UNIT 8: LORD CHESTERFIELD: LETTER TO HIS SON

UNIT STRUCTURE

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8.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- define the epistolary genre
- gain an idea of the life and works of Lord Chesterfield
- discuss the letter written by Lord Chesterfield to his son
- analyse the important themes of the letter
- describe the style of the letter

8.2 INTRODUCTION

The genre of literature that employs the use of letters as a narrative is known as the epistolary genre and this genre was the most prevalent in the 18th century with Lord Chesterfield being one of its prime exponents.

Although, Lord Chesterfield enjoyed a reputation as a man of wit and letters and penned many a letter and essay for publication, his reputation as a writer today rests solely upon his letters written to his illegitimate son over a period of thirty years beginning in the year 1737-38. Chesterfield wrote most of the letters during the years 1746-54; and, to develop and refine his son's skill, flair and command of languages, he wrote him letters in French, English, and Latin and also wrote instructive letters about subjects ranging from Classical literature and history to geography and politics.These were published as *Letters to His Son on the Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman* posthumously by his son's widow Eugenia Stanhope in 1774. The student must note that these letters were private correspondences between Lord Chesterfield and his son in which Lord Chesterfield advised and guided his son in the ways of the world and thus were never meant for the public eye or for publication. Perhaps, due to this intimate nature of the letters Chesterfield wrote with a frankness and honesty that may have at time been at odds with the "cultivated self-seeking and hypocritical morality of the upper-class society of the time". The letters can be seen as a guide to manners, of good conduct and of worldly success and they provide a view into 18th century codes of aristocratic values and norms.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1. What is meant by epistolary?

Q2. Who was the recipient of these letters?

Q3. When was Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son* published?

8.3 LORD CHESTERFIELD: LIFE AND WORKS

Philip Dormer Stanhope, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield, was born in London on 22ndSeptember, 1694. He was a British statesman, diplomat and a man of letters who is primarily remembered as the author of *Letters to His Son* published in 1774, a year after his death in March, 1773.

Born in London to parents Lady Elizabeth Savile and Philip Stanhope, the 3rd Earl of Chesterfield, he was known only as Lord Stanhope until the death of his father in 1726. He was educated at Trinity Hall, Cambridge and having completed his education went on a tour to Europe in 1714 to complete his education as a nobleman. He spent most of his time in Paris and was a great admirer of French culture and manners. It is here that he came into contact with his aristocratic counterparts from Europe and was exposed to European modes and tastes. His political and administrative career began early, upon his return in 1715; he was appointed the Gentleman of the Bed-chamber to the Prince of Wales and in 1723 was appointed the Captain of the Yeoman of the Guards. He became the 4th Earl of Chesterfield in 1726 upon his father's death and was appointed ambassador to Holland in 1728. He stayed there till 1732 when he returned to England. It was during his tenure as ambassador in Holland that his illegitimate son, Philip Stanhope, who was the recipient of his famous *Letters to His Son,* was born. He started his decade long parliamentary career in the year he returned to England and was a strong opponent of Sir Robert Walpole. He had a long political life serving as the much esteemed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in 1745 and later brought about the Calendar (New Style) Act of 1750 which enabled the adoption of the Gregorian calendar in 1751 in Britain and the Commonwealth. He gradually retreated from public life in his later years due to his increased deafness and he died in London on March 24th 1773.

Lord Chesterfield has been variously recorded as being witty and courteous but also as being selfish and shrewd in matters of worldly importance. His urbanity and manners were praised by many contemporaries and he was close to many men of letters of the age such as Voltaire and Alexander Pope. However, he quarreled with Samuel Johnson in 1755 regarding the dedication to *A Dictionary of the English Language* and Johnson famously went on to condemn him in his letter against professed patrons of the arts. Johnson also critiqued Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son* when it was published posthumously in 1774 and said the letters sought to teach "the morals of a [mistress], and the manners of a dancing master." Decades after his death, Chesterfield was caricatured as Sir John Chester in

Charles Dickens' novel *Barnaby Rudge*in 1841. The learner may note that the opinions of these two famous writers regarding Chesterfield have shaped future conceptions of him as being a cynic and calculating courtier. However, it is important to note that despite such conceptualisations, the readers of *Letters to his Son* have found his letters enlightening and helpful and they have been described as offering "sound advice" and present with "wit and elegance".



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q4. When was Stanhope born?

Q5. When did he become the Earl of Chesterfield?

Q6. Which writer did Chesterfield have an argument with?

Q7. Who caricatured Chesterfield as Sir John Chester and where?

8.4 TEXT OF THE LETTER

London, October 16. O.S. 1747

Dear Boy

The art of pleasing is a very necessary one to possess, but a very difficult one to acquire. It can hardly be reduced to rules; and your own good sense and observation will teach you more of it than I can. "Do as you would be done by," is the surest method that I know of pleasing. Observe carefully what pleases you in others, and probably the same things in you will please others. If you are pleased with the complaisance and attention of others to your humours', your tastes, or your weaknesses, depend upon it, the same complaisance and attention on your part to theirs will equally please them. Take the tone of the company that you are in, and do not pretend to give it; be serious, gay, or even trifling, as you find the present humour of the company; this is an attention due from every individual to the majority. Do not tell stories in company; there is nothing more tedious and disagreeable; if by chance you know a very short story, and exceedingly applicable to the present subject of

conversation, tell it in as few words as possible; and even then, throw out that you do not love to tell stories, but that the shortness of it tempted you.

Of all things banish the egotism out of your conversation, and never think of entertaining people with your own personal concerns or private affairs; though they are interesting to you, they are tedious and impertinent to everybody else; besides that, one cannot keep one's own private affairs too secret. Whatever you think your own excellencies may be, do not affectedly display them in company; not labour, as many people do, to give that turn to the conversation, which may supply you with an opportunity of exhibiting them. If they are real, they will infallibly be discovered, without your pointing them out yourself, and with much more advantage. Never maintain an argument with heat and clamour, though you think or know yourself to be in the right; but give your opinion modestly and coolly, which is the only way to convince; and, if that does not do, try to change the conversation, by saying with good-humour, "We shall hardly convince one another; nor is it necessary that we should, so let us talk of something else."

Remember that there is a local propriety to be observed in all companies. And that what is extremely proper in one company may be, and often is, highly improper in another.

The jokes, the *bon-mots* (1), the little adventures, which may do very well in one company, will seem flat and tedious, when related in another. The particular characters, the habits, the cant of one company may give merit to a word, or a gesture, which would have none at all if divested of those accidental circumstances. Here people very commonly err; and fond of something that has entertained them in one company, and in certain circumstances, repeat it with emphasis in another, where it is either insipid, or, it may be, offensive, by being ill-timed or misplaced. Nay, they often do it with this silly preamble: "I will tell you an excellent thing," or, "I will tell you the best thing in the world." This raises expectations, which, when absolutely disappointed, make the relator of this excellent thing look, very deservedly, like a fool.

If you would particularly gain the affection and friendship of particular

people, whether men or women, endeavour to find out their predominant excellency, if they have one, and their prevailing weakness, which everybody has; and do justice to the one, and something more than justice to the other. Men have various objects in which they may excel, or at least would be thought to excel; and, though they love to hear justice done to them, where they know that they excel, yet they are most and best flattered upon those points where they wish to excel, and yet are doubtful whether they do or not. As for example: Cardinal Richelieu, who was undoubtedly the ablest statesman of his time, or perhaps of any other, had the idle vanity of being thought the best poet too; he envied the great Corneille his reputation, and ordered a criticism to be written upon *The Cid* (2). Those, therefore, who flattered skilfully, said little to him of his abilities in state affairs, or at least but *en passant* (3), and as it might naturally occur. But the incense which they gave him, the smoke of which they knew would turn his head in their favour, was as a *bel esprit* (4) and a poet. Why? Because he was sure of one excellency, and distrustful as to the other.

You will easily discover every man's prevailing vanity by observing his favourite topic of conversation; for every man talks most of what he has most a mind to be thought to excel in. Touch him but there, and you touch him to the quick. The late Sir Robert Walpole (5) (who was certainly an able man) was little open to flattery upon that head, for he was in no doubt himself about it; but his prevailing weakness was, to be thought to have a polite and happy turn to gallantry- of which he undoubtedly less than any man living. It was his favourite and frequent subject of conversation, which proved to those who had any penetration that it was his prevailing weakness, and they applied to it with success.

Women have, in general, but one object, which is their beauty; upon which scarce any flattery is too gross for them to follow. Nature has hardly formed a woman ugly enough to be insensible to flattery upon her person; if her face is so shocking that she must, in some degree, be conscious of it, her figure and air, she trusts, make ample amends for it. If her figure is deformed, her face, she thinks, counterbalances it. If they are both bad, she comforts herself that

she has graces, a certain manner, a*je ne sais quoi* (6) still more engaging than beauty. This truth is evident from the studied and elaborate dress of the ugliest woman in the world. An undoubted, uncontested, conscious beauty is, of all women, the least sensible of flattery upon that head; she knows it is her due, and is therefore obliged to nobody for giving it her. She must be flattered upon her understanding; which, though she may possibly not doubt of herself, yet she suspects that men may distrust.

Do not mistake me, and think that I mean to recommend to you abject and criminal flattery: no; flatter nobody's vices or crimes: on the contrary, abhor and discourage them. But there is no living in the world without a *complaisant* (7) indulgence for people's weaknesses, and innocent, though ridiculous vanities. If a man has a mind to be thought wiser, and a woman handsomer, than they really are, their error is a comfortable one to themselves, and an innocent one with regard to other people; and I would rather make them my friends by indulging them in it, than my enemies by endeavouring (and that to no purpose) to undeceive them.

There are little attentions, likewise, which are infinitely engaging, and which sensibly affect that degree of pride and self-love, which is inseparable from human nature, as they are unquestionable proofs of the regard and consideration which we have for the persons to whom we pay them. As, for example, to observe the little habits, the likings, the antipathies, and the tastes of those whom we would gain; and then take care to provide them with the one, and to secure them from the other; giving them, genteelly, to understand, that you had observed they liked such a dish, or such a room, for which reason you had prepared it: or, on the contrary, that having observed they had an aversion to such a dish, a dislike to such a person, etc., you had taken care to avoid presenting them. Such attention to such trifles flatters self-love much more than greater things, as it makes people think themselves almost the only objects of your thoughts and care.

These are some of the *arcana* (8) necessary for your initiation in the great society of the world. I wish I had known them better at your age; I have paid

the price of three and fifty years for them, and shall not grudge it if you reap the advantage. Adieu.

Notes

1. *A clever saying; literally, good words (French)*
2. *When the French classic tragedy The Cid, founded upon the legendary exploits of the medieval Castilian warrior-hero, was published in 1636 by its author Pierre Corneille (1606-1684), it was the subject of violent criticism, led by the French minister of state, Richelieu (1585-1642)*
3. *Casually or in passing (French)*
4. *Beautiful spirit (French)*
5. *For two decades a powerful prime minister, Walpole (1676-1745) was also a patron of the arts and prided himself on his taste.*
6. *A certain inexpressible quality; literally, I do not know what (French)*
7. *A certain disposition to please or comply, affability*
8. *A secret, mystery. Or a secret and powerful remedy*

Let us now discuss in detail the letter by Chesterfield to his son that has been included in your course. Learners are requested to read the entire letter once before coming to this section. Having read the letter and then this discussion, you are requested again to revisit the letter to fully appreciate its contents and qualities. The following section aims to explain the text of the letter and provide an analysis of its style and language.

8.5 EXPLANATION OF THE TEXT

As we have already read in the previous sections, Lord Chesterfield's letters to his son were instructive letters to help his son get on in life. They reveal the writer's views on good breeding, manners, social and conversational

etiquettes and thus offer us a glimpse into 18th century mores and manners. This particular letter was written in October 1747 and thus belongs to the period in which Chesterfield wrote most of his letters. The letter seeks to primarily educate his son in manners by which to please other people, not by outright flattery but by a certain complaisance. It also endeavours to teach his son proper conduct in respect to the company that he finds himself in.

Let us now go through the letter in detail, taking one paragraph at a time.

Lord Chesterfield begins his letter straight on point without any sort of a preamble of greetings. He says, "The art of pleasing is a very necessary one to possess, but a very difficult one to acquire", thus setting the tone for the letter and stating the subject outright. Thus we may notice that the first paragraph seeks to introduce the ideas that would be elucidated further as the letter progresses. He goes on to say that to please others is a quality which cannot be taught but is one which is most likely to be inculcated by a good and keen sense of observation. Having said that, he goes on to say that the only thing one must keep in mind is that the qualities in another person that please you are most likely to be the same qualities in you that would please others and thus Chesterfield advises his son to "do as you would be done by". He then goes on to say how one must conduct himself according to the situation, context and company one finds himself in and must adopt the appropriate tone for the said company. He says one must not tell stories to please but if one recalls a short story that is appropriate in the context then one must share it in as few words as possible after having proclaimed that it is but the brevity of the story that made one want to share it.

Continuing on the topic of the adoption of the appropriate tone for appropriate company, Chesterfield advises his son to remove any sort of egotism from his conversation and instructs him never to try and please others with matters that may be of importance or concerns himself. Chesterfield states that things that may seem interesting or important to you may not necessarily be so for others and may indeed be tiresome and tedious. He also says that one must keep one's private matters to himself in the company of others.

Chesterfield says that his son must not ever "labour" or try to display the qualities, he may believe to be good in himself because if they are good and strong qualities, they would be visible to others without any attempt or effort to display them. He then talks of how one must never carry out an argument with another with "heat and clamour" but with restraint and finesse and offer his opinions "coolly and modestly". Even if one believes himself to be right, one must not be too argumentative and too eager to convince the other of his own views. And if coolly offering one's opinion does not work then the best thing is to politely change the conversation by saying something like, "We shall hardly convince one another; nor is it necessary that we should, so let us talk of something else."

The third paragraph continues in the same strain and elaborates more on the idea of one's propriety in terms of the situation and context one is in. He goes on to say how the jokes and funny stories related in one situation may be entirely inappropriate in another and how one must take care not to make this mistake as it is an easy mistake to make and many end up doing so too. Chesterfield says people who found enjoyment in a joke in a particular situation seem to want to repeat it in another and when the context is inappropriate, it makes the person look "deservedly like a fool". Thus the student may see that the prime themes of the first three paragraphs seem to be conversational etiquette and conduct and propriety in terms of contexts and the first three paragraphs may be seen as an organic whole in terms of the themes explicated.

It is with the next sections from paragraphs 4 to 5 in the letter that Lord Chesterfield reveals his shrewder side and his ability to discern qualities in people that may help one please them better. Chesterfield's experiences as a calculating courtier come to light here. He says, in order to gain the affection and friendship of certain (important) people, it is necessary to discover their predominant "excellencies" and weaknesses. While people may have many fields in which they excel and are pleased when one praises them in those but it is where a man wants or wishes to excel but may be unsure of his standing

is where he is most pleased when praised. This advice seems *Machiavellian* in nature and seems to be a departure from the previous sections which may seem straightforward good moral advice as here one must use one's tact and cunning to identify qualities in men which to praise as to please them and improve one's station in life. He goes on to give the example of Cardinal Richelieu, who, though the most able statesman of his time, considered himself a poet too and those who praised his poetry rather than his administrative abilities found more favour at the hands of this powerful man of state. He then goes on to tell his son that one may identify a person's leading vanity by his topic of conversation as "man talks most of what he has most a mind to be thought to excel in". One must but praise him there to please him the most. He goes on to give the example of Sir Robert Walpole whose prevailing weakness was a "turn to gallantry" and those who could identify it, would praise him for it and reap success.

Chesterfield now dedicates one paragraph to how women in general behave and how they like to be praised and about what. This frank commentary of his opinions on women may offend our modern sensibilities but we must put the letter in its misogynist context of the 18th century. Also, it is important to keep in mind the private nature of the letters which granted Chesterfield a freedom to frankly voice his thoughts without having to mince words which might not have been the case if it was a document written for public readership.

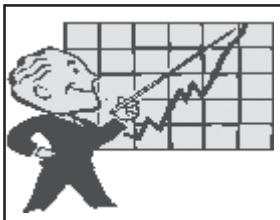
He says that with women, it is their beauty which pleases them most and no amount of praise upon that object is too much. He then goes on to say that nature has never created a woman who would be insensitive to praises heaped upon her appearance. He says if a woman doesn't have a pretty face, she believes her figure and her airs make up for it and if a woman has neither of those things, she believes she has certain natural graces and a kind of inexplicable endearing manner that is even more arresting than beauty. Chesterfield supports his opinions by stating that "this truth is evident from the studied and elaborate dress of the ugliest woman in the world". He says that

a woman who is aware of her "uncontested" beauty would be less sensitive to flattery upon her appearance as she believes it is "her due, and is therefore obliged to nobody for giving it (to) her". These women, according to Chesterfield, must be praised for their intelligence as even though they might be sure of it themselves, they might believe men would be distrustful of their intelligence.

Chesterfield, from this point onwards, begins to sum up his letter. Having offered advice on how to identify people's vanities and weaknesses in order to please them, he says to his son that it must not degenerate into a kind of sycophancy or "abject and criminal flattery" of people's values and vices. He says that one must even condemn vices in others and not flatter them. The key Chesterfield says is to still have a complaisant nature for people's "innocent; though ridiculous vanities". One must not flatter or criticise unnecessarily but occasionally should give in to people's innocent indulgences. This helps one stay in people's good books without being viewed as being overtly flattering or exceedingly harsh. He says that if a man wants to believe he is wiser than he is or if a woman believes she is more beautiful than she might really be, these vices are "a comfortable one to themselves, and an innocent one with regard to other people" and Chesterfield says that he would rather make these people his friends by indulging them in their harmless vanity than making them his enemies by trying to "undeceive" them which would be of no avail and unnecessary on his part.

He then says that there are certain little things which when done please people and make them feel good about themselves. He says that one must observe people of importance or from whom one stands to gain in life of their certain habits or likes and dislikes. This provides one the opportunity to offer them something they like or make sure something they dislike is not presented to them. These little things when done and then noticed by the person it was meant to please, makes them feeling exceedingly important and boosts what Chesterfield calls their "self love". These qualities would undoubtedly hold the person responsible for these indulgences in good stead.

Chesterfield then concludes the letter in this paragraph by saying that these little pieces of advice are the secrets he has learned along the way in life that would help his son's "initiation into the great society of the world". He wishes he knew these better when he was younger and says he has had to live a long life to arrive at these and would not be unhappy if his son would "reap" the benefits of his experiences and advice.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q8. Do you think that Chesterfield's letters reveal his views on eighteenth century manners?

Q9. What did Chesterfield say about the art of pleasing?

8.6 MAJOR THEMES

The major themes of the text are as discussed below:

Worldly Success or Success in Society :

The major overarching theme of this particular letter by Chesterfield to his son is a kind of worldly success in polite society, something which Chesterfield calls "an initiation into the great society of the world". All particular advice in the letter regarding etiquette and speech etc. can be subsumed under this theme of succeeding or climbing up the social ladder. It is a limited view of a courtier and man of parliament as to what he views as social success. We view things from the vantage point of Chesterfield, an 18th century courtier and this view does not accommodate exceptions and there is no space or scope for individual success in this view of things. While most of the letter seems to contain good moral advice, we also encounter parts where succeeding in society seems to be a matter of much calculation and flattery. Chesterfield attempts to distinguish what he calls "complaisance" from "abject and criminal flattery" but the implications of being complaisant towards men of importance shows that his advice is aimed at gaining ground in the social hierarchy of the age.

To succeed in society is thus the main theme of the letter. The other themes like that of conversational etiquette, of conducting oneself according to certain manners in specific contexts etc. can all be grouped under the grand theme of social success. Let us look at these themes briefly.

Conversational Etiquette :

Chesterfield guides his son on how to carry out a conversation with social peers and the manners in which one must argue. The theme of etiquette is an important one in this letter as we can see the first three paragraphs being dedicated to it. It is also an overall important theme in the other letters as many letters are dedicated towards the elucidation of manners of speech. This becomes an important theme as it is one of the qualities which helps an individual be noticed in society and admired too for his skill and flair in conversation and thus becomes an important step in the process of social success.

Proper Conduct :

An individual's conduct in society reflects his culture, manners and breeding and thus Chesterfield gives this theme an important place in the letter. Adopting the proper tone for the appropriate company and making conversation that would suit the context are important directions Chesterfield gives his son and thus, this becomes another important theme through the letter.

Complaisance :

This perhaps is the most important step on the path towards social success. It is in advice such as this that Chesterfield lives up to his reputation as a calculating shrewd courtier. He advises his son to be indulgent towards people's weaknesses and vanities as these offer opportunities to please the concerned people. Although Chesterfield seeks to dissociate his "complaisance" from flattery, it still may be perceived as a trick or a formula to please the rich and important rather than it being a simple moral quality that one may necessarily possess.

Women :

Although not exactly an important theme in this particular letter, Chesterfield's views regarding women in the letter can be seen as reflecting the prevalent attitudes towards women in the 18th century. This view can be seen as being misogynistic as it viewed women solely according to their beauty rather than any other faculties of intelligence and imagination.

8.7 STYLE AND LANGUAGE

The language is crisp, instructive and the purpose, didactic. While Chesterfield wrote letters in different languages to hone his son's skill and flair in them, his letters in English too have been celebrated for its masterful use of language and for its succinct nature. Chesterfield's letters to his son, although many, are never too laborious or long. They display a precision and mastery of the English language. His letters have also been celebrated for the apt use of maxims and metaphors in the appropriate places in his correspondences with his son.



CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q10. What is the most important theme of the letter?

Q11. State very briefly Chesterfield's style in the letter that you have read?



8.8 LET US SUM UP

The epistolary genre was a popular one in the 18th century and we can see Chesterfield making use of this genre in his *Letters to His Son*. We have read about Chesterfield's life and his political achievements and also gathered that Chesterfield was a writer who wrote a fair amount of letters and essays. Although unintended for publication and written for the instruction of his

illegitimate son, these letters are the chief reason why Chesterfield is remembered as a writer today. The letters contain instructions and advice as to how to conduct oneself in society and lessons in good breeding and manners. The letters also reveal Chesterfield's political sensibilities and reveal the values and norms of 18th century society. These letters have been celebrated for its didactic purposes of instilling good manners and etiquette and also been criticized for being too calculating and cunning in the pursuit of social success.



8.9 FURTHER READING

1. Ann C, Dean. (2005) "Authorship, Print, and Public in Chesterfield's "Letters to His Son", *Studies in English Literature. 1500-1900*. Vol. 45, No. 3, Restoration and Eighteenth Century.

2. E. Sprague, Allen. (1923). "Chesterfield's Objection to Laughter". *Modern Language Notes*. Vol. 38, No. 5.



8.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Ans to Q1: The genre of literature that employs the use of letters as a narrative is known as the epistolary genre.

Ans to Q2: Chesterfield's illegitimate son.

Ans to Q3: Chesterfield's *Letters to his Son on the Art of Becoming a Man of the World and a Gentleman* was posthumously published by his son's widow Eugenia Stanhope in 1774.

Ans to Q4: Philip Dormer Stanhope, the fourth Earl of Chesterfield, was born in London on 22ndSeptember, 1694.

Ans to Q5: He became the 4th Earl of Chesterfield in 1726 upon his father's death.

Ans to Q6: Samuel Johnson.

Ans to Q7: Chesterfield was caricatured as Sir John Chester in Charles Dickens' novel *Barnaby Rudge* in 1841.

Ans to Q8: Yes, Chesterfield's letters reveal the writer's views on good breeding, manners, social and conversational etiquettes and thus offer us a glimpse into 18th century mores and manners.

Ans to Q9: He says, "The art of pleasing is a very necessary one to possess, but a very difficult one to acquire".To please others is a quality which cannot be taught but is one which is most likely to be inculcated by a good and keen sense of observation.

Ans to Q10: The major overarching theme of this particular letter by Chesterfield to his son is a kind of worldly success in polite society, something which Chesterfield calls "an initiation into the great society of the world".

Ans to Q11: The language is crisp, instructive and the purpose, didactic. His letters have also been celebrated for the apt use of maxims and metaphors in the appropriate places in his correspondences with his son.



8.11 MODEL QUESTIONS

Q1. What are the factors that contributed to Chesterfield's reputation as being a shrewd and selfish courtier?

Q2. Write short notes on:

a) Lord Chesterfield

b) Lord Chesterfield's *Letters to His Son*.

Q3. Why did Chesterfield write letters to his son?

Q4. What, according to you, are the themes of the letter?

Q5. Do you find all the advice moralistic or do you find certain sections cunning? Explain.

Q6. Give a gist of the letter by Chesterfield in your own words.

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