the most popular and widely read 18th century novels among Victorians.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: Briefly write on epistolary novel.

Q 6: In what way the novels of eighteenth century differed from the ones belonging to the nineteenth century?



1.5 LET US SUM UP

Thus, we have seen the varied and long lineage of the modern novel and how narratives and fiction have existed since the birth of language and how over the ages, they have evolved to form the novel as a unique genre in the 18th century. We are now acquainted with some of the important novels and novelists of the age while also gaining an insight into reasons that accounts for the growth and popularity of the genre.



1.6 FURTHER READING

1) Allen, Watter, (1991 rpt.). *The English Novel : A Short Critical History*. Penguin.

2) Eagleton, Terry. (2005). *The English Novel : An Introduction Oxford:* Blackwell Publishing.

3) Mackay, Marina. (2011). *The Cambridge Introduction to the Novel*. New York : CUP.

4) Poplawski, Paul. (2008). *English Literature in Context*. Cambridge : CUP.

5) Richetti, John. (Ed.) (1996). *The Cambridge Companion to the Eighteenth - Century Novel*. New York : CUP.

6) Sanders, Andrew. (2000). *The Short Oxford History of English Literature*. Oxford : OUP.

7) Watt, Ian. (2000 rpt.). *The Rise of the Novel : Studies in Defoe, Richardson and Fielding*. London : University of California Press.

1.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719).

Ans to Q No 2: Perhaps the most important social phenomenon of the age was the rapid rate at which country people were moving to the cities, especially London. It is said the population of London doubled, from around 350,000 to 700,000, between 1650 and 1750. With the rapid urbanisation and the rampant growth of the city there was a faster and wider dissemination of ideas and an easier access to reading material resulting in the development of a more commercial society.

Ans to Q No 3: The ultimate expression of the middle class**,** family life, the details of everyday living, and the problems of morality being lived out, etc.

Ans to Q No 4: *The Castle of Otranto* (1765) by Horace Walpole was the first gothic novel.

Ans to Q No 5: *Clarissa* or *the History of a Young Lady* is an epistolary novel by English writer Samuel Richardson, published in 1748. It tells the tragic story of a heroine whose quest for virtue is continually thwarted by her family and is regarded as one of the longest novels in the English language and as Richardson's masterpiece.

Ans to Q No 6: The nineteenth century novel often contained a varied assortment of local voices from across the socio-economic fabric whereas the eighteenth century novels were more globally engaged rather than domestically.



1.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Trace the history of the rise of English novel in the eighteenth century.

Q 2: What are the factors that contributed to the rise of the English novel?

Q 3: Give an account of the first English novel highlighting its significant features.

Q 4: Provide a glimpse into the major novels that were written during the eighteenth century. What kind of themes did these novels reflect?

****

Unit 2 : Daniel Defoe: *Robinson Crusoe* I

UNIT STRUCTURE

2.1 Learning Objectives

2.2 Introduction

2.3 Daniel Defoe: The Novelist

2.3.1 His Life

2.3.2 His Works

2.4 Context of the Novel

2.5 Summary of the Novel

2.6 Let us Sum up

2.7 Further Reading

2.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

2.9 Model Questions

2.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to :

- receive a cursory glance of the times in which Defoe wrote
- discus the life and works of the author
- explain the background of the novel *Robinson Crusoe*
- summarise the sequence of adventures in the novel
- appreciate and enjoy the adventures contained in the larger narrative of the novel.

2.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit is based on Daniel Defoe's novel *Robinson Crusoe.* The narratives of adventure have always continued to stir our imagination. Perhaps, in the line of all-time adventure classics like *Treasure Island*, *Castaway* and other such works, Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) still continues to be one of the most interesting and wonderful examples. It is always a pleasure to read and re-read *Robinson Crusoe* and to receive a slice of adventure and excitement, from the life and adventures of Crusoe who survives the dangers and challenges on a deserted island, away from

the company of his family and friends for twenty eight long years. The inspiration for the novel is considered to have been drawn from a real life story that had occurred in 1709. In this unit, we will try to explore life and works of Daniel Defoe and also the times in which he had written his narrative, recreating two of the most memorable characters in English literature i.e., Robinson Crusoe and his endearing companion Friday. Besides, you will also be provided with an outline of the novel that will help you to reflect on the story of the novel.

2.3 DANIEL DEFOE: THE NOVELIST

Daniel Defoe is regarded as one of the pioneers of the novelistic form or genre and with his considerable amount of literary and journalistic works, as the founder of British journalism. As a writer, he roughly belonged to the period which was between the latter half of the 17th century and the beginning of the 18th century. He was a prolific journalist, author, essayist, pamphleteer, trader and a dissenter in his own right and was much inclined towards both religion and politics. Let us then, glance into the life and works of this major English novelist.

2.3.1 His Life

Daniel Defoe (1660-1731) was born as 'Daniel Foe' to Annie Foe and James Foe, a tallow-chandler in London. The Foes were a converted Presbyterian family because of which they had to suffer many restrictions under the prevailing law. The young Defoe received his early education at the Dissenter's academy at Newington Green which was under the Reverend Charles Morton (who later came to be the vice-president of Harvard University). Defoe's growing years were surrounded by the religious and political suffering of the Dissenters and he grew up always feeling like an outsider for his religious identity. The Dissenters (Protestants who did not follow the Church of England) were subject to several restrictions particularly the availing of higher education, which is why Defoe had dropped out of school at the age of 19. He also lost his mother

at the tender age of 11, when she had passed away in 1771. Although his father wanted him to join the ministry, instead of joining the Church he went on to pursue his interests in trade and business. He traded in varied commodities and it interested him so much that he even enjoyed 'writing' on aspects of trade and is considered today as a pioneer of 'economic journalism'. But even as a young trader, he held strong moral convictions and religious beliefs that had been instilled in him from his childhood years.

He was a close ally and supporter of William III and had also served in the Monmouth's Rebellion in the year 1685. The Dissenters were once again targeted under Queen Anne's rule, when she had ascended the throne after the demise of William III in 1702. Defoe was a politically conscious individual and also a 'whig' supporter and owing to his political activism through his controversial pamphlets like "The Shortest-Way With the Dissenters" (1702) was also subject to trial and arrest. Having spent three days in the pillory, he was shifted to the Newgate Prison but subsequently, released by Robert Harley, 1st Earl of Oxford and Earl Mortimer. The release came with Harley's offer to Defoe, to act as a secret agent for the Tory ministry, which Defoe had accepted in return for his freedom. But after the demise of Queen Anne, he switched to working undercover for the Whig government and subtly did away with writing in favour of the Tories.

Although, he was much involved and surrounded by the political changes during his time, Defoe had a stable married life with Mary Tuffley, the daughter of a London merchant, who he had married in 1684 and with whom he had eight children. Defoe's life was not easy by any means, as he was constantly surrounded by political conflicts and controversies right from his childhood. And in his later years, his popularity as a journalist had also suffered when his activities for the government had turned into an open-secret. To add to it, he also suffered bankruptcy, debts and losses resulting from the fluctuations in trade and commerce from time to time.

Defoe had several ups and downs in life but despite all hardships and circumstances produced a considerable amount of books, pamphlets and journalistic works. He breathed his last in the year 1731 at the age of 71 and was laid to rest in Bunhill Fields, London.

2.3.2 His Works

It will surprise you to know that Defoe took to writing only after crossing the age of fifty. Defoe is significantly considered to have given shape to the modern English novel. Defoe is credited with over 500 or more religious and political pamphlets and satirical poems and is known to have written at least under 198 pen names.

Having faced prison life, Defoe had penned a pamphlet titled "The Shortest Way to Dissenters" (1702), which had almost created a flurry amongst the Tories and opportunistic Dissenters as well. Due to this, charges of 'sedition' and 'libel' were pressed against him, which resulted in his not only being fined but also subjected to face humiliation in the pillory and later being held under prison custody at London's Newgate prison. It was during this time that he wrote and circulated his verses titled "Hymn to Pillory" which gained him mass supporters rather than just spectators in the pillory, so much so that he was garlanded and cheered by the crowds resulting in his subsequent release. That year he had started his own periodical the *Review* and his political views found a voice through its pages.

In the year 1703, a great storm had ravaged through London and Bristol taking a toll on human lives, also causing a tempest at sea and killing many people. Defoe wrote a first hand account of the Great Storm of 1703 in *The Storm* (1704) which came to be regarded as one of the best examples of modern journalism.

He wrote several manuals on conduct such as *Religious Courtship* (1722), *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726) and *The New Family Instructor* (1727); accounts of travel like *The History of the Union of Great Britain* (1709), *A General History of Discoveries*

and Improvements (1727), *Atlas Maritimus and Commercialis* (1728)and *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain* (1724–27); works voicing social concerns like *The Great Law of Subordination Considered* (1724) and *Everybody's Business is Nobody's Business* (1725) among other works. Being a tradesman himself, he held a great regard for the profession and one of his significant volume *The Complete English Tradesman* (1726) and *London, the Most Flourishing City in the Universe* (1728) provides a broad view of his insight into the workings and significance of trade in England.

Some of his best known works are *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Captain Singleton* (1720) based on travel and adventure; *Duncan Campbell* (1720);*Memoirs of a Cavalier (1720)* based on the English Civil War and the Thirty Years' War; *Journal of the* Plague *Year (1722*), a realistic novel based on Great Plague of London in 1665; *Colonel Jack* (1722) a picaresque novel which traces the trajectory of an orphan; *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana: The Fortunate Mistress* (1724), both centered on the development of women protagonists, which are also counted as two of his best works.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1. Who was Daniel Defoe?

Q 2. Where did Defoe receive his early education? Briefly discuss his childhood years?

Q 3. Which poem had gained him mass supporters at the pillory during his arrest?

Q 4. Name some of the best works of Daniel Defoe.

2.4 CONTEXT OF THE NOVEL

Let us explore the contents of the novel *Robinson Crusoe* through a wider approach to the text.

The life and times of Daniel Defoe revolved around the "ferment" of ideals and beliefs in the rapidly transforming socio-political scenario of England. Oliver Cromwell had led the puritan movement and introduced the parliamentary form of governance in England in place of the monarchy. In 1658, with the death of the Puritan leader Oliver Cromwell, the monarchy was restored in 1660 with Charles II as the new king. Charles II was succeeded by James II whom the Duke of Monmouth, the illegitimate son of Charles II had tried to overtake unsuccessfully. In a small way, Defoe had also extended his support to the Monmouth's Rebellion in 1865 but had some how escaped charges. Catholicism prevailed under the rule of James II but his son-in-law William of Orange was a protestant and much progressive in his views. Seven bishops had offered the throne to James' daughter and William-of-Orange together and this peaceful settlement without any bloodshed came to be known as the Glorious Revolution.

Following the Glorious Revolution of 1688, in which the monarchy was declared under the state, Defoe gladly sided with William of Orange and the Whig party. While the term 'Whig' was used for a supporter who upheld liberal views and supported the parliamentary form of governance, a 'Tory' supporter was one who upheld conservative views and supported the monarchy. This was also a period of literary journalism which saw the widespread publication and circulation of news papers, pamphlets, journals and periodicals like the *Spectator* and the *Tatler* which had also ushered in a new wave of intellectual growth. With financial aid, Defoe had himself launched an independent periodical *The Review* in 1703 which ran successfully for eleven years.

Defoe also rose from his humble beginnings to the middle station of life with his fortunes as a successful trader and merchant. Therefore, it can be aptly quoted: "Thus, Defoe himself as a manufacturer of writings, participates in the mercantile opulence, 'the increase and extensiveness of its commerce' which to him is the pride of contemporary Britain." (*Cassell's History* 332).

2.5 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

After reading through the text, the learner will find that the novel does not contain a particular form of chapterisation and that the narration progresses in a long, winding manner. Thus, the learner will do well to read through the entire text of the novel first, so as to gain a brief idea through the provided summary while reading along the novel. The summary is divided into smaller sections and highlighted with a caption, in order to make it easier for the learner to grasp the chronicle of events in a systematic manner.

The Preface :

Just before the narration opens, the Preface to the novel unfurls an anomymous editor's words of praise and appreciation for the life and adventures of Crusoe as worthy of publication. The words of praise which are in a stylish calligraphy read as follows: "The Wonders of this Man's Life exceed all that (he thinks) is to be found extant; the Life of one Man being scarce capable of a greater Variety."

The Preface adds in a word on how Crusoe's story is threaded with a narrative that is tinged with "modesty" and "seriousness" together with wise or religious ascriptions to such events as revealed in the narrative. It also takes into account the aim "to justify and honour the Wisdom of Providence" which takes its own course as in the story of Crusoe. On an ending note, the Preface sums up the editor's opinion of the entire account as a factual or better still as a "just History of Fact", the publication of which shall be considered as rendering of a "great Service" to the world.

York and sailing to London:

The narratorial voice of Robinson Crusoe begins in the first person narrative, through which he reveals his family and personal details to unfurl the story of his life and adventures. Being born of good parentage, in the city of York in 1632, the young Crusoe was christened 'Robinson Kreutznaer'. He was brought up with his two elder brothers and received a good education at home and at the country free-school. It was from his mother's side of the family that he had received the second part of his name 'Robinson' and through "the usual corruption of words" (3) the name

stuck as Crusoe and also his friends called him so. His eldest brother had served as a lieutenant colonel to an English regiment and died in war and no one knew what had happened to his other sibling. And as far as he was concerned, he only longed to go to the seas for adventure feeling strongly that "…I (he) would be satisfied with nothing but going to sea…" against all the will and requests of his family and friends (3).

It was his wise and concerned father who had warmly tried to counsel him one morning in his chambers. He had questioned his son's desire to sail across the high seas, when a prospect of raising fortunes with the industry and leading a pleasurable life was available to him. The old man after all, had also once lost his unheeding(eldest) son, whom he had dissuaded from fighting in the low Country Wars. Crusoe was moved by his father's prophetic discourse and had decided to alter his mind but it only lasted a few days with his thoughts "so entirely bent upon seeing the world" (6). This was at a time when the new worlds were being opened up through the sea routes and there were adventures to be explored. Thus, Crusoe tried to gain his father's consent by pressing on his mother to persuade him. But the old man persisted in his own belief.

Finally, one of Crusoe's companions had allured him to experiment and set sail on a journey to London on his father's ship. And it was after a year that Crusoe had almost secretly eloped from the comforts of his home without really letting his parents know, without receiving their blessing or asking for divine blessings and without "any consideration of circumstances or consequences" (7). Perhaps, at the age of nineteen, it was the rush in his young blood that had impulsively led him to decide on a sea journey which could and did prove fatal.

Thus, he boarded the ship bound towards London on the 1st of September 1651 which having sailed just a few nautical miles had been caught in a tempest or a storm at sea. And this is when he seriously came to reflect in his moment of panic and agony the gravity of the situation, having gone against all the entreaties and counsels of his parents, his "wicked leaving" from his home and abandonment of his duties(7). While the storm brewed and increased by the minute, he helplessly made avowals

to God to spare his life, promising to never leave home or sail the seas if he survived by the grace of a divine intervention. This was when he felt like a repenting prodigal son wanting in his repentance to return home to his father whose worst fears had only come true

But, the following day everything seemed fine and the sea was smooth without a trace of storm winds, bringing on a renewed hope and cheerfulness to an already sea-sick Crusoe. What had seemed like a tempest to Crusoe was in the words of his friend only "a squall of wind", who offered him drinks to drown all the distress of the previous night (8). On the sixth day, they had crossed the Yarmouth roads and it was on the eighth day that the increasing winds caught their masts before they could anchor. And though the master of the ship kept his calm and constant vigilance, Crusoe could hear him repeating: "Lord, be merciful to us, we shall all be lost, we shall all be undone" (9). Thus, you can imagine the kind of fears that wreck havoc in a person's mind and spirit being helpless and at the mercy of the infinite powers in the high seas as expressed in Crusoe's own reflections later on: "I know not what to call this, nor will I urge that it is a secret overruling decree that hurries us on to be the instruments of our own destruction, even tho' it be before us, and that we rush upon it with our eyes open"(12).

Having survived and grown all the more wiser for his experiences, he embraced offers of other sea voyages, sharpening his knowledge of mathematics, rules of navigation and sailing and qualifying himself both a sailor and a merchant.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: What does the Preface to the novel *Robinson Crusoe* reveal?

Q 6: a. Crusoe was christened as …….

b. Crusoe was ……years old when he left home.

Q 7: What did Crusoe's father question him?

Q 8: When did Crusoe secretly leave home to board a ship?

Sea voyage and settling in the plantations :

The shipmaster on having learnt that Crusoe had only sailed with them "for a trial in order to go further abroad" had begun to discourage him from returning to sea ever again and bringing misfortunes and ruin upon himself and also to return home to his father (12). With a little money left to him, Crusoe then travelled to London wondering on his future course of action and constantly remembering his father's words. But, it was not long before he boarded yet another ship for a new journey to the coast of Africa, a voyage to Guinea, as the sailors called it. As the ship sailed towards the Canary Islands, they were surprisingly caught by a sudden attack of the Turkish rovers or sea pirates. And although they fought in defense, they were easily outdone and taken as prisoners to Sallee, a port that belonged to Moors. Being young and resourceful, Crusoe was taken in to serve as a slave to the captain of the rovers. This had sealed his fate from that of a merchant to a slave. Thus, his new master or patron had him engaged in common household chores and gardening, while he went to sea. Thus, you will notice the turn of events that take place, Crusoe turns into a pirate's slave.

Two years had passed by and on many occasions, Crusoe had meditated on his escape, until one fine day when he took his chance while being sent to fish for food along with a young man named Moely and a little boy called Xury. As the patron had to attend his guests, these circumstances had presented itself as a perfect opportunity to escape. So, on this fishing trip, they took along jars of freshwater, basket full of biscuits, lumps of beeswax (to make candles), parcel of thread, hatchet, saw, hammer, gun powder and bullets. When they reached the bay of Cadiz, near the coast of Spain, Crusoe took his chance to escape by pushing Moely off the boat and threatening to shoot him if he swam back to the boat. Moely, the young man being an excellent swimmer swam away to their shore. In the meantime Xury, the innocent boy who seemed to mean no harm was taken into his confidence to faithfully accompany him.

Thus, they sailed southward to the Barbarian coast to lay off the rovers' suspicion because in all probability, they would not have suspected them to go that way, owing to the "nations of negroes" who posed as serious threats

on that side (19). On having safely sailed away for several miles from the port of Sallee, Crusoe was headed for a short adventure with Xury in tow. Together, they sailed on their boat without anchoring, for fear of dangers, until they were close to the islands of Canaries and the Cape de Verd Islands. European sailors sailing on a ship had received their signal and having located their boat through their perspective glasses had taken them aboard. The captain of the ship proved to be a very generous and hospitable person and had also brought Crusoe's boat and ammunitions for the ship. Crusoe had made a total of 220 pieces of eight with his stock. The captain had also offered him a good amount for Xury, whose freedom Crusoe was not ready to sell and whom he was reluctant to part with. But when Xury himself expressed his will to go with the captain, who had also offered to set him free after ten years, Crusoe let the good Captain take him along.

Settling down in the sugar plantations of Brasil :

Thus, Crusoe had settled down to a life in the plantations situated by the shores of Brasil, while also owning his own sugar plantation and sugar-mill (ingenio as they called it). Gradually, he came to purchase land for himself and settled down to what his father had called the 'middle station of life' which he would have easily had anyway, had he not runaway from his father's home. A good four years had rolled by and to add to the slave that the Captain had provided him with, he had brought himself a European servant and a black slave.

Even as he thought he was prosperous in the plantation life that he had led, the desires to return to sea and embark upon a new sea adventure had constantly stirred him into restlessness. Crusoe reflects thus: "I was still the willful agent of all my own miseries; and particularly to encrease my fault and double the reflections upon myself , which in my future sorrows I should have the leisure to make; all these miscarriages were procured by my apparent obstinate adhering to my foolish inclination…" (31). And finally, Crusoe "blindly adhering to the dictates" of his "fancy rather than his reason" had arranged for a ship and cargo to set sail (33). He went on board yet again on the fateful day of the first of September, 1659, exactly eight years since he had gone away from his parents.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 9: How was Crusoe's fate transformed from an Englishman to that of a slave?

Q 10: When did Crusoe take his chance to escape from the rovers?

Q 11: What was Crusoe's plan after parting ways with the Captain and Xury?

Second storm at sea and ship wreck :

Having sailed smoothly for several days, they had reached the northern part of Brazil away from the river Amazon and towards the river Oronoque (called the 'Great River'). But as the ship proved to be leaky and required assistance, a second storm had come upon them and the seas suddenly went wild. The storm was a fury and the crew of the ship were all "swallowed" by the sea in a moment that appeared to rise "as high as a hill" (37). But even as they were being driven by the waves, Crusoe did not lose his presence of mind. And this was until he had set his foot on land again, on an unknown shore and gained a new leash of life and courage to take his fate in his stride. He had found himself washed ashore on an unknown island; the waves had dashed him against the rocks and it took a while for his condition to sink into his consciousness. Infact, after he gained his composure, realising he was the sole survivor of the ship, he walked about the shore in disbelief, partly trying to register his own helpless condition in his mind. Just imagine how lonely it would be on an island all by yourself without a clue of which part of the world you could be in. And suddenly chasing his immediate fears of survival Crusoe had begun to run all about the place much like a mad man.

When the sea turned very calm at the tidal ebb, he decided to swim across to the ship wreck to look for some provisions. So he swam to the ship and climbed its forecastle and having searched, had found that dry and untouched provisions which had once again lifted his spirits.

Gathering his provisions on the island :

Immediately, Crusoe had begun his work and made a small but strong raft, to drift his provisions in order to carry them across the island. The first list of his collected provisions comprised of:

Bread, rice, Dutch cheese, dried goat's flesh, European corn, barley and wheat, gallows of rack and cordial waters, carpenter's chest, arms and ammunition like barrels of gun powder, fowling pieces, pistols and rusty swords.

Thus, he was well-freighted. Although it was not without his share of struggle, he took it all ashore. Next, he had intended to circumspect (look around) the countryside but he also had no idea, if he was on an island or on some continent, whether there were any inhabitants or wild beasts there. Gradually, he began to plan his trips to and fro the ship in order to procure anything and everything that would be necessary to him. On his second trip he had gathered the listed necessities such as:

Nails, spikes, screw-jack, hatchets, grindstone, iron-crows, barrels of musquet bullets, musquets, fowling pieces, small quantity of fowling pieces, gun-powder, small shot, big roll of sheet lead, clothes (of the crew), spare fore-top-sail, hammock and bedding.

Crusoe apparently was not without his apprehensions (fears of the provisions left behind on shore, being taken away by someone). And thus, till the "ship sat upright in that posture" he tried to make the most of it and gather as much useful necessities that he could find. On his third trip he gathered: small ropes, rope-twine, spare-canvas, barrel of gun powder and all the sails. And in the consecutive trips, he brought a great hogshead of bread, large runlets of rum or spirits, box of sugar, barrel of fine flour, cables, hawser, sprit sail-yard, missen-yard and iron. Although, he lost much of his collected cargo due to the currents, he managed to restore most of his freight. He had also collected broken oars, chest of tools, saws, axes, hammers etc. Thus, during the 13 days of his stay at the island, he had made eleven trips on board the ship. On his 12th trip he had collected razors, scissors, knives, forks, European corn, six pounds' value in money, pieces of gold and silver. His first thoughts were his own security from

savages, wild beasts or any unforeseen dangers and so he tried to find a place for his settlement where fresh water was available.

Crusoe's setting up his dwelling and encampment on the island :

Some of the favourable conditions he was looking for were:

- Health and fresh water
- Shelter from heat of the sun
- Security from ravenous creatures
- View from the sea in order to locate any ship that happens to pass by.

So, he had set up a tent on the side of a rising hill, crowing it with a semi-circle of two rows of strong stakes dug in or driven into the earth as a defensive fence. Only after having brought in his provisions and fortifying or securing his tent could he sleep peacefully at night. Thus, in his fancy he called his new homestead his "kitchen". In time, he had also acquainted himself with the whereabouts of the island and searched for food and hunting for meat.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 12: Make a list of some of the necessary provisions that Crusoe had gathered.

Q 13: Where had they reached before the storm destroyed the leaky ship?

Q 14: How many trips did Crusoe make to the wrecked ship?

Q 15: What were some of the favourable conditions that Crusoe had been looking for?

Activities on the island :

Thus, Crusoe took to breeding goats, made fire and even enlarged his cave. He would often wonder "Did not you come eleven of you into the boat? Where are the ten? Why were not they sav'd and you lost? Why were you singled out: is it better to be here or there?" (51). Crusoe went about the business of living a silent life. It occurred to him that in order to avoid losing his sense of time, he carved his weeks on a wooden cross with a knife and set it up on the shore, marking time from his first stepping

on the island. This was how he had marked time weekly, monthly and yearly in a systematic manner.

He had with him pens, ink, paper, various parcels, compasses, mathematical instruments, dials, perspectives, charts, books (particularly navigation books) and three good Bibles. Also, he had brought along with him two cats and a dog. During this time he also began to keep a journal that recorded his activities (almost like an activity log book). From his journal, we get a detailed account of the amount of toil, he had put into his each activity. He had widened his vault or cave in eighteen days, labouring with wood of iron tree, weaving an extra thatch with coarse grass, breeding live stock, poultry and pigeons, making candles out of goat tallow, cooking turtle meats and eggs, leavening his own bread, gathering drifting barrels of gun powder and even accidently scattering husks of corn stalks. To his luck, he also came upon the seaman's chest on the stranded ship which was of excellent use to him. Often he worried of running out of water in his habitation. At times he dreamt or even hallucinated and in his lonely hours remembered his father's words. From here on, you will find Crusoe often seeking solace and reassurance in reading the words of the Bible and growing spiritually.

Surrendering to the will of the Almighty :

This was when he made his first prayer in his distress crying out "Lord, be my help, for I am in great distress" (74). It was in one of the chests that he had found tobacco, few books and Bibles as a "cure, both for soul and body" (76). Thus, he had tried various ways of easing his anxiety by experimenting with tobacco to drug himself. During one such moment when he picked up and casually opened the Bible, he found the words: "Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shall glorify me", which was when he knelt to pray after a long time. Thus, began a spiritual journey and what could also be considered as a journey of self-discovery.

Shifting to new habitation and enjoying labour :

While on the island, he also happened to fall sick but recovered and took to surveying the island, discovering banks and brooks, savannas or meadows and higher grounds, wild plants and fruit trees like wild aloes,

sugarcane, cocoa trees, orange, lemon, citron, green limes etc. He took to drying grapes, limes and lemons to store for the wet season. And yet again he began considering on shifting his habitation and to start work immediately. Just before the August rains, he completed building his new bower and carved his "notches" on the wooden post to measure time. Gradually, he lost track of time and ran out of ink as well. Thus, he ate sparingly, used his supply and ammunitions with discretion and was particular not to waste much ink. He turned familiar with the various seasons on the island which also found a description in the pages of his journal.

Without the least idea of which part of the world he could have been in, he suffered unseen fears of man-eaters and cannibals in what he calls the "savage coast". Here he caught a young parrot for a pet and trained the bird to call out 'words', something that he really longed to hear. This presented itself as a welcome diversion from his lonely hours of toil and labour. Time and condition had seasoned him to be good and an all-rounder in all activities like sowing, arranging scarecrows, making wicker-ware, creating pottery, stone-cutting, baking bread, enlarging his barn, felling trees, growing grapes, carving his canoe, tailoring his own clothes, curing animal skin, brewing and various other activities to provide for his sustenance. Gradually, he also learnt to read currents and developed a sense of direction, building on his knowledge of navigation and to also fight the unpredictable eddies.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 16: What did Crusoe do in order to avoid losing his sense of time?

Q 17: How did he record his day-to-day activities?

Q 18: When did Crusoe begin to pray again?

Q 19: What did Crusoe finish just before the August rains?

Eleven years pass by and new unknown fears visit Crusoe :

'Poll', his parrot would often repeat "Robin, Robin, Robin Crusoe, poor Robin Crusoe, where are you? ...Where have you been?" and draw his thoughts which would occupy his mind mostly for want of conversation. Having passed eleven years on the island i.e., over a decade, he often

thought to himself, "I seem banished from human society", which he called his "silent life" (127). The dense semi-circle crown of dense stakes in front of his fortification had begun to grow in height.

One fine noon, he was alarmed at finding a 'footprint' of a man on the shore and his apprehensions and fears started crawling in his consciousness, racking through his imagination. But five years from that day, he was still without the shadow or appearance of another human figure on the island. Nevertheless, he drew his own "rational design" and made a second fortification in the same way and thickened his double wall and while, on the outside, it was a row of thickly growing trees, the inside part was thickened with earth (above ten foot thick) with seven holes, just about enough to plant his guns. In two years time, it had grown into a thick grove which made it "impassable" (131) and he used two ladders to get across his fortification. He spent another two years in his "uneasiness" fearing the presence of cannibals (native men who had a practice of eating human flesh) and their flesh-eating ways and eighteen years in total had passed by.

During this time, he rehearsed his every move to defend himself from any unwarranted attack. One fine day, he had discovered the insides of a cave that reflected hundred thousand lights from his tallow candles-not knowing whether this 'grotto' (a cavity in the rocks) was a tunnel of gold, diamond or other previous stones. He fancied this as a hideout in case, a strength of around five hundred savages came to hunt him.

Twenty six long years :

He spent many good years in the company of his parrot and loving companion, his dog. In the twenty third year, he had come to discover savages at a good distance through his perspective glass in his side of the island. This caused him to both prepare for retaliation as well to pray. The savages who were stark naked, had rowed towards the shore in their boats and later had left behind "a dreadful sight" of blood, bones and human flesh. Although, Crusoe was alert all the while, he used his discretion to hold his fire and avoid unnecessary attention.

The sight of ship wreckage :

After around a year and three months in the twenty fourth year, a strange encounter had taken place in which Crusoe noticed a ship in distress and later found its wreckage, to realise that the stretch of concealing or hidden rocks that had once proven his saving grace had turned into the cause of destruction for the unassuming crew of the ship. He was so desperate for company that he searched the wreckage, in the hope to find "some living creature on board" (154) to not only save a life but also comfort his own. But having found only a set of necessities, he assembled a cargo of rice, umbrella, large pot of fresh water, dozens of small loaves or barley cakes, goat's milk, cheese etc.

You will notice that this is when he faces a Hamletian situation i.e., whether to sail away from the island or not with this thought "[a]nd now I was to launch out into the ocean, and either to venture, or not to venture". But he gave up the very thought to rescue a dog, the only life in the remains of the wreckage. To enlist his provisions from the wrecked ship, he collected: casks of liquor, muskets, powder, fire-shovel, tongs, brass kettles, copper pots, clothes and a chest with paper money and coins (of which kind he had collected from his own ship as well). Two more years had sailed by.

A dream comes true :

One morning, Crusoe dreamt of two canoes and eleven savages landing ashore and one savage escaping from their clutches. And he dreamt that upon revealing himself to the savages, the man knelt in front of him for assistance and on being showed the way to the cave, decided to become his servant. Note the psychological conflicts, mental configurations, action plans, "his secret disputes" with himself and finally his resolutions to take on the savages as and when they come.

But his dream had come true indeed, when savages landed on the island in a total of five canoes. Suddenly he felt unprepared and saw that while they cooked one of their victims, another was waiting his fate! Taking it upon himself to save the victim's life, he tried to befriend the victim who had tried to escape, by coming in his way. And they were both equally frightened at seeing each other. Only gradually after having gained Crusoe's

trust, he drew nearer and knelt down after ten-twelve steps in acknowledgement of Crusoe's acting as his miraculous rescuer or better still, his saviour. When Crusoe smiled and through signs bade him to draw nearer, the man gestured his servitude for life.

Hearing the man speak in his own tongue, Crusoe found it pleasant to his ears "for they were the first sound of a man's voice that he had heard …for above twenty five years" (166). Together they fought the savage men and buried them soon after. Crusoe took the young savage to his cave and provided him bread and water and a place to lie down and rest.

Master and Friday :

While Crusoe taught the man to call him "Master", he named the man- 'Friday' for he was saved on a Friday. The canoes had left assuming that two of their companions had been lost. Later Crusoe and Friday discovered parts of human flesh and bones strewn on the shore and Crusoe at this point threatened and instructed Friday to never touch or desire human flesh or ever return to their cannibalistic practices. As a provider, Crusoe sewed clothes for Friday and provided him with lodging and although was initially scared of being attacked, gained a gradual sense of trust.

Crusoe then took to teaching Friday who was to him "the aptest schollar" (171). He taught him all that was useful, handy and helpful and most importantly taught him his "language". Crusoe endeared Friday particularly for his "simple unfeign'd honesty" and knew that Friday loved him more than anything, even more than it would ever be possible for him to, for he had saved his life.

Language and discourse :

Soon, Friday learnt the English language well enough to make conversations in broken words. While Crusoe once again began to have use of his language, Friday took to asking questions in his master's language. Thus, their discourses, conversations, discussions and arguments had begun. They both talked about their Gods and beliefs. While Crusoe asserted the supremacy of his Christian God, to Friday 'Benamuckee' was the guardian spirit, manifested in nature and just as Christians had their own clergy, Friday's people had mediators called 'oowocakee'. In one such significant discussion, when Crusoe asserted

the supremacy of God, Friday listening as seriously as a child asked his master: "if God much strong, much might as the devil, why God no kill the devil, so make him no more do wicked?" (178).

Nevertheless, Crusoe was very grateful to God for providing him with a good company. And together, they had completed three happy years on the island. Crusoe related his own story, taught him religion and the Christian doctrine, taught him to shoot, armed him with weapons of his own and further, taught him to carve a boat of good wood and stitch sails to make him an expert sailor.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 20: Who repeated the words given below?

"Robin, Robin, Robin Crusoe, poor Robin Crusoe, where are you? ...Where have you been?"

Q 21: Briefly state Crusoe's significant dream?

Q 22: What had Friday learnt from his master?

Another rescue and addition to Crusoe's family :

Friday narrates of how he had seen a boat of white men land in their nation, who even lived there in harmony with the natives, having made a peaceful truce with them. When Crusoe suggested that Friday could return to his own people, a hurt Friday with tears in his eyes asked his master: "Why you angry with Friday, what me done?" In Friday's reply, he would rather die in his master's hands than sail away without him which indeed reflected his "utmost affection" towards his master.

One morning Friday brought him news of three canoes with two captives, one being a European man and as Friday discovers later to his utter amazement, his own father. Together they rescued the two captives from the clutches of the natives, although two of their men had escaped in their boats. Thus, the new guests had been welcomed and well provided for. It was from this European man (a Spaniard) that Crusoe learnt of how fourteen of his country men were still alive and if his crew were to take their group on board to any of the Christian colonies, they would have to make a good offer for the same, such as a running food supply. Because in having

four more persons (Crusoe and his group) to provide for, the crew might decide not to rescue them, unless they would be offered a good food supply. Thus, with the Spaniard's caution and suggestion, they waited for another harvest, reaping a good harvest of several bushels and jars of rice.

A New Arrival :

Having gathered sufficient supply, Crusoe sent the Spaniard and Friday's father to the mainland to approach the fourteen men with his proposal in the form of a formal written order, which was to be duly signed by them, acknowledging that they would be subject to Crusoe's commands (202). Thus, they left in the same boat that they had been brought in, being entrusted with muskets and gun powder, supplied with provisions and reminded to send a signal on their return.

Eight days after their departure to the mainland, Friday brought in news of yet, another arrival which Crusoe discovered to be that of an anchored English ship at around two and a half leagues distance and an approaching boat with mostly Englishmen. And even when he saw his own countrymen after so many years, he could not hold back his apprehensions. They landed on shore, leaving behind two men in their boat, to simply wander about the woods on the island. This was when Crusoe cautioned Friday to load himself with arms and took them by surprise to first assure them of assistance instead of attacking them directly. At this point a commander, who was brought captive by the men, revealed how his men had mutinied against him and instead of murdering him, had sent him on shore to the desolate island with the two men on the boat in charge (one being his mate and the other being a passenger). Thus, Crusoe availed the opportunity to lay down certain terms and conditions if he was to be delivered. The terms were if their ship was recovered, it would be commanded by him and secondly, the commander would pretend no authority on the island.

Upon this, the commander provided his assurances but warned Crusoe of the two villains who had been the main instigators in that conspiracy and who would bring back the entire crew if they had managed to escape. Although, the Captain was bent on to having them severely punished, you will find that Crusoe's better sense had prevailed. And in

keeping with Crusoe's stratagem, the commander approached the ship and following a sudden charge of attack, in which the main sailor (who had recently turned into the new conspiring-captain) along with his men had died, took control of the ship. And after the ship was secured, the commander had fired a signal, anchoring the ship on shore just past the midnight hour. When Crusoe saw the anchored ship, he was left at a complete loss of words and had almost broken into tears. The cheerful commander had brought with him bottles of lime juice, sugar, flour, lemon and among other things, clothes and presented Crusoe with one of his good suit along with his clean shirts and neck clothes which also symbolised a return to his old self, an English gentleman.

Crusoe spared the two villains from punishment and instead provided them the option of staying back to look after the island, which the two had willingly accepted. Thus, Crusoe provided them a history of his stay at the island in order to make their stay comfortable and informed them of the fourteen Spaniards who were to be expected soon on the island (for he had sent for them). And thus, leaves a letter for them so that the arriving Spaniards were assured of being treated equally by the two men.

Finally setting sail after a period of twenty eight years :

Having arranged all the preparations to embark on his long-awaited journey, he left the island on the 19th of December after a period of twenty eight years, two months and nineteen days. He took along with him his goat's skin cap, umbrella, his parrot and his money. And after a long voyage, had arrived at England on the 11th of June, 1687 (having been absent for a long thirty five years).

In England, he was taken for a perfect stranger. His benefactor whom he visited to acknowledge her former kindness and also his faithful steward were still alive. But, his father and mother and most of his family members had long passed away, except his two sisters and two of his brother's children. Although, he learnt that no provision was really left for him due to his long absence, to his good fortune and surprise, he had was presented with a gift of gratitude of almost 200 pounds sterling, from the merchants who had learnt from the commander, about Crusoe's act of delivering the



Homo Economicus: The term implies the 'economical man' an example of which is crusoe himself.

commander and the ship with all its cargo intact. And with this, Crusoe sailed towards Lisbon along with his man Friday as Crusoe says "…my man Friday accompanying me very honestly in all these ramblings, and proving a most faithful servant upon all occasions" (227).



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 23: What were the two terms that Crusoe had laid down for the commander?

Q 24: When did Crusoe leave the island and when did he arrive at England?

Final adventure :

Crusoe's old acquaintances had been very kind to him which had touched him emotionally. He received congratulatory letters and gifts in gold and kind, from his old plantation partner with which he also provided generously for his original benefactor, the captain who had been very charitable to him earlier. Also he provided well for the kind widow of his first benefactor (the old captain) while also providing for his own sisters. At the same time, he generously gave a good portion for charity to the St. Augustine monastery and the poor and along with his abundant stock and crew had set out for a new sea journey.

Crusoe narrates his final account of travelling through Madrid, Spain and Pampeluna towards the edge of Navarre, at the French and later the Gascoign side of the mountains. Travelling in a carriage drawn by horses, they ran the risk of crossing through a snowy terrain lurking with ravenous wolves. And although, they were well armed and had a French guide in tow, to show them the way, the pack of wolves at the foot of the mountains and vast forests were too fierce to be done away with. You can easily imagine, the kind of fear and uncertainty that they had faced on being surrounded by two to three troops (around three hundred wolves) on all sides, ready to tear them to pieces. The snow had dazzled their eyes but Crusoe quickly devised his strategy of placing the horses (the chief target of the hungry wolves) in the middle and his small troop of men enclosing the horses in the formation

of a triangle. They fired several volleys at the wolves and even blew up gun powder to kill scores of wolves and chase the remaining away.

And thus, after having survived this dangerous adventure with Friday, he travelled from Thoulouse to Paris and then to Dover. Following the good advice of his true friend the widow, he kept away from travelling and instead took to raising his two nephews, the eldest as a gentleman to look after his own estate and the other as a captain of a ship. He even married and had three children, two sons and a daughter. And long after his wife's death, he visited the island his "new colony" as he called it, to also provide his men with their necessary cargoes and supplies there. While reserving most of the island for his own, he also gave them portions of their choice as well. Thus, "beginning foolishly, but closing much more happily" (248) in the words of Crusoe, he led an eventful and a truly adventurous life.

Crusoe also ends his narrative, on the note that he would further share his new travel and adventures on another account.



2.6 LET US SUM UP

After reading the above sections of the unit, you have seen how the narrative imbued with the spirit of adventure as unravelled through Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* have always continued to please the imagination of the readers. From your reading of the unit, you will certainly gain a keen interest in the life and adventures of Robinson Crusoe who survives the dangers and challenges on a deserted island, away from the company of his family and friends for twenty eight long years.

What makes the narrative more fasinating is the fact that it was inspired from a real life story that took place in 1709. Besides, familiarising yourself with the life and works of Daniel Defoe, you will receive a cursory glance of the times in which Defoe wrote, explain the background of the novel discuss the string of adventures in the novel and appreciate the larger narrative of the novel in its entirety.



2.7 FURTHER READING

1) Conrad, Peter. (2006). *Cassell's History of English Literature.* London: Weidenfield and Nicolson.

2) Long, William J. (2007). *English Literature: Its History and Its Significance.* New Delhi: Surjeet Publications.

3) Man, John. (ed). (1998). *Robinson Crusoe by Daniel Defoe.* London: Everymen.

4) Sanyal, Lopa. (2006). *English Literature in Eighteenth Century.* New Delhi: Discovery Publishing House.



2.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Journalist, author, essayist, pamphleteer, trader and a dissenter.

Ans to Q No 2: The young Defoe received his early education at the Dissenter's academy at Newington Green which was under the Reverend Charles Morton (who later came to be the vice-president of Harvard University). His growing years were surrounded by the religious and political suffering of the Dissenters and he grew up always feeling like an outsider for his religious identity.

Ans to Q No 3: "Hymn to Pillory".

Ans to Q No 4: *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), *Captain Singleton* (1720), *Duncan Campbell* (1720), *Memoirs of a Cavalier* (1720), *Journal of the Plague Year* (1722), *Colonel Jack* (1722), *Moll Flanders* (1722) and *Roxana*: *The Fortunate Mistress* (1724).

Ans to Q No 5: The Preface to the novel unfurls an anonymons editor's words of praise and appreciation for the life and adventures of Crusoe as worthy of publication.

Ans to Q No 6: a. Robinson Kreutznaer, b. Nineteen.

Ans to Q No 7: He had questioned his son's desire to sail across the high seas, when a prospect of raising fortunes with the industry and leading a pleasurable life was available to him.

Ans to Q No 8: He had secretly boarded the ship bound towards London on the 1st of September 1651.

Ans to Q No 9: Crusoe was taken as prisoner to Sallee by the pirates and being young and resourceful was made to serve as a slave to the captain of the rovers.

Ans to Q No 10: He had taken his chance to escape, after two years while on a fishing trip when Crusoe had reached the bay of Cadiz, near the coast of Spain.

Ans to Q No 11: Crusoe had settled down to a life in the plantations situated by the shores of Brasil, where he became the owner of his own sugar plantation and sugar-mill.

Ans to Q No 12: Try and make a list on your own.

Ans to Q No 13: They had reached the northern part of Brazil away from the river Amazon and towards the river Oronoque (called the 'Great River').

Ans to Q No 14: Thirteen.

Ans to Q No 15: a. Health and fresh water

b. Shelter from heat of the sun

c. Security from ravenous creatures

d. View from the sea in order to locate any ship that happens to pass by.

Ans to Q No 16: In order to avoid losing his sense of time, he carved his weeks on a wooden cross with a knife and set it up on the shore, marking time from his first stepping on the island.

Ans to Q No 17: Journal that recorded his activities (almost like an activity log book).

Ans to Q No 18: During one such moment when he picked up and casually opened the Bible, he found the words: "Call on me in the day of trouble, and I will deliver, and thou shall glorify me", which was when he knelt to pray after a long time.

Ans to Q No 19: He had completed building his new bower.

Ans to Q No 20: Poll, Crusoe's pet parrot.

Ans to Q No 21: Crusoe dreams of two canoes and eleven savages landing ashore and one savage escaping from their clutches. Further, upon revealing himself to the savages, the man knelt in front of him for assistance and on being showed the way to the cave, decided to become his servant.

Ans to Q No 22: Friday learnt the English language well enough to make conversations in broken words.

Ans to Q No 23: Crusoe availed the opportunity to lay down certain terms and conditions if he was to be delivered. The terms were if their ship was recovered, it would be commanded by him and secondly, the commander would pretend no authority on the island.

Ans to Q No 24: He left the island on the 19th of December after a period of twenty eight years, two months and nineteen days. And after a long voyage, had arrived at England on the 11th of June, 1687 (having been absent for a long thirty five years).



2.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1. What does the Preface of the novel reveal? Why is it important?

Q 2. Discuss the life and works of Daniel Defoe.

Q 3. Describe Crusoe's first sea adventure in the novel *Robinson Crusoe*.

Q 4. Describe the context of the novel by highlighting the thematic significance of the novel.

Q 5. Briefly chronicle the twenty eight years that Crusoe spends on the island.

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UNIT 3 : DANIEL DEFOE: *ROBINSON CRUSOE* II

UNIT STRUCTURE

3.1 Learning Objectives

3.2 Introduction

3.3 Reading the Novel

- 3.3.1 Major Themes
- 3.3.2 Major Characters
- 3.3.3 Narrative Style

3.4 Critical Reception

3.5 Let us Sum up

3.6 Further Reading

3.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

3.8 Model Questions

3.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through the unit, you will be able to :

- receive a concise summary and outline of the novel
- read into the major themes pertaining to the novel
- gain an insight into some of the important and memorable characters
- form an analysis on the narrative style
- receive a critical reception of Defoe's work

3.2 INTRODUCTION

In the previous unit, you have read about the life and works of Daniel Defoe along with the background and the summary of the novel *Robinson Crusoe.* In this unit, you will receive a critical insight into the novel, as the main focus will be on the various important areas and aspects pertaining to the novel. At the same time, you are advised to read the text thoroughly with an eye for the details. It is 'best' to read the novel from cover-to-cover in order to enjoy Crusoe's sense of adventure and excitement. Such a reading will also bring alive (almost like a lived experience) your imagination as a reader, while going through Crusoe's varied adventures and engrossing experiences of struggle for survival on an island, lurking with unforeseen

dangers and an uncertain future. A complete reading will also provide you with a better comprehension of the unit.

3.3 READING THE NOVEL

In the following subsections, you will gain a critical insight into various important aspects pertaining to the novel *Robinson Crusoe* such as the major themes, major characters and narrative style. These detailed discussions will also supplement your reading of the text of the novel.

3.3.1 Major Themes

Spirit of Travel and Adventure :

Even after having received the wise counsel of his father, being well-provided for with all the prospects of excelling at their trade and despite courting near death like situations, there was a continuous stirring in the restless mind of Crusoe to sail the seas on adventures. It was almost as though only the seas were his true calling. Crusoe through both his adventures and misadventures underwent tremendous challenges to emerge a survivor. He was well-travelled and had grown wiser for his experiences which he would not have had, had he remained confined to his father's estates.

The very feeling of losing a sense of time and place on a boat, without being equipped with nautical instruments, rolls of map, idea of latitude or sailor's advice can be grasped in Crusoe's own words in which he says: "…*so I ventur'd to make to the coast, and came to an anchor in the mouth of a little river, I knew not what, or where; neither what latitude, country, what nations, or what river…*" (20). And whatever be the risk or threat, he always took it in his stride to tackle and employ his stratagems in time to overcome it all. Crusoe also took to killing for sport like in the instance of escaping the clutches of the Turkish rovers; Crusoe had shot and killed a lion at a harmless distance from his boat just for game rather than necessity. All things taken into consideration, Crusoe's spirit was truly imbued with a sense of fun and adventure, which is why he left home at the age of nineteen

to return home only as a seasoned and a well-travelled middle-aged man. In a broader sense, it is also an account that presents the degrees of struggle and balance between man and his nature.

Colonisation :

The theme of 'colonisation' is evident in the wider context of the novel. By the term colonisation, we understand the domination of the native colonies and its people by the Europeans and the English alike. The process of colonisation can also be related to cultural domination in which the culture and traditions of the natives is rendered inferior to that of the colonisers.

As a prosperous gentleman's son who was but attracted towards the life of a sea-farer, Crusoe was reminded by his father "*that the calamities of life were shared among the upper and lower part of mankind; but the middle station had the fewest disasters*" (4-5). Although, Crusoe had settled to a more humble life on the stranded island, he carried the cultural burden of superiority as an English man. Crusoe considered his culture, religion and beliefs superior to that of Friday, so much so, that he had initiated Friday's into his religion, taught him his language and even refashioned his ways. After all, he was "master" to Friday and all the others who later joined him on the island. He acted as the sole owner of the island (his 'colony') with his own set of terms and conditions. But it is not as though, Crusoe was the complete figure of the English coloniser because it must be said that he also had a personality of his own. He even considered how cannibalism was a natural practice of the natives, just as it was a common practice of people to kill animals for food. And further, he even made a relative comparison and felt that the 'ignorant natives' were lesser criminals than that of the 'conscious Spaniards' who destroyed millions of native Americans and displaced them from their homes.

During the colonial times, slave trade was a common practice. In one such extract in the novel, Crusoe observes on how "buying negroes" or slave trade was a practice during his time, which

was carried on in public through obtained permission (*assiento's*) from the kings of Spain and Portugal, so that few but the best of the black slaves could be brought (32). With the sudden turn of events in the novel, English men (like Crusoe himself) were taken as slaves to serve the Moors (who were otherwise taken as slaves by European seafarers). You may note that like Crusoe there was another English slave who had served the Turkish rover at Sallee (17).Thus, in the process of colonisation, the coloniser is held superior to the colonised, the master to the slave and likewise the civilised to the savage.

Religion and Spiritual Transformation :

That providence plays a part in his destiny is presented in the form of Crusoe's dawning realisation of being the sole survivor of the wrecked ship, which again happened to be at an accessible distance for him to gather all the necessities for his own survival. Gradually, he learnt to look at the positive side of life, believing strongly that he was delivered by the divine grace of God alone. In his lonely hours several realisations had dawned on him and he thought to himself: "*I learn'd here again to observe, that it is very rare that the providence of God casts us into any condition of life so low, or any misery so great, but we may see something or other to be thankful for, and may see others in worse circumstances than our own*" (152).

One July morning, he had picked up his Bible and after a long time began to kneel and pray, also offering thanks for his deliverance from his illness. With time, he cultivated it as a regular habit and engaged himself in reading portions of the Bible every morning and night to his soul's content. Through prayer and confession, he gained strength and felt that "*a temper of peace, thankfulness, love and affection*" (133) was the proper frame of prayer and not a temper of distress or terror. In many ways he had turned philosophical in his approach towards life and had undergone a spiritual transformation as well. At all times, he acknowledged his sincerest gratitude to his great Preserver and learnt never to despair but to hope for the best.

Towards the end of the novel, while having considered his return to the Brasil plantations, Crusoe made a regretful confession that when he "*began to think of living and dying among them, I began to regret my having profess'd myself a Papist, and thought it might not be the best religion to die with*" (234). Only under certain circumstances, he had to profess himself to the religion of the country (Brasil) as a Catholic but it was not a natural choice as he was a Protestant Christian. In the end, he had upheld and preached his religion; he was a good Christian and faithful to the Lord which was all that mattered to him. In many ways the spiritual journey of Crusoe reminds one of John Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress.*

ACTIVITY 3.1



There is a proverb that says, "No man is an island" which means that no man can live all by himself. However, imagine you were stranded all alone on an unknown island. If you had a choice what would be some of the most important things or provisions that you would rather have with you?

Also devise and jot down some of your own survival strategies on an island.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is the meaning of the term Colonisation?

Q 2: To what extent was Crusoe adventurous?

Q 3: How did Crusoe, during his stay in the island, come to know about his spiritual transformation?

3.3.2 Major Characters

The following are the important characters in the novel *Robinson Crusoe*.

Robinson Crusoe :

"But I that was born to be my own destroyer, could no more resist the offer than I could restrain my first rambling designs…"(33), this is what Crusoe felt as a young gentleman intent on embarking on sea adventures across continents. Having miraculously escaped death and surviving on the stranded island, Crusoe found ways of providing for his own sustenance, instead of waiting for things to look up. Although, he possessed an impulsive nature, he was seen ever ready to embark on sailing adventures and was also blessed with a presence of mind and resolution to tackle the worst of circumstances. Crusoe was also much foresighted as he says "I consider'd from the beginning how I would provide for the accidents that might happen" (52). Here, in his journey, you will observe how Crusoe applied his practical reasoning and rational judgment in every way in all situations. By the dint of his hard labour, he provided very well for his own sustenance and was by all means self-sufficient, so much so that his cave looked "like a general magazine of all necessary things" (56). Although he suffered a gamut of emotions he learnt not to despair of anything. Without wasting time he put in his best efforts and kept up with all the dreary work, so much so, that even when he fell sick several times, he never passed out of exhaustion.

Crusoe somehow followed his instincts of survival and with the passing of time became laborious and seasoned. He learnt optimism and struggle in the face of all odds and as he himself declared "…I seldom gave up anything over without accomplishing it, when I once had it in my head enough to begin it." He also learnt much by trial and error, for an instance, he lost one whole crop by sowing it during the dry season but on rectifying it later gained an abundance of harvest. We learn from Crusoe's character the qualities of fortitude, courage, hard work, perseverance, presence of mind, being self-determined or strong-willed and overall to be optimistic. It was not as though, it was easy for Crusoe to be hopeful at all times and as is obvious, he was not without his share of emotional turmoil, often in

remembrance of his father's counsel and musings on God. He often sat down all by himself and wept like a child.

Often, he felt like a prisoner on the island which made him lose his composure. Although, he was much self-contained and pre-occupied with himself, he desperately longed for company. During his lonely years only his pet parrot, pet dogs and goats provided him with a sense of attachment. He repented at times, made confessions, while also praying and acknowledging God's judgment on himself. In his own words he says, "I was removed from all the wickedness of the world here. I had neither the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life"(105).

But, we can also find a sense of arrogance or indulgence in the character of Crusoe, when he finds new company on the island, "[m]y island was now peopled, and I thought myself very rich in subjects; and it was a merry reflection which I frequently made, how like a king I look'd" and that he was "absolute Lord and law giver" on the island (196). As a white gentleman, he also had certain inbuilt biases against the savages but these were dispelled when he learnt from Friday that their people were not necessarily violent or hostile at all times. He considered himself 'generalissimo' with Friday as his 'lieutenant'. Above all, he had emerged as a survivor in his own right and grew all the wiser through this self-journey or journey within.

Friday :

In Crusoe's description, Friday was a tall, straight, shapely and a strong limbed man with long black hair, bright dun olive colour skin and a good physique. He was probably 26 years of age and had a good countenance which Crusoe described as "all the sweetness and softness of an European in his countenance" and always bore a pleasant smile with a "sparkling sharpness in his eyes" and a humbleness in his approach.

As Crusoe had saved Friday from his death, he promised his servitude and submission to him. Although, initially both of them could not comprehend the other's language, yet they understood each

other in many things. Friday was an amiable person and a fast learner of all things, being amazed at the way things worked like the functioning of guns and shots, learning his master's language which was very new to him. He was a good companion and help to Crusoe and bore an extraordinary love for his master, his own father, and also his nation that was reflected through his words. Friday was a sight when his emotional side had surfaced and he was reunited with his father on the island. In his "filial affection" (194), he was jumping and dancing, laughing and crying, embracing and overwhelmed and simply rejoicing that special moment. He was also very loyal and faithful by nature and such was his loyalty that he expressed his lifelong gratitude to Crusoe saying: "Me die, when you bid die, master" (188).

Friday thus accompanies Crusoe for the rest of his adventures from his share of being frightened of snow mountains to fighting wolves in Pampeluna. All in all, Friday has been an interesting and a rounded portrayal in Defoe's characterisation and also one of the most endearing and memorable characters in fiction.

Xury :

Xury, the innocent and endearing boy had accompanied Crusoe on his fishing trip which Crusoe had planned to turn into his final escape from the rover's captivity. Xury was unaware of Crusoe's plans of escape on the fishing trip but nevertheless, on being demanded to swear his loyalty, he had innocently smiled and promised to be faithful and travel the world with him. It was the little boy's cheerfulness that had kept Crusoe's spirits high. He also seemed to have a sound sense of place and survival, being alert and awake to all the lurking dangers, often suggesting Crusoe on the 'do's and don'ts' as if he were a "councellor"(24). And it is he who notices the ship near Cape de Verd which had become their ultimate rescuer.

In one such situation, in which they had taken the risk to anchor on an unknown shore, Xury had voluntarily requested Crusoe to allow him to look ashore for fresh water. When Crusoe asked him the reason as to why he should not go instead and Xury stay back,

this is what the boy had said: "If wild mans come, they eat me, you go wey" and it was the boy's affectionate answer, which made Crusoe "love him ever after" (21). He was a brave and independent boy, skilled at hunting and also skinning (he skins a lion that Crusoe had shot). Later, the boy decided to serve the captain of the ship who had rescued them and promised him his freedom after ten years.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: What do we learn from the character of Crusoe?

Q 5: What was Friday's appearance like in Crusoe's description?

Q 6: Who had kept Crusoe's spirits high while escaping the pirates of Sallee?



LET US KNOW

The learner shall find several words spelled differently in the text of the novel. It must be noted that you are to use the correct form of the words (as provided within brackets) while writing answers. A complete list of the variation in the spellings of words in the text is provided below:

Perswasions (persuasions), Collonel (Colonel), wandring (wandering), entred (entered), vertues (virtues), harrast (harassed), prophetick (prophetic), ruine (ruin), cabbin (cabin), imprest (impressed), lookt (looked), cloaths (clothes), quallified (qualified), mathematicks (mathematics), compleated (completed), suddain (sudden), extasies (ecstasies), firr (fir), tyde (tide), roused (rouz'd), barly (barley), dipt (dipped), cargoe (cargo), linen (linen), skrew jack (screw jack), canvass (canvas), sizzers (scissors), cabbin (cabin), wholesom (wholesome), terras (terrace), fewel (fuel), subtile (subtle), tollerable (tolerable), kalender (calendar), mechanick (mechanic), ryce (rice), politicks (politics), head ach (head ache), desart (desert), burthen (burden), feaver (fever), meer (mere), immediatly (immediately), accompt (account), mannor (manor), straitned (straightened), humane (human), murther (murder), hazey

(hazy), journies (journeys), hamock (hammock), taylering (tailoring), sprye (spray), victuall'd (visualised), auning (awning), chearfully (cheerfully), easyer (easier), chace(chase), stopt (stopped), stoick (stoic), troublesom (troublesome), joyn'd (joined), adjoyning (adjoining), subtilty (subtlety), thickened (thickened), loth (loath), wast (waste), thorow (thorough), haled (hailed), rendred (rendered), corps (corpse), jaum'd (jammed), fastned (fastened), poring (pouring), encrease (increase), thorow-fare (thorough fare), tranquillity (tranquility), Governour (governor), enclin'd (inclined), antick (antique), soverainty (sovereignity), schollar (scholar), embraceing (embracing), satisfie (satisfy), joyn (join), waryness (weariness), skreaming (screaming), extream (extreme), handsom (handsome), comerades (comrades), traffick (traffic), cutlash (cutlass), parlying (parleying), staid (stayed), wakned (wakened), bad (bade), inchanted (enchanted), pease (peas).

3.3.3 Narrative Style

"Thanks to Defoe, the novel defines itself as art in a new mode…" (*Cassell's History* 334)

The narration of the novel is very interesting; in the way it alternates with events and shapes up in form and content. The novel *Robinson Crusoe* is woven with varied adventures both on land and at sea but remains not only an adventure novel but also, a work that delves into the human psyche and his inner journey towards transformation. The narrative in the novel is in the first person in which Crusoe narrates his experiences in a conversational style. When he says, "tho' I have not given the reader the trouble of so particular account of my works this year as the first…" (93), it gives the impression that Crusoe as a narrator is consciously aware of his readers, reading into his narration. Within the fictional narrative, Defoe also uses the journal form as a suitable mode to record the vivid details or the particulars of his long stay on the island. Also he mentions his maintenance of not only land journals but 'sea journals' as well (235).

If you notice, the form of English dialect used in the novel, you will find slight variations of language usage. But, it does not really pose as much of a problem as the implied meaning of the words (in relation to the sentences) can be easily grasped with just a little effort such as: 'be thought' (I thought), 'durst not' (did not/does not), 'why wert thou' (why were you), tho'mixt with (although mixed with), 'I durst to believe' (I had to believe), wakned (awakened), often times (often), from whence they came (from where they came) etc. Friday's dialogues are presented in broken English as he is a new learner of the language and his usage of words is often amusing to the reader. Apart from this, the narration is serialised or episodic and alternates from one account to the other. Both the land and sea adventures are accounted alternately with an attention to details. The narration is lively and stirs the imagination through a wide range of challenging adventures and interesting experiences.

In the lay-out of the novel's title page, the learner will find a few crisp lines on what to expect in the novel's narrative structure. These short lines presented here in the form of a paragraph, read exactly as follows:

"The life and strange surprizing adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, Mariner: who lived eight and twenty years, all alone in an un-inhabited island on the coast of America, near the mouth of the great river of Oroonoque; having been cast on shore by shipwreck, wherein all the men perished but himself with an account how he was at last as strangely deliver'dby pyrates. Written by himself."

These expository lines subtly hint at the course of events in the narrative.

3.4 CRITICAL RECEPTION

The biographer Jean Jacques Rousseau in *Emile, ou de l'education* (1762) had celebrated Crusoe's work saying: "What is this wonderful book, then? Is it Aristotle, or Pliny, or Buffon? No- it is Robinson Crusoe". Karl Marx in *Das Kapital* had discussed the socio-economical relevance of the

work with his analysis on Crusoe: "[s]ince Robinson Crusoe's experiences are a favourite theme with political economists, let us take a look at him on his island." Also, Defoe's "Serious Reflections of Robinson Crusoe" (1720) is a significant essay based on his own work. Following the publication of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), he had also written two more sequels titled *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Robinson Crusoe*: *With His Vision of the Angelick World* (1720). Some critics have also emphasised on the spiritual significance of this work.

While there have been some critics who have both under-valued and over looked Defoe's works as "fit only for the kitchen…" (Long 346), the continued significance and the popularity of his works, considering also his literary contribution he had undoubtedly carved a place for himself in the development and history of English literature. The novel has been adapted in the form of several plays, films and opera. Defoe had inspired a trend that came to be known as the 'Robinsonads' which was used for similar island-castaway stories which has drawn a significant crowd and readership over the years. In the words of John Man: "The book's literary significance as 'the first great English novel' and its international success makes it a wonder."



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q7. What is the suitable mode or form that Defoe employs to record Crusoe's activities?

Q8. Name the two sequels after *Robinson Crusoe*.

Q9. What do you find most interesting in the style of Crusoe's narration?



3.5 LET US SUM UP

After going through the unit, you will receive a substantial idea of how to place the novel *Robinson Crusoe* in its relevant context by highlighting the relevant themes and the significant characters in the novel. The

supplemented discussons is the unit will also enable you to form a critical analysis on the narrative style and also receive a critical reception of Defoe's work. The unit is prepared to enrich the learner's insight and interest into the experiences and adventures of Robinson Crusoe. The novel also contains significant aspects of the moral and the spiritual which is retained throughout the course of the novel. It aims to draw the learner's interest towards the larger narrative of the text and also encourages him/her to further explore the two sequels followed by the all time adventure classic *Robinson Crusoe*.



3.6 FURTHER READING

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3.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The domination of the native colonies and its people by the Europeans and the English alike. Colonisation can also be related to cultural domination in which the culture and traditions of the natives is rendered inferior to that of the colonisers.

Ans to Q No 2: Crusoe was highly adventurous following which he left home at the age of nineteen only to return as a well-travelled middle-aged man.

Ans to Q No 3: Crusoe learnt to look at the positive side of life and believing strongly that he was delivered in the island by the divine grace of God alone.

Ans to Q No 4: We learn from Crusoe's character the qualities of fortitude, courage, hard work, perseverance, presence of mind, being self-determined or strong-willed and overall to be optimistic.

Ans to Q No 5: In Crusoe's description, Friday was a tall, straight, shapely and a strong limbed man with long black hair and a good physique. He was probably 26 years of age and had a good countenance which Crusoe described as "all the sweetness and softness of an European in his countenance" and he always bore a pleasant smile with a "sparkling sharpness in his eyes" and a humbleness in his approach.

Ans to Q No 6: The cheerfulness of the little boy Xury had kept Crusoe's spirits high.

Ans to Q No 7: Defoe also uses the journal form as a suitable mode to record the vivid details or the particulars of his long stay on the island.

Ans to Q No 8: *The Adventures of Robinson Crusoe* (1719) and *Robinson Crusoe: With His Vision of the Angelick World* (1720).

Ans to Q No 9: To attempt on your own.



3.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Discuss the varied activities that Crusoe engages himself in, for his own sustenance.

Q 2: Analyse the relationship between Robinson Crusoe and Friday.

Q 3: Discuss Robinson Crusoe's emotional and spiritual journey.

Q 4: Critically analyse the novel in the light of its critical reception.

Q 5: Draw a character sketch of

(a) Robinson Crusoe

(b) Friday.

Q 6: What is the meaning of the term colonisation? Do you agree that *Robinson Crusoe* reflects different aspects of colonisation?

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UNIT 4 : JANE AUSTEN: *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* I

UNIT STRUCTURE

4.1 Learning Objectives

4.2 Introduction

4.3 Jane Austen: The Novelist

- 4.3.1 Her Life
- 4.3.2 Her Works

4.4 Context of the Novel

4.5 Summary of the Novel

4.6 Let us Sum up

4.7 Further Reading

4.8 Answers to Check Your Progress

4.9 Model Questions

4.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss the life and works of Jane Austen
- enlist the contribution of Jane Austen into the gamut of British fiction
- analyse the context and background of the novel, *Pride and Prejudice*
- discuss the story of the novel
- make an assessment of the significance of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* in the context of English fiction.

4.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit deals with one of the most prominent novelists of the late eighteenth century, namely Jane Austen and one of her best known works, *Pride and Prejudice*. You will be interested to know that Austen is one of the writers who played a significant role in reviving the literary genre of novel writing. The English Novel was in a deteriorating condition when Austen first came to the literary scene. Jane Austen, along with Sir Walter Scott, was the major exponent of this literary form during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Both these writers marked the life of this genre into an ever lively and dominant literary form during the nineteenth century which

has persisted till the present age. While reading this novel, you are to keep in mind that the 'manners' that the novel portray belong to the eighteenth century. As such, reading the novel today in the 21st century, we may find it difficult to relate to us. But at the same time, you will gain a wider scope to appreciate the novel as a work of art. However, as stated in the letters of Austen, *Pride and Prejudice* is one of the most favourite works of the author herself.

4.3 JANE AUSTEN: THE NOVELIST

The following sub-sections, while dealing with the life and works of Jane Austen, shall enable you to explore and become familiarised with this remarkable novelist in a detailed way.

4.3.1 Her Life

Jane Austen, the second youngest of the eight children of George Austen and Cassandra Leigh Austen, was born in 1775 at Steventon, Hampshire which is situated in the South of England. She was born into the eighteenth century society of England, and her writings show an inclination towards the early eighteenth century. It has to be mentioned that Austen lived and wrote well into early nineteenth century– an age of revolution. Interestingly, her love of the early generation was the focus of her works where she was seen to be least concerned about the politics or the ***Revolution*** of the day.



LET US KNOW

By ***Revolution***, reference is made to the beginning of the Industrial Revolution which was an epoch in the history of Britain. Though it spread to the rest of the world in the later centuries, Britain was the first to encounter it. As a result there was growth of cities, migration, and so on. Austen, however, loved to be a part of the country rather than the city. Reading the life of Jane Austen is very important for us because her writings are much influenced by the kind of life she led and the society she dwelt in.

Jane was closest to her brother, Henry and her only sister, Cassandra among all her ***siblings***. In fact, several correspondences between the sisters have been well recorded. Austen attended school for quite a brief period of time. But it was her family, especially her father, who played the key role in educating her wisely. She grew up acknowledging and observing the social ***mannerisms*** and customs that dominated her society during that period of time. As mentioned earlier, due to the growth of industrialisation, there came upon a divide in the society. On the one side there was the aristocratic section, while on the other side was the section of labourers or the working class. It needs special mention that with the rise of the middle class, sophistication dominated the society, especially the landed ***gentry***. This section of people became newly rich and sophisticated in their mannerisms. It was because most of their income directly came from the Church. Austen's father was also one of the beneficiaries of the income that flowed from the Church. A number of Churches owed their ***proprietorship*** to Austen's father. However, within a social class, distinction prevailed too. A person's status came to be determined by his wealth. Members of a certain class extended company only to those belonging to their own class. Austen was brought up in such a social ***milieu*** where the aristocats the noveu rich (or newly rich) class moved among their own circles.

As a child belonging to such a class, Austen's visit to the city was natural. But it was within the country that she spent her most comfortable and carefree days of her life. Rather than conforming to the contemporary period, Austen was attracted towards the ***Augustan*** writers. As such, her literary inclination was more towards the earlier generation rather than towards her ***contemporary*** literary scenario. England, during Austen's time, was not only affected by industrial revolution and economic differences, but was also torn between two wars- one with America and the other with France. However, her writings do not bear any trace of either the political condition or the economic change. It is rather the landed gentry in whom Austen took interest. She literally did not move beyond her own small world, full of characters cast alike such as the sophisticated ladies and gentlemen or dandies, particularly those belonging to the upper middle class.



Siblings: a person's brother or sister.

Mannerisms: a way of speaking or behaving.

Gentry: people of good social position, specifically the class next beyond the nobility.

Proprietor: a holder of property.

Milieu: a person's social environment.

Augustan: it refers to the distinctive period in English literature of the 17th -18th century which is marked by a refined classical style.

Contemporary: originating or occurring at the same time.



***Maria Edgeworth*:** (1768-1849) Maria Edgeworth was popular for her contribution to children's literature and celebration of Irish culture. Her works like *Letters for Literary Ladies* or "An Essay on the Noble Science of Self-Justification" are expressions of her views regarding women and literature.

***Frances Burney* or Frances Burney** (1752-1840) was a notable novelist, diarist and a playwright of the late eighteenth century.



Disastrous: having unfortunate consequences or causing great damage.

Blow: an unpleasant or disappointing surprise.

Demise: a person's death.

Austen read widely and her literary works bear influence of women writers such as, ***Maria Edgeworth*** and ***Frances Burney*** among others. Apart from reading, Austen was very active when it come to dance. She was very fond of dancing as revealed through her letters to her younger sister, Cassandra. Austen took initiative in domestic works as well; it is known that Austen was good at needle works. The society provided her the scope to perform recitation and dance in social gatherings. Such gatherings, in the form of dinner party or ball dance party, were the source of inspiration of her novels. The characters in her novel are often inspired by this kind of parties where they mostly gain the advantage of searching their perfect match. Thus, Austen also followed the fashion of her day where the her favourite pastime was singing, dancing, visiting people, talking, etc. However, Austen's search for a husband was not a successful one. Unfortunately, despite being in love once, Austen could not marry because an accident took away her beloved's life. In fact, she was said to have rejected any marriage proposals that came her way. This is because Austen was against any "emotionally unworthy marriage." Both Austen and her sister, Cassandra led a spinster's life. Due to her helpful attitude, Austen was able to earn the sympathy of the society in which she dwelt and did not face the rebukes one would face in such a kind of society where marriage was of pivotal interest.

The period from 1801-1809 was stressful for Austen. Both her personal life as well as her career had tremendously changed due to her father's decision to leave Steventon for Bath. During this period, her father retired and the family moved to Bath. As you have already learnt, Austen was filled with a sense of belongingness to rural England. This shift from rural to urban England left Austen in a ***disastrous*** state of mind and particularly, her career as a writer ceased all of a sudden. Added to it was the death of her father which came as a further ***blow*** to her life. The family shifted to Southampton shortly after her father's death. Later her family was offered a cottage in rural England near Steventon in Chawton by by one of her brothers for good. The period from 1809 till her ***demise*** was the most fruitful one in her literary production. Her works gained so much popularity that it attracted the **Prince Regent**. Austen joyously dedicated her novel, ***Emma*** to him.

Austen's illness caused her death in 1817; she was probably a patient of cancer. This remarkable novelist who created an epoch during her age and also in the latter ages was buried in Wincester Cathedral. Her simple and not very extraordinary life came to an end, thus, leaving us with many valuable works which are discussed in the next section of this unit.

4.3.2 Her Works

As you have already noted that Austen was a lover of books, she found pleasure in reading the works of Dr. Johnson, Maria Edgeworth, etc. to name a few. Rather than the romantic veins which ***engulfed*** her contemporaries, she was always Augustan in her approach towards writing. Through her writings she asserts her love for the confined world in which she grew up and within which her life was circumscribed. The events or incidents that she wrote about in her novels are borrowed from the encounters in her own life. She started writing at a very tender age. Reading and writing formed her passion. Her works were previously compartmentalised into several volumes, each of which flowered gradually in the form of her novels. Her first completed work of Volume I is *Love and Friendship*. You may be interested to know that Austen also wrote a humorous history of England at that time called *A History of England* by a partial, prejudiced and ignorant Historian. She even attempted at writing plays which were performed and confined within her family.



***Engulfed*:** surround or cover completely.

***Epistolary*:** denoting the writing of literary works in the form of letters or correspondences.

She began to write Elinor and Marianne in 1796, which was later revised and popularly called *Sense and Sensibility.* This novel was written in an ***epistolary*** form and was published in 1811. During this period Austen also wrote *Lady Susan* (which later came to be known as *Northanger Abbey*). The novel under discussion, that is, *Pride and Prejudice* was initially titled as *First Impressions.* It was published in 1813, making Austen the most sought after writer of her times. As you have been informed in the previous section, the period from 1809 was the most productive period of the writer. During this period, Austen saw the publication of most of her novels. After much

of the turmoil in her life came to an end, she began to write again. The revival of a life that she longed for along with the country atmosphere contributed massively in finishing her works. The result was that readers were gifted with the novels like *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815), *Northanger Abbey* (1817) and *Persuasion* (1817).

It is interesting to note that Austen strived for perfection in writing. The numerous revisions of her works throw light to such an end. Most importantly, Austen was a writer whose aim was to entertain her readers with the presentation of the reality that existed in the upper middle class of her society. As a writer, her concerns were confined within that particular class of society.

There are also records of the letters that were exchanged between Austen and her sister, Cassandra. The impression of Austen's letter can be summed up as follows: "[h]er letters teem with every possible kind of reference to books: simple reports of what she or the family is reading; opinions; quotations applied sometimes straightforwardly but more often with multiple layers of irony; affectionately joking reference to details from novels in which she treats them just like actual life" (Copeland et al 192). Thus, it may be seen as her ordinary comments teamed with the most extraordinary zeal for writing. Apart from these novels, she also wrote *The Watsons* that was published in 1871. *Sandition* is the unfinished work which was disrupted by her death.

As a whole, Austen has left behind not many works but the influence that she exerted is immense. Her surroundings mostly determined her literary temperament and as a result her writings became the realistic expression of such a society. The omission of any kind of political or historical references in her works show her love for the universal themes of marriage, family, courtship, etc.



LET US KNOW

Jane Austen and Sir Walter Scott are two contemporary novelists whose role in the revival of the Novel form is

commendable. Austen's first published work, *Sense and Sensibility* and Scott's *Waverley* appeared in 1811 and 1814 respectively, creating epoch in British literary history. The most interesting fact is that these two writers are totally different in terms of their style in writing. Unlike Austen, Scott popularised the historical novel/romance depicting the "trauma and devastation of Scotland's colonial past" (Eagleton 96). The eighteenth century, thus, saw the growth of historical romance alongside Austen's realist fiction. These romances dealt with the nationalist sentiments of the people by 'cherishing or inventing myths about the nation's glorious past.' The pioneer of the historical romance is Sir Walter Scott whose *Waverley* (1814) novels established this genre as one of the dominant literary forms in the early nineteenth century British fiction.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Where did Austen receive her education?

Q 2: What are the six novels that Jane Austen wrote?

Q 3: What are the basic features of the letters written by Austen?

Q 4: Write a short note on Jane Austen as a novelist.

Q 5: What are the common themes that the novels of Austen incorporate?

4.4 CONTEXT OF THE NOVEL

In order to delve deeper into the novel, it is necessary that we know the condition that prevailed in England during the writing of this novel. By now, you must have noted that Austen's works are a reflection of the society in which she lived. That is why, it becomes important for us to be acquainted with the situation, both political and social, of London society of that time. Originally titled *First Impressions*, *Pride and Prejudice* was written during the Regency period. Now before we move on to discuss other details regarding the writing of this novel, let us first consider the Regency period which continued in England from 1810 to 1820. King George III, owing to his illness, was removed from the throne in 1810 and his son was established as Prince Regent by the Parliament. However, after the death of his father, Prince Regent was crowned King George IV officially.

This background is useful for a reading of Austen because the characters of her novels belong to this period. During the Regency period, the English scenario changed to a great extent because the middle class gained status as well as property. All this can further be related to the Industrial Revolution which has contributed immensely in changing the social structure of Great Britain. The manufacturing centers, due to industrialisation, affected the income of the people by making them rich. However, only a certain section of people like the middle class merchants gained wealth who were known as the landed gentry during that time. All the novels of Austen including *Pride and Prejudice* reflect the lives and manners of the people belonging to this upper ***stratum*** or the so- called landed gentry. It has to be noted that although a certain section of the society was benefitted, issues like class divide gradually dominated the society; it was an age of urbanisation. As a result, the economic and social scenario of Britain transformed where money became the sole factor of determining one's status and class. This changing social and economic condition led Austen to include ***monetary*** factor as one of the dominant issues of this novel. Also, this newly formed section of the society - the landed gentry, occupies a prominent place in her fiction. The inclusion of topics such as property or status very genuinely reflects the nature of the landed gentry during the eighteenth century.



***Stratum*:** class of society.

***Monetary*:** of or relating to money.

***Anonymously*:** without disclosing one's name, hiding one's identity.

Regarding the title of the novel, it is seen that Austen was influenced by Frances Burney. It is from one of her novels, namely, *Cecilia* (1782) that Austen borrowed the title '*Pride and Prejudice*' for her novel that was formerly titled as *First Impressions*. It has to be noted that publishing a work of art by any woman writer during Austen's time could harm one's social status which is why her first novel was published ***anonymously***.

4.5 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

The novel begins thus: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife". This single line sets the tone of the entire novel- that is, the search for a suitable partner with respect to conditions as wealth. Structurally, the novel is divided into three volumes (according to the Norton edition) Vol. I, II and III are again

divided into 23, 19 and 19 chapters respectively. For our convenience, we shall deal with the novel volume-wise.

Volume I :

There are altogether twenty three chapters in this volume. The first chapter is significant for the inclusion of the prime subject matter that will encompass the whole of the novel. This very chapter introduces us to the old couple, Mr. and Mrs. Bennet and their daughters. It begins with the arrival of Mr. Bingley who is "a single man of great fortune" in the neighbourhoods of the Bennets and whom Mrs. Bennet considers "as the rightful property of one or other of their daughters". Here, we find the incompatible pair, the Bennets, trying to get their daughters married to a man of property. Indeed, what we come across in this chapter is a competitive society where everyone's main concern is to find a suitable match. Chapter 2 and 3 is about the social meeting of the Bennets and Mr. Bingley. A ball is arranged where Mr. Bingley arrives with his companions comprising his 'two sisters, the husband of the eldest, and another young man' (7) who we later come to know as Mr. Darcy. Here we find a contrast in the characters of the two young men - on the one hand is Mr. Bingley who had every feature to charm a girl and on the other hand, his friend Mr. Darcy who is handsome yet not presented as a favourable young man. Indeed, Mr. Darcy's charm was difficult to resist but at the same time 'he was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased' (8). An important facet that uncovers in this episode is the nature of Elizabeth Bennet who considers herself to be intellectually superior. Chapter 4-6 are significant so far as it throws light on the contrasting characters of Elizabeth Bennet and Jane Bennet on the one hand and Mr. Darcy and Mr. Bingley on the other hand respectively. It is Darcy's 'pride' which is reiterated in the novel and the 'prejudice' of all the other characters against him. Gradually a shift is visible in Darcy's pride against Elizabeth with his inclination towards her.

Due to Jane's ill health, she had to stay at Netherfield in Bingley's place, which Mrs. Bennet favoured a lot because of the possibility of Jane's marriage to Mr. Bingley. Elizabeth's visit to the Netherfield was out of her concern for her sibling, Jane Bennet. Unlike Jane, Elizabeth's character is

examined by Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst as being rude, proud and unrefined. Jane is thought of a better person than Elizabeth. We see that most of the time the women in the novel is engaged in the discussion of the other characters. This was basically the feature of the society in which the novel is set. The stereotypical love for ball dance or property is quite distinct from the conversation of the characters. As the novel is dialogic and we find the issues being discussed by the characters. However, Elizabeth's visit to Netherfield was encouraged by the surprise invitation to her family from the Bingleys. Despite bad weather she managed to reach there but this goes unappreciated on the part of both Miss Bingley and Mrs. Hurst. Bingley's sister and Mrs. Hurst, unconvinced with Elizabeth, consider her as unrefined and thus comparable to a lower status. However, it is ***ironical*** that they consider her sister, Jane Bennet a suitable match for Mr. Bingley. Apart from this, the readers are also acquainted with the economic condition of the Bennets. They have an estate which is 'entailed to their male heir', Mr. Collins although they have five daughters. Through this example, Austen brings the economic realities to our notice. As mentioned above, women were not entitled to any kind of property rights during the eighteenth century.



Irony: to mean the opposite of what is being said in order to create a humourous ffect.

Boasting: talk with excessive pride and self-satisfaction about oneself.

Mocked: to treat with contempt.

Jane's illness led to her exclusion from the social meetings that Elizabeth was part of in Netherfield. Darcy’s admiration for Elizabeth increases with her choice of reading rather than playing cards since he stresses on cultivating one's mind with extensive reading. However, Darcy's admiration for Elizabeth is coupled with Miss Bingley's jealousy, who has a soft corner for Darcy and wants to marry him. In the next chapter Mrs. Bennet arrives at Netherfield and embarrasses her daughters for her silliness of ***boasting*** about country life. Mr. Bingley accepts Lydia's request of organising a ball. Elizabeth comments on Darcy and Bingley's character are altered as the plot of the novel progresses. This chapter is significant for it subtly points towards Darcy's feelings for Elizabeth.

Chapter 11 shows Austen's use of irony very distinctly. Elizabeth's prejudice and Darcy's controlled pride are ***mocked*** in this chapter. The next chapter marks the departure of the Bennet sisters from Netherfield along with hints about the possible love affairs of the two couples- Jane and

Mr. Bingley on the one hand and Darcy and Elizabeth on the other. In chapter 13, Mr. Collins visited the Bennets only to annoy them with his ***pompous*** nature. His arrival is not a pleasure to Mrs. Bennet particularly because he is the heir to their property, being the nearest male relation. It is to be noted that during Austen's time, it was not possible for a woman to be the holder of any property. For example, a family with only daughters like the Bennets had to transfer their property to one of their male relatives. The next chapters further describe Mr. Collins' attitude towards marriage, his indecisive and practical nature. He accompanies the Bennet sisters to visit their aunt at Meryton. On their way, they meet two army officers, Mr, Denny and his friend Mr. Wickham. They also meet Darcy and Mr. Bingley. An uneasiness pervades when Darcy and Mr. Wickham confront each other. However, their aunt Mrs. Philips gives them a warm welcome and plans to organise/ a party the next day.



***Pompous*:** characterised by cheap and vain display.
***Dismay*:** distress.

Chapter 16 is crucial to the plot because Elizabeth's prejudice against Darcy' strengthens after she is informed of Darcy's past by Mr. Wickham. He also accuses Darcy of depriving him of the property that Darcy's father had intended to give him and condemns him for being jealous. The following chapter throws light on the ball dance and Elizabeth's prejudice. She finds Mr. Wickham attractive and wishes to dance with him. To her ***dismay***, Mr. Collins asks her to dance with him and becomes aware of his possible proposal for marriage. Very ironically Austen throws light on Elizabeth's character. In the following chapter, Elizabeth is disappointed to find Mr. Wickham absent in the ball. His absence has probable relations with Mr. Darcy's presence. Mr. Darcy surprises her by asking her to dance. It is interesting to note that though Elizabeth gets positive vibes from Jane regarding the character of Darcy, she sticks to her prejudice. In another occasion she does the same when Miss Bingley warns her of Mr. Wickham's deceptive character. Darcy also shows his pride and asks Elizabeth to end her analysis of others' characters. Chapters 19-23 deal with Elizabeth's refusal of Mr. Collins' marriage proposal, Mr. Collins' subsequent interest in Charlotte Lucas and the growing interest of Elizabeth in Mr. Wickham. Lady Catherine approves the marriage of Mr. Collins with Charlotte Lucas. This

marriage, however, affects Mrs. Bennet who regrets Elizabeth's decision of refusing such a good proposal. This volume ends with the alienation of Jane and Bingley.

Volume II :

The next volume begins with a letter from Miss Bingley assuring the arrival of Mr. Bingley. The letter also informs about the growing relationship of Mr. Bingley and Miss Darcy. In the first chapter of this volume, a contrast is revealed in the characters of Jane and Elizabeth. While Jane is shown to be practical, Elizabeth reveals herself to be a conservative and emotional being. The next chapter introduces the readers to Mr. and Mrs. Gardiner. Mr. Gardiner is Mrs. Bennet's brother. Mrs. Gardiner is a sensible woman and plans to take Jane with her to London so that she may be comforted. Elizabeth's intimacy with Mr. Wickham worries Mrs. Gardiner. Chapters 2-5 highlight the description of Austen's themes such as money and marriage. Three important developments emerge- Charlotte's marriage with Mr. Collins, Mr. Wickham's reference for a rich heiress to Elizabeth and Jane's dying hopes of Mr. Bingley. After being rejected by Wickham, Elizabeth realises her fault. She meets her friend, Charlotte at Hunsford and is surprised to find her happy with Collins. Jane is sympathised for the critical phase of her life.

Chapter 6 deals with Elizabeth's visit to the Lady Catherine's place at Rosings. She is a sophisticated with a pompous nature and has been brilliantly painted with Austen's ***humour***. Elizabeth handles everything there with much confidence. In the next chapter, we find a changed Darcy who is able to impress Elizabeth delicately. He is shown to be neither a proud man nor a ***haughty*** person. Darcy's admiration for Elizabeth is overtly expressed in the party at Rosings. Both of them converse and become close. However, Lady Catherine boasts of her own daughter and irritates everybody. Chapter 9 sets the plot for Darcy's proposal to Elizabeth. However, Elizabeth shows least interest in him. But in the next chapter, Elizabeth doubts Darcy's role in separating Mr. Bingley from her sister, Jane. Darcy's friend, Fitzwilliam shares all this with her and she believes that Darcy has done this for his sister, Georgiana. The next chapter deals with Darcy's haughty proposal to



***Humour*:** the quality of being funny.

***Haughty*:** arrogant.

Elizabeth and her further rejection of the same. He justifies his haughty nature with the mention of lowering his status with his love for her. As you have seen that 'epistolary' technique has been used several times in the novel, chapter 12 can be cited as a good example. Through this technique, Austen clears the differences between the protagonists. Darcy's letter to Elizabeth settles their misunderstandings. This letter has been instrumental in changing Elizabeth's reaction to Darcy's character. Chapters 14-19 deal with Elizabeth's return to home and the realisation of her prejudice against Lady Catherine. Elizabeth leaves Hunsford and Rosings and returns home. She is disturbed by the comments made by Darcy on her family. Lydia informs Elizabeth of Wickham's split with Miss King, the rich heiress. Also, Lydia has been given space in these chapters. A maturity seems to enlighten the character of Elizabeth towards the end of this volume.

Volume III :

Chapter 1 begins with the description of Pemberly Woods: "The park was very large, and contained great variety of ground" (158). Elizabeth is filled with pleasure at the sight of it. She is astonished to meet Darcy at the park. Darcy is introduced to the Gardiners and is found favourable. Her earlier prejudice shakes as she finds Darcy to be a sensible and elegant person. Chapters 2-3 deal with the meeting of Elizabeth with Darcy's sister. The Gardiners found out Darcy's feelings for their niece. As a result Elizabeth rethinks about Darcy and whether to consider a second proposal from him. At Pemberly, the Bingley sisters show their impertinence in insulting Elizabeth. Miss Bingley's jealous and overt attack on Elizabeth is handled by her politely. The mutual respect between Darcy and Elizabeth develops in this episode. The next two chapters describe Lydia's ***elopement*** with Darcy which causes trouble to the Bennets. Lydia proves herself to be an insensible and impractical character. Also, Wickham's wicked nature comes to the front. There also seem to raise a question whether Wickham will marry Lydia or not. Elizabeth regrets for hiding Wickham's real character from the rest of the family. Chapters 6-9 deal with Lydia and her elopement. It also discusses the theme of marriage based on financial aspect. The runaway couple however was married and had returned to Longbourn after



***Elopement*:** to run away with a lover.

ten days. These two characters are shown to be devoid of a sense of shame and do not regret the trouble they has caused to the family. Chapter 10 reveals the development of Elizabeth's respect for Darcy. She learns from Mrs. Gardiner the role played by Darcy in tracing the runaway couple and settling things for them. Overwhelmed with joy, Mrs. Gardiner asks Elizabeth to consider Darcy seriously for marriage. All the pride and prejudice of the protagonists shatter as they discover each other. Chapter 12 is interesting because here it is Elizabeth who is frustrated for being unable to get close to Darcy. She fears being deceived by the reality. At the same time, the romance between Jane and Mr. Bingley develops again. In the next chapter, Jane and Mr. Bingley are engaged much to the excitement of the other characters. Chapter 14 highlights the theme of class-divide. Lady Catherine, depicting the aristocratic class, disapproves of Elizabeth's marriage to Darcy. The chapters 16-19 seem to focus on the conclusion of the novel. Both Darcy and Elizabeth admit their faults and shows gratitude to one another. She defends Darcy and ***reconciles*** her family to accept her marriage with him. The novel ends with Austen's social concern regarding marriage.



***Reconciles*:** to restore friendly relations.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 6: Write a note on the social background of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Q 7: What was the political situation that prevailed in England during the writing of this novel? Do you think the novel bears any witness to the politics of its day?



4.6 LET US SUM UP

After going through the sections above, you have learnt that Jane Austen is one of the finest novelists in the history of British fiction. In her novels, she juxtaposes both classical and romantic veins by portraying a 'disciplined'

and 'traditional' structure of society and at the same time delving deep into emotional notions such as love respectively. She can be called a realist in terms of the accurate representation of the manners and customs of her society in her works. In her novels, she never moves beyond the portrayal of her society yet the themes that her novels indulge in are to be appreciated for their universality. Generally speaking, her novels abound with themes of courtship, marriage, etc. and these themes, further marked by her own experience and observation, have resulted in creating a significant place for her among others in the history of English literature. Thus, in this unit, you must have read in sufficient detail about the life and works of Austen and gained a detailed idea on the background of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.



3.7 FURTHER READING

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5) Meynell, Alice. (1905). "The English Women-Humorists". *The North American Review*. Vol. 181, No. 589 pp. 857-872.
6) Poole, Adriane. (ed). (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists.* New York: Cambridge University Press.



3.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Austen attended school for quite a brief period of time. But it was her family, especially her father, who played the key role in her education.

She grew up acknowledging and observing the social mannerisms and customs that dominated her society during that period of time.

Ans to Q No 2: The six novels that Jane Austen wrote are *Sense* and *Sensibility* (1811), *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), *Mansfield Park* (1814), *Emma* (1815), *Northanger Abbey* (1817) and *Persuasion* (1817).

Ans to Q No 3: The basic features of Austen's letter can be summed up as follows: "[h]er letters teem with every possible kind of reference to books: simple reports of what she or the family is reading; opinions; quotations applied sometimes straightforwardly but more often with multiple layers of irony; affectionately joking reference to details from novels in which she treats them just like actual life".

Ans to Q No 4: Jane Austen is one of the finest novelists in the history of British fiction. In her novels she juxtaposes both classical and romantic veins by portraying a 'disciplined' and 'traditional' structure of society and at the same time delving in deep emotional notions such as love respectively. Austen is a realist in terms of the accurate representation of the manners and customs of her society. As a novelist, she strived for perfection in writing. The numerous revisions of her works throw light to such an end. She was a writer whose aim was to entertain her readers with the presentation of the reality that existed in the upper middle class of her society. As a writer, her concerns were confined within that particular class of society.

Ans to Q No 5: The common themes that the novels of Austen incorporate are marriage, family, courtship, etc.

Ans to Q No 6: The social scenario of Britain was in a state of transformation where money became the sole factor of determining one's status and class. This changing social and economic condition led Austen to include monetary factor as one of the dominant issues of this novel. Also, this newly formed section of the society - the landed gentry, occupies a prominent place in her fiction. The inclusion of topics such as property or status very genuinely reflects the nature of the landed gentry during the eighteenth century.

Ans to Q No 7: The political climate in Britain during Austen's time was not at all favourable. Britain was shattered by the defeat with her colonies in America on the one hand. On the other hand, there was the French

Revolution. However, you will be surprised to know that Austen's writings do not have any record of either the civil war or the revolution that accompanied Britain's history. The novel does not bear any witness to the politics of its day.



4.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: Discuss the significance of Jane Austen as an English novelist with special reference to her fictional works.

Q 2: Give an account of the context of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*.

Q 3: Describe in your own words the gist of the novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen.

Q 4: Critically examine the contribution of Jane Austen as a novelist.

Q 5: To what extent does *Pride and Prejudice* depict the condition of eighteenth century London society? Explain.

Q 6: "Austen's works are a reflection of the society in which she lived." Discuss.

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UNIT 5 : JANE AUSTEN: *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE* II

UNIT STRUCTURE

5.1 Learning Objectives

5.2 Introduction

5.3 Reading the Novel

- 5.3.1 Major Themes
- 5.3.2 Major Characters
- 5.3.3 Narrative Style

5.4 Critical Reception

5.5 Let us Sum up

5.6 Further Reading

5.7 Answers to Check Your Progress

5.8 Model Questions

5.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to :

- discuss the important themes of the novel *Pride and Prejudice*
- identify the characters in the novel *Pride and Prejudice* and discuss their significance
- explain the various aspects of the narrative style used by the novelist Jane Austen
- discuss the reception of the novel in a wider context

5.2 INTRODUCTION

This unit is to be studied in connection with the previous unit namely unit 4 as it comprises the second part of the discussion on Jane Austen's novel *Pride and Prejudice.* This novel by Austen is best known as a 'novel of manners.' The detailed description of the ordinary lives of the characters as well as the intricate expressions of love, morality, courtship, marriage, etc. makes this novel a representative voice of the society, manners and customs of which Austen herself was a part. Among all her works, this novel achieved popularity in terms of readership and several editions credited

to it. By the time you finish reading the unit, you will be able to discuss this novel in terms of its various aspects like themes, characterisation and narrative technique implicit in the novel. Besides all these, you will also learn about the reception of Austen and her novel *Pride and Prejudice.*

5.3 READING THE NOVEL

In the following subsection, attempts have been made to help you study the various important aspects of the novel *Pride and Prejudice.*

5.3.1 Major Themes

The various themes that are embedded in the novel are detailed below:

Marriage :

Marriage is the most dominant theme ever to be found in any Austen novel. In *Pride and Prejudice*, this is the ultimate aim of the characters. The upper middle class, having nothing to engage with, remain engulfed in their concerns of marriage. Marriages in this novel are of two kinds, good and bad, showing the various facets of each. In this novel, many marriages take place. One of the examples of a bad marriage is the marriage of Mr. and Mrs. Bennet. Readers are aware of the ***incompatibility*** of their marriage in the first chapter itself. The marriages of Elizabeth with Darcy and Jane with Mr. Bingley are only considered by Austen as examples of good marriage. Austen strongly dislikes marriages based on money or physical appearance. This is evident from the failed marriages of Lydia and Wickham. These two characters end up in mutual tolerance in their marriage and depend upon Elizabeth for supporting them financially. However, it is to be noted that marriage was a social concern of the age and related to it was money.



***Incompatibility*:** unsuitably matched.

Class-divide :

Class-divide is a very prominent issue in this novel. You have already read that money was the determining factor of a person's social status. The time when the novel was written saw numerous changes in this aspect. Parts of these changes were brought about

by the industrial revolution. In this novel division of class has been handled by Austen so as to throw light on her main concern, that is, marriage. The social setting in this novel is as such that the characters are regulated by the materialistic forces. The issues like courtship and marriage also involve factors like property, social class, etc. and Austen is one of the best mouthpieces of her age to attract the attention of the readers towards this aspect. Marriage, coupled with wealth, is the aim of all the middle class characters. In the novel, we find characters like Lady Catherine de Bourgh who is the owner of Rosings and patron of Collins to merely portray the upper class vulgarity.

Status of Woman :

Another significant issue that this novel focuses is the status of woman. During Austen's time, women were engaged in various social meetings or gatherings only to attract suitors for marriage. Women in this novel are also seen in such a light. Mrs. Bennet may be cited as the typical man-hunter kind of women whose only aim is to get her daughters married. However, the society looks upon them as silly people lacking in intelligence. Economically speaking, women were deprived of any kind of property rights. This, in a way, shaped the status of women as hunters of wealthy and rich men in order to make their lives secure. Thus, women were the most pathetic victims of the economic system that prevailed during that century. Women did not have the chance to test their fate in industries, business or even education. Hence, they were forced to do household chores and often remain within the four walls of their house. However, women belonging to the upper class kept themselves busy with dancing, singing, recitation, parties, etc. as in case of the Bennet sisters and Miss Bingley. Interestingly, the two significant women characters– Jane and Elizabeth are shown as two contrasting ones. Jane suffers silently without much complaint whereas Elizabeth, who is ***witty*** and ***satirical***, is extrovert in nature. She, unlike Jane, paves her own way with her sheer intelligence. Jane represents the ***stereotype*** of all the women of her age. Austen has portrayed



Witty**:** combination of cleverness and amusing tone.

Satirical**:** exposing human folly to ridicule.

Stereotype**:** a conventional conception of one's image.

Adheres: to follow.

Elizabeth as an unconventional figure in order to voice her concern on the status of women in the age she lived.

Morality :

Morality is another important concern of Austen. Terry Eagleton has described Austen's morality in these following words: "As a classical moralist, Austen believes that the ethical life is primarily about action, not about feelings, intuitions, inner states or intentions. Austen, quite rightly, adheres to a more traditional conception of morality as primarily a matter of what we do, not what we feel" (Eagleton 106). Hence, in the novel it is seen that Austen has a soft corner for a character like Elizabeth who moves beyond her private self to accommodate the realities of other characters around her. Through the mouthpiece of Mr. Bennet, Austen condemns a selfish character like Lydia as mean and silly. The theme of love holds importance in Austen as much as it bears influence upon marriage. Austen is not very supportive of sexual love or physical attraction. The materialistic society of her time influenced the perception of love to quite an extent. Austen kept the novel relatively free from deep emotional baggage and rather favoured a mood of intellect where attitudes and ideas were given scope for exchange and development.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is Austen's views on love and marriage?

Q 2: What was the status of women during Austen's time?

5.3.2 Major Characters

Austen's art of characterisation is brilliant with minute and delicate analysis of human nature. Austen's realism in a way is revealed through the characters she portrays. You have been informed that the works of Austen represents the manners and culture of the eighteenth century London society. Her characterisation reflects the greatness of the novelist for it depicts the numerous traits of human

nature. She presents her readers with a portraiture of characters who appear to be people of flesh and blood. Her characters are normal human beings with different natures. However, her power as a writer lies in her realistic description of human traits. As we all know, no single individual is alike, so does Austen creates various characters but with subtle discrimination from one another. All her characters are given distinct characteristics thus imbibing in them a sense of individuality. The characters seem to live their own lives in the novel. Austen's humour touches not only the situations but also the characters of the novel. Indeed, the comic element that some of the characters like Mrs. Bennet represents is an example of Austen's fine humour. The duality of real versus appearance is a feature of her characterisation. Austen is well aware of the reality herself but she gives her characters an inward looking attitude, thereby lessening the gap between what the reality is and what they see. It has to be noted that exaggeration and drama are not features of her characterisation. It is very evident that characters are based on real life human beings. The eighteenth century society was also characterised by different strata of social class. In terms of characterisation Austen makes it clear that her characters are also represented according to their status. For example, Lady Catherine is the aristocrat who is shown to be boasting over her rank. Likewise, Mr. Collins to whom she is a ***patron*** is portrayed as a submissive individual before her though the readers are clearly aware of his snobbishness.



Patron**:** a person who gives financial support to another person.

Pride and Prejudice comprises many characters- minor and major, who are given distinct role to play in the development of the story or plot. The major characters are that of Elizabeth, Jane, Darcy, Mr. Bingley and Mr. Fitzwilliam.

Darcy :

Darcy is the central figure who plays a crucial role in the novel as a whole. The title of the novel in a way represents his pride and haughty nature. Austen has portrayed him as an educated and refined man who: "was discovered to be proud, to be above his

company, and above being pleased" (8). His manners were found disgusting by others which led to his unpopularity in the novel. However, he wins the heart of the readers when he gradually becomes free of their prejudice. His intelligence and his ability to look beyond his self ultimately make him one of the best heroes of Austen.

Mr. Bingley :

Mr. Bingley represents the "gentlemanlike character who was good looking…and had a pleasant countenance, and easy, unaffected manner" (7). He is in every way a contrast to his friend, Mr. Darcy. He loves to be socially active, by attending and giving parties. He is shown to be a skilled dancer and the centre of attraction at the balls. Austen presented him as the most lovable bachelor who falls for Jane Bennet and finally marries her. He is introduced as a "young man of large fortune" (3) who is sought after by people like Mrs. Bennet in order to get one among her five daughters married to him.

Elizebeth Bennet :

Elizebeth Bennet is the heroine of the novel who has an intelligent and charming personality. She is the wittiest of all the Bennet sisters and appears to be the favourite of her father. She loves challenges. She has one elder sister and three younger ones. Portrayed as an intelligent woman, Elizabeth excels her sisters for her distinguished personality. However, in the beginning of the novel, she is portrayed as a prejudiced character only to find faults of others, particularly Mr. Darcy. She falls in love with Darcy after much ***deliberation***. But her positivity and flexible nature comes to the forefront when she accepts Mr. Darcy's proposal. Elizabeth Bennet has undoubtedly been characterised as a different kind of woman in comparison to the other women characters.



Deliberation: careful consideration.

The important character next to Elizabeth is her elder sister, Jane Bennet who is the most beautiful among all the Bennet sisters. She is shown to be a lovely lady who wins the Mr. Bingley's affection with her manners as well as dance. She is loved by everyone for her quiet and charming nature. A mutual feeling of affection with Mr. Bingley leads to

their marriage. However, she is compassionate and likes to think about others' good. But in this process she is left with very little individuality. She is less intelligent than Elizabeth Bennet yet referred to as the prettiest character. At best, Jane Bennet leaves the impression of being the lover of Mr. Bingley and the self-sufficient and meek kind of village girl. The two of them are more focused than the other sisters who are comparably portrayed as less beautiful and less intelligent; they are called "silly and ignorant girls". (4)

Some of the minor characters who helped to shape the plot of the novel are Mr. Bennet- the Head of the Bennet family, his wife Mrs. Bennet, Mr Colins, Mr Wickham, Miss Caroline Bingley to name a few. Mr. Bennet and his wife have five daughters of marriageable age and their prime concern is to get wealthy husbands for their daughters. A quote from the novel will help us to understand their characters better: "Mr. Bennet was so odd a mixture of quick parts, ***sarcastic*** humour, reserve, and ***caprice*** that the experience of three and twenty years had been insufficient to make his wife understand his character" (4). He is a country gentleman who loves to read and remains in his library for most of the time in the novel. On the other hand, Mrs. Bennet is one of Austen's best comic and ironic characters. She has been described as "a woman of mean understanding, little information, and uncertain temper" (4).



***Sarcastic*:** the use of irony to convey contempt.

***Caprice*:** sudden change of mood.

Mr. Collins, a cousin to the Bennets, is seen in the novel courting Elizabeth Bennet, one of the Bennet sisters. Unfortunately he is disliked by them for his superficial nature which he has acquired from his patroness, Lady Catherine de Bourgh. Being the nearest cousin to the Bennets, he is also the heir to their property. As far as marriage is concerned, Collins was rejected by Elizabeth and ends up marrying her friend, Charlotte Lucas. Austen has created this character with sheer touch of humour. On the one hand, Mr. Wickham has been portrayed as an intelligent and charming personality yet a deceitful and unstable person. He worked as an officer in the military. Elizabeth finds him very attractive but soon dislikes him after she

discovers his real nature. In the novel, he loves to gamble and elopes with Elizabeth's sister, Lydia without any intention of marrying her. Finally he abandons her and as a result is not very popular with the readers of the novel. Miss Caroline Bingley is Mr. Bingley's sister who finds Darcy very attractive and wants to marry him. Though she is fond of Jane, she dislikes Elizabeth. Her character serves as a contrast to both Elizabeth and Jane due to her snobbish nature as well as self-centric approach.

On the whole, Austen shows brilliance in her characterisation of the various characters that have packed the novel into one of the best works that she has ever written.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Austen describes the character of Elizabeth as "delightful a creature ever appeared in print". Discuss.

Q 4: Give a character sketch of Mr. Fitzwilliam Darcy.

5.3.3 Narrative Style

Austen's ***dialogic*** narrative has enhanced the readership of the novel. In fact, if we look at the narrative technique, it becomes clear that Austen has employed the direct method of narration, the most frequently used method of narrating an account or a story. Thus, Austen took the freedom to take part in the events of the story as an omniscient narrator. In *Pride and Prejudice*, by adopting this method, Austen gives a detailed account of the characters' past and also the incidents that make up the novel. This is done in such a way that it leads her readers to believe the narrator's participation in the incidents. However, with the insight that the narrator forwards the narrative, the readers become aware of the omniscient narrator's interest in the affairs and life of the characters. The dialogic aspect of her narrative has moulded it into an interesting one giving it the characteristic of ***polyphony***, that is, several voices are overlapped into the narrative of this novel. Her characters are made more effective by this method



***Dialogic*:** a literary composition in the form of a conversation between two people.

***Polyphonic*:** having many voices.

of exchanging dialogues. Indeed, dialogues have provided Austen with sufficient scope for creating a complex atmosphere in the novel. Austen comments, analyses and explains her readers about the characters or sometimes the situation several times in the novel by intruding as an omniscient narrator. Through such a technique, Austen successfully creates situations known to her readers but unknown to the characters of her novel. As for example, the readers are aware of Darcy's feelings towards Elizabeth from the beginning. But Elizabeth herself is unable to decide upon his feelings for her until much later in the novel. This is because of Austen's method of narration which related her readers with the inner progression of the characters. After reading this novel, it becomes clear that there are many points of view in the narrative and Austen's role as an omniscient narrator itself proposes such an understanding. You have been acquainted with Austen's use of irony. Here, you must consider the use of irony in her narrative style. Dramatic irony plays an important role in this novel.

Irony and Humour :

Irony and humour are the two prominent aspects of her style which are to be taken into consideration. Austen's use of irony is juxtaposed in her narrative style as well as her themes. Irony is overlapped with humour in Austen. The characters too are expressions of her delicate irony. There are no overt laughter provoking situations in the novel, but an undulating comic presence is felt in the way Austen presents her characters. You can consider the Bennet family as a comic portrayal where the readers are aware of the actual intention of the novelist. Besides exaggerating the issues within the family, Austen critiques the economic system of her times as well as the involvement of the women of her age in unintelligent pursuits. As a humorist, Austen fills the novel with numerous misunderstandings that exist between the characters which find solution only at the end as the characters move beyond their social reality to give space to other realities.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 5: What are the two most important aspects of Austen's style?

Q 6: Comment on Austen's use of irony and humour.

Q 7: Comment on the narrative style of Jane Austen.

5.4 CRITICAL RECEPTION

During her lifetime, Austen led a simple life and was not very popular. Therefore, it was hard for her to find a publisher. However, she sold the manuscript to Egerton after necessary revisions. Published in 1813, *Pride and Prejudice* brought her success as well as critical acclaim. It was well received by her family as well as the widely reading public. In fact, the increased demand for her earlier novel (that is, *Sense and Sensibility*) rests very much upon the success and reception of this novel.

With regard to critical reception, Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* did not become popular immediately. Her contemporaries gave a mixed review; Austen herself wrote in one of her letters to Cassandra that the "work is rather too light". On the other hand, her love for this particular novel abounds in another letter addressed to her sister, Cassandra Austen, dated 29 January, 1813, where she mentioned this novel as "my own darling Child". It is quite obvious that this novel is one of the favorites of all her works. Apart from being read, this novel was adapted widely on screen. Writers like Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf praises Austen for her brilliant representation of human follies, virtues and emotions.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 8: Briefly discuss the reception of Austen's *Pride and Prejudice.*



5.5 LET US SUM UP

By now, you must have gained an idea regarding the novel *Pride and Prejudice* and its proper historical contexts. After having read through the unit you will certainly be able to analyse the important characters in the novel and also explain the important themes. Besides these, the background reading of the novel in the previous unit provided you with a detailed idea on the practice of fiction during the late 18th and early 19th century. This unit will further help you to think critically about the important aspects of the novel. The discussion regarding the critical reception of the novel shall familiarise you to Jane Austen as well as her work, and thereby help you in appreciating the novel as a whole.



5.6 FURTHER READING

1) Austen, Jane. (2002). *Pride and Prejudice.* Donald Gray. (ed.) New York : Norton.

2) Copeland, Edward & Juliet McMaster. (eds). (2011). *The Cambridge Companion to Jane Austen.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

3) Courtney, W. L. (1913). "The English Girl in Fiction". *The North American Review.* Vol. 198, No. 696 pp. 664-674.

4) Eagleton, Terry. (2005). *The English Novel: An Introduction.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

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6) Poole, Adriane. (ed). (2009). *The Cambridge Companion to English Novelists.* New York: Cambridge University Press.

5.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: The theme of love holds importance in Austen as much it bears influence upon marriage. Austen is not very supportive of sexual love or physical attraction. The materialistic society of her time influenced the perception of love to quite an extent. Austen strongly dislikes marriages based on money or physical appearance.

Ans to Q No 2: During Austen's time, women were deprived of any kind of property rights. This, in a way, shaped the status of women as hunters of wealthy and rich men in order to make their lives secure.

Ans to Q No 3: Elizabeth Bennet is the heroine of the novel who has an intelligent and charming personality. She is the wittiest of all the Bennet sisters and appears to be the favourite of her father. She loves challenges. She has one elder sister and three younger ones. Portrayed as an intelligent woman, Elizabeth excels her sisters for her distinguished personality. However, in the beginning of the novel, she is portrayed as a prejudiced character only to find faults of others, particularly Mr. Darcy. She falls in love with Darcy after much deliberation. But her positivity and flexible nature comes to the forefront when she accepts Mr. Darcy's proposal. Elizabeth Bennet has undoubtedly been characterised as a different kind of woman in comparison to the other women characters.

Ans to Q No 4: Darcy is the central figure who plays a crucial role in the novel as a whole. The title of the novel in a way represents his pride and haughty nature. Austen has portrayed him as an educated and refined man who "was discovered to be proud, to be above his company, and above being pleased". His manners were found disgusting by others which led to his unpopularity in the novel. However, he wins the heart of the readers when he gradually becomes free of their prejudice. His intelligence and his ability to look beyond his self ultimately make him one of the best heroes of Austen.

Ans to Q No 5: Irony and humour are the two prominent aspects of her style.

Ans to Q No 6: Austen's use of irony is juxtaposed in her narrative style as well as her themes. Irony is overlapped with humour in Austen. As a humorist, Austen fills the novel with numerous misunderstandings that exist between the characters which find solution only at the end as the characters move beyond their social reality to give space to other realities.

Ans to Q No 7: Austen has employed the direct method of narration, the most frequently used method of narrating an account or a story. In *Pride and Prejudice,* by adopting this method, Austen gives a detailed account of the characters' past and also the incidents that make up the novel. Dialogues have provided Austen with sufficient scope for creating a complex atmosphere in the novel. Austen comments, analyses and explains her readers about the characters or sometimes the situation several times in the novel by intruding as the omniscient narrator.

Ans to Q No 8: Refer to Section 5.4



5.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q 1: What are the major themes that the novel *Pride and Prejudice* encompass? Do the themes reflect Austen's concern for morality?

Q 2: 'In terms of the accurate representation of the manners and customs of her society in her works, Austen has been called a realist'. Discuss.

Q 3: Explain Austen's narrative style used in the novel *Pride and Prejudice* with particular reference to her use of dialogues.

Q 4: Write a note on Austen's use of irony and humour in her novel *Pride and Prejudice.*

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UNIT 6: EMILY BRONTE: *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* I

UNIT STRUCTURE

6.1 Learning Objectives

6.2 Introduction

6.3 Emily Bronte: The Novelist

6.3.1 Her Life

6.3.2 Her Works

6.4 Context of the Novel

6.5 Summary of the Novel

6.6 Let us Sum up

6.7 Further Reading

6.8 Answer to Check Your Progress

6.9 Model Questions

6.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to:

- discuss some facets of Emily Bronte's personal life as well as her works
- describe the backdrop of the novel against which it has been conceived
- explore Bronte's approach to the uncanny, that is, the Gothic tradition
- critically analyse *Wuthering Heights* as a literary dossier which was much ahead of its times

6.2 INTRODUCTION

Considering the time when the Bronte Sisters (Emily, Charlotte and Anne) were writing, women writers were not expected enthusiastically, either by the publishers or the readers, to pursue their career in writing. This is why, the Brontes wrote under the pseudonyms, Ellis Bell, Curer Bell and Acton Bell, respectively. The Victorian era had experienced both a shift from the spontaneous Romanticism in literature and a bend towards a more realistic, rather verging on the pessimistic universe of human existence. A

penchant for the Gothic was another fascinating turn that this era experienced. A classic example is Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* published in 1818. But what the readers were yet to experience was a perfect blend of the gothic and an untamed, wild passion that almost verged on cruelty. Published in 1847, *Wuthering Heights* took the Victorian readers by surprise with its treatment of a raw dose of unfettered and wild human passions. This is one reason, out of many, why this novel received only a few miscellaneous reviews at the time of its publication.

6.3 EMILY BRONTE: THE NOVELIST

Emily Bronte was born in 1818 and died in 1848, and in this short span of life, she, along with her sisters, Anne and Charlotte Bronte, wrote stories, plays and poems for their own amusements. Together with Anne, Emily created a fictional world and called it Gondal. There are several poems and prose pieces centering this imaginary world and its residents. Emily Bronte lived an eccentric life, with her father who served as the rector of the Church, and her aunt, who raised the three sisters guardedly. Her aunt was a deeply religious woman however Emily did not take to her religious temperament. The sisters were a creative lot and they drew heavily from their locale, Haworth, a village in Yorkshire. Haworth—a place in the midst of bleak moors, became the inspiration behind the setting of *Wuthering Heights.* Besides *Wuthering Heights*, Emily Bronte had also written some other prose pieces and poems. Charlotte Bronte discovered some of her poems and intended to get them published together with the poems of Anne Bronte and some of her own poems. This collection was published in 1846 as *Poems.*

Wuthering Heights delineates the intertwined destinies of two families, the Earnshaws and the Lintons and their respective locales, Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. This novel progresses as an account of love, rejection, despair, passion and revenge between the two protagonists, Heathcliff and Catherine Earnshaw.

6.3.1 Her Life

After the death of her mother, Maria Branwell, the three elder sisters of Emily—Maria, Elizabeth and Charlotte were sent to Cowen Bridge to get their education at Clergy Daughters' School. There, the sisters were frequently subjected to abuse and ill-treatment by their peers. This episode later forms a significant part of Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre.* In November, 1824, Emily Bronte joined her elder sisters in school at the age of six, but only for a short period. Soon, the school came under the attack of a typhoid epidemic and affected Maria and Elizabeth. Charlotte and Emily were soon removed from school. Maria and Elizabeth succumbed to this epidemic. The three remaining sisters, Charlotte, Anne and Emily and their brother, Patrick Branwell began their education at home under the tutelage of their father and aunt. Shaped largely by a sense of isolation, the world of Emily Bronte and her siblings soon became familiar to the works of Sir Walter Scott, Byron, Blackwood's Magazine and Shelley.

The four Bronte siblings were gifted with a great sense of imagination. They could weave stories and poems out of the materials from their immediate surroundings. Patrick Branwell had a box full of toys and around this inanimate entity the young children started creating imaginary worlds full of characters and their stories. They called this world Angria. But soon, Emily felt an urge to create her own unique world at the age of thirteen and she called it Gondal. She let Anne to share this world of hers. It was an imaginary island full of myths and characters and the two sisters wrote excessively around this world. However, only some of their Gondal poems and some of the characters created by Anne survived. Soon, at the age of seventeen, Emily was to get admitted to the Roe Head Girls' School, where Charlotte was already working as a teacher. But Emily's homesickness made her return to her home only after a few months.

In September, 1838, when she was twenty, she started working as a teacher at Law Hill School in Hailfax. But her failing health always stood as an obstacle in her career. She left her

profession in April 1839 and became secluded in her home at Haworth, tending mostly to domestic chores. It is during this period that she started learning German.

Emily and Charlotte Bronte started attending a girls' academy in Brussels, Belgium, where they wanted to improve their knowledge of German and French. Their objective was to open their own school. Even here, Emily's homesickness got the better of her and she remained immune to the Belgian ways of life. The two siblings excelled well in their French lessons. But soon, they were compelled to return to Haworth owing to their aunt's demise. In 1844, their attempt at opening their own school at home did not flourish well.

6.3.2 Her Works

Being of a shy personality, Emily Bronte was not too keen of publishing her poems. In 1844, she started revising her own poems, perusing them carefully and rearranging them into two sections. The first, she entitled, "Gondal Poems", but left the second untitled. Charlotte suggested her to get these poems published, which she refused. It was Anne who shared her little secret of writing down manuscripts herself and won her sister's confidence. Both of them formed an intimacy since they both were accustomed to reading out to each other the tales and poems of Gondal. Emily Bronte has written poems like "Come Hither Child" (1839) and "A Death Scene" (1846). Together the three siblings published *Poems by Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell* in1846 under male pseudonyms. Emily's contribution to this anthology was her twenty one poems. Her *Wuthering Heights* first saw the light of publication in 1847 in London. Her publisher was Thomas Cautley Newby. The bold treatment of passion and fierce handling of wild imagery led the reading public believe that it was written by a male writer. Nevertheless, her real name did not appear until 1850. The book did not attract much attention immediately after its publication. But gradually, it achieved a place in the literary canon as one of the English classics. Emily Bronte did

not live long to see her book flourish among readers. On December 19, 1848, she died of tuberculosis, at the age of thirty.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: What is Emily Bronte's fictional world called?

Q 2: Name a few poems by Emily Bronte.

6.4 CONTEXT OF THE NOVEL

The narrative of *Wuthering Heights* covers a period of approximately thirty years. It opens in the year 1801, a time when Industrial Revolution was ongoing in England. It was a time when certain changes had already started taking place in the social system of Britain, like the upward movement of the middle class to acquire a certain position among the upper class. Such a shift is noticeable in the character of Heathcliff when he vanishes for sometime from Thrushcross Grange only to return as a proper gentleman. Despite this movement in the social sector, certain things remain rigid even in the wake of the Industrial Revolution such as the patriarchal set up. One must always bear in mind that the treatment of women and children as portrayed in the novel somewhere reflects Emily Bronte's own experience as a woman. When Earnshaw introduces Heathcliff to his family, he hardly considers the discomfort of his own children. He only commands them to treat Heathcliff well. The same attitude is later adopted by Hindley and Heathcliff as patriarchs. Emily Bronte and her other siblings lived secluded lives under the care of their father and aunt. They got their works published as male writers and not as female.

The novel also portrays class conflict extensively, a phenomenon not unknown to the Victorian world. The families that the novel revolves around are wealthy families. The Earnshaws and Lintons own property estates—Thrushcross Grange and Wuthering Heights, respectively. Heathcliff does not fit into either of the two aristocratic families. He is just an

outsider. The treatment that is meted out to Heathcliff and Catherine as children is also different. When they sneak into Thrushcross Grange, both the children are caught and held hostage. But once Catherine's identity is revealed that she is an Earnshaw, she is treated with utmost care, but Heathliff is dismissed off quite irreverently as somebody "quite unfit for a decent house." It becomes an urgent necessity for Heathcliff to climb the social ladder because he overhears only small bit of the conversation between Catherine and Nelly, that "It would degrade me to marry Heathcliff now." However, he had failed to listen to the whole matter where Catherine was planning to marry Edgar Linton only for his money so that she could "aid Heathcliff to rise and place him out of my [her] bother's power." Heathcliff disappears for several years only to return as a wealthy gentleman and succeed in usurping the properties of the Lintons and Earnshaws. This is a world where property decides the social standing of an individual. Heathcliff partially succeeds in disinheriting young Hareton Earnshaw and Catherine Linton, but when the narrative inclines towards the possibility of a marriage of the couple, there is a potent chance that the couple will inherit what is rightfully theirs. Hence, it is eventually indicated that justice shall be done in the end by allowing the rightful heirs to their respective inheritance. And Heathcliff, who has been always an outsider, shall be deprived of these properties.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Does Emily Bronte deal with the issue of class conflict in the novel?

6.5 SUMMARY OF THE NOVEL

The novel unfolds itself as a narrative related to a gentleman, Lockwood, who happens to visit Yorkshire and rent a house and its surrounding park, Thrushcross Grange. There he meets an elderly caretaker,

Ellen Dean, and gradually learns about the two families, one of which had been the previous resident of Thrushcross Grange and whom Ellen Dean had served. The main plot begins sometime around 1760. A gentleman had undertaken a journey to Liverpool from his farm, Wuthering Heights, on a business trip. On his return, he found an abandoned boy on whom he took pity and so, brought him home. He already had a son, Hindley and a daughter, Catherine. He commanded his wife and his children to treat the gypsy boy as one of their siblings. He named him Heathcliff, who was supposed to be a son who had died earlier. He had a male servant, Joseph and Ellen Dean was his housekeeper, who was quite young at that time. To everyone in the Earnshaw family, Heathcliff was an uninvited intruder, especially for Hindley, Heathcliff was a threat to his share of family property. But Catherine's attitude towards Heathcliff was different from the beginning of his introduction to the family. Hindley was a few years older than him, while Catherine, a year younger. Due to his aggressive behaviour and strange attitude towards Heathcliff, he was sent to a college away from Wuthering Heights.

With the passage of time, Earnshaw's health degraded and the thought of Heathcliff constantly haunted him. He thought that Heathcliff was not accepted by his family and that after his death, Heathcliff's position in the family would worsen. Earnshaw died and Catherine and Heathcliff were left heartbroken. They grew up consoling each other and thus, came closer to each other.

Eventually, Hindley returned to his ancestral home. By then, he was twenty years old, Heathcliff was twelve and Catherine eleven. On his return, he introduced his wife Frances to everyone, whom he had married and bought along. He became the rightful owner of the house and the estate. His attitude towards Heathcliff worsened. His position in the family degraded to that of the servants. But Catherine continued her intimacy with him and taught him her lessons in the moors. They used to run and play in the fields without bothering about the punishments they received later.

One fine day, the two children, Heathcliff and Catherine sneaked into the house of the Lintons at Thrushcross Grange. There lived the two Linton children, Edgar who was thirteen, and Isabella, who was eleven. They

made faces at the Linton children through the window. This raised an alarm and Catherine and Heathcliff attempted to flee. But the family bulldog caught Catherine and the two children were trapped. When they were brought inside, her identity was revealed as Miss Earnshaw and she was treated with respect and utmost care. However, Heathcliff was despised and dismissed as "quite unfit for a decent house."

Catherine stayed with the Lintons for five weeks, and when she returned to Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff felt, she had changed. She stated dressing up and behaving as a proper lady belonging to the upper class and this delighted Hindley and his wife, Frances but disappointed Heathcliff. He felt that Catherine was gradually drifting away from him. With the passage of time, Catherine tried her best to maintain a balance between her friendship with the Lintons and her intimacy with Heathcliff.

A son was born to Hindley and Frances and she died of tuberculosis. They called him Hareton. This left Hareton shattered and due to his aggression and alcoholic nature, the Earnshaw household became disintegrated. Heathcliff became the worst sufferer of Hindley's despair. He began to be treated in an even worse manner. He became more and more distanced from Hindley. Meanwhile, Edgar Linton's love for Catherine flourished. She was also attracted towards Edgar for his wealth and polished manners but her love for Heathcliff was more serious and deep. Heathcliff fled from Wuthering Heights suddenly after the engagement of Edgar and Catherine. One night she searched for Heathcliff in the storm and fell ill. She visited Thrushcross Grange to recover there. But Edgar's parents were affected by her fever and they succumbed to it. They were married when Catherine was about nineteen years old. They lived together happily for about the year, till the sudden return of Heathcliff. He had acquired education, wealth and gentle manners mysteriously. Catherine was overwhelmed to see him again, but Edgar showed obvious dissatisfaction. At Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff started gaining control over the alcoholic Hindley by paying for his gambling. His frequent visits to Thrushcross Grange created friction in the relationship between Catherine and Edgar. Eventually, there came a day when there was a bitter quarrel between Edgar and Heathcliff. The latter

left the Grange before Edgar's servants could throw him out of the house. Catherine became furious at both the men's behaviour and shut herself up in her room for several days. Heathcliff, meanwhile, eloped with Edgar's sister, Isabella. He did not do it as a gesture of genuine love, but in order to avenge Edgar's act of marrying Catherine. But Isabella was charmed by his careless and romantic looks. Catherine's health worsened at this news. She became delirious and weak, but was carefully attended by Edgar during that time of crisis. After a few months, Catherine discovered that she was pregnant. She was still unstable. Meanwhile, Heathcliff and Isabella returned to Wuthering Heights. Isabella regretted her troublesome marriage with Heathcliff and confessed to Ellen Dean through letters that Heathcliff was a hostile and savage husband. Ellen went to visit them to help them cope with the situation and make amends. She narrated to them about Catherine's failing health. Heathcliff expressed his wish to see her.

One fine day, when Edgar was away in the Church, Heathcliff visited Catherine at Thrushcross Grange. It was a meeting full of passions and mutual forgiveness. Catherine suddenly fainted and Edgar, in the meantime, returned home. Heathcliff left immediately after. That very night Catherine died while giving birth to a baby girl. Edgar was left heartbroken and Heathcliff, wild and inconsolable. He wished Catherine's ghost to visit and trouble him. After a few days, there was a fight between Hindley and Heathcliff, and when the former wanted to murder him, he was badly wounded instead. Isabella escaped from her husband's home and took refuge in a place near London. There she gave birth to a baby boy, Linton. Hindley succumbed to his wounds and died some days after his sister's death.

Cathy, the daughter of Catherine and Edgar grew up to be a charming young lady. She was entirely oblivious of the existence of Wuthering Heights, Heathcliff or her cousin Hareton, the son of Hindley and Frances. She grew within the confinements of Thrushcross Grange and thus, she did not know anything about Wuthering Heights or its inhabitants. Once, in her playful exploration, she found out about Wuthering Heights and that Hareton was related to her; they were cousins. She was not very delighted to know about it. Ellen Dean forbade her to visit Wuthering Heights again. She revealed to

her that her family was in bad terms with Heathcliff and there was an old enmity between him and Edgar.

When Isabella died, Edgar went to fetch Linton who was then twelve years old. Linton was a frail boy but Cathy found it comforting to have someone around to play with. But when Heathcliff came to know of Linton's return to the Grange, he sent Joseph to bring his son to Wuthering Heights. When Cathy realised that Linton had left, she was disappointed but she soon recovered from her disappointment and continued leading her childhood days.

When it was Cathy's sixteenth birthday, Ellen and she accidentally stepped into Heathcliff's territory where they were invited to see Linton. In his mind, he was planning to design a relationship between Cathy and Linton, so that he could acquire Edgar's land after his death. After her return, Edgar strictly commanded Cathy not to visit Heathcliff again. But she continued her relationship with Linton through love letters. Ellen discovered them one day and stopped the correspondence altogether. Once when Edgar was ill, Heathcliff invited Cathy to his farmhouse to attend to Linton who was sick suffering from heartbreak due to her. She found Linton bossy but was charmed by him equally. Ellen had also fallen ill and could not keep a watch over her. Cathy continued her visits to Wuthering Heights and found Hareton boring and illiterate. Edgar was told by Ellen about Cathy's secret visits, and he in turn forbade her to do it. Edgar's health deteriorated and he was unaware of Linton's health and character. He thought it would be good for Cathy to marry him, since, he thought, Linton would inherit the Grange. An alliance was made between Cathy and Linton. Linton's health degraded and it seemed he was under constant threat. It was revealed that he was forced by Heathcliff to court Cathy. Heathcliff feared that Linton would die before Edgar, thus nullifying his prospect of usurping Edgar's estate. He kidnapped Cathy and Ellen and commanded that Cathy would go to meet her father without marrying Linton. She married Linton and reached Edgar just before his death. After Edgar's funeral, whose grave was placed just beside that of Catherine, Heathcliff took Cathy to Wuthering Heights to look after Linton. Meanwhile, he cleared up Thrushcross Grange to rent it out to

outsiders, Lockwood being the first tenant. Heathcliff confessed before Ellen that Catherine still haunted him after he had gazed at her body when Edgar was being buried. Cathy cared for Linton, but he soon died and she maintained a cold relationship with Heathcliff, Hareton, Joseph and Zillah, the housekeeper. Hareton secretly loved her and though Cathy despised him initially, she developed a liking towards him and started teaching him to read and write. All this happened while Lockwood was at the Grange. However, he was away for several months and Ellen had some more events to narrate. Heathcliff had grown strange and isolated and he grew more and more delirious as if Catherine's ghost was constantly haunting him. He stopped taking his food and sleeping, and one day Ellen discovered him dead, wearing a peculiar grin on his face. His body was buried next to Catherine's grave, as he had wished. Hareton was left disheartened but Cathy's company consoled him. The novel ends with Hareton and Cathy planning to wed and move to Thrushcross Grange.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 4: Fill in the blanks with appropriate answers:

a. The Earnshaws resided in ……. whereas the Lintons lived in ….

b. The poor homeless boy was introduced to the Earnshaw family while Earnshaw was returning from a ……..

c. The name of the maid servant at Wuthering Heights was…….

d . ……was the son of Heathcliff and Isabella.

Q 5: State whether the following are True or False.

a. Catherine was the wife of Heathcliff.

b. Cathy was the daughter of Catherine and Edgar.

c. Heathcliff was murdered by Edgar in a fit of temper.

d. After his death, Heathcliff was buried near Catherine's grave, according to his wish.



6.6 LET US SUM UP

You have just finished reading Emily Bronte's only novel *Wuthering Heights.* While reading you have also noticed the projection of Victorian values in this work of fiction. The patriarchal setup, the life of women and children, the class conflicts, marriage alliances according to one's social ranking and scheming human nature occupies a great portion of the novel. Along with these social aspects, Emily Bronte also explores the dark side of human passion and the untamed, wild obsession of two individuals, weighed down by societal pressure and class consciousness. The unit will enable you to critically analyse the novel and explore its interesting facets as well.



6.7 FURTHER READING

1) Fegan, Melissa. (2008). *Wuthering Heights: Character Studies.* London: Bloomsbury.

2) Mezo, Richard E. (2002). *A Student's Guide to Wuthering Heights.* Parkland, Florida: Brown Walker Press.

3) Tytler, Graeme. (2018). *Facets of Wuthering Heights: Selected Essays.* Leicester: Troubador Publishing Ltd.

6.8 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: Gondal.

Ans to Q No 2: "Come Hither Child" (1839) and "A Death Scene" (1846).

Ans to Q No 3: Yes. The novel portrays class conflict extensively. When Catherine and Heathcliff sneak into Thrushcross Grange and are caught, the treatment clearly brought out the issue of class difference. Once Catherine's identity is revealed that she is an Earnshaw, she is treated with utmost care, but Heathliff is dismissed off quite irreverently as somebody "quite unfit for a decent house." Hence, Heathcliff disappears for several years only to return as a

wealthy gentleman who succeeds in usurping the properties of the Lintons and Earnshaws. In the world of the novel it is property that decides the social standing of an individual.

Ans to Q No 4:

a. Wuthering Heights, Thrushcross Grange.

b. business trip.

c. Ellen Dean.

d. Linton.

Ans to Q No 5: a. False. b. True. c. False. d. True.



6.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q1: Comment on the context of the novel and how certain traits of the Victorian England are reflected in it.

Q 2: Critically analyse the life of Emily Bronte and her contribution to the literary world.

Q3: What is it in the novel that makes it classify itself as gothic fiction?

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UNIT 7: EMILY BRONTE: *WUTHERING HEIGHTS* II

UNIT STRUCTURE

7.1 Learning Objectives

7.2 Introduction

7.3 Reading the Novel

7.3.1 Major Themes

7.3.2 Major Characters

7.3.3 Narrative Style

7.4 Critical Reception

7.5 Let us Sum up

7.6 Further Reading

7.7 Answer to Check Your Progress

7.8 Model Questions

7.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through his unit, you will be able to:

- analyse the major themes that thread the narrative of the novel together and push it towards its climax
- critically assess the characters and how they fit into the novel
- discuss the narrative structure of *Wuthering Heights*
- explain the publication history of the novel and how it came to be accepted by various readerships over the years

7.2 INTRODUCTION

We have already read in the previous unit about the context against which the novel was conceived. There are certain recurring patterns that make *Wuthering Heights* an exceptional work of fiction and those patterns constantly, but very subtly, pinpoint the larger Victorian world. It would not be an exaggeration to call this novel a microcosm of the wider universe in which Emily Bronte and her siblings resided. A thorough study of the themes

and major characters will enable you to see the different forces that went in to shape a novel like the one in question.

7.3 READING THE NOVEL

7.3.1 Major Themes

Let us elaborately discuss the major themes that have merely been mentioned in the introduction. These are patterns that constantly surface in the course of the novel to give an idea of the milieu in which this novel was written.

Patriarchy :

This is a poignant theme that surfaces itself every once in a while. When Earnshaw fetches the gypsy boy from the street and commands his wife and children to treat him well, the opinions of his wife and children are not sought at all. He takes it for granted that whatever he commands them to do, it shall be obeyed without question. This is a time when patriarchy is treated as normal and men make all the decisions. Women and children are only the mute recipients of such decisions. This is also something that is carried down to the children, where the male child behaves like his father. Heathcliff, once he gains education, power and genteel manners, expects the same from his wife, Isabella. His ill treatment towards her shows the extremities of such a system. When Linton grows up into a young lad, he becomes bossy and dominating, despite his poor health. Even young Cathy is carried away by his charm of being domineering, and despises Hareton for his clumsiness. The novel seems to indicate that a woman is attracted to a man who nourishes the patriarchal mentality.

The Conflict of the Classes and Property Matters :

Another major theme in the novel is class consciousness. The Earnshaws and the Lintons are aristocratic family, and people like Ellen Dean, Joseph and Zillah are their subordinates. Heathcliff

occupies a rather liminal space; he is neither one of the masters, nor can he be classified as one of the servants. In that brief episode where the two children, Catherine and Heathcliff are caught making faces at the Linton children, both the kids are treated differently. Miss Catherine Earnshaw is treated with love and respect once her identity is revealed and Heathcliff is thrown out of the house as an embarrassing entity. When Earnshaw dies, Hindley reduces Heathcliff's position as one of the servants. Catherine also confesses in Ellen that she would marry Edgar Linton for his money and position and try to raise Heathcliff to the position of her brother so that he is treated with respect. It is very important for the characters to belong to the upper class in the society because it is the defining yardstick of an individual's worth and respect. When Heathcliff returns as a wealthy gentleman his manners charm Miss Isabella Earnshaw so much so that she elopes with him. Even marriage alliances are designed keeping in mind the property and estates of the other party. To illustrate, Heathcliff plots the relationship between Linton and Cathy, because he wishes to get hold of Thrushcross Grange through her, which she definitely will inherit. Edgar, although initially hesitates the courtship between Linton and his daughter, eventually agrees because he thinks that it is Linton who will inherit the Grange and his daughter will be secured for the rest of her life.

Health and Mortality :

These are issues that one constantly comes across while reading *Wuthering Heights.* The women characters are not very healthy and physically strong as seen here. Catherine once falls sick searching for Heathcliff in a storm. She returns to the Grange and the Linton parents catch her disease and they die. Catherine remains mentally disturbed with the return of Heathcliff and his marriage with Isabella. She remains indoors and becomes increasingly ill. Even in such health, she conceives and delivers a baby girl. She dies at childbirth. Frances dies of tuberculosis after bearing Hindley's son, Hareton. Isabella also leads a life of despair

after marrying Heathcliff. She also dies young when Linton is twelve years old. It seems the air of the Grange and the moors is constantly charged by the fear of death. Disease and death loom large in the lives of these characters.

Isolation :

Isolation seems to be one of the most appealing and sought after luxury to the characters in *Wuthering Heights*. Each character seems to have a great deal of faith in the restorative effects of isolation. Heathcliff remains aloof and so does Hindley from the rest of the family. Catherine also shuts herself in and falls sick and does not wish to see anybody after Heathcliff's elopement with Isabella. Hindley kills himself slowly by his self induced alienation and alcoholism after Frances's death. Heathcliff also prefers to remain alone after Catherine's death and he becomes almost a savage to the people around him. Lockwood's retreat to Thrushcross Grange, as is revealed to Ellen in a brief episode, is due to his preference of solitude to get over a failed romantic relationship. But soon he realises that such isolation does more harm than good and thus, he goes back to London.

Idea of the Outsider :

The idea of the 'outsider' forms a major theme in *Wuthering Heights.* For the setting of this novel, Bronte chooses a remote place in the north of England, Yorkshire. For its inhabitants, a journey to Liverpool which is approximately sixty miles away, it becomes irksome. There are moors and long stretches of barren land and one does not get to meet many people from the outside world. While they reside in the northern part of England, those from the southern part are not viewed with friendliness. When Hindley brings home his new bride, Frances, Ellen Dean views her with suspicion. She describes the new bride as 'a foreigner' and that they 'don't in general take to foreigners here…unless they take to us [them] first." This shows the cold reception of the people to anyone outside their own narrow territory. Similarly, Heathcliff is an outsider, a 'gypsy' and Mr.

Earnshaw himself addresses the boy as 'it' and describes him before his wife as "it came from the devil." Hindley refers to him as 'an imp of Satan" and the Lintons too cannot generate any warm feelings towards an outsider and describe him thus, "that strange acquisition my late neighbour made, in his journey to Liverpool—a little Lascar, or an American or Spanish castaway." These people are insulated in that small area and are not very fond of outsiders. Before they actually communicate with them, they already make assumptions about them which are not very positive. And therefore, Frances and Heathcliff become misfits and create turbulence in their seemingly composed lives.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 1: Explain the notion of 'outsider' in the novel *Wuthering Heights*.

7.3.2 Major Characters

Wuthering Heights has some of the most interesting and intriguing characters in the history of the English novel. They have been discussed below:

Mr. Earnshaw :

He is the father of Catherine and Hindley Earnshaw and the owner of Wuthering Heights. He is a farmer, prosperous but kind-hearted. He picks up Heathcliff, a homeless boy, when he was coming back home from a business trip from Liverpool. He tries to assure Heathcliff's safety in the hands of his other family members. He is a strict father to Catherine and tries to mend Hindley's aggressive behaviour by sending him off for higher education. He is a true patriarch and receives whatever he wishes from his family. He commands respect and obedience from the rest of his family which he gets.

Mrs. Earnshaw :

She is the wife of Mr. Earnshaw and mother of Catherine and Hindley. She is suspicious of the new addition to her family, Heathcliff. She is not much visible in the narrative and dies shortly after Heathcliff's entry into the Earnshaw household.

Hindley :

He is the son of the Earnshaws and brother of Catherine. His cruelty surfaces when he is still a young boy. He has a strange dislike for Heathcliff and protests his entry into the house. He grows crueler towards Heathcliff with the passage of time. He also becomes cold-hearted towards Catherine for her empathy towards the orphan. When Mr. Earnshaw dies, he comes back to Wuthering Heights as the new patriarch and commands respect from everyone. He reduces Heathcliff's position to that of the servants. He brings home his wife Frances when he returns. After her death, he becomes isolated and takes to drinking and alcoholism. It is at this point that Heathcliff gains power over him and becomes the new tyrant of Wuthering House. Hindley dies soon after a fight between Heathcliff and him, where he wants to murder Heathcliff but gets wounded instead.

Catherine :

Mischievous, spoilt and carefree, she is the daughter of the Earnshaws and sister of Hindley. She is the only person, after her father, who is empathetic towards Heathcliff. Their friendship later develops into a passionate love interest. She confesses her love for Heathcliff before Ellen but is also equally conscious of her social status. She learns to behave more ladylike after her accidental visit to Thrushcross Grange. She is charmed by Edgar Linton's genteel ways, however, her love for Heathcliff works at a more serious and deeper level. This is proved after the mysterious disappearance of Heathcliff from Wuthering Heights and she falls sick after searching for him at night in the storm. She stops eating and sleeping and remains behind closed doors most of the time, despite the care and attention of her husband. She is unable to accept the fact that

Heathcliff has eloped with Isabella, her sister-in-law. Her forgiveness also comes instantly when Heathcliff comes back to meet her, when Edgar is away, and they reunite passionately. She dies after giving birth to Edgar's daughter, Cathy.

Frances :

She is the wife of Hindley and she is from the South of England. As is the general attitude of the people of the village, she is not received warmly by the Earnshaw family. She is viewed with suspicion and coldness. She does not like Heathcliff and is often cruel to him. She dies of tuberculosis soon after giving birth to a son, Hareton.

Heathcliff :

He is the male protagonist of the novel because it is with his appearance in the narrative that the lives of the Earnshaws and Lintons are disrupted. He is person with no known family lineage. He is picked up from the streets by Mr. Earnshaw in one of his business trips, when he was returning home. He is looked down as an outsider and although adopted, he is not counted as one of the Earnshaws. Even the servants of the Earnshaw family despise him as 'strange' and 'a gypsy'. His attitude towards Hindley remains cold and cruel throughout the novel. He makes himself impressive before Isabella and makes her fall in love with him. He does this to avenge Edgar's marriage with his own love interest, Catherine. He is also a scheming man when he plots the courtship between young Cathy and his own son, Linton, in order to acquire the estate, Thrushcross Grange. His untamed passion for Catherine flowers fully after her death when he becomes more and more mysterious and cruel. His end is also equally mysterious, when he is discovered dead in his room wearing a devilish grin.

Mr. Linton :

He is the father of Edgar and Isabella and the owner of Thrushcross Grange. He takes good care of his children and wishes to raise them as respectable young people of their rank.

Mrs. Linton :

She is the wife of Mr. Linton and mother of Edgar and Isabella. She is a hypocritical woman who cannot stand Heathcliff because his origins are unknown. She does everything to spoil her children and does not allow them to be near Heathcliff. It is she who insists Catherine on learning the ways and etiquettes of young ladies of the upper class. Both Mr. and Mrs. Linton die after being affected by Catherine's fever.

Edgar :

The son of the Lintons, he is a spoilt boy. He is well-bred and has all the charms of the young men of the upper class. He charms Catherine with his gentlemanliness but this becomes futile when it comes to the practical level. He is a cowardly man and fails to act strong when his wife (Catherine), sister (Isabella) and daughter (Cathy) become affected by the evil schemes of Heathcliff. When Catherine starts throwing tantrums for her unsuccessful relationship with Heathcliff, Edgar stands there helpless. His fight with Heathcliff only takes a negative turn when he finds Isabella elope with him. As a father, he cannot stop Cathy from visiting Wuthering Heights and finally approves of her marriage with Linton Heathcliff.

Isabella :

Equally spoilt like her brother Edgar, she is the daughter of the Lintons. As a child she despises Heathcliff as if he were a creature. But when he returns as a young man with education, wealth and manners, she is romantic by his romantic appeal. She elopes with him and realises her mistake. She keeps in touch with Ellen Dean and confides in telling her about Heathcliff's brutality. She lives a life of negligence from her husband who only uses her as an instrument to ruin the Linton family. She gives birth to a feeble son, Linton. She stays away from her husband with her son and her son gets to meet Heathcliff only after her death, when Linton is twelve years old.

Cathy :

She is the daughter of Catherine and Edgar Linton. Like her mother, she is free-spirited and mischievous. She is arrogant, carefree and temperamental like her mother. But Edgar's guidance has made her kinder and more considerate than Catherine. She pursues her connection with Wuthering Heights and relationship with Linton after repeated warnings from Ellen Dean and her father and this reflects the stubborn and impetuous nature of her mother. But her compassion towards Hareton and her attempts at teaching him to read and write also reflects the elder Catherine's compassion towards Heathcliff. Finally, she emerges as the mode of restoring order and peace to the troubled life of Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange by deciding to marry Hareton.

Hareton :

He is the son of Hindley and Frances Earnshaw. After his parents' death, he starts depending entirely on Heathcliff. To avenge the bitter attitude and ill treatment of Hindley towards him, Heathcliff misbehaves and ill treats Hareton. He turns him into an illiterate farm worker. Hareton, under Heathcliff's dark influence, becomes quick-tempered and is easily humiliated. However, with Cathy around he shows a tendency to improve and possesses a much kinder heart than his father and this nature makes him win Cathy's heart after Linton's death.

Linton :

He is the son of Heathcliff and Isabella, and although peevish, he is commanding and arrogant. He constantly remains ill. He grows up in London under the care of his mother and meets his father only after her death, when he is twelve years old. He is despised by his father and becomes instrumental in Heathcliff's plan of acquiring the estate of the Lintons by forcibly making him court Cathy. He weds Cathy under Heathcliff's pressure but dies soon after.

Ellen Dean :

She is a strong character in the plot because we get to know about the Earnshaws and Lintons through her narration. She is the caretaker of the house of the Earnshaws and becomes deeply involved with the children, Hindley and Catherine and later, Cathy. She is compassionate and intelligent and she cannot remain objective in her narration of the two families' history. Sometimes her feelings get underway. She is also a confidant to the women in the novel—to Catherine, to Isabella and to Cathy. She is loyal to the Earnshaw family and does what is best to keep the family together. Her narration often gets problematic when she becomes overtly emotional and gets involved in her own narration.

Joseph :

He is also the servant at Wuthering Heights, but unlike Ellen, he is unkind and cruel. He is obsessively religious and speaks with a Yorkshire accent.

Mr. Lockwood :

Although he is not directly involved with either of the two families, his presence is important in the novel for providing room for Ellen's narration to develop. It is because of his probing that Ellen Dean shares the history of the two families and through him, the reader gets acquainted with the entangled lives of the people in that remote village. Mr. Lockwood goes to this rural retreat to recover from his own romantic failure. Mr. Lockwood comes from a disciplined country life in London and finds the atmosphere of Wuthering Heights in total contrast to the place he is familiar with. He finds the cold attitude of the people around him in that place quite unsettling. He remains distanced from the characters in Ellen's narration and his vanity and presumptuous nature often make him a complicated narrator.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 2: Give a character sketch of Ellen Dean. Is she reliable as a narrator?

7.3.3 Narrative Style

The narrative structure of *Wuthering Heights* is rather complex with two apparent narrators, Lockwood and Ellen Dean, and the brief narrative threads of other characters like Heathcliff, Zillah, Cathy and Isabella often interspersing. Catherine does not interact with the reader directly, but through her diary entries. Till Chapter Fourteen, Lockwood is the narrator, improvising upon Ellen's narration of the history of the two families. His English is sophisticated, sometimes punctuating with words of Greek or Latin origin. But such a narration tends to be biased since Lockwood's is doubly distanced from the events that had already occurred and he comes to know of all this through Ellen. After Chapter Fifteen, Ellen Dean becomes the narrator, and her narration could be perceived more authentic than Lockwood's in that she has the first hand experience of all the events that had occurred. She has grown up with the Earnshaw children (Catherine, Hindley and Heathcliff) and has witnessed almost all the experiences in the lives of the two families. She also stands witness to the second generation of the Earnshaws and Lintons. However, her narration too is not without prejudice. Sometimes, it seems she prefers Edgar to Heathcliff while sometimes it is the other way round. But her plain language and her typical accent offer flavour to the narrative. Since, she had the first hand experience of all the bygone events, Bronte allows her the liberty to dramatise them in a way that the reader feels as if they are not things from the remote past, but of a recent time.

7.4 CRITICAL RECEPTION

At the time of its publication, *Wuthering Heights* received mixed reviews from readers and publishers. In the earlier reviews, the critics showed their wariness in accepting a text that was unconventional and unsettling at the same time. However, the earlier reviews were not without a word or two of appreciation for a novel that had a challenging plot, more so, because it was the product of imagination of a woman writer. The novel can be read as a synthesis between the romantic novel and gothic fiction. It has been often labelled as 'anti-Christian' (for some religious readings of *Wuthering Heights,* J. Hillis Miller's *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth Century Writers* [pg. 259] can be consulted). Notwithstanding the negative criticisms, the novel has survived and generated many interesting essays and theories in literature. The novel has also been adapted into many film productions.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q 3: Fill in the blanks with appropriate words:

a. Heathcliff and Frances are considered as ……. by the Earnshaws and Ellen Dean.

b. Catherine does not communicate with the reader in person but through her…….

c. Lockwood is the narrator, improvising upon……. narration of the history of the two families.

d. ……..… is forcibly made to court Cathy by Heathcliff.

e. Frances dies of ……. soon after giving birth to a son, Hareton.

f. Linton Heathcliff does not meet his father until he is ……..…years old.



7.5 LET US SUM UP

This unit gives an interesting insight into the plot, characterisation and narrative structure of *Wuthering Heights*. The whole range of characters serves to portray intriguing contradictions or opposite pairs like master-slave relationship, the insider-outsider dichotomy, the benevolent-malevolent forces, etc. The narrative framework provides sufficient room to each character to come and comment on the series of events from his/her own perspective. The unit discusses the social stratification and the representatives of each social stratum as portrayed in the novel, which becomes a microcosm of the society at large.



7.6 FURTHER READING

1) Miller, Hillis J. (1963). *The Disappearance of God: Five Nineteenth Century Writers.* Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

2) Tytler, Graeme. Ed. (2018). *Facets of Wuthering Heights. Selected Essays.*Leicestershire: The Bronte Society.



7.7 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q No 1: For the setting of this novel, Bronte chooses a remote place in the north of England, Yorkshire and those from the southern part are not viewed with friendliness. There are many instances of cold reception of the people to anyone outside their own narrow territory. For example, Heathcliff is an outsider, a 'gypsy' and Mr. Earnshaw himself addresses the boy as 'it' and describes him before his wife as "it came from the devil." Before they actually communicate with them, they already make assumptions about them which are not very positive.

Ans to Q No 2: Ellen Dean is the caretaker of the house of the Earnshaws and becomes deeply involved with the children, Hindley and Catherine

and later, Cathy. She is compassionate and intelligent and she cannot remain objective in her narration of the two families' history. Her narration often gets problematical when she becomes overtly emotional and gets involved in her own narration.

Ans to Q No 3:

a. outsiders

b. diary-entries

c. Ellen Dean's

d. Linton Heathcliff

e. tuberculosis

f. twelve



7.8 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q1: Comment on Heathcliff's plan to acquire the wealth and estate of the Earnshaws and the Lintons.

Q 2: Analyse the narrative structure of *Wuthering Heights*.

Q 3: Illustrate with examples the theme of health and mortality in *Wuthering Heights.*

Q 4: Discuss the various issues reflected in *Wuthering Heights* that enable us to receive a wider picture of the time in which it is written.

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