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## Literary Text Course 2<sup>nd</sup> Year LMD

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## 1. Course Presentation

As a school of life, literature was and still the carrier of the identity, the history, the civilization, the tradition, the past, present and the future. Since the beginning of the ever first spoken word, the mankind carved and recorded their daily activities on walls and tried to communicate their needs and desires with their peers. The love, the hatred, the respect, the disrespect, the I, and the Other, the empathy, the apathy, the sympathy, the indifference, are all but components which give the field of literature its antiquity and uniqueness. Stemming from the latter, the students as humans and part of this world and its future effective factors, are meant to discover and understand different cultures and peoples, and this is done, in this course, with enjoyable and witty way that will enable them to live with the different texts which they will encounter in this course. The study of any languages, basically, should be accompanied with literature of that language, and English language is no difference. Stories, Novels, Poems, Drama are the foundational elements which any literature course should be built on.

This course offers a comparative study of major literary movements and texts in British and American literature from the late 18th to the 19th century. Through focused readings in Romanticism, the Gothic novel, Victorian realism, American Romanticism, the short story, and

Realist and Regionalist fiction, students will explore how literature responds to cultural, philosophical, and historical change. Authors such as William Blake, Mary Shelley, Jane Austen, Charles Dickens, Thomas Paine, Edgar Allan Poe, Mark Twain, and Henry James will serve as central figures for analysis. Emphasis is placed on literary form, thematic development, historical context, and the intersections between national identity and artistic expression.

## 2. Course Contents

This course provides a comprehensive exploration of **British and American literature** from the late 18th century through the 19th century, focusing on how writers shaped—and were shaped by—moments of profound cultural, political, and philosophical change. Students will encounter a diverse array of genres, movements, and narrative voices that reflect shifting ideas about identity, power, morality, nature, class, and society.

□□ **Part I: British Literature – Imagination, Industry, and Social Conscience.** We begin in **Great Britain**, where the **Romantic Movement** arose as a passionate response to Enlightenment rationalism, industrial progress, and social upheaval. In *Romanticism in Great Britain*, students explore the foundational ideals of individualism, emotional depth, and communion with nature through the works of major poets such as **William Blake** and **Samuel Taylor Coleridge**. Particular attention will be paid to poems like *The Chimney Sweeper* and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, which juxtapose imagination with human suffering and spiritual isolation.

The Romantic tradition gives way to a deeper investigation of the **Gothic novel**, particularly in **Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein***. This text challenges Enlightenment ideals by presenting a haunting meditation on scientific ambition, alienation, and monstrosity. Here, students will examine how Gothic fiction serves as a psychological and political mirror of its time, combining horror with philosophical inquiry.

Moving into the **Victorian period**, the course turns to **The Literature of the Victorian Age**, a time marked by empire, moral complexity, and social reform. Through **Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice***, we study how wit and narrative structure critique class and gender conventions, while **Charles Dickens' *Hard Times*** confronts the grim realities of industrialization, exploring utilitarianism, social injustice, and the struggle for human empathy in a mechanized world.

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## □□ Part II: American Literature – Nation, Identity, and Literary Innovation

The second half of the course shifts across the Atlantic to explore the birth and evolution of distinct **American literary voice**. In *Introduction to American Literature*, students are introduced to the cultural and historical conditions that shaped early American writing, including the formation of national identity, the legacy of Puritanism, and the ideals of liberty and reason.

We begin with the **Literature of the American Revolution**, focusing on **Thomas Paine's *Common Sense***, a rhetorical and ideological cornerstone of revolutionary thought. Students will analyze how Paine blends political philosophy with plainspoken urgency, marking a turning point in American political and literary expression.

Next, the course turns to **American Romanticism**, a movement that, while influenced by European models, carves out its own emotional and spiritual terrain. Themes of nature, self-reliance, and the transcendental are explored, preparing students for the development of uniquely American genres such as the **short story** and **Gothic fiction**.

The **Introduction to the Short Story** centers on **Washington Irving's *Rip Van Winkle***, a tale that blurs folklore and political allegory, exploring themes of time, memory, and national transformation. This segment highlights the American short story as a flexible form well-suited to capturing emerging democratic and individualistic values.

In the **Gothic Short Story**, students examine **Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of the House of Usher***, a masterclass in psychological horror, atmosphere, and unreliable narration. Poe's work embodies the dark side of American Romanticism—where madness and decay reflect deeper anxieties about identity and rationality.

The course then moves into **American Realism**, a literary response to the disillusionment following the Civil War and the rise of industrial capitalism. Realist writers rejected idealism in favor of depicting everyday life, complex morality, and the social conditions of ordinary Americans.

Within this movement, we study **Local Color literature**, with a focus on **Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***. Twain's use of dialect, satire, and the Mississippi River landscape presents a vivid portrait of regional life while grappling with national issues like race, freedom, and hypocrisy.

The final lesson explores the **Genteel Tradition**, represented by **Henry James's *Daisy Miller***. Here, students investigate the tension between Old World manners and New World assertiveness. The genteel tradition upheld moral refinement and intellectual elitism, even as modernism and realism began to question its limitations.

### 3. Prerequisite Knowledge

In order to grasp the largest amount of information and to have the maximum benefit from this course, learners need to be familiar with the reading process in addition to some background about the world of literature, especially, the famous writers at least. Learners need to have full understanding of different grammatical and vocabulary aspects. In addition, a readiness for reading is essential for coping with the course, also time organization for the reading activities should be on the schedule of the students for the sake of maintaining the habit of devotion towards the reading process. Also:

- Introduction to Literature or equivalent foundational course in literary studies.
- Competency in **academic reading and writing**.
- Recommended: Prior exposure to **historical or cultural studies** is helpful but not required.

### 4. Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

#### 1. Literary Comprehension & Genre Awareness

- Identify and describe the defining characteristics of major literary movements, including **Romanticism, Gothicism, Victorian literature, American Romanticism, Realism, Local Color**, and the **Genteel Tradition**.
- Distinguish between **poetry, the novel, the short story, political prose**, and **philosophical essays**, and assess how form influences meaning.

#### 2. Historical & Cultural Contextualization

- Analyze the relationships between literary texts and their **historical, political, and philosophical contexts**, particularly in relation to:
  1. The French and American Revolutions
  2. The Industrial Revolution
  3. 19th-century gender roles and class systems
  4. Nationalism, colonialism, and transatlantic cultural exchange

- Examine how literature responds to and reflects issues such as **slavery, class inequality,**
- **moral reform, technological change,** and **religious doubt.**

### 3. Critical Thinking & Interpretation

- Develop **close reading skills** that allow for precise textual analysis of figurative language, narrative structure, tone, and symbolism.
- Formulate interpretive arguments based on evidence from primary texts and scholarly sources.
- Explore multiple theoretical perspectives (e.g., **feminist, historical, psychoanalytic, postcolonial**) to deepen literary analysis.

### 4. Written & Oral Communication

- Construct well-organized, thesis-driven essays that clearly articulate an analytical argument using appropriate literary terminology.
- Engage in **academic discourse** through class discussions, group presentations, and peer responses.
- Integrate **secondary research** and textual evidence in support of critical analysis, using MLA or comparable citation style.

### 5. Transatlantic & Comparative Literary Awareness

- Compare **British and American literary traditions**, identifying common themes (e.g., individualism, nature, morality) and distinct national perspectives.
- Understand how writers from different cultures and historical moments **influence and respond to one another**, forming a broader transatlantic literary dialogue.

### 6. Ethical and Reflective Engagement

- Reflect on how literature explores questions of **ethical decision-making, personal identity, cultural memory,** and **social justice.**
- Articulate how historical literary concerns continue to resonate in **contemporary society**, from gender politics to media representation and political discourse.

## Lectures:

### Semester 1:

- Romanticism in Great Britain
- Study of Romantic Poetry (The Rime of The Ancient Mariner by T.S Coleridge, Chimney Sweeper by W. Blake)
- The Gothic Novel: Frankenstein or Modern Prometheus by Mary Shelley
- The Literature of the Victorian Age
- Jane Austen's Pride and Prejudice
- Charles Dickens' Hard Times

### Semester 2:

- Introduction to American Literature
- Literature of Revolution: Thomas Paine's Common Sense
- American Romanticism
- Introduction to the Short Story: Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle
- Gothic Short Story : Edgar Allan Poe's The Fall of the House of Usher
- American Realism.
- Local Color: The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn
- Genteel Tradition : Daisy Miller

## 5. Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will:

- Recognize the defining characteristics of major literary movements in Britain and America.
- Analyze the relationship between historical context and literary form.
- Compare thematic and stylistic developments across national literatures.
- Engage critically with poetry, fiction, and non-fiction through close reading and discussion.
- Develop academic writing skills rooted in literary interpretation and cultural analysis.

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This course offers students not only a broad survey of literary evolution but also the opportunity to reflect on how literature both shapes and reflects society. From the sublime landscapes of Romantic poetry to the haunted interiors of the Gothic, and from the idealism of revolution to the skepticism of realism, this journey through 19th-century Anglo-American literature reveals a world in flux—and the writers who gave it voice.

## Lecture One: Lecture One: Romanticism in Great Britain — Movement, Ideas & Texts

### Focus: Understanding the origins, features, and writers of British Romanticism

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#### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

1. **Define** Romanticism as a literary and cultural movement and explain its historical background.
2. **Identify** the major philosophical and artistic characteristics of Romantic literature.
3. **Recognize** key themes such as nature, imagination, and individuality in major Romantic texts.
4. **Analyze** selected Romantic ideas through quotations from key writers.
5. **Compare** Romanticism's values with those of the Enlightenment.
6. **Apply** Romantic principles creatively through a short reflective or analytical activity

#### 1. Historical and Cultural Background

Romanticism emerged in Britain at the end of the eighteenth century and continued through the first half of the nineteenth century. It was a time of great transformation: the **French Revolution (1789)** had shaken Europe's political foundations, and the **Industrial Revolution** was rapidly altering everyday life. Cities grew crowded, machines replaced workers, and nature was increasingly seen as something to be conquered rather than cherished.

Romantic writers responded to these social and political changes with a desire to **reclaim emotion, imagination, and moral truth**. They resisted the Enlightenment's obsession with reason and order, turning instead to the **inner world of feelings** and the **spiritual beauty of nature**. M. H. Abrams describes this change as "a shift from imitation to expression—from the outer world to the inner world" (*The Mirror and the Lamp* 22).

For the Romantics, poetry became a means of emotional discovery, moral reflection, and even rebellion against a mechanized and unjust society.

#### 2. Definition and Core Characteristics of Romanticism

Definition:

Romanticism is a literary and artistic movement that emerged in the late eighteenth century as a reaction against rationalism, industrialization, and social conformity. It celebrates emotion, imagination, individuality, and the natural world as sources of truth and inspiration.

## Key Characteristics:

1. **Emotion over Reason:** Romantics valued emotional depth and spontaneity. Wordsworth wrote that poetry arises from “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings.”
2. **Imagination as Creative Power:** Coleridge saw imagination as “a repetition in the finite mind of the eternal act of creation in the infinite I AM” (*Biographia Literaria* 173).
3. **Nature as a Living Spirit:** Nature is not merely scenery but a teacher, healer, and reflection of divine presence.
4. **Individualism:** The self becomes the center of artistic and moral experience.
5. **The Sublime and the Supernatural:** Romantic writers were fascinated by awe, mystery, and the unknown. Edmund Burke called the sublime “a delightful horror” (*A Philosophical Enquiry* 36).
6. **Rebellion and Freedom:** Romantics opposed oppression and valued artistic and personal liberty.
7. **The Common Man:** Ordinary people and rural life became worthy subjects of poetry.

**In short:** Romanticism moved literature from the intellect to the imagination, from rules to inspiration, and from the city to the countryside

## 3. Major Themes and Representative Writers

Each Romantic poet interpreted these ideas differently but shared the same longing for freedom, feeling, and meaning.

- **William Wordsworth:** Focused on nature, memory, and simple rural life. In *Tintern Abbey*, nature is “the anchor of my purest thoughts.”
- **Samuel Taylor Coleridge:** Explored imagination and the supernatural. In *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, guilt and redemption are linked to respect for all living things.
- **Lord Byron:** Created the *Byronic hero*—a proud, emotional, rebellious figure who rejects social norms (*Manfred*).
- **Percy Bysshe Shelley:** Linked art to political change. In *Ode to the West Wind*, he calls for renewal and revolution: “If Winter comes, can Spring be far behind?”
- **John Keats:** Explored beauty, art, and mortality. In *Ode to a Nightingale*, he dreams of escaping pain through imagination: “Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!”
- **Mary Shelley:** In *Frankenstein*, she combined science and moral imagination to critique the dangers of ambition and reason without empathy.

Together, these writers turned literature into a space of emotional truth and creative rebellion.

#### 4. Romanticism vs. Enlightenment Thought

Romanticism often defined itself by what it rejected. While Enlightenment thinkers like Voltaire or Locke emphasized reason, science, and order, the Romantics emphasized emotion, intuition, and freedom.

##### **Romanticism**

**Emotion and feeling**

**Imagination as truth**

**Nature as sacred**

**Individual experience**

**Freedom and rebellion**

##### **Enlightenment**

**Reason and logic**

**Rational knowledge**

**Nature as a machine**

**Universal laws**

**Authority and order**

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* demonstrates this conflict vividly. Victor Frankenstein represents the Enlightenment scientist—rational, ambitious, but morally blind. His creation, in contrast, embodies Romantic sensitivity, yearning for love and belonging. The novel warns that knowledge without compassion leads to ruin

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#### 5. The Legacy and Impact of Romanticism

Romanticism changed the course of English literature and Western thought. It:

- Reimagined the artist as visionary, not imitator.
- Elevated emotion and imagination as paths to truth.
- Critiqued industrialism and loss of connection with nature.
- Inspired movements in art, music, and environmental ethics.
- Laid the foundation for later movements such as Symbolism, Modernism, and Transcendentalism.

As Abrams notes, “Romanticism turned poetry into a mirror of the soul rather than of the world” (*The Mirror and the Lamp* 27).

#### 6. Classroom Activities

##### **Activity 1: Concept Mapping (15 minutes)**

Students work in pairs to create a visual map showing connections between Romantic values (emotion, imagination, nature, rebellion) and examples from specific poets.

##### **Activity 2: Comparative Thinking (10 minutes)**

Discuss: How does the Romantic view of nature differ from today's environmental perspective? Students list two similarities and two differences.

### Activity 3: Short Reflection (Homework)

Write a short paragraph (8–10 lines) explaining how one Romantic poem or novel expresses emotion through nature. Include one quotation with an MLA citation.

### 7. Discussion Questions

1. What events in British history helped give rise to Romanticism?
2. How do the Romantics define the role of the poet or artist?
3. What does the term *sublime* mean, and why was it important to the Romantics?
4. How is nature represented differently by Wordsworth and Mary Shelley?
5. Why is the Byronic hero considered a Romantic figure?
6. How does Romanticism criticize science and progress?

### 8. Key Takeaway

Romanticism in Great Britain marked a profound transformation in how writers understood art, nature, and the self. It gave voice to emotion, celebrated imagination, and taught that moral and artistic truth often lie beyond reason. From Wordsworth's peaceful lakes to Byron's dark heroes and Shelley's tragic monster, the Romantics redefined what it means to be human in an age of change.

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- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *Biographia Literaria*. 1817. Penguin, 1997.
- Shelley, Mary. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. 1818. Oxford UP, 2012.
- Wordsworth, William, and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. *Lyrical Ballads*. 1798. Oxford UP, 2013.

## **Lecture Two: Study of Romantic Poetry — Coleridge’s “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” and Blake’s “The Chimney Sweeper”**

**Focus: Romantic Imagination, Moral Vision, and the Voice of the Marginalized.**

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### **□ Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

By the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

1. Define Romantic poetry and identify its key characteristics.
2. Explain how Coleridge and Blake express imagination, emotion, and moral vision.
3. Discuss the central themes of guilt, nature, and innocence in both poems.
4. Recognize Romantic values through direct textual evidence.
5. Write a short comparative paragraph using quotations.

### **1. What Is Romantic Poetry?**

**Romantic poetry** appeared in Britain around the end of the eighteenth century. It reacted against the Enlightenment’s focus on reason and order. Instead, Romantic poets celebrated **emotion, imagination, and the beauty of nature**.

As Wordsworth wrote in his *Preface to Lyrical Ballads* (1800), poetry is “the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings... recollected in tranquillity.” Poets like Coleridge and Blake believed that deep emotional and spiritual experiences connect humanity with truth.

### **2. Samuel Taylor Coleridge — “The Rime of the Ancient Mariner” (1798)**

#### **Summary:**

In this long narrative poem, an old sailor tells the story of a terrible voyage. He kills an **albatross**, a bird considered a good omen. After this act, the natural world turns against him — the wind stops, the ship is cursed, and the sailors die of thirst. The Mariner only finds peace after learning to bless and love all living creatures.

“Water, water, every where,  
And all the boards did shrink;  
Water, water, every where,  
Nor any drop to drink.”

These famous lines describe the sailors’ suffering — surrounded by the sea, yet dying of thirst. Nature becomes both a source of punishment and of moral instruction.

Later, when the Mariner feels love for the sea snakes, the curse begins to lift:

“O happy living things! no tongue  
Their beauty might declare:

A spring of love gushed from my heart,  
And I blessed them unaware.”

Through this moment, Coleridge shows that redemption comes through love and empathy. The Mariner’s blessing restores his spiritual harmony with nature.

**Main Romantic Elements:**

- **Emotion:** Fear, guilt, wonder, and repentance.
- **Nature:** Alive, moral, and sacred.
- **Imagination:** The supernatural mirrors the human soul.
- **Moral Lesson:** Respect and love for all life.

“He prayeth best who loveth best / All things both great and small.”

This final line summarizes the poem’s central message: true spirituality lies in love and compassion.

**3. William Blake — “The Chimney Sweeper” (1789 / 1794)**

**Context:**

William Blake wrote during the Industrial Revolution, a time when many children worked in dangerous jobs. His poetry combines simplicity and vision, expressing both innocence and anger.

**Version 1 — *Songs of Innocence* (1789):**

The child narrator accepts his suffering but dreams of freedom:

“And by came an Angel who had a bright key,  
And he opened the coffins and set them all free.”

The dream gives comfort: faith and imagination bring hope even in pain. The poem ends with a message of innocence and trust:

“So if all do their duty, they need not fear harm.”

But Blake uses irony: the child’s obedience hides a society that has failed him.

**Version 2 — *Songs of Experience* (1794):**

The tone becomes darker and more critical:

“And because I am happy and dance and sing,  
They think they have done me no injury.”

Here, Blake exposes social hypocrisy — adults praise God while ignoring injustice. The contrast between **Innocence** and **Experience** shows how society destroys purity and faith.

**Main Romantic Elements:**

- **Emotion:** Compassion and indignation.

- **Imagination:** Dreams and visions express truth.
- **Moral Protest:** Against exploitation and hypocrisy.
- **Simplicity:** Everyday language used for deep meaning

#### 4. Comparison Between Coleridge and Blake

Aspect	Coleridge	Blake
Focus	Individual guilt and redemption	Social injustice and lost innocence
Imagination	Supernatural and moral	Visionary and symbolic
Tone	Mysterious and reflective	Simple but ironic
Moral Message	Love restores harmony	Society must protect the innocent

Both poets believe in the **spiritual power of imagination** and the **moral importance of compassion**. Coleridge teaches through mystery; Blake teaches through vision.

#### 5. Discussion Questions

1. What mistake does the Mariner make, and what lesson does he learn from it?
2. How does Coleridge use nature to show ideas of guilt and forgiveness?
3. What do the angels and dreams in Blake's poem represent?
4. How does Blake use a child's voice to criticize society?
5. What emotions do both poems make you feel?

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#### 6. Activities

##### In-Class Exercise:

- Find **two quotations** (one from each poem) that express strong emotion. Explain what feeling is shown and what idea it teaches.

##### Homework Task:

- Write a short paragraph (8–10 lines) comparing how Coleridge and Blake use **imagination** to express moral truth. Use at least one quotation from each poem.

#### 7. Key Takeaway

Romantic poetry uses **emotion and imagination** to reveal moral and spiritual truths. Coleridge's mariner learns that love for all life leads to peace.

Blake's child reminds us that innocence and justice must be defended.  
Both poets show that **true vision begins in compassion.**

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- Abrams, M. H. *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition*. Oxford UP, 1953.
- Blake, William. *Songs of Innocence and of Experience*. 1789–1794. Oxford UP, 1970.
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*. 1798. Norton, 2012.
- Wordsworth, William. *Preface to Lyrical Ballads*. 1800. Oxford UP, 2013.

## Lecture Three: Lecture Three: The Gothic Novel — *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*

### Focus: Fear, Emotion, and the Limits of Human Knowledge

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#### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

1. Define **Gothic literature** and describe its main characteristics.
2. Explain how the Gothic novel reflects fear, emotion, and imagination.
3. Identify how *Frankenstein* combines Gothic horror with Romantic ideas.
4. Analyze the moral and emotional dimensions of Victor and the Creature.
5. Reflect on how Mary Shelley's novel warns against human pride and isolation.

#### 1. Introduction: What Is Gothic Literature?

**Gothic literature** appeared in the second half of the eighteenth century as a new and powerful form of storytelling. It mixed **terror, mystery, and imagination** to explore human fears and emotions. The first recognized Gothic novel is **Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764)**, which introduced the essential elements of the genre: a gloomy setting, a tragic hero, supernatural events, and a sense of awe and fear known as the **sublime**.

The word *Gothic* originally referred to medieval architecture — large cathedrals with dark towers and mysterious corridors. In literature, it came to mean **the return of the repressed**: hidden fears, guilt, and forbidden desires.

Common **features of Gothic literature** include:

- **Dark and mysterious settings:** castles, old mansions, dungeons, graveyards.
- **The supernatural or uncanny:** ghosts, monsters, or unexplained events.
- **Strong emotion:** fear, horror, passion, and madness.
- **Isolation:** characters separated from family or society.
- **Moral transgression:** characters crossing moral or scientific limits.
- **The Sublime:** nature's vastness inspires both admiration and terror.

As Edmund Burke explained, the sublime is the feeling that mixes *beauty and fear* when facing something greater than ourselves — a storm, a mountain, or death.

The Gothic novel became a space to explore **moral questions** and **psychological depth**. It allowed writers to ask: What happens when human beings lose control of their emotions or challenge the natural order?

## 2. The Gothic and the Romantic Spirit

The Gothic novel grew alongside **Romanticism**. Both movements reacted against the Enlightenment's focus on reason and order. While Romantic poets like Wordsworth and Coleridge turned to nature and imagination, Gothic writers turned to **emotion, darkness, and the unknown**.

The Gothic, however, is not only about horror. It also reveals the inner conflicts of the soul — guilt, desire, and the search for meaning. As critic Mario Praz notes, “The Gothic imagination does not fear the dark; it listens to what the dark reveals.”

Thus, Gothic literature combines **fear and reflection** — it both frightens and teaches.

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## 3. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818): The Modern Gothic

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus* is one of the greatest Gothic novels in English literature. Written when Shelley was only nineteen, it began as a ghost story told during a stormy night in 1816 at Lake Geneva, where she stayed with her husband, Percy Bysshe Shelley, and Lord Byron.

The novel tells the story of **Victor Frankenstein**, a young scientist who tries to create life. Through his obsession with knowledge, he gives life to a creature made of dead human parts. Horrified by his success, he abandons the being — and tragedy follows.

Shelley's story combines **science and horror, imagination and morality**. It is both a **Romantic** story (exploring emotion, imagination, and nature) and a **Gothic** one (exploring fear, death, and guilt).

## 4. Main Themes and Ideas

### A. Forbidden Knowledge and Human Ambition

Victor Frankenstein represents the modern scientist who dares to play God. His desire to “pour a torrent of light into our dark world” expresses the Enlightenment dream of mastering nature. But Shelley shows that knowledge without moral responsibility leads to destruction.

“Learn from me, if not by my precepts, at least by my example, how dangerous is the acquirement of knowledge.”

The monster becomes the punishment for Victor's arrogance. Like Prometheus, who stole fire from the gods, Victor suffers for overstepping human limits.

### B. The Creature and the Question of Humanity

The creature is intelligent and sensitive, but society rejects him for his appearance. He reads books like *Paradise Lost* and *The Sorrows of Young Werther*, developing feelings and moral awareness. Yet, rejection turns his goodness into revenge.

“I am malicious because I am miserable. Am I not shunned and hated by all mankind?”

Through the creature, Shelley asks: What makes us human — our body, our emotions, or our capacity for empathy?

The creature's loneliness and suffering make him more *human* than his creator.

### C. Nature and the Sublime

Shelley uses nature to reflect emotion and morality. When Victor feels guilt, the landscapes around him become dark and violent; when he finds peace, nature comforts him.

“The sight of the awful and majestic in nature had indeed always the effect of solemnizing my mind.”

Like other Romantic writers, Shelley presents nature as powerful, sacred, and capable of moral teaching. The mountains, storms, and ice are not just background — they mirror the characters' inner turmoil.

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### D. Isolation and Responsibility

Both Victor and the creature live in isolation. Victor separates himself from family and friends to complete his experiment, and the creature is abandoned from birth. Their tragedy comes from this lack of connection.

“I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel.”

This line shows the creature's desire for love and recognition, echoing Milton's *Paradise Lost*. Shelley suggests that the real monster is not the creature, but human coldness and irresponsibility.

Gothic Feature	Example from the Novel	Meaning	Effect
Dark, sublime settings	Arctic wastes, mountain peaks, storms		Reflect inner chaos and isolation
Supernatural / science crossing nature	Creation of life from death		Fear of uncontrolled knowledge
Psychological horror	Victor's guilt and nightmares		The real terror is moral, not physical
Isolation and madness	Victor's obsession and the creature's exile		Loneliness destroys humanity
Tragic ending	Death of loved ones and Victor's fall		Punishment for human pride

Shelley's genius was to replace medieval castles with the **modern laboratory**. She turned ancient fears into questions about **modern science, creation, and ethics**

## 6. Discussion Questions

1. What does Victor's experiment symbolize about human ambition?
2. Why does the creature suffer, and how does society treat him?
3. How does Shelley use nature to express feelings and morality?
4. In what way is *Frankenstein* both Romantic and Gothic?
5. Who is the real monster — Victor or his creation? Why?

## 7. Activities

### Activity 1 — Group Work:

Find two short quotations that show **fear** and **emotion** in the novel. Explain how Shelley creates a Gothic atmosphere in those lines.

### Activity 2 — Individual Writing:

Write a short paragraph (8–10 lines) discussing how *Frankenstein* shows both the power and the danger of imagination. Use one quotation and explain its meaning.

## 8. Conclusion

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* represents a turning point in English literature. It combines **Romantic emotion** and **Gothic horror** to explore questions that remain relevant today: What are the limits of science? What makes us human? What happens when emotion and responsibility disappear?

The novel teaches that imagination and curiosity must be guided by empathy. As Shelley warns through Victor's downfall, creation without compassion leads to destruction.

“You are my creator, but I am your master; obey!”

In this terrifying moment, the creature's voice becomes the echo of all human creations that turn against their makers — from myths to modern machines.

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## Frankenstein - Lesson Analysis

### Learning Objectives

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Identify the main characteristics of Gothic and Romantic literature as reflected in *Frankenstein*.
  - Describe the historical and intellectual context in which Mary Shelley wrote the novel.
  - Explain how themes such as ambition, isolation, and responsibility appear in key passages.
  - Analyze selected quotations to understand character motivations and narrative techniques.
  - Discuss the symbolic role of nature, science, and the Creature in shaping the novel's message
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### I. Author Biography: Mary Shelley (1797–1851)

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley was the daughter of the radical philosopher William Godwin and the pioneering feminist writer Mary Wollstonecraft. Growing up surrounded by intellectual debates about politics, science, and human rights, Shelley absorbed ideas that shaped *Frankenstein*. Her relationship with Percy Bysshe Shelley, one of the great Romantic poets, further immersed her in the Romantic movement's emphasis on imagination, emotion, and rebellion against social constraints.

Shelley wrote *Frankenstein* at the age of **18**, during the famous “ghost story contest” at Lake Geneva with Lord Byron and Percy Shelley. In her 1831 introduction, she recalls:

“I saw the pale student of unhallowed arts kneeling beside the thing he had put together... the hideous phantasm of a man.”

This dreamlike image became the seed of a novel that would combine Gothic horror and Romantic philosophy.

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### II. Historical and Literary Context

*Frankenstein* was published in **1818**, during a period marked by major transformations:

- **The Industrial Revolution**, with rapid scientific advancement
- **Romanticism**, which valued imagination, emotion, and nature
- **Gothic literature**, exploring the supernatural, fear, and psychological terror

- **Philosophical debates** about the limits of human knowledge

Shelley's novel reflects the anxieties of a world where science could create wonders—but also unknown dangers.

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### III. Plot Overview (Brief)

Victor Frankenstein, a brilliant but obsessive scientist, succeeds in animating dead matter. Horrified by the Creature's appearance, he abandons it. Rejected by society and desperate for affection, the Creature becomes violent and vows revenge on his creator. The novel ends in the Arctic, with both creator and creation destroyed by ambition, loneliness, and moral failure.

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### IV. Key Themes: Detailed Analysis

#### 1. The Dangers of Unchecked Ambition

Victor's ambition mirrors Enlightenment ideals taken to extremes. His early enthusiasm—

“Life and death appeared to me ideal bounds, which I should first break through.”

—reveals a hubris that blinds him to ethical responsibility.

Shelley shows that scientific curiosity is not evil, but **ambition without conscience** becomes destructive. Victor never considers the emotional consequences of his discovery, and his refusal to “mother” the being he created becomes the root of tragedy.

#### 2. Isolation and the Need for Belonging

Isolation affects every major character:

- Victor isolates himself during his experiment
- The Creature suffers societal rejection
- Walton longs for a “friend” on his Arctic journey

The Creature's loneliness is expressed in one of the novel's most famous lines:

“I was benevolent and good; misery made me a fiend.”

Shelley suggests that **love, acceptance, and social bonds are essential to humanity**.

#### 3. Nature and the Sublime

Shelley uses nature as both escape and emotional mirror. After his guilt overwhelms him, Victor seeks the Alps:

“The immense mountains and precipices... spoke of a power mighty as Omnipotence.”

This description reflects the Romantic belief that nature reveals deep emotional truths and humbles human pride.

#### **4. Social Prejudice and Otherness**

The Creature is rejected because of appearance, not character:

“All men hate the wretched; how then must I be hated, who am miserable beyond all living things?”

Shelley critiques the superficial standards by which society judges worth, raising questions about racism, xenophobia, and physical difference.

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### **V. Major Symbols**

#### **1. Light and Fire**

Light represents knowledge and discovery. Victor sees scientific discovery as “a sudden light,” but like the myth of Prometheus, fire burns those who mis-handle it.

The Creature first discovers fire:

“How strange, I thought, that the same cause should produce such opposite effects!”

Symbolizing both enlightenment and pain, fire highlights the double-edged nature of knowledge.

#### **2. The Arctic and the Frozen Landscape**

The frozen wasteland symbolizes emotional desolation and the consequences of obsession. Walton describes:

“The icy climes increase your danger.”

This setting frames the novel as a cautionary tale against extremes of ambition.

#### **3. Books and Language**

The Creature learns morality through reading *Paradise Lost*, *Plutarch*, and *Sorrows of Werter*. These texts shape his worldview and emotional sensitivity, proving Shelley’s belief in literature’s moral power.

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## **VI. Figures of Speech & Narrative Techniques**

### **1. Frame Narrative (Story within a Story)**

Walton → Victor → Creature

This layered narrative creates multiple perspectives and reinforces themes of storytelling, memory, and confession.

### **2. Imagery**

Shelley uses vivid imagery to evoke fear:

“The candle was nearly burnt out, when, by the glimmer of the half-extinguished light, I saw the dull yellow eye of the creature open.”

The mix of faint light and horror emphasizes suspense.

### **3. Foreshadowing**

Walton’s ambition foreshadows Victor’s fate. The novel warns us early that the quest for glory ends in ruin.

### **4. Metaphor**

Victor often describes himself as enslaved to his passions:

“I pursued nature to her hiding places.”

This metaphor shows science as a force to be conquered, reflecting Victor’s violent mindset.

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## **VII. Character Analysis**

### **Victor Frankenstein**

A brilliant but irresponsible scientist. His fatal flaw is ego:

“I ardently desired the acquisition of knowledge.”

Yet he lacks empathy, becoming the true moral “monster” of the story.

### **The Creature**

Intelligent, sensitive, capable of moral reasoning. His transformation into a killer results from rejection, not birth. He represents the consequences of failed social responsibility.

## Robert Walton

A mirror of Victor's ambition. His eventual decision to turn back represents wisdom and the rejection of destructive ambition.

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### VIII. Long Passage for Close Reading

"I ought to be thy Adam, but I am rather the fallen angel... everywhere I see bliss, from which I alone am irrevocably excluded."

This quote:

- alludes to *Paradise Lost*
- shows the Creature's deep self-awareness
- reveals Shelley's critique of abandonment
- frames the Creature not as evil, but as a tragic figure seeking connection

The biblical imagery elevates his suffering to universal human experience.

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### IX. Conclusion

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* remains powerful because it confronts universal questions: **What does it mean to be human? What responsibilities accompany creation? What happens when ambition outruns empathy?**

Through a blend of Gothic horror, Romantic beauty, scientific anxiety, and emotional depth, Shelley crafted a novel that speaks directly to modern concerns about technology, ethics, and human identity.

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## □ **Lecture Four : Literature of the Victorian Age**

**Approach:** Thematic Exploration via Historical and Literary “Stations”

**Time Period Covered:** 1837–1901

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, students should be able to:

1. Describe the major historical changes that shaped Victorian Britain.
2. Define Victorian literature and explain how it differs from Romanticism.
3. Identify the main characteristics of Victorian writing, including realism, moral reflection, and social criticism.
4. Discuss major Victorian themes—industrialization, morality, gender roles, faith vs. doubt, and class inequality.
5. Recognize key Victorian writers and explain how their works respond to the challenges of their time.
6. Analyze short quotations to illustrate Victorian concerns.
7. Reflect on how literature functioned as a tool for social awareness and reform

### **1. Historical Background: A Century of Change**

The Victorian Age (1837–1901), named after Queen Victoria, was a period of extraordinary transformation. The **Industrial Revolution** reshaped British society: new machines, factories, and technologies drew millions from the countryside into expanding cities. Life in these places was often harsh. Charles Dickens captures this grim reality in *Hard Times*, describing Coketown as a place where the air is thick with smoke and the river runs “purple with ill-smelling dye.” His image reflects a key reality of Victorian life—the cost of industrial progress.

Scientific thought also changed dramatically. Charles Darwin’s *On the Origin of Species* (1859) questioned long-standing religious beliefs by proposing the theory of evolution. Many Victorians felt torn between traditional faith and new scientific understanding. Matthew Arnold’s “Dover Beach” expresses this anxiety; the poet laments the retreat of the “Sea of Faith,” leaving society uncertain and spiritually uneasy.

At the same time, the Victorian era presented itself as a model of strict morality. Values such as discipline, duty, respectability, and self-control shaped public life. Yet beneath these ideals lay serious social problems: poverty, child labor, gender inequality, exploitation of workers, and rigid class divisions. Victorian literature emerges as a response to these tensions, offering insight, criticism, and—in many cases—a moral call to action.

## 2. What Is Victorian Literature?

Victorian literature refers to the writing produced during this era of dramatic change. It is strongly defined by **realism**, a commitment to portraying life honestly and accurately. Writers described factories, slums, schools, and households in detail, believing that literature should reflect the real world. George Eliot argued that the purpose of fiction is “the nearest approach to truth,” expressing the Victorian belief that literature can help readers understand human motivations and moral responsibilities.

Another defining feature is the idea that literature should help improve society. Victorian novels often function as social critiques, exposing injustice and encouraging empathy. They explore themes such as poverty, gender inequality, moral conflict, and the effects of industrial capitalism. Victorian fiction, therefore, becomes both a mirror of society and a voice for reform.

## 3. Characteristics of Victorian Writing

Victorian literature is characterized by several distinct qualities. First, it demonstrates a strong commitment to **realistic detail**. Authors describe urban landscapes, workplaces, and family life with precision. Dickens’s descriptions of crowded London streets or Gaskell’s portraits of factory towns show how closely writers observed their environment.

Second, Victorian writing often includes **social criticism**. Many authors felt responsible for exposing abuses and inequalities. Through their stories, they questioned harsh labor conditions, the suffering of children, and the indifference of the wealthy to the poor.

A third characteristic is the era’s **moral seriousness**. Characters frequently struggle with conscience, duty, and ethical choices. Charlotte Brontë’s *Jane Eyre* insists on personal integrity, proclaiming that she must “keep the law given by God,” even at great personal cost. Such moments illustrate the Victorian belief that individuals must act morally despite temptation or suffering.

Finally, Victorian literature reflects a growing tension between **faith and science**. As new discoveries challenged long-held beliefs, writers explored themes of doubt, uncertainty, and the search for meaning. This intellectual conflict became one of the defining spiritual questions of the age.

## 4. Major Victorian Writers

Several writers shaped the Victorian literary landscape. **Charles Dickens** is known for his powerful depictions of poverty, injustice, and the struggles of ordinary people. His mix of humor, vivid imagery, and moral vision made him one of the most influential voices of the period.

**Charlotte Brontë**, through her intense and psychological style, explores themes of independence, emotion, and morality. **Elizabeth Gaskell** offers compassionate portrayals of working-class life and industrial conflict. **Thomas Hardy** presents a darker view, emphasizing fate, suffering, and rural decline. Meanwhile, **Matthew Arnold** uses poetry and criticism to express the intellectual anxieties of an age torn between belief and doubt.

These writers, though different, all engage with the deep social and moral questions of their time

## 5. Central Themes of Victorian Literature

Victorian literature frequently explores the tension between industrial progress and human values. Industrialization brought technological advancements, but it also created unhealthy cities and harsh working conditions. Dickens exposes these concerns through powerful imagery, revealing how industrial societies risk losing compassion and humanity.

Another major theme is **morality and personal integrity**. Victorian characters often confront difficult ethical decisions. Jane Eyre resists temptation and insists on moral clarity, illustrating the era's respect for conscience and self-respect.

The **status and role of women** also form a central theme. Writers like the Brontës and Elizabeth Gaskell depict women as thoughtful, intelligent, and capable of independence. Through their heroines, Victorian novels question the limitations placed on women's education, opportunities, and freedom.

Victorian literature also investigates **faith versus doubt**. As science gained prominence, many questioned traditional religion. Arnold's poetry illustrates the emotional conflict of a society struggling to reconcile old beliefs with new knowledge.

Finally, the theme of **class inequality** runs throughout Victorian fiction. Writers portray the hardships of orphans, servants, workers, and rural families, revealing the deep divisions between rich and poor. These works encourage empathy and demand social responsibility.

## 6. Illustrative Quotations

Dickens captures industrial misery in *Hard Times*:

"It was a town of red brick, or of brick that would have been red if the smoke and ashes had allowed it."

Charlotte Brontë expresses female independence in *Jane Eyre*:

"I am no bird; and no net ensnares me: I am a free human being with an independent will."

Matthew Arnold describes the retreat of religious certainty in "Dover Beach":

"The Sea of Faith was once, too, at the full... but now I only hear its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar."

## 7. Discussion Questions

1. How did industrialization shape the concerns of Victorian writers?
2. In what ways does Victorian realism differ from Romantic imagination?
3. Why was social criticism so important in Victorian literature?
4. How did scientific discoveries influence Victorian thinking about faith?
5. What makes Victorian heroines like Jane Eyre significant for understanding gender in the period?

## 8. Classroom Activities

### Activity: Character and Theme Writing

Students choose a Victorian character and write a brief paragraph explaining how that character represents one Victorian theme (morality, social inequality, gender roles, or industrial change).

## 9. Conclusion

The Victorian Age was a time of extraordinary progress and profound difficulty. Literature responded to these conditions by portraying society with realism, questioning the effects of industrialization, exploring moral dilemmas, and giving voice to those who suffered under social and economic pressures. Victorian writers believed that literature could help create a better, more compassionate world. Their works endure today because they address timeless concerns: justice, identity, dignity, and the meaning of human progress.

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## □ **Lecture Four/Session One: Analysis of *Pride and Prejudice***

**By: Jane Austen**

**Published: 1813**

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Understand the narrative and character structure of *Pride and Prejudice*.
  - Identify key themes, such as class, gender, pride, and personal growth.
  - Analyze Austen's use of irony, narrative voice, and dialogue.
  - Explore how social norms of the Regency era influence characters and plot.
  - Examine the feminist and moral commentary embedded in the novel.
- 

### **1. Introduction: Why Study *Pride and Prejudice*?**

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) remains one of the most widely read novels in English literature because of its sharp social commentary, memorable characters, and ironic style. The novel explores how personal emotions and social expectations shape relationships in early nineteenth-century England. Through Elizabeth Bennet and Mr. Darcy, Austen invites readers to reflect on pride, prejudice, class, and the challenges of making moral judgments in a society governed by reputation and marriage.

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### **2. Summary of the Narrative (Brief Recap)**

The novel follows the five Bennet sisters as their family navigates the world of courtship and marriage. Elizabeth Bennet, intelligent and independent, clashes with Mr. Darcy, who initially appears proud and aloof. Misunderstandings, social pressures, and moral reflections lead both characters to change. By the end, pride is humbled, prejudice is corrected, and the novel concludes with two marriages: Elizabeth and Darcy, and Jane and Bingley.

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### **3. Key Characters and Their Functions**

#### **Elizabeth Bennet**

Elizabeth represents *reason, independence, and moral judgment*. She refuses to marry for financial security alone, declaring to Mr. Collins:

“You could not make me happy.”

Her ability to recognize her own mistakes makes her the moral center of the novel.

### **Mr. Darcy**

Darcy embodies the tension between personal integrity and social class. His early pride is summarized in his cold remark at the Meryton ball:

“She is tolerable, but not handsome enough to tempt me.”

As the novel progresses, Darcy learns humility and acts generously, especially in the Lydia–Wickham crisis.

### **Mr. Collins**

A symbol of social foolishness, self-importance, and blind obedience to class hierarchy.

### **Mr. and Mrs. Bennet**

They represent the failures and pressures of family structure. Mrs. Bennet is comic but irresponsible; Mr. Bennet is intelligent but passive.

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## **4. Major Themes in the Novel**

### **A. Marriage: Social Contract vs. Personal Affection**

Austen presents different models of marriage:

- Charlotte and Mr. Collins → practical marriage
- Lydia and Wickham → impulsive and dangerous
- Jane and Bingley → ideal but dependent on class approval
- Elizabeth and Darcy → balance of reason, affection, and respect

The novel teaches that a successful marriage must unite “esteem and love.”

### **B. Class and Social Mobility**

The rigid class system of Austen’s England shapes all interactions. Darcy’s early reluctance to marry Elizabeth reflects this tension. Yet Austen suggests that character, not class, determines worth.

### **C. Pride and the Danger of First Impressions**

Elizabeth admits later:

“Till this moment, I never knew myself.”

Both Elizabeth and Darcy must confront flaws in their judgments.

### **D. The Role of Women**

Women had limited options: marriage was often their only path to security. Austen criticizes these constraints through irony and character portrayal, showing how intelligent women like Elizabeth navigate them.

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## 5. Style and Techniques

### Austen's Irony

The novel opens with the famous ironic statement:

“It is a truth universally acknowledged...”

This sentence mocks society's obsession with marriage and exposes how people treat marriage as an economic transaction.

### Free Indirect Discourse

Austen blends third-person narration with the character's thoughts. This technique allows readers to share Elizabeth's biases and gradually see them corrected.

### Dialogue

The novel's conflicts, humor, and character development happen mostly through dialogue. For example, Darcy's first proposal scene showcases conflicting emotions and pride through speech alone.

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## 6. Social and Historical Context

The novel reflects:

- the limited economic rights of women
- the importance of property and inheritance (entailment)
- the pressure to “marry well” for financial survival

The Bennet estate is entailed to Mr. Collins, meaning the daughters must marry or face poverty. This historical detail shapes the entire plot.

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## 7. Guided Analysis Questions

How does Austen use irony to criticize marriage as a social institution? Give one example.

1. Why is Elizabeth considered a modern heroine? Which actions show her independence?
  2. How do Darcy's actions challenge Elizabeth's first impressions of him?
  3. Compare the marriages in the novel. Which one does Austen seem to value the most? Why?
  4. What does the novel teach about judging others too quickly? Support your answer with a quote.
-

## 8. Tutorial Activities:

### Activity 1: Character Map

Students create a chart comparing Elizabeth, Darcy, Wickham, and Charlotte Lucas. Include: motivations, social position, key decisions, lessons learned.

### Activity 2: Quote Interpretation

Each group with one important quote (e.g., “You could not make me happy” or “She is tolerable”).

Students explain:

- Who says it
- In what context
- What it reveals about the character

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## 9. Conclusion

*Pride and Prejudice* endures because it blends romance with sharp social critique. Through irony, lively dialogue, and memorable characters, Austen questions the values of her society while celebrating moral growth and emotional intelligence. Elizabeth and Darcy’s journey shows that genuine happiness requires humility, self-knowledge, and the courage to challenge social expectations.

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## □ **Lecture Four/Tutorial Session: Analysis of *Hard Times***

**By: Charles Dickens**

**Published: 1854**

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students should be able to:

- Understand the socio-political context of *Hard Times* and its critique of industrial society.
  - Analyze key themes such as utilitarianism, education, and the loss of imagination.
  - Evaluate Dickens's use of satire, symbolism, and character contrast.
  - Discuss the moral and emotional messages conveyed through plot and character development.
  - Interpret the novel's relevance in both historical and modern contexts.
- 

### **1. Introduction: Why Study *Hard Times*?**

Published in 1854, *Hard Times* is Dickens's sharpest critique of the Industrial Revolution and its effects on human life. The novel examines how mechanized thinking, strict utilitarianism, and relentless pursuit of profit reduce individuals to "hands" rather than human beings. Through the characters of Gradgrind, Bounderby, Louisa, and Sissy Jupe, Dickens exposes the emotional, moral, and social consequences of a society built entirely on facts, efficiency, and productivity.

This novel teaches students to think critically about the relationship between education, human values, and industrial progress.

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### **2. Short Summary of the Plot**

Thomas Gradgrind, a strict believer in "Facts, facts, facts," raises his children—Louisa and Tom—according to utilitarian principles. He forbids imagination, emotion, and creativity. Louisa enters a loveless marriage with the wealthy factory owner Mr. Bounderby, while Tom becomes selfish and morally weak. In contrast, Sissy Jupe, raised in a circus, represents affection, empathy, and imagination. As the story unfolds, Gradgrind's philosophy collapses, and the emotional suffering of his children reveals the failure of a purely rational worldview.

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### 3. Key Characters and Their Roles:

#### **Thomas Gradgrind**

A rigid educator who believes that “nothing but Facts” should be taught. He symbolizes the dangers of reducing education to numbers and memorization. His arc demonstrates the need for emotional understanding.

#### **Louisa Gradgrind**

Louisa suffers from emotional repression. Her famous confession to her father—

“I have been tired for a long time”  
reveals the human cost of Gradgrind’s system.

#### **Josiah Bounderby**

A factory owner who falsely prides himself on “self-made” success. He represents greed, hypocrisy, and capitalist exploitation.

#### **Sissy Jupe**

Kind, imaginative, and loyal, Sissy demonstrates that compassion and imagination are necessary for a meaningful life. She also exposes the limitations of utilitarian education.

#### **Stephen Blackpool**

A poor factory worker whose tragic story shows the injustices faced by the working class. Dickens uses Stephen to criticize the harshness of industrial life.

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### 4. Central Themes

**A. Industrialization and the Dehumanization of Workers** Coketown, the fictional industrial city, is described as:

“a town of red brick...like the painted face of a savage,”  
showing how industrial progress destroys nature and human dignity. Workers are called “Hands,” suggesting their humanity is ignored.

#### **B. Utilitarianism and the Tyranny of Facts**

The novel critiques the philosophy that decisions should be made only for the “greatest happiness of the greatest number.” Dickens argues that humans cannot live on facts alone—emotion, imagination, and moral values are equally important.

#### **C. Education and the Suppression of Imagination**

Gradgrind’s school produces children who cannot think creatively or empathize. Sissy Jupe, with her imaginative background, exposes the failure of this system.

#### **D. Class Division and Social Injustice**

Stephen Blackpool’s suffering shows how workers have “no way out” of poverty. Dickens condemns both the harsh conditions and the lack of compassion among industrial leaders.

## **E. Emotional Starvation**

Louisa embodies the emotional emptiness produced by Gradgrind's worldview. Her breakdown reveals the novel's message:

without imagination and affection, life becomes mechanical.

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## **5. Dickens's Style and Techniques**

### **Satire**

Dickens mocks Bounderby's lies and Gradgrind's rigid thinking to expose social hypocrisy.

### **Symbolism**

- Coketown symbolizes industrial ugliness.
- Smoke and machinery represent the loss of individuality.

### **Character Contrast**

Sissy and Louisa serve as opposites—emotion vs. calculation—to highlight the novel's moral point.

### **Pathos**

Dickens uses emotional scenes (Stephen's suffering, Louisa's breakdown) to move readers toward empathy and reform.

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## **6. Guided Questions**

1. Why does Dickens criticize Gradgrind's philosophy of "Facts"? Give one example from the novel.
  2. How does Sissy Jupe serve as a contrast to the Gradgrind children?
  3. What does Coketown symbolize in the context of Industrial Revolution?
  4. Why is Stephen Blackpool considered one of the most sympathetic characters?
  5. How does Louisa's emotional crisis show the limits of utilitarian thinking?
- 

## **7. Tutorial Activities**

### **Activity 1: Character Comparison Table**

Students compare Louisa, Tom, and Sissy in terms of:

- values
- upbringing
- choices

- emotional development

### Activity 2: Quote Analysis

#### Groups analyze one quote:

- “Now, what I want is Facts.”
  - “I have been tired for a long time.”
  - “The sea-shell of Coketown, with all its discordant noises.”  
Explain what it reveals about character or theme.
- 

## 8. Conclusion

*Hard Times* remains powerful because Dickens shows how an overly rational, profit-driven society destroys empathy, creativity, and happiness. Through contrasting characters, symbolic settings, and moral lessons, the novel argues that education must nourish both the mind and the heart. Dickens reminds readers that a humane society requires imagination, compassion, and justice—not facts alone.

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## □ **Lecture Five: Introduction to American Literature – Voices of a Nation**

**Focus:** Origins, Identity, and the Formation of a National Voice

**Duration:** 1–2 sessions

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### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Identify major historical periods in the development of American literature.
  - Explain key characteristics that distinguish American writing from British traditions.
  - Recognize the contributions of major early American writers (Irving, Emerson, Poe, Hawthorne, Whitman).
  - Analyze selected passages for themes such as nature, democracy, identity, and individualism.
  - Understand how literature reflects cultural encounters, national identity, and social change in the United States.
- 

### **1. Introduction: What Is American Literature?**

American literature refers to the body of writing produced in the territories that became the United States, beginning with early colonial narratives in the seventeenth century and evolving through political revolutions, cultural transformations, and artistic movements. Unlike British literature, which developed across centuries of monarchy and stable traditions, American literature emerged in a young nation grappling with questions of identity, independence, and cultural diversity. Writers faced the challenge of defining what it meant to be American in a land shaped by migration, frontier expansion, and encounters among different cultures. Many critics describe American literature as marked by “restlessness, reinvention, and the search for self,” reflecting a national experience centered on freedom, exploration, and conflict between individual desires and communal expectations.

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### **2. Historical Background**

The evolution of American literature is inseparable from the country’s cultural and political history. The earliest writings belong to the Colonial and Puritan era, when religious motivations shaped both community life and literary expression. Puritan authors emphasized spiritual self-examination, moral seriousness, and the belief that daily life revealed signs of divine intent. The poetry of Anne Bradstreet, for example, combines humility with emotional sincerity, as seen in her reflection that “the world no longer let me love,” expressing the tension between earthly affection and spiritual duty.

The Revolutionary and Enlightenment period introduced a new literary voice driven by political urgency and rational argument. Writers such as Thomas Paine used plain, forceful language to advocate for independence and democratic principles. His influential pamphlet *Common Sense*

declares, “These are the times that try men’s souls,” capturing the emotional and philosophical stakes of the Revolution.

The early nineteenth century saw the rise of Early National and Romantic literature, when writers sought to establish a distinctly American literary identity. Influenced by European Romanticism but shaped by uniquely American concerns, these authors explored the frontier, the power of nature, the mystery of the self, and the complexity of moral choice. Figures such as Washington Irving, Edgar Allan Poe, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and Walt Whitman contributed to what is often called the American Renaissance, a period of extraordinary creativity that defined American writing for generations.

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### 3. Defining Characteristics of Early American Literature

A major feature of American literature is its emphasis on individualism, the belief that people must rely on their own judgment and inner strength. This value, deeply tied to American political and social identity, is expressed strongly by Emerson in “Self-Reliance,” where he urges readers to “trust thyself,” presenting self-confidence as essential to personal and moral freedom.

Another defining characteristic is the centrality of nature. For American writers, nature was not only a spiritual refuge but also a landscape of exploration, danger, and national symbolism. The wilderness represented opportunity, mystery, and the tension between civilization and the unknown.

American literature is also characterized by persistent moral and social questioning. Writers frequently addressed slavery, democracy, inequality, industrialization, and the struggles of ordinary people. They were not afraid to explore the darker or contradictory aspects of American life.

Finally, early American literature demonstrates a strong attachment to democratic ideals. Walt Whitman’s poetry famously celebrates the dignity and equality of all individuals, beginning *Leaves of Grass* with the bold declaration, “I celebrate myself, and sing myself,” giving poetic authority to the common citizen rather than the aristocratic hero.

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### 4. Major Writers and Their Contributions

**Washington Irving** is often regarded as the first American author to gain international literary recognition. His stories blend humor, folklore, and social reflection. “Rip Van Winkle,” for instance, examines cultural change and the passage of time through the humorous tale of a man who sleeps for twenty years.

**Edgar Allan Poe** represents the darker and more psychological side of American Romanticism. His tales explore fear, madness, guilt, and the supernatural. In *The Fall of the House of Usher*, Poe creates a vivid Gothic atmosphere filled with “a sickening of the heart,” illustrating his mastery of emotional intensity and symbolic detail.

**Ralph Waldo Emerson**, a leading Transcendentalist, emphasized intuition, self-reliance, and the spiritual unity of humanity and nature. His essays encouraged readers to look inward for truth and inspiration.

**Nathaniel Hawthorne** explored themes of guilt, sin, and the legacy of Puritanism. His fiction reveals how past traditions and moral conflicts shape individual lives.

**Walt Whitman** revolutionized American poetry through innovative free verse and a democratic vision that embraced diversity and celebrated ordinary experience. His voice remains one of the most influential in American literary tradition.

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## 5. Central Themes in American Literature

American literature consistently explores the theme of freedom and the search for identity, reflecting a society built on ideals of independence and self-definition. Characters often confront the challenge of discovering who they are in a rapidly changing or morally ambiguous world.

The American Dream—the belief in personal success through effort—appears in many texts, sometimes idealized and sometimes critiqued for its limitations and inequalities.

Another major theme is the relationship between nature and civilization. For some writers, nature brings spiritual insight; for others, it represents danger or isolation. The frontier becomes a symbol of possibility and fear, shaping American imagination.

The conflict between the individual and society is a recurring motif. Writers explore conformity, rebellion, moral responsibility, and the struggle to balance personal freedom with social expectations.

American literature also examines cultural encounters among Indigenous peoples, European settlers, enslaved Africans, and later waves of immigrants. These encounters create rich but often difficult questions about identity, belonging, and justice.

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## 6. Sample Text Passages for Discussion

Washington Irving’s “Rip Van Winkle” captures the theme of cultural change with the humorous observation, “A tart temper never mellows with age,” showing how personal and social character can persist through time.

Poe’s *The Fall of the House of Usher* develops deep psychological tension through descriptions of “a peculiar sense of insufferable gloom,” revealing the power of language to create mood.

Emerson’s “Self-Reliance” expresses the heart of American individualism through the line, “Envy is ignorance; imitation is suicide,” urging readers to resist conformity.

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## 7. Classroom Activities

**Activity 1:** Choose one quoted passage and explain how it illustrates a key theme in American literature.

**Activity 2:** Compare in pairs how nature is used by a British Romantic (e.g., Wordsworth) and an American writer (e.g., Emerson or Irving).

Activity 3: Write a brief paragraph explaining how American literature reflects the idea of “self-making” or personal reinvention.

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## 8. Conclusion

American literature emerged from a nation defining its identity, values, and cultural imagination. From the spiritual struggles of the Puritans to the visionary works of nineteenth-century writers, American literature examines themes of freedom, moral responsibility, individuality, nature, and cultural difference. This introduction prepares students for deeper study of important texts such as *Rip Van Winkle*, *Common Sense*, *The Fall of the House of Usher*, and later movements such as American Romanticism and Realism.

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## □ **Lecture Six/session One: The American Revolution:**

### **Historical Context – Political Thought – Themes – Major Writers – Rhetorical Technique**

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#### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Explain the historical and intellectual background of the American Revolution.
  - Identify the major writers and documents associated with Revolutionary literature.
  - Analyze the persuasive strategies used in political writings of the period.
  - Recognize themes such as liberty, natural rights, democracy, and national identity.
  - Interpret short extracts from Revolutionary texts with attention to style and purpose.
  - Understand how literature supported and shaped the movement toward independence.
- 

#### **1. Introduction: Literature as a Tool of Revolution**

The American Revolution (1775–1783) was not only a military conflict but also a struggle of ideas, arguments, and persuasive language. Literature played a vital role in shaping public opinion, encouraging resistance, and defining the political identity of the emerging nation. Revolutionary writings were circulated in pamphlets, newspapers, speeches, and essays, designed to reach ordinary citizens as well as political leaders.

Unlike British literature of the same period, which often focused on artistic expression and social refinement, American Revolutionary literature was **urgent, practical, and openly political**. Writers such as Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and Abigail Adams used accessible language to inspire unity and action. Through reasoned argument, moral conviction, and emotional appeal, Revolutionary literature helped articulate a new vision of human rights and national belonging.

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#### **2. Historical Background**

The roots of Revolutionary literature lie in the growing tensions between the American colonies and the British Crown after the Seven Years' War. New taxes, trade restrictions, and military presence generated resentment, which writers expressed in pamphlets and speeches. Enlightenment ideas—especially those of John Locke—deeply influenced American thinkers who believed government should be based on natural rights and the consent of the governed.

This period saw the rise of a public reading culture. Pamphlets were cheap, widely distributed, and easy to understand. As historian Bernard Bailyn observes, political writing “became the vehicle of revolutionary ideology,” shaping the collective consciousness of the colonies. In this context, literature functioned not simply as art, but as a powerful tool for political transformation.

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### 3. Characteristics of Revolutionary Literature

Revolutionary literature is marked by **clarity, persuasion, and moral conviction**. Writers aimed to convince ordinary citizens that independence was both necessary and achievable. Unlike the imaginative or symbolic language of Romanticism, Revolutionary texts were direct, argumentative, and grounded in Enlightenment logic.

A key characteristic is the emphasis on **natural rights**, the belief that all individuals are entitled to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. This principle appears throughout the period's literature, forming the philosophical foundation of the new nation.

Another feature is the use of **strong emotional appeal**. Writers appealed to fear, hope, duty, and patriotism. Paine's rhetorical force demonstrates this blend of logic and emotion. His style is simple but powerful, designed to "bring common ideas to common people."

The literature also reflects a developing sense of **American identity**, portraying the colonies as morally superior, hardworking, and destined for self-rule. Such works helped construct the idea of America as a unique nation, distinct from Europe.

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### 4. Major Writers and Their Contributions

#### Thomas Paine (1737–1809)

Paine was the most influential Revolutionary writer. His pamphlet *Common Sense* (1776) sold over 100,000 copies in a few months, an enormous number for the era. He argues that monarchy is unnatural, declaring:

"Even brutes do not devour their young; nor savages make war upon their families." His work transformed public opinion by presenting independence as logical, moral, and urgent.

#### Thomas Jefferson (1743–1826)

As principal author of the *Declaration of Independence*, Jefferson gave literary expression to the ideals of equality and natural rights. The famous line—

"All men are created equal"  
—became the philosophical center of American political identity, drawing on Enlightenment principles and giving them revolutionary force.

#### Benjamin Franklin (1706–1790)

Franklin contributed essays, letters, and political arguments promoting unity, diplomacy, and republican values. His clear, humorous style made his writing accessible to broad audiences.

#### Abigail Adams (1744–1818)

Through her letters, Adams voiced early arguments for women's rights and moral responsibility within the new nation. In her famous appeal, she writes:

"Remember the ladies,"  
reminding leaders that liberty must include women's experiences.

## Patrick Henry (1736–1799)

Known for his fiery speeches, Henry stirred revolutionary emotion. His declaration, “Give me liberty, or give me death!” became a rallying cry for independence.

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### 5. Central Themes in Revolutionary Literature

One of the dominant themes is **liberty**, defined as the natural condition of human beings. Revolutionary writers consistently argue that freedom is a universal right and that tyranny must be resisted. Another key theme is **moral responsibility**, as many authors portray the struggle for independence as a sacred duty.

A third theme is **national identity**. Writers attempt to articulate what makes America unique: its diversity, its commitment to equality, and its rejection of hereditary power. This theme marks a shift from colonial dependence toward self-determination.

Additionally, Revolutionary literature engages with the theme of **reason and Enlightenment thought**. Logical argument, scientific analogy, and appeals to rational judgment appear frequently in political texts, reflecting the intellectual climate of the time.

Finally, there is a strong emphasis on **collective action**. Paine often uses the pronoun “we,” reinforcing the idea that freedom requires unity, sacrifice, and shared responsibility.

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### 6. Sample Passages for Classroom Discussion

- **Thomas Paine, *Common Sense*:**

“The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.”

—Discuss how Paine elevates political action to a moral mission.

- **Declaration of Independence (Jefferson):**

“Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.”

—Analyze how Enlightenment ideas appear in political language.

- **Patrick Henry’s Speech:**

“I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty, or give me death!”

—Examine emotional appeal and persuasive tone.

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### 7. Classroom Activities

#### Activity 1: Quote Interpretation

Students choose one of the above quotes and explain:

- its meaning

- the rhetorical strategy used
- what it reveals about Revolutionary ideology

### **Activity 2: Compare and Contrast**

Compare Paine's tone with Jefferson's.

- Which is more emotional?
- Which is more philosophical?

**Activity 3: Short Paragraph (8–10 lines):** Why did Revolutionary writers rely so heavily on simple, direct language?

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## **8. Conclusion**

The literature of the American Revolution demonstrates how powerful language can be in shaping political reality. By blending Enlightenment logic with emotional appeal, Revolutionary writers helped unite the colonies, justify independence, and lay the intellectual foundation of the United States. These texts continue to influence American political culture and remain essential for understanding the ideals and contradictions of the nation's origins.

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## □ **Lecture Six /Tutorial Session : Analysis of *Common Sense***

**By:** Thomas Paine

**Published:** January 1776

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### **Learning Objectives:**

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical purpose of *Common Sense* within the American Revolutionary context.
  - Explain Thomas Paine’s main political arguments for independence.
  - Analyze key rhetorical techniques such as emotional appeal, repetition, and direct address.
  - Interpret selected quotations to understand how language is used to persuade readers.
  - Discuss the themes of liberty, justice, and popular sovereignty in the text
- 

### **1. Introduction: Why Study *Common Sense*?**

Published in January 1776, *Common Sense* is one of the most influential political pamphlets in American history. Thomas Paine wrote it to convince ordinary colonists that independence from Britain was not only desirable but necessary. Unlike philosophical treatises aimed at intellectual elites, *Common Sense* uses clear, powerful language to appeal to farmers, workers, and everyday readers.

It is a foundational text because it transforms political argument into compelling literature—using imagery, emotion, and rhetorical force to inspire collective action and shape a new national consciousness.

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### **2. Brief Summary of the Pamphlet**

Paine divides the pamphlet into several arguments.

First, he criticizes monarchy and hereditary rule, calling kingship an unnatural and unjust form of government.

Next, he argues that America has matured and no longer needs Britain.

He then appeals to practicality: the colonies have the population, resources, and moral purpose to become an independent nation.

Finally, Paine warns that delay will cause suffering and that independence is the only path to peace, prosperity, and dignity.

By the end of the pamphlet, readers are convinced that separation from Britain is “common sense.”

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### **3. Key Arguments and How Paine Supports Them**

## **A. Monarchy Is Corrupt and Illogical**

Paine argues that monarchy violates natural equality. He writes:

“Even brutes do not devour their young; nor savages make war upon their families.”

This vivid comparison equates monarchy with cruelty and irrationality, appealing to readers’ emotions and ethics.

## **B. America Has No Need for Britain**

Paine claims that British rule brings more harm than protection. He states:

“Europe, and not England, is the parent country of America.”

By highlighting the colonies’ cultural diversity, he undermines loyalty to Britain.

## **C. Independence Is Necessary and Urgent**

Paine stresses that independence must not be postponed. He famously writes:

“The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.”

This elevates the Revolution to a noble mission guided by destiny.

## **D. A Republican Government Is the Best Choice**

He proposes a system based on elected representatives, arguing that government should reflect the will of the people rather than inherited privilege.

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## **4. Major Themes**

### **1. Liberty and Natural Rights**

Paine insists that all people are born free and that any government limiting freedom is illegitimate. His belief in natural rights forms the moral foundation of the pamphlet.

### **2. The Power of the People**

He emphasizes collective responsibility. Paine frequently uses the pronoun *we* to unite readers and create a shared sense of purpose.

### **3. Reason and Enlightenment Thought**

Paine appeals to rational thought, using simple logic and everyday examples to guide readers toward political awareness.

### **4. Moral Duty and National Identity**

Independence is presented as not only politically smart but morally necessary. Paine portrays America as the site where liberty can flourish.

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## **5. Paine’s Style and Rhetorical Techniques**

### **Plain, Direct Language**

Paine rejects complex philosophical terms. His goal is clarity:

“This plain language may perhaps offend, but it is necessary.”  
His simplicity gives the pamphlet enormous persuasive power.

### **Metaphors and Analogies**

He uses metaphors drawn from family life, nature, and everyday experience. For example, he compares America’s relationship to Britain to a child growing beyond dependence.

### **Emotional Appeal**

Paine’s language stirs pride, fear, and hope. He calls the colonists to courage by saying:

“The harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph.”

### **Direct Address**

He speaks to readers as equals, making them feel responsible for the nation’s future.

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## **6. Guided Questions**

1. Why does Paine think monarchy is an unjust form of government?
  2. What reasons does he give for believing that America no longer needs Britain?
  3. Which rhetorical strategies (emotion, logic, metaphor) are most effective in *Common Sense*?
  4. How does Paine use the idea of natural rights to support independence?
  5. Why does Paine choose plain language instead of philosophical vocabulary?
- 

## **7. Tutorial Activities**

### **Activity 1: Quote Interpretation**

Choose one of these quotes:

- “The sun never shined on a cause of greater worth.”
- “These are the times that try men’s souls.” (from *The American Crisis*)
- “Society is produced by our wants.”

Explain its meaning, context, and persuasive effect.

### **Activity 2: Argument Mapping**

Students outline Paine’s three strongest arguments and identify the evidence or examples that support each one.

### **Activity 3: Short Written Task (8–10 lines)**

Why was *Common Sense* so effective in convincing ordinary colonists to support independence?

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## 8. Conclusion

Thomas Paine's *Common Sense* remains a powerful example of how literature can influence politics and shape public consciousness. Through clear argument, emotional appeal, and strong moral conviction, Paine helped transform colonial anger into revolutionary action. His pamphlet not only contributed to the birth of the United States but also demonstrated how persuasive writing can mobilize societies and redefine national identity.

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## 9. References

### Primary Text

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### Secondary Sources

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Wood, Gordon S. *The American Revolution: A History*. Modern Library, 2002.

## □ **Lecture Seven: American Romanticism: Key Concepts, Major Writers, and Textual Illustrations**

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

- Identify the historical and cultural background that shaped American Romanticism.
  - Define the main characteristics of the movement and explain their importance.
  - Recognize major American Romantic writers and key themes in their works.
  - Analyze short textual passages to understand how Romantic ideas appear in literature.
  - Compare American Romanticism with its British counterpart in simple, meaningful ways.
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## **2. Background: America in the Early 19th Century**

American Romanticism emerged roughly between **1820 and 1865**, during a period of national expansion, political change, and growing cultural identity. Unlike Britain, where Romanticism reacted to the Industrial Revolution and the French Revolution, the American movement grew out of the nation's desire to define itself.

The young republic was searching for an identity separate from Europe, and writers tried to express uniquely **American experiences**—the frontier, the wilderness, democracy, and individual freedom.

During this era, the United States expanded westward, and the vast landscapes encouraged writers to imagine nature as a space of possibility, danger, and spiritual meaning. At the same time, major issues such as slavery, Native American displacement, and social reform shaped American thought. As a reaction to these tensions, American writers turned toward the **imagination**, the **inner self**, and **moral questioning**, echoing but transforming British Romantic ideas.

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## **3. Defining American Romanticism**

American Romanticism is a literary and cultural movement that emphasizes **emotion**, **imagination**, **nature**, **individualism**, and **the search for truth beyond reason**.

While British Romanticism often focused on nature's beauty or sublime power, American Romanticism frequently connected nature to **national identity** and **moral exploration**.

### **Main Characteristics**

#### **1. Celebration of Nature**

Nature is not only beautiful but a spiritual guide and moral teacher. Ralph Waldo Emerson famously wrote:

“In the woods, we return to reason and faith.”

This idea of nature as a source of truth lies at the heart of American Romantic thought.

## **2. The Importance of the Individual**

American Romantics celebrated the self-reliant, independent person. According to Emerson,

“Nothing is at last sacred but the integrity of your own mind.”

The inner voice becomes more valuable than social tradition.

## **3. Emotion and Imagination**

Like their British counterparts, American Romantics valued feelings over rational calculation. Intuition, creativity, and passion were seen as paths to understanding the world.

## **4. The Supernatural and the Gothic**

American literature developed a strong Gothic branch—dark houses, psychological terror, and mysterious forces. Edgar Allan Poe wrote stories exploring fear, madness, and guilt, often connecting physical spaces to disturbed minds.

## **5. Interest in the Past and Folklore**

Writers used legends, Native American myths, and early American history to build a sense of cultural identity. Washington Irving revived folk storytelling through tales like *Rip Van Winkle*.

## **6. Social Criticism**

Some Romantic writers addressed slavery, injustice, and inequality. This moral questioning adds depth and urgency to the movement.

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## **4. Major Writers and Textual Anchors**

### **Washington Irving**

Often considered the first American short-story writer, Irving mixed humor, nostalgia, and folklore. In *Rip Van Winkle*, he describes nature as a timeless refuge:

“Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed every hour of the day produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains.”

### **Ralph Waldo Emerson (Transcendentalism)**

He taught that truth is found through intuition and that the natural world reflects the divine. In *Nature*, he writes:

“The currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God.”

### **Henry David Thoreau**

In *Walden*, he promotes simplicity, resistance to materialism, and harmony with nature. He famously declares:

“I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately.”

## **Edgar Allan Poe**

Poe represents the Gothic side of American Romanticism. In “The Fall of the House of Usher,” he creates a terrifying atmosphere:

“The vacant eye-like windows... a sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.”

Poe explores the dark corners of the human mind, making emotion a source of fear as well as beauty.

## **Nathaniel Hawthorne**

His works examine sin, guilt, and moral conflict. In *The Scarlet Letter*, nature becomes a symbol of freedom and truth, contrasting with strict Puritan society.

## **Walt Whitman**

A late Romantic, Whitman celebrates democracy, the body, and the American spirit.

In *Leaves of Grass*, he writes:

“I celebrate myself, and sing myself.”

His poetry embodies freedom, diversity, and optimism.

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## **5. Themes of American Romanticism**

### **1. Nature as a Path to Truth**

Nature helps individuals discover spiritual and moral truth. Unlike European landscapes with long histories, American wilderness suggested possibility and renewal.

### **2. Individualism and Self-Reliance**

Romantic writers saw the individual as the center of meaning. Social rules often appear restrictive, while personal intuition is liberating.

### **3. The Dark Side of the Mind**

Poe and Hawthorne explored madness, guilt, and psychological conflict, showing that the imagination can reveal both beauty and terror.

### **4. The Frontier and National Identity**

Literature reflected the excitement and anxiety of a rapidly expanding nation. Characters often face wilderness, isolation, and discovery.

### **5. Social Justice and Reform**

Many Romantic writers opposed slavery, praised democracy, or criticized social inequality.

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## **6. Simple, Targeted Discussion Questions**

1. How does American Romanticism use nature differently from British Romanticism?
2. Why is the individual so important in the works of Emerson and Thoreau?

3. What makes Edgar Allan Poe’s style “Romantic” even though it is dark and terrifying?
  4. How does *Rip Van Winkle* express nostalgia for the past?
  5. How do Romantic ideas help shape early American identity?
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## 7. Short Practice Activities

### Activity 1: Quote Interpretation (5–6 lines)

Choose one quote from Emerson, Poe, or Irving and explain what it reveals about American Romanticism.

### Activity 2: Mini-Comparison (8–10 lines)

Compare one American Romantic theme (e.g., nature, individuality) with how it appears in British Romanticism.

### Activity 3: Identifying Characteristics

Students read a short excerpt (provided by teacher) and identify at least **two Romantic characteristics** in it.

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## 8. Conclusion

American Romanticism helped shape a distinct cultural identity for the United States. Through its celebration of nature, individuality, imagination, and the mysteries of the human mind, it laid the foundation for much of American literature. Whether in the calm woods of Emerson, the eerie houses of Poe, or the nostalgic villages of Irving, American Romanticism expresses the nation’s desire for freedom, creativity, and spiritual understanding. It remains a vital movement that connects literature to identity, history, and the human experience.

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□ **Lecture Eight /session One: Introduction to the Short Story – Art in a Few Pages**  
Focus: Definition, Origins, Characteristics & Literary Value

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□ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

- Define the short story as a literary genre.
  - Identify its main characteristics and narrative features.
  - Understand its historical development, especially in American literature.
  - Recognize key writers who shaped the form.
  - Analyze a short textual passage using basic narrative concepts.
- 

### 1. What Is a Short Story?

The short story is a **brief fictional narrative** that focuses on a single event, a handful of characters, and a unified emotional effect. Although storytelling itself is ancient, the *modern* short story took shape in the 19th century, especially through the work of American writers such as **Washington Irving**, **Edgar Allan Poe**, and **Nathaniel Hawthorne**. Poe famously defined the short story as a composition that can be read in “**a single sitting**” and should create “**one pre-established design**”—meaning that every detail works together to produce a single impact on the reader. This emphasis on unity and concentration is what distinguishes the short story from the novel.

Because of its brevity, the short story often explores intense moments—turning points, moral dilemmas, or psychological tensions. The Irish critic Frank O’Connor describes the short story as dealing with “**submerged population groups**,” meaning characters at the margins of society who face private struggles. This perspective gives the short story a sense of intimacy and urgency. Through suggestion, symbolism, and carefully chosen language, the form invites readers to reflect deeply on very small but significant moments in human experience.

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### 2. Historical Background

While traces of short narrative appear in myths, fables, and tales, the short story became a recognized literary form in the early **19th century**. Rising literacy, the growth of magazines, and rapid social change created a demand for shorter, sharper narratives. American literature played a central role in shaping the genre. Writers such as **Irving** blended folklore with humor; **Poe** introduced psychological depth and Gothic tension; and **Hawthorne** explored questions of guilt, sin, and morality. According to Charles E. May, the short story “**captures the mystery of human experience in its smallest and purest shape**,” showing that the form is not just brief but also profoundly meaningful.

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### 3. Characteristics of the Short Story

One key characteristic of the short story is **brevity**, which forces writers to use language economically. Because of its short length, the story usually centers on **one main conflict** or

situation and often unfolds within a limited setting. The characters are few, sometimes even a single protagonist, and they may not be fully developed. Instead, they reveal something essential through a single decisive moment. Another important characteristic is the **unity of effect**, a concept Poe insisted upon, arguing that every element—setting, imagery, dialogue, and plot—should guide the reader toward a single emotional or intellectual impression.

Short stories also frequently rely on **suggestion** rather than explicit explanation. Endings may be open, ambiguous, or surprising, leaving readers with questions rather than answers. This subtlety is part of the power of the genre. Critics often note that short stories are “**the art of leaving out**,” meaning they rely on implication rather than detailed narrative. The result is a form that is compact but rich, capable of expressing profound themes with minimal words.

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#### 4. Key Narrative Concepts

To study short stories effectively, students should understand several narrative elements.

The **plot** usually follows a simple structure—exposition, rising action, climax, and resolution—though many modern stories disrupt this sequence.

**Characters** tend to be limited in number and defined by a central conflict or emotional state.

The **setting** provides the time and place, often enhancing the mood.

The **theme** expresses the underlying meaning of the story, while **point of view**—first person or third person—shapes how readers interpret events.

Elements such as **tone**, **mood**, and **symbolism** help create depth, giving the short story its emotional texture.

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#### 5. Examples from Classic Writers

Washington Irving’s “*Rip Van Winkle*” demonstrates how a short story can use folklore to explore cultural change. Irving’s description of the Catskill Mountains—“**every change of season produces some change in the magical hues**”—highlights nature’s symbolic role in Rip’s long sleep and awakening.

Edgar Allan Poe’s “The Tell-Tale Heart” represents the psychological side of the genre. The narrator’s claim, “**I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth**,” reflects exaggerated perception and signals his descent into madness.

Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “*Young Goodman Brown*” reveals moral conflict through symbolism and ambiguity. The statement “**Evil is the nature of mankind**” forces readers to question innocence and corruption in human nature.

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#### 6. Practice Activities

##### Activity 1:

Read a short paragraph from a story provided by your teacher. Identify **two characteristics** of the short story (e.g., brevity, single effect, limited characters).

**Activity 2:**

Choose one narrative element—plot, theme, or setting—and write a 4–5-line explanation of how it works in any short story you know.

**Activity 3:**

Write a short reflection (5–6 lines) on why short stories remain popular today. Consider time, emotional impact, and modern reading habits.

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**7. Discussion Questions**

1. Why does Poe insist that a short story should be read in “a single sitting”?
  2. How does the short story’s brevity influence its narrative structure?
  3. What differences can you observe between Irving’s use of folklore and Poe’s use of psychological terror?
  4. Do you prefer stories with open endings or fixed conclusions? Why?
- 

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- Irving, Washington. *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* Oxford UP, 2009.
- May, Charles E. *The Short Story: The Reality of Artifice.* Routledge, 2013.
- O’Connor, Frank. *The Lonely Voice: A Study of the Short Story.* Melville House, 2011.
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## □ **Lecture Eight /Tutorial Session : Analysis of *Rip Van Winkle***

**Author:** Washington Irving

**Published:** 1819 (in *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*)

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this tutorial session, students will be able to:

- **Summarize the plot** of “*Rip Van Winkle*” and identify its main events.
  - **Describe the traits** of key characters, especially Rip Van Winkle and Dame Van Winkle.
  - **Explain major themes** such as change, national identity, escapism, and the role of nature.
  - **Identify narrative techniques**, including the framed narrative, humor, and fantasy elements.
  - **Interpret short quotations** from the text to support analytical statements.
  - **Recognize symbolic elements** such as Rip’s long sleep, the mountains, and the transformed village.
  - **Discuss how the story reflects historical change**, particularly before and after the American Revolution.
  - **Apply basic critical vocabulary** (theme, character, symbolism, setting, point of view) when analyzing the story.
- 

### **1. Introduction**

Washington Irving’s “*Rip Van Winkle*” (1819) is one of the earliest and most influential American short stories. Published in *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.*, the tale blends folklore, fantasy, humor, and social commentary. It is often considered the first major short story in American literature because it introduces a distinctly American landscape, American characters, and an American sense of national identity. As a transitional text, it stands between traditional European tales and the emerging American literary voice. The story uses a simple plot—a man who sleeps for twenty years—to explore deeper questions about time, change, and the birth of a new nation.

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### **2. Plot Overview**

The story follows **Rip Van Winkle**, a kind but idle man living in a small village at the foot of the Catskill Mountains before the American Revolution. Rip enjoys helping others but avoids working on his own farm, which leads to constant conflict with his nagging wife, Dame Van Winkle. One day, Rip wanders into the mountains, meets mysterious figures (believed to be the ghosts of Henry Hudson’s crew), drinks their liquor, and falls into a deep sleep. When he wakes

up twenty years later, everything has changed: his wife is dead, his children are grown, and the American colonies have become an independent nation. Rip becomes a symbol of the old world in a new political and cultural environment.

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### 3. Character Analysis

#### Rip Van Winkle

Rip is gentle, generous, and passive. He is loved by children and trusted by his neighbors because **“he would never refuse to assist a neighbor.”** Yet he dislikes work, especially anything related to responsibility. Irving humorously describes his dislike of labor, noting that Rip was **“one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy.”** Rip represents the desire to escape social pressure and domestic duty.

#### Dame Van Winkle

Rip’s wife is portrayed as strict, demanding, and constantly scolding him. Although her characterization reinforces the comedic tone, her presence also symbolizes the pressures of social expectations. Dame Van Winkle embodies order, productivity, and the Protestant work ethic—values Rip avoids.

#### The Villagers

The community values Rip for his kindness rather than his productivity. After the Revolution, however, the villagers appear more politically engaged, reflecting the new national consciousness.

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### 4. Key Themes

#### 1. Change and Transformation

The central theme is the dramatic transformation of society over time. Rip awakens to find a world he no longer recognizes: **“The very village was altered; it was larger and more populous.”** The story contrasts pre-Revolutionary simplicity with post-Revolutionary political energy.

#### 2. Escape and Freedom

Rip’s long sleep represents an escape from responsibility, conflict, and change. His disappearance into the mountains suggests the timeless appeal of withdrawing from social pressures. After waking, he finds freedom not only from his wife but from the expectations of his former life.

#### 3. Nature and the Sublime

The Catskill Mountains are described in magical, almost spiritual terms:

“Every change of season... produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains.”

Nature becomes a space of transformation and mystery, echoing Romantic ideas.

#### 4. National Identity

The story symbolizes the shift from colonial dependence to American independence. Rip sleeps through the Revolution, and upon waking, finds a nation obsessed with voting, rights, and political slogans. This humorous comparison shows how the Revolution reshapes not only laws but everyday life.

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#### 5. Narrative Style and Techniques

Irving uses a **framed narrative**, presenting the story as a tale written by a fictional historian, “Geoffrey Crayon,” who claims it is based on the notes of the historian **Diedrich Knickerbocker**. This device makes the story feel like authentic folklore. The style is descriptive, humorous, and filled with irony. For example, the narrator mocks Rip’s laziness while also portraying him sympathetically. The story also uses **fantasy elements**, such as the mysterious men playing ninepins, to blur the line between reality and myth. Irving’s rich description of nature and detailed local setting contribute to the story’s realism and charm.

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#### 6. Symbolism

##### Rip’s Sleep

Symbolizes escaping both domestic life and historical change.

##### The Mountains

Represent mystery, the supernatural, and the power of nature.

##### Pre- and Post-Revolution Village

Symbolizes America before and after independence—quiet and traditional vs. dynamic and politically active.

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#### 7. Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think Rip Van Winkle is unable to change while the world around him changes completely?
  2. How does nature function in the story? Is it only a setting, or does it have symbolic meaning?
  3. What is Irving suggesting about American society before and after the Revolution?
  4. Why is Rip happier after he wakes up than before?
  5. How does Irving use humor to criticize human behavior?
- 

#### 8. Practice Activities

##### Activity 1: Quote Interpretation (5–6 lines)

Interpret the following quote:

“He was ready to attend to anybody’s business but his own.”

What does this reveal about Rip’s personality?

### **Activity 2: Short Paragraph (6–7 lines)**

Explain how the story uses fantasy elements (the ghosts, the long sleep) to explore realistic social and historical themes.

### **Activity 3: Character Comparison**

Compare Rip Van Winkle before and after the twenty-year sleep. What changes? What does not?

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## **9. Conclusion**

“*Rip Van Winkle*” is more than a simple tale about a man who sleeps for twenty years. It is a symbolic story about change, time, and the formation of American identity. Through humor, folklore, and vivid description, Irving creates a narrative that reflects both personal transformation and national transformation. Rip’s journey reveals how individuals relate to history, how societies evolve, and how the past can both comfort and limit us. The story remains a foundational text in American literature because it captures the tension between old worlds and new beginnings.

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- Fiedler, Leslie A. *Love and Death in the American Novel.* Dalkey Archive, 1997.
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## □ **Lecture Nine/ Session one: The Gothic Short Story – Shadows, Secrets, and the Supernatural**

**Format:** Lecture + Literary Analysis + Discussion

**Focus:** Elements of Gothic fiction in the short form

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

- Define the Gothic short story as a literary subgenre.
  - Identify major characteristics of Gothic fiction (setting, atmosphere, themes).
  - Understand its historical development in Europe and America.
  - Recognize Edgar Allan Poe's role in shaping Gothic short fiction.
  - Analyze passages for Gothic elements such as mystery, terror, and psychological depth.
  - Distinguish between traditional Gothic (castles, ghosts) and American Gothic (mind, fear, madness).
- 

### **1. Introduction: What Is the Gothic Short Story?**

The Gothic short story is a brief fictional narrative that uses **mystery, fear, the supernatural, and psychological tension** to create an intense emotional effect. Gothic literature began in the late 18th century with novels such as Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), which introduced dark castles, ancestral secrets, and supernatural events. When the short story became a recognized genre in the 19th century, the Gothic mode found a perfect home in shorter forms because brevity intensifies suspense and emotional impact.

Unlike the Gothic novel, the Gothic short story focuses on **one disturbing moment, one haunting space, or one psychological crisis**. Critics often argue that Gothic fiction reveals "the fears that lie beneath civilized society," showing that terror is not only external but also internal. Edgar Allan Poe transformed the Gothic tradition by shifting the source of horror from ghosts and castles to the human mind itself.

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### **2. Historical Background**

The Gothic emerged during the Romantic era as a reaction against Enlightenment ideas of order and rationality. Writers began to explore the mysterious, the irrational, and the emotionally extreme. Early Gothic works were set in medieval Europe, featuring ruined castles, dungeons, storms, and supernatural events. However, by the early 19th century, American writers adapted Gothic themes to their own environment. Instead of haunted castles, the American Gothic focused on **psychology, guilt, madness, and internal conflict**.

Edgar Allan Poe became the master of this mode. He believed that a short story should leave a "**single, unified effect on the mind**," and this effect in Gothic fiction is usually fear, dread, or dark fascination. Through characters trapped in their own minds, decaying houses that reflect inner decay, and mysterious atmospheres, the Gothic short story reveals deep anxieties about identity, death, and the unknown.

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### 3. Characteristics of the Gothic Short Story

Gothic short fiction contains several distinctive features. One of the most important is **atmosphere**, usually dark, oppressive, or mysterious. Stories often take place in decaying mansions, abandoned rooms, or remote landscapes. Such settings create suspense and suggest something hidden beneath the surface. Another characteristic is the presence of **the uncanny**—events or images that are strange and unsettling but not fully supernatural. Sigmund Freud later described the uncanny as something that is both familiar and frightening.

Gothic stories typically explore **psychological tension**, especially fear, obsession, guilt, and madness. Poe's characters, for instance, often suffer from nervous conditions or overwhelming emotions. Symbolism is also central to the Gothic: buildings, objects, and weather often reflect the characters' mental and emotional states. Finally, Gothic stories frequently include **ambiguous events**, leaving readers uncertain whether the horror comes from supernatural forces or human imagination.

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### 4. Narrative Elements in Gothic Fiction

In Gothic short stories, the **setting** is more than a backdrop; it shapes the entire emotional experience. Dark corridors, flickering lights, and isolated landscapes create tension.

The **characters** are often unstable narrators, tormented figures, or victims of their own fears.

The **plot** revolves around a crisis or revelation, sometimes involving hidden secrets or psychological breakdowns.

The **tone** is usually melancholic, eerie, or suspenseful.

The **theme** commonly addresses the power of fear, the duality of human nature, or the collapse of rational control.

Through these elements, the Gothic short story creates an atmosphere that is haunting, symbolic, and emotionally charged.

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### 5. Edgar Allan Poe and the American Gothic

Edgar Allan Poe elevated the Gothic short story to a literary art. In "The Fall of the House of Usher," Poe creates an atmosphere of dread from the opening paragraph:

"A sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit."

The decaying mansion becomes a symbol of the decaying Usher family, blurring the line between physical and psychological collapse.

In "The Tell-Tale Heart," Poe uses an unreliable narrator whose confession reveals madness:

"I heard all things in the heaven and in the earth."

The exaggerated claim signals a disturbed mind, demonstrating Poe's interest in psychological horror rather than ghosts or monsters.

In “The Black Cat,” guilt and alcoholism destroy the narrator’s sanity as he commits violent acts and attempts to hide them. The story shows how everyday environments can become Gothic spaces when viewed through a troubled mind.

Poe’s innovation lies in transforming Gothic fear into **internal terror**, making the mind itself the haunted space.

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## 6. Example Passages for Illustration

### Irving (Gothic Touch in American Folklore)

“Some say the shadowy men were spirits, others that they were strange mountain folk...”  
This echoes Gothic mystery within a folk setting.

### Poe, *The Fall of the House of Usher*

“There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart...”  
Here, setting and emotion merge in a classic Gothic manner.

### Poe, *The Tell-Tale Heart*

“It was open—wide, wide open—and I grew furious as I gazed upon it.”  
Obsession and distorted perception replace supernatural horror.

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## 7. Practice Activities

### Activity 1:

Choose one short passage from Poe (provided by the teacher). Identify **two Gothic characteristics** (e.g., atmosphere, psychological tension).

### Activity 2:

Write 5–6 lines explaining how the setting creates fear or suspense in one Gothic story you know.

### Activity 3:

List three elements that make “The Fall of the House of Usher” a Gothic story, using at least one short quote.

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## 8. Discussion Questions

1. Why do Gothic stories often take place in dark or decaying locations?
  2. How does Poe use the mind as a source of horror?
  3. What is the difference between traditional European Gothic and American Gothic?
  4. Do Gothic stories rely more on supernatural elements or psychological elements? Explain.
-

## 9. Conclusion

The Gothic short story is a powerful literary form that explores fear, mystery, and psychological depth within a brief narrative space. Its focus on atmosphere, symbolism, and emotional intensity makes it particularly effective in the short-story structure. Edgar Allan Poe perfected this form, turning the Gothic from a tale of external darkness into a journey into the darkest parts of the human mind. Through suspense, ambiguity, and vivid detail, Gothic short fiction continues to captivate readers and reveal the hidden fears that shape human experience.

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## 10. References

- Botting, Fred. *Gothic*. Routledge, 1996.
- Hawthorne, Nathaniel. *Young Goodman Brown and Other Stories*. Dover, 1992.
- Irving, Washington. *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* Oxford UP, 2009.
- Poe, Edgar Allan. *Selected Tales*. Oxford UP, 1998.
- Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror: A History of Gothic Fictions from 1765 to the Present Day*. Routledge, 1996.
- Smith, Andrew. *Gothic Literature*. Edinburgh UP, 2007

## □ **Lecture Nine/Tutorial Session: Analysis of *The Fall of the House of Usher***

### **Atmosphere, Characterization, Symbolism, and Gothic Techniques**

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#### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this tutorial session, students will be able to:

- Summarize the main events of “The Fall of the House of Usher.”
  - Identify Gothic features such as atmosphere, psychological tension, and the uncanny.
  - Describe the personalities of Roderick and Madeline Usher and explain their symbolic roles.
  - Analyze how setting reflects the emotional and mental states of the characters.
  - Interpret key passages to understand the story’s themes of decay, fear, and madness.
  - Explain how Poe uses first-person narration to create suspense and ambiguity.
  - Relate the story to broader ideas in the American Gothic tradition.
- 

#### **1. Introduction**

Edgar Allan Poe’s “*The Fall of the House of Usher*” (1839) is one of the most iconic works of Gothic short fiction. Poe blends psychological terror, supernatural suggestion, and symbolic settings to create a narrative that explores the collapse of both a family and a mind. The story demonstrates Poe’s belief that a tale must produce a “**single effect**”—in this case, an overwhelming sense of gloom and dread. Critic David Punter notes that Poe’s Gothic stories reveal “**the terror of the mind turning against itself**,” a concept central to the tale. Through imagery of darkness, illness, and decay, Poe creates a world where physical and mental breakdown mirror one another.

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#### **2. Plot Overview**

The story begins with an unnamed narrator traveling to the Usher mansion after receiving a distressed letter from his childhood friend, **Roderick Usher**. The narrator describes the house as possessing an almost supernatural atmosphere:

“A sense of insufferable gloom pervaded my spirit.”

Inside, the narrator finds Roderick pale, nervous, and hypersensitive to sound and light. Roderick explains that his twin sister, **Madeline**, suffers from a mysterious illness that leaves her weak and death-like. Soon after, Madeline appears to die, and Roderick insists on placing her in the family vault beneath the house.

As days pass, Roderick becomes increasingly agitated. During a storm, he confesses that he believes Madeline was buried alive. At that moment, Madeline appears, blood-stained and

trembling. She collapses onto Roderick, and both siblings die. Terrified, the narrator flees the house just as it breaks apart and sinks into the tarn (lake) below.

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### 3. Character Analysis

#### Roderick Usher

Roderick represents the psychological center of the story. Poe describes him as having “**an eye large, liquid, and luminous beyond comparison,**” signaling extreme sensitivity. Roderick suffers from fear, isolation, and a nervous disorder. His emotional instability causes him to project his inner terror onto the house itself. Many critics argue that Roderick symbolizes the collapse of rationality when overwhelmed by imagination and fear.

#### Madeline Usher

Madeline’s character is mysterious and almost ghost-like. Her illness, which leaves her in a death-like trance, reflects Gothic fascination with the boundary between life and death. She symbolizes the suppressed, hidden, or unconscious part of Roderick’s psyche. Her dramatic return from the tomb is both frightening and symbolic, representing the return of repressed fear.

#### The Narrator

The narrator is a rational outsider who tries to interpret events logically. However, his perceptions become unreliable as the atmosphere affects him. His presence allows the reader to bridge the gap between rational explanation and supernatural possibility.

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### 4. Themes

#### 1. Psychological Terror

Unlike traditional Gothic literature that depends on external ghosts or monsters, Poe focuses on internal fear. Roderick’s terror comes from his own mind:

“He suffered much from a morbid acuteness of the senses.”

This suggests that perception itself can become a source of horror.

#### 2. Decay and Ruin

The decaying house mirrors the declining Usher bloodline. This parallel symbolism shows how setting and character reflect each other.

#### 3. Duality and the Double

Roderick and Madeline are twins, representing physical and spiritual halves of the same identity. Their deaths together reinforce this unity.

#### 4. The Power of the Uncanny

Madeline’s return from the tomb blurs the line between life and death. The uncertainty—was she buried alive or is something supernatural at work?—creates a classic Gothic effect.

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## 5. Narrative Techniques

Poe uses a **first-person narrator** to heighten suspense and ambiguity. The narrator is credible but limited, which makes the strange events more unsettling.

The **setting** is described with heavy detail—dark corridors, decayed walls, echoing sounds—to create an oppressive atmosphere.

The **language** is poetic yet dramatic, filled with adjectives like “gloom,” “desolate,” “vacant,” and “phantasmagoric.”

The story also includes a **story-within-a-story** when the narrator reads “The Mad Trist,” which ironically mirrors the events happening in the mansion, a technique Poe uses to intensify tension.

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## 6. Symbolism

### The House

The Usher mansion is the most important symbol. Its cracked exterior represents the fractured Usher family. When the house collapses, it mirrors the final fall of the bloodline.

### Madeline’s Tomb

Symbolizes confinement, repression, and the boundary between life and death.

### The Tarn (lake)

Its dark and reflective surface symbolizes the merging of reality and distortion. When the house sinks into it, the Usher legacy disappears entirely.

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## 7. Practice Activities

### Activity 1: Quote Analysis

Interpret this quote in 4–6 lines:

“There was an iciness, a sinking, a sickening of the heart...”

What atmosphere does Poe create? What emotion does it express?

### Activity 2: Short Paragraph

Explain how the house reflects Roderick’s personality. Give one example from the text.

### Activity 3: Theme Identification

Identify **one theme** in the story (e.g., fear, madness, decay) and explain how it appears in a specific scene.

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## 8. Discussion Questions

1. How does Poe use setting to create fear in the story?

2. Is the story supernatural, psychological, or both? Explain your view.
  3. What is the symbolic relationship between Roderick and Madeline?
  4. Why does the narrator become less reliable as the story progresses?
- 

## 9. Conclusion

“*The Fall of the House of Usher*” stands as a masterpiece of American Gothic fiction because it transforms a simple plot into a profound exploration of fear, identity, and psychological collapse. Poe uses atmosphere, symbolism, and narrative ambiguity to show that terror can emerge from the human mind itself. The story remains important not only for its chilling effect but for its deep insight into human vulnerability and the fragility of reason.

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## 10. References

- Poe, Edgar Allan. *Selected Tales*. Oxford UP, 1998.
- Punter, David. *The Literature of Terror*. Routledge, 1996.
- Botting, Fred. *Gothic*. Routledge, 1996.
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## □ **Lecture Ten: American Realism – Society, Character, and Everyday Experience**

**Type:** Lecture + Literary Analysis + Discussion

**Time Period:** ~1865–1914

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Define *American Realism* and distinguish it from Romanticism.
  - Identify major social and historical forces that shaped the movement.
  - Recognize key writers of American Realism and describe their contributions.
  - Explain how Realist writers portrayed everyday life, ordinary characters, and moral complexity.
  - Analyze short passages for Realist characteristics such as objectivity, detail, and social critique.
  - Discuss how Realism reflects class, gender, and regional identity in 19th-century America.
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### **1. Background: A Cultural Shift after the Civil War**

American Realism emerged between the **1860s and 1890s**, largely as a reaction against the imaginative and emotional style of Romanticism. The **American Civil War (1861–1865)** deeply affected the nation, bringing violence, social division, and rapid transformation. Industrialization reshaped American cities, immigration increased, and social hierarchies shifted. These changes encouraged writers to turn away from idealized heroes and dramatic plots toward **real-life situations, ordinary characters, and social truth**.

Realism was influenced by scientific developments—especially ideas connected to observation, psychology, and social behavior. Writers adopted a more **objective, journalistic, and analytical** approach. As critic Donald Pizer explains, Realism expresses the belief that “**truth can be found through the accurate representation of life**,” showing everyday events without exaggeration or sentimentality.

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### **2. Defining American Realism**

American Realism is a literary movement that aims to portray life **as it is**, focusing on credible characters, plausible events, and recognizable social environments. It emphasizes **accuracy, detail, and ordinary experience**. Realist writers avoid romantic fantasy and instead examine the complexity of human behavior.

Key elements of Realism include:

- **Everyday settings** such as small towns, workplaces, farms, and developing cities.

- **Ordinary characters**, often from the middle or lower classes.
- **Moral dilemmas**, social pressures, and internal conflicts.
- **Detailed description** that reflects close observation.
- **Dialogue** that imitates real speech patterns rather than poetic language.

Realists believed that literature should help readers understand social problems and human motivations, not escape from them. William Dean Howells, one of the leading figures of Realism, argued that literature should portray “**the familiar, the commonplace, the daily life**” because this is where truth resides.

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### **3. Characteristics of American Realism**

#### **1. Focus on Everyday Life**

Realist fiction centers on normal routines and believable events. The drama arises from social and psychological pressures rather than from adventure or the supernatural.

#### **2. Complex Characters**

Characters are neither purely heroic nor purely evil. They show mixed motivations, conflicting desires, and personal growth. Realists aimed to present characters as “real people facing real challenges.”

#### **3. Social Critique**

Realist literature frequently comments on social issues such as class inequality, industrial labor, gender roles, racism, and moral hypocrisy. Literature becomes a window into the tensions of 19th-century American society.

#### **4. Vernacular Speech**

Dialogue captures the language spoken by ordinary people—regional accents, slang, and conversational rhythms. This feature becomes especially important in Regionalism and Local Colour writing.

#### **5. Ethical and Psychological Depth**

Realists paid great attention to why characters behave as they do. Internal conflict replaces external adventure.

#### **6. Rejection of Romantic Escapism**

Realism avoids idealized love, heroic quests, and dramatic nature scenes. Instead, it looks at the world directly—even when it is harsh or disappointing.

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## 4. Major Writers and Contributions

### William Dean Howells (The “Dean of American Letters”)

Howells believed literature should faithfully represent everyday reality. In works like *The Rise of Silas Lapham*, he explores business ethics, class mobility, and moral choices. He famously wrote that Realism is “**nothing more and nothing less than the truthful treatment of material.**”

### Henry James

James brought psychological complexity to Realism. His novels, such as *The Portrait of a Lady*, explore consciousness, motivation, and moral decision-making. James emphasized point of view, arguing that the writer should imitate “**the mind in motion,**” not external spectacle.

### Mark Twain

Twain combined Realism with humor and sharp social critique. In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Twain portrays the Mississippi River world with realistic dialects and exposes racism, hypocrisy, and moral contradictions. Huck’s narrative voice reveals a truthful, unpolished view of American society.

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## 5. Themes in American Realism

### 1. Society and Class

Realists examine the struggles of middle- and working-class people. Issues include poverty, business ethics, social expectations, and class conflict.

### 2. Moral Ambiguity

Characters face dilemmas without easy answers. Realism argues that life is complex and moral choices require careful thought.

### 3. Identity and Self-Discovery

Characters often confront their limitations or illusions. Huck Finn’s struggle over slavery—“**All right, then, I’ll go to hell**”—reveals ethical growth through realistic experience.

### 4. The Conflict Between Individual and Society

Social norms, traditions, and economic pressures shape personal choices.

### 5. Regional Identity

Many Realists emphasize specific settings—New England, the South, the Midwest—capturing local customs and speech.

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## 6. Textual Illustrations

### Twain, *Huckleberry Finn*

“You don’t know about me without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*...”

This opening shows vernacular voice, humor, and realism.

### Henry James, *Daisy Miller*

“She was the most innocent girl I ever saw.”

The story explores cultural misunderstanding and moral judgment without idealization.

### Howells, *The Rise of Silas Lapham*

“He had come to the city with no fortune but his honesty...”

This line hints at social mobility and ethical conflict.

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## 7. Short Practice Activities

### Activity 1: Identify Realist Features

Read a short passage provided by your teacher and list three Realist characteristics you can find.

### Activity 2: Short Response (5–7 lines)

Explain how *Huckleberry Finn* reflects the goals of Realism through its narrator, language, or themes.

### Activity 3: Compare

In 5–6 lines, compare Realism with Romanticism. Which movement seems closer to real life? Why?

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## 8. Discussion Questions

1. Why did Realism emerge after the Civil War?
  2. How do Realist writers create believable characters?
  3. Why is dialogue so important in Realist fiction?
  4. In what ways can Realism help us understand social issues?
  5. How does Realism differ from Romanticism in tone, subject, and style?
- 

## 9. Conclusion

American Realism marks a major shift in the history of American literature. After decades of Romantic imagination, Realists turned toward the everyday world—its conflicts, its ordinary people, and its moral challenges. Through detailed observation, psychological insight, and

honest representation, writers such as Howells, Henry James, and Mark Twain helped Americans see their society clearly. Realism remains important today because it teaches us to look closely at human behavior and to understand the complexity of real-life experience.

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## □ **Lecture Eleven/Session One: Local Color Literature – Region, Identity, and Everyday Life**

**Format:** Lecture + Textual Analysis + Discussion

**Period Focus:** ~1865–1910

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- Define *Local Colour* and explain how it relates to Realism.
  - Identify the major characteristics of Local Colour writing.
  - Describe how writers portray regional customs, dialects, and landscapes.
  - Recognize the major figures of the movement (e.g., Mark Twain, Kate Chopin, Bret Harte, Sarah Orne Jewett).
  - Analyze a short passage for Local Colour features such as vernacular language, regional detail, and social setting.
  - Explain how Local Colour literature reflects American cultural diversity in the late nineteenth century.
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### **1. Background: America after the Civil War**

Local Colour literature developed mainly between **1865 and 1900**, a period when the United States was undergoing rapid transformation. After the Civil War, America expanded westward, industrialized quickly, and absorbed waves of immigrants. National unity was important, but so was the discovery of regional uniqueness.

In this context, writers began documenting the **distinct voices, customs, and landscapes** of different parts of the country—New England fishing towns, the Mississippi River, Louisiana plantations, Western mining camps, and Southern villages.

Critic Richard Brodhead notes that Local Colour “**makes the region itself a literary subject,**” turning landscapes, accents, and daily habits into essential parts of storytelling. This movement became a bridge between **Romantic nostalgia** and **Realist observation**.

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### **2. Definition of Local Colour Literature**

Local Colour refers to a literary tendency that focuses on representing the **specific features of a particular region** of the United States. These features include:

- **Dialect** (regional speech)
- **Customs and traditions**
- **Social values and beliefs**
- **Geography and landscape**

- **Clothing, food, and daily activities**

Local Colour is considered a branch of **American Realism**, but it is more focused on **setting and atmosphere** than on psychological depth. It shows how people's identities are shaped by the environment in which they live.

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### **3. Key Characteristics of Local Colour Writing**

#### **1. Strong Sense of Place**

The setting is central—not just a background.

Descriptions of nature, houses, food, weather, and geography create a vivid picture of the region.

#### **2. Use of Dialect and Vernacular Speech**

Writers reproduce local accents and speech patterns.

Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* famously uses dialect to reflect Mississippi River culture:

“It warn't no time to be sentimentering.”

#### **3. Emphasis on Everyday Life**

Stories focus on small, ordinary events—visiting neighbors, fishing, gossiping, or attending a local festival.

#### **4. Stereotypical or Idealized Characters (sometimes)**

Many Local Colour stories portray simple, humorous, or charming characters, but sometimes they reinforce stereotypes.

#### **5. Mix of Humor and Social Insight**

Writers often use regional differences to explore identity, conflict, or change.

#### **6. Interest in Vanishing Lifestyles**

Many authors feared that modernization would destroy old traditions.

Thus, Local Colour preserves the “memory” of American communities.

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### **4. Major Writers and Regional Contributions**

#### **Mark Twain — The Mississippi River Region**

Twain blends humor, dialect, and sharp observation.

His stories show life along the river with realism and satire.

Huck Finn's narration provides an authentic perspective:

“It was a mighty nice family, and a mighty nice house too.”

#### **Bret Harte — The American West**

Harte wrote about miners, gamblers, and frontier towns.

He popularized the image of the Western camp with stories such as *The Luck of Roaring Camp*.

His characters show the roughness and kindness of frontier life.

### **Sarah Orne Jewett — New England**

Jewett portrays the rural villages of Maine.

Her writing is gentle, reflective, and focused on women's experiences.

In *The Country of the Pointed Firs*, she writes:

“The sea breathed its long sigh against the shore.”

### **Kate Chopin — Louisiana and the American South**

Chopin explores Creole and Cajun culture, often highlighting women's lives and emotional struggles.

Her story *Désirée's Baby* captures Southern society, racial prejudice, and family conflict.

### **Charles Chesnutt — African American Southern Life**

Chesnutt addresses race relations, folklore, and Black identity in the post-slavery South.

His works bring realism and social critique into Local Colour literature.

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## **5. Themes in Local Colour Writing**

### **1. Regional Identity**

Characters are shaped by their environment—food, weather, landscape, and social traditions.

### **2. Cultural Diversity**

Local Colour highlights America as a nation of many voices and histories.

### **3. Tension Between Old and New**

Industrialization threatens rural ways of life.

Many stories preserve nostalgic images of disappearing communities.

### **4. Social Hierarchy and Inequality**

Class differences, racial relationships, and gender expectations often appear in the stories.

### **5. Humor, Irony, and Folklore**

Many texts reflect oral storytelling and folk traditions.

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## **6. Short Textual Illustrations**

### **Twain, “The Notorious Jumping Frog of Calaveras County”**

“He was the curiosest man about always betting on anything.”

Shows humor, vernacular speech, and Western exaggeration.

### **Jewett, “A White Heron”**

“The woods were full of shadows, but the child knew their shapes.”  
Highlights New England nature and community values.

### **Chopin, “Désirée’s Baby”**

“The blood turned like ice in Désirée’s veins.”  
Shows Southern culture, race, and dramatic tension.

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## **7. Practice Activities**

### **Activity 1 — Identifying Local Colour Elements**

Read a short paragraph selected by your teacher. Identify:

- one detail describing place
- one example of dialect
- one cultural or social feature

Write your answers in three simple lines.

### **Activity 2 — Short Reflective Response**

In 5–7 lines, explain why Local Colour literature is important for understanding American identity.

### **Activity 3 — Comparison**

Compare Local Colour with Realism. How are they similar? How are they different? (5–6 lines)

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## **8. Discussion Questions**

1. Why did Local Colour emerge after the Civil War?
  2. How does dialect help create authenticity in a story?
  3. Which region (South, West, New England) seems most interesting to you? Why?
  4. How does the setting influence the characters’ behavior?
  5. Do Local Colour stories preserve culture or stereotype it?
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## **9. Conclusion**

Local Colour literature offers a valuable window into the everyday life of 19th-century America. By focusing on dialect, customs, and regional traditions, writers like Twain, Harte, Jewett, Chopin, and Chesnutt captured the diversity of the nation and preserved the voices of communities undergoing rapid change. As a branch of Realism, Local Colour highlights the

importance of place in shaping identity and reflects the complexity, humor, and richness of American cultural experience.

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## 10. References

- Chopin, Kate. *Bayou Folk and Other Stories*. Penguin Classics, 1999.
- Chesnutt, Charles W. *The Conjure Woman*. Dover Publications, 1994.
- Harte, Bret. *The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Stories*. Penguin Classics, 2001.
- Jewett, Sarah Orne. *The Country of the Pointed Firs*. Oxford UP, 2009.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. Penguin Classics, 2002.
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- Kaplan, Amy. *The Social Construction of American Realism*. U of Chicago P, 1988.

## □ **Lecture Eleven/Tutorial Session: Analysis of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn***

**Author:** Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens)

**Published:** 1884 (UK), 1885 (US)

**Genre:** Satirical novel / Picaresque / Realism

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### □ **Learning Objectives**

By the end of this tutorial session, students will be able to:

- Identify stylistic features of Twain's writing, especially dialect, humor, and satire.
  - Interpret central symbols such as the river, the raft, and the shore.
  - Analyze Huck and Jim's relationship through moral and philosophical lenses.
  - Recognize elements of Local Colour literature and Realism in selected passages.
  - Support claims with direct textual evidence from the novel.
  - Explain how Twain uses narrative voice to question social values.
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### **Reading the Novel Through Voice and Region**

Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* remains an essential text of American literature largely because of its innovative use of language and point of view. Told through the eyes of Huck, a young, uneducated boy, the novel uses regional dialect to achieve a vivid sense of authenticity. Twain makes this intention clear from the beginning by announcing that various dialects of the Mississippi region have been "painstakingly" reproduced. Huck's conversational opening—"You don't know about me, without you have read a book by the name of *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*"—immediately draws the reader into a world shaped by spoken language rather than polished literary narration.

The Mississippi River setting functions as more than a backdrop; it situates the novel deeply within Local Colour traditions. The river and its surrounding communities provide sensory richness that evokes specific cultural habits, social customs, and patterns of speech. Twain's detailed observations ("The river looked miles and miles across") highlight the landscape as a living force shaping the characters' experiences. Regional specificity becomes a way of exploring broader issues of freedom, identity, and social injustice.

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### **Characters, Morality, and Philosophical Conflict**

Huck's narrative voice allows Twain to stage philosophical questions in deceptively simple terms. As a boy raised in a racist society, Huck struggles to understand Jim's humanity in ways that directly challenge the moral codes he has inherited. His inner conflict becomes especially intense when he debates whether to reveal Jim's location to the authorities. The trembling moment of hesitation—"It was a close place... I was a-trembling"—shows Huck confronting the weight of social teaching. His emotional declaration, "All right, then, I'll go to hell,"

expresses not only loyalty to Jim, but also a profound philosophical rebellion against the moral universe society tries to impose on him.

Jim, too, speaks in ways that reveal philosophical depth beneath the surface of superstition or simplicity. His insistence that “I owns myself” asserts a humanist principle of individual autonomy. Jim and Huck’s bond, formed through shared vulnerability, becomes a site of ethical growth, illustrating the novel’s central question: **What makes a human being worthy of respect—law, or conscience?**

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### **Themes, Symbols, and the Novel’s Larger Meaning**

Several recurring ideas help shape the novel’s interpretations. The most important symbol is the **river**, which represents movement, change, refuge, and moral possibility. When Huck and Jim are on the raft, social pressures fall away; the raft becomes a floating space of equality and companionship. By contrast, the **shore** symbolizes restriction, danger, and the cruelty of established institutions. Every time they leave the river and return to land, they encounter violence, fraud, or prejudice—suggesting Twain’s critique of American society.

Another symbolic element is **the raft itself**, often seen as a fragile utopia. On the raft, the characters improvise a life that rejects racism and hierarchy, even if only temporarily. Its fragility mirrors the novel’s philosophical suggestion that freedom and equality require constant defense and attention.

Twain’s use of **satire** is not merely humorous but philosophical. Through the King and the Duke—fraudulent “aristocrats”—Twain exposes the emptiness of social titles and civilized manners. Their ridiculous behavior raises questions about what society celebrates and what it condemns. The exaggerated feud between the Grangerfords and Shepardsons serves a similar purpose: it dramatizes the irrationality of inherited hatred, making readers reflect on how tradition can blind individuals to cruelty.

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### **Stylistic Observations: Dialect, Humor, and Narrative Irony**

Twain’s style is grounded in vernacular speech, but his technique is more sophisticated than it appears. The simplicity of Huck’s voice allows complex issues to emerge naturally, often through irony. Huck often describes violent or immoral events in a neutral tone, forcing the reader to recognize the gap between his understanding and the moral reality of the situation. Humor, especially irony, becomes a way of revealing truth.

Dialect plays a crucial stylistic role. By allowing characters to speak in their own voices, Twain resists the homogenizing tendency of Standard English and emphasizes the diversity of American life. His humor—sometimes gentle, sometimes cutting—disarms the reader before delivering deeper critiques of hypocrisy, religion, and politics.

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### **A Focused Analytical Example**

When Huck resolves to protect Jim, Twain uses a mixture of sensory detail and emotional intensity to highlight the moment’s philosophical weight. Huck describes his hand shaking, his

breath short, and his fear rising. Only afterward does he deliver the dramatic line, “*I’ll go to hell,*” which is both a child’s misunderstanding of theology and a symbolic assertion of individual moral judgment. This decision shows the novel moving from simple adventure toward ethical inquiry, presenting Huck as someone capable of standing apart from his society.

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## Short Practice Activities

### 1. Stylistic Noticing

Choose three short lines from an assigned passage.

Explain how each line shows dialect, humor, or narrative irony.

### 2. Symbol Identification

In 5–6 lines, explain how one symbol (the river, the raft, the shore, or the fog) adds meaning to the story.

### 3. Moral Reflection (brief paragraph)

Discuss whether Huck’s decision to protect Jim is an emotional reaction, a moral awakening, or both.

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## Questions for Class Discussion

- Why does Twain choose Huck, a simple and young narrator, to tell the story?
  - How does the Mississippi River make Huck and Jim feel more free than life on the shore?
  - What does the raft represent for Huck and Jim?
  - How do the townspeople Huck meets show the problems of American society?
  - How does dialect (the way characters speak) make the story feel more realistic?
  - What do you think Huck learns during his journey?
  - In your opinion, does the novel support or criticize the idea of “civilization”? Why?
- 

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Kaplan, Amy. *The Social Construction of American Realism*. U of Chicago P, 1988.

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□ **Lecture Twelve/session Two: Genteel Tradition:** Culture, Restraint, Social Codes, and the Shaping of American Identity  
**Format:** Lecture + Cultural Analysis + Textual Exploration  
**Period Focus:** ~1870–1915

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### □ Learning Objectives

By the end of this lecture, students will be able to:

- Define the Genteel Tradition and explain its historical origins.
  - Identify the main characteristics of genteel writing, including restraint, moral refinement, and social decorum.
  - Recognize how the movement shaped late-nineteenth-century American literature.
  - Explain the conflict between the Genteel Tradition and emerging Realist and Modernist voices.
  - Analyze how Henry James’s *Daisy Miller* reflects or challenges genteel values.
  - Interpret the cultural and ideological tensions behind the concept.
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## 1. Historical Background and Cultural Context

The **Genteel Tradition** refers to a set of cultural and literary values that dominated American intellectual life from the mid-nineteenth century to the early twentieth century. It emphasized refinement, moral restraint, elevated taste, and a belief in the uplifting role of literature. The term was famously used by the philosopher **George Santayana** in his 1911 lecture, where he described it as a tradition that lived in “the quiet corners of American culture,” maintaining old-world ideals of decorum and propriety at a time when American society was becoming more industrial, democratic, and dynamic.

This tradition emerged among educated upper-middle-class circles in New England—especially Boston and Cambridge—where writers, critics, and academics tried to preserve high culture and moral seriousness. They believed literature should elevate the reader, promote ethical behavior, and present life in a noble, refined way. As America expanded westward and experienced social disruption, the Genteel Tradition functioned as a cultural anchor meant to maintain order and dignity.

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## 2. Defining the Genteel Tradition and Its Literary Features

The Genteel Tradition favored **polite manners, moral clarity, and aesthetic delicacy**. Literature associated with this movement avoids harsh realism, explicit social critique, or open discussion of sexuality or violence. Instead, it presents characters who embody civility, restraint, and proper conduct.

Stylistically, genteel writing values smooth prose, well-structured sentences, and refined vocabulary. Characters often belong to respectable social classes and face dilemmas related to etiquette, reputation, and social expectations. Critics have described this tradition as one that “looked backward to Europe” for cultural models, while resisting the energy and directness that later characterized Realist and Modernist literature.

In philosophy, the Genteel Tradition rests on the idea that **literature should guide moral development** and reinforce cultural stability. Its worldview sees society as something that can be improved through good taste, correct behavior, and moral discipline.

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### 3. Major Writers and Intellectual Figures

Although not all “genteel” writers used the label, many authors were associated with the values of refinement and tasteful composition. These included:

- **Henry James**, especially his early international novels
- **William Dean Howells**, in his early career
- **Sarah Orne Jewett** (in her social tone, though she also belongs to Local Colour)
- **Thomas Bailey Aldrich**
- **Charles Eliot Norton** (critic and editor)

Philosophically, the tradition was most clearly articulated by **George Santayana**, who saw genteel culture as noble yet disconnected from America’s industrial reality.

While these writers appreciated careful style and psychological subtlety, many of them—especially James—eventually challenged the limitations of genteel culture.

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### 4. Themes and Cultural Tensions

Although genteel texts often seem quiet or refined, they contain underlying conflicts that reveal deeper social tensions.

#### 1. Social Respectability and Reputation

Characters must navigate strict social codes. Errors in behavior can lead to exclusion or scandal.

#### 2. Politeness vs. Honesty

Genteel culture values manners more than direct speech, creating tension between sincerity and social performance.

#### 3. Old World vs. New World Values

The movement often contrasts European elegance with American innocence or boldness.

#### 4. Tradition vs. Change

The genteel worldview resists modern industrial life, immigration, urban growth, and emerging realism.

## 5. Class and Cultural Authority

The tradition privileges the upper middle class as guardians of “good taste” and moral influence.

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### 5. *Daisy Miller* as a Reflection of the Genteel Tradition

Henry James’s *Daisy Miller* (1878) offers an excellent example of the tensions within the Genteel Tradition. The novella portrays a young American woman traveling in Europe who violates conventional social expectations. Daisy’s friendliness, spontaneity, and informality disturb the more rigid European-American expatriate community. The criticism she receives reveals the narrowness of genteel judgment.

The social environment around Daisy represents the genteel worldview: strict rules, careful behavior, and concern for reputation. Winterbourne, who tries to understand Daisy, is shaped by this tradition—he admires Daisy yet ultimately interprets her through the lens of propriety. James uses subtle irony when describing her critics, suggesting that genteel values can lead to misunderstanding and unfair judgment. In this way, the novella becomes both a product of genteel culture and a critique of it.

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## 6. Short Illustrative Passages

Although genteel authors avoid sensationalism, their writing contains refined observation and psychological insight. James’s description of Daisy’s brightness—“*She was strikingly, admirably pretty*”—contrasts with the rigid social expectations around her. Winterbourne’s hesitation reflects the genteel conflict between desire and restraint: “*He was afraid he should find her coarser than he liked.*” These short lines capture the tension between spontaneity and propriety that defines the tradition.

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## 7. Brief Practice Activities

### Activity 1 – Identifying Genteel Features

Read a short excerpt from *Daisy Miller*. Identify one sentence that shows politeness, social restraint, or concern for reputation.

### Activity 2 – Compare Traditions

In 5–6 lines, explain how the Genteel Tradition differs from American Realism.

### Activity 3 – Reflection

Write a short paragraph explaining whether Daisy is a rebel, a victim of gossip, or both.

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## 8. Conclusion

The Genteel Tradition played a major role in shaping American taste during a period of rapid national transformation. By promoting refinement, politeness, and cultural stability, it sought to preserve a noble vision of society. Yet, as literature evolved, writers such as Henry James used genteel settings to question the rigidity and limitations of this worldview. Today, the Genteel Tradition remains important for understanding America's cultural development, its debates about identity, and the shift toward more realistic and modern literary forms.

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## 9. References

- James, Henry. *Daisy Miller*. Penguin Classics, 2007.
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## ■ Lecture Twelve/Tutorial Session: Analysis of *Daisy Miller*

**Author:** Henry James

**Published:** 1878

**Genre:** Novella / Realist fiction / Social satire

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### □ Learning Objectives

By the end of this tutorial session, students will be able to:

- Summarize the central events of *Daisy Miller*.
  - Identify the social codes and expectations that shape the characters' behavior.
  - Analyze Daisy's personality and Winterbourne's perspective toward her.
  - Explain key themes such as innocence, social judgment, and cultural conflict.
  - Interpret stylistic techniques such as James's subtle irony and psychological narration.
  - Recognize important symbols, including Daisy's name and the Roman setting.
  - Support statements with short quotations from the text.
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### 1. Brief Plot Overview

*Daisy Miller* (1878) follows the young American girl Daisy as she travels through Europe with her mother and younger brother. She is friendly, talkative, and spontaneous—traits that shock the more rigid American expatriate community living in Europe. Daisy forms a friendship with Winterbourne, a young American man fascinated by her beauty and independence. However, he constantly questions her behavior, unsure whether she is simply free-spirited or socially improper. Daisy's association with the Italian gentleman Giovanelli becomes the final "scandal" among polite society. Winterbourne eventually judges her like everyone else, only realizing the cost of his misunderstanding after Daisy dies of Roman fever.

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### 2. Character Study and Social Dynamics

James builds the story around **contrasts in social attitude**. Daisy is lively, open, and confident. She talks easily to strangers and does not care much about European rules. Winterbourne, in contrast, is polite, analytical, and cautious. He is drawn to Daisy but cannot escape the influence of genteel society. Mrs. Walker and the expatriate community represent strict social expectations—proper visiting hours, approved companions, and controlled behavior.

Daisy often confuses Winterbourne because she acts in ways that break tradition without realizing she is doing so. Her friendliness, which she considers normal, is read as flirtation or impropriety by society. Winterbourne's inability to understand her fully becomes the emotional center of the story. His internal struggle is shown through lines such as:

"He was afraid he should find her coarser than he liked."

This shows how he tries to fit Daisy into a category instead of understanding her as an individual.

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### 3. Major Themes

#### **Innocence vs. Social Judgment**

Daisy is innocent of malice. She enjoys freedom and conversation, but society interprets her behavior as immoral. This contrast exposes the harshness of rigid social codes.

#### **Cultural Conflict (America vs. Europe)**

Daisy represents a “new” American identity—free, unrestrained, democratic—while Europe symbolizes tradition and social control. Winterbourne himself is caught between these worlds.

#### **Appearance and Interpretation**

James shows how people judge others based on appearances. Winterbourne repeatedly misreads Daisy because he relies on social rules rather than intuition.

#### **Freedom and Constraint**

Daisy wants the freedom to move, speak, and choose her companions. Society wants to restrict her for the sake of reputation.

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### 4. Stylistic Features

James’s style is known for **psychological subtlety** and **narrative ambiguity**. Instead of telling readers what to think, he presents small gestures, hesitations, and moments of silence that reveal emotional tension. His irony is quiet but precise. For example, he describes Daisy as “the most innocent,” but also shows how everyone interprets her as the opposite.

The novella’s perspective is also filtered through Winterbourne’s thoughts. This creates uncertainty: we never see Daisy fully; we see how Winterbourne *perceives* her. This narrative choice makes the reader question whether Daisy is misjudged because society is wrong—or because Winterbourne never truly understands her.

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### 5. Symbolism

#### **Daisy’s name**

A daisy flower is simple, natural, and bright. The name symbolizes her purity and openness.

#### **The Roman Colosseum**

Daisy’s nighttime visit to the Colosseum represents the danger of ignoring social rules and also symbolizes the destructive power of gossip and misunderstanding.

## Italy

Italy stands for warmth, art, beauty—but also passion and risk, reflecting Daisy’s mix of innocence and unconventional behavior.

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### 6. Model Analytical Paragraph

Daisy’s nighttime visit to the Colosseum shows the conflict between innocence and social judgment. Winterbourne sees the visit as improper, calling it “the most reckless, the most offensive” act a young woman could commit according to social norms. However, Daisy simply wants to enjoy the city and talk to Giovanelli. The fact that she later becomes ill suggests how James uses symbolism: society’s criticism becomes a force that destroys her. This moment reveals how misunderstanding and rigid social expectations shape the tragedy of the novella.

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### 7. Short Practice Activities

#### Activity 1 – Character Reflection

Choose Daisy or Winterbourne.

Write 5–6 lines describing the character and include **one short quotation** that supports your description.

#### Activity 2 – Symbol Hunt

Explain the symbolic meaning of **Daisy’s name** or **the Colosseum** in 4–5 lines.

#### Activity 3 – Social Judgment

Write a short paragraph: Why does society misunderstand Daisy?

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### 8. Class Discussion Questions

1. Why do the expatriates criticize Daisy so quickly?
  2. Does Winterbourne truly understand Daisy? Why or why not?
  3. What makes Daisy different from the society around her?
  4. How does her behavior reflect “American” values in Europe?
  5. Was Daisy innocent, careless, or rebellious?
  6. Why is the ending tragic? What causes Daisy’s downfall?
  7. Do you think Henry James wants the reader to defend Daisy?
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## Appendix 1



Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

English Department

Academic Year 2021-2022

### Final Achievement Test S1

Module: Literary Text

Level: L2

Duration: 1h30

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#### Exercise One: (3 pts)

1. What are two main characteristics of Romanticism in Great Britain?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. In what ways do Romantic poets react against the ideals of the Enlightenment?

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.....  
.....

---

#### Exercise Two: (4 pts)

1. Why is *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* considered a Romantic poem?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. What contrast does William Blake establish between innocence and experience in *The Chimney Sweeper*?

.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Correct if the statement is wrong, or put TRUE: (3 pts)**

1. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is a typical love story set in the 18th century. Justify.

.....  
.....  
.....

2. The Victorian Age was a period of stability with little concern for moral or social reform. Justify.

.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Three: (3 pts)**

1. How does Jane Austen criticize social class and marriage in *Pride and Prejudice*?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. What social issue does Charles Dickens attack in *Hard Times* through the character of Mr. Gradgrind?

.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Four: (7 pts)**

1. How does *Frankenstein* reflect the dangers of scientific ambition and isolation?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. Compare how the themes of **individual emotion** and **social expectation** are treated in Romantic poetry and Victorian novels.

.....  
.....  
.....

3. Do you think literature has the power to create social change? Justify your answer using one work from the course.

.....  
.....  
.....

**Appendix 2**



Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

English Department

Academic Year 2022-2023

**Final Achievement Test S1**

Module: Literary Text

Level: L2

Duration: 1h30

**Exercise One: Short Definitions (4 pts)**

*Define the following concepts in 3–5 lines each:*

1. **Romanticism** (in Great Britain).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. **Gothic Novel** (key features and purpose).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. **Victorian Literature** (general concerns).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

4. **American Revolutionary Writing** (main goals).

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Two: Textual Understanding (6 pts)**

*Answer briefly (4–6 lines each).*

1. **How does Coleridge use the supernatural in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* to teach a moral lesson?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

2. **Why is Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* considered both a Gothic and Romantic novel? Mention at least two features.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. **How does Thomas Paine argue for independence in *Common Sense*? Give one key idea.**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Three: Compare & Connect (4 pts)**

*Answer in 6–7 lines.*

Choose **ONE** of the following Subjects:

**A.** Compare how **social class** is treated in *Pride and Prejudice* **and** in *Hard Times*.

OR

**B.** Explain one similarity and one difference between **British Romanticism** and the **American Revolution writings** in tone or purpose.

Write your answer here:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Four: Guided Analysis (6 pts)**

*Choose ONE of the following extracts and analyze it in a short paragraph (8–10 lines):*

**Extract 1 – From *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner***

“He prayeth best, who loveth best  
All things both great and small.”

→ Explain the meaning of this moral and how it relates to the Mariner's journey.  
OR

**Extract 2 – From *Pride and Prejudice***

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife.”

→ Comment on how this opening sentence reflects Austen's use of irony and social criticism.  
OR

**Extract 3 – From *Common Sense***

“O ye that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only tyranny but the tyrant!”

→ Explain how Paine uses emotional appeal (pathos) and persuasive language here.

Write your analysis:

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## Appendix 3

### Answer Key

Academic Year 2021-2022

## Final Achievement Test S1

### Exercise One:

1. **Two main characteristics of Romanticism:**
    - Emphasis on individual emotion and imagination
    - Deep connection with nature and the sublime
  2. **Romantic poets vs Enlightenment:**
    - Romantic poets rejected Enlightenment rationalism and order; instead, they valued intuition, emotion, and nature over logic and reason.
- 

### Exercise Two:

1. **Why Rime is Romantic:**
    - It focuses on supernatural events, intense emotion, nature's power, and the theme of spiritual redemption—all key Romantic features.
  2. **Blake's contrast:**
    - *Innocence* presents childlike faith and hope, while *Experience* reveals social hypocrisy, suffering, and disillusionment.
- 

### Correction/Justification:

1. **Wrong** – The angel in *The Chimney Sweeper* (Innocence) appears only in a dream. He does not rescue them in real life, but symbolizes escapist hope.
  2. **Wrong** – *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* is written in rhymed quatrains and ballad stanzas, not in blank verse (which is unrhymed iambic pentameter).
- 

### Exercise Three:

1. **Guilt and the Mariner:**
    - The Mariner is cursed, spiritually tormented, and forced to retell his story endlessly as penance for killing the albatross.
  2. **Religious imagery in Blake:**
    - Blake uses images like angels, heaven, and God to critique religious institutions that justify child suffering instead of preventing it.
-

#### **Exercise Four:**

1. **Criticism of society:**
  - Blake critiques child labor and religious hypocrisy; Coleridge criticizes humanity's disrespect for nature and the consequences of sin.
2. **Nature symbolism:**
  - In Blake: nature is both harsh (chimney soot) and ideal (green plains in dreams).
  - In Coleridge: nature is sacred, powerful, and linked to divine punishment and forgiveness.
3. **Opinion on the Mariner's punishment** (open-ended):
  - Acceptable responses might say it's just (eternal guilt fits the crime) or excessive (he acts impulsively, yet suffers forever).

## Appendix 4

### Answer Key

Academic Year 2022-2023

## Final Achievement Test S1

### Exercise One: Short Definitions (4 pts)

(Each definition  $\approx$  1 pt)

- Romanticism**  
A literary and artistic movement (late 18th–early 19th century) that emphasized emotion, imagination, individual experience, and a deep connection to nature. It reacted against Enlightenment rationalism and industrial society, valuing intuition and the sublime.
  - Gothic Novel**  
A genre blending horror, mystery, and the supernatural, usually set in dark or decaying environments. It explores themes of fear, transgression, and the limits of human knowledge. *Frankenstein* is a key example.
  - Victorian Literature**  
Literature produced during Queen Victoria's reign (1837–1901), concerned with industrialization, class conflict, morality, social reform, and realism. Writers explored poverty, education, gender roles, and moral responsibility.
  - American Revolutionary Writing**  
Texts promoting independence from Britain (late 18th century). They used persuasive arguments, reason, and emotional appeal to encourage unity, freedom, and democratic ideals. Thomas Paine is a major figure.
- 

### Exercise Two: Textual Understanding (6 pts)

(Each answer  $\approx$  2 pts)

- Supernatural in *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner***  
Coleridge uses supernatural elements—ghostly spirits, curses, and the living dead—to illustrate the Mariner's moral and spiritual punishment after killing the albatross. The supernatural forces guide him toward repentance and the lesson that all creatures deserve love.
- Frankenstein* as Gothic and Romantic**  
It is Gothic because it includes horror, dark settings, and the monstrous Creature. It is Romantic because it highlights emotion, nature, individual ambition, and the critique of uncontrolled scientific progress. Victor's obsession and the Creature's emotional suffering reflect Romantic concerns.
- Paine's Argument in *Common Sense***  
Paine argues that monarchy is unjust and unnatural, and that the colonies must seek independence for moral, economic, and political reasons. He appeals to common people, saying America has the right and duty to break from tyranny.

---

**Exercise Three: Compare & Connect (4 pts)**

(Any well-developed point earns credit)

**Option A — Social Class in *Pride and Prejudice* vs. *Hard Times***

- *Pride and Prejudice* critiques social class through marriage, manners, and prejudice among the gentry.
- *Hard Times* critiques class through industrial poverty, workers' suffering, and the rigid division between factory owners and laborers.
- Austen focuses on polite society; Dickens focuses on industrial misery.

**OR**

**Option B — British Romanticism vs. American Revolution**

- Romanticism focuses on emotion, nature, and the inner self.
  - Revolutionary writing focuses on reason, freedom, and political independence.
  - Both challenge authority, but one is artistic/philosophical while the other is political/practical.
- 

**Exercise Four: Guided Analysis (6 pts)**

(Any coherent literary analysis earns full credit)

**Extract 1 — *Rime of the Ancient Mariner***

- The lines express the poem's moral: loving all beings is essential to spiritual goodness.
- The Mariner learns this after suffering for killing the albatross.
- His journey teaches respect for nature and the unity of creation—core Romantic values.

**OR**

**Extract 2 — *Pride and Prejudice***

- The famous opening line uses irony to criticize society's obsession with marriage.
- Austen mocks the assumption that wealthy men automatically seek wives.
- The sentence exposes social expectations and highlights the novel's themes of class, marriage, and judgment.

**OR**

**Extract 3 — *Common Sense***

Paine uses strong emotional appeal ("O ye that love mankind") to inspire courage and unity.

- He portrays resistance to tyranny as a noble and moral duty.
- The passionate tone encourages the reader to support independence.

## Appendix 5



Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

English Department

Academic Year 2023-2024

### Final Achievement Test S2

Module: Literary Text

Level: L2

Duration: 1h30

#### Exercise One: Multiple Choice (4 pts)

*Choose the correct answer. ONE answer only.*

1. American Romanticism emphasized:
  - a) Logic and scientific reason
  - b) Emotion, nature, and individual freedom
  - c) Industrial progress
  - d) Colonial authority
2. A major characteristic of the short story is:
  - a) Long digressions
  - b) A single main conflict
  - c) Multiple plots
  - d) Several chapters
3. Rip Van Winkle symbolizes:
  - a) The American fear of war
  - b) A return to British traditions
  - c) A break from colonial identity
  - d) Industrial progress
4. Local Colour literature focuses on:
  - a) Fantasy and supernatural worlds
  - b) Scientific experiments
  - c) Regional customs, dialects, and landscapes
  - d) International politics

---

#### Exercise Two: Match the Concepts (4 pts)

*Match A with B (write the correct pair).*

A (Concepts):

1. American Realism
2. Gothic Short Story
3. American Revolution Literature
4. Genteel Tradition

B (Descriptions):

- a. Calm, polite society contrasted with inner moral conflict
  - b. Writing that promotes freedom and democratic principles
  - c. Dark atmosphere, psychological fear, and haunted spaces
  - d. Focus on everyday life, ordinary characters, and social truth
- 

**Exercise Three: Short Answers (6 pts)**

*Answer in 3–4 lines.*

1. What makes American Romanticism different from British Romanticism?  
.....  
.....
  2. Give one definition and one characteristic of the Gothic short story.  
.....  
.....
  3. Mention **one** regional element present in *Huckleberry Finn* that makes it Local Colour writing.  
.....  
.....
- 

**Exercise Four: Text Interpretation (6 pts)**

*Read the excerpt and answer the questions.*

**Excerpt from Poe’s *The Fall of the House of Usher*:**

“I felt that I breathed an atmosphere of sorrow. The air seemed dense, heavy, and painfully oppressive.”

1. Identify **one** Gothic element found in this excerpt.  
.....  
.....  
.....
2. How does this atmosphere reflect the emotional state of the narrator or the house?  
.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

3. In 4–5 lines, explain how Poe creates a sense of fear or mystery in this passage.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

## Appendix 6



Faculty of Letters and Foreign Languages

English Department

Academic Year 2024-2025

### Final Achievement Test S2

Module: Literary Text

Level: L2

Duration: 1h30

#### Exercise One: Fill in the Blanks (4 pts)

Fill each blank with the correct term.

1. American Romanticism values \_\_\_\_\_ and the natural world over reason.
  2. Thomas Paine wrote *Common Sense* to encourage \_\_\_\_\_ from Britain.
  3. A short story usually focuses on one main conflict and reaches a quick \_\_\_\_\_.
  4. Local Colour literature highlights regional \_\_\_\_\_, speech, and traditions.
- 

#### Exercise Two: True / False + Justification (4 pts)

Write True or False, then justify in one line.

1. Poe's Gothic stories use light, humor, and optimistic endings.  
.....
  2. American Realism avoids idealized heroes and focuses on ordinary life.  
.....
  3. Rip Van Winkle supports British loyalty and colonial obedience.  
.....
  4. The Genteel Tradition promotes polite behavior and controlled emotions.  
.....
- 

#### Exercise Three: Short Paragraph Questions (6 pts)

Answer in 4–5 lines.

1. Explain one main characteristic of American Romanticism and show how it appears in literature.

- .....  
.....
2. What makes *Huckleberry Finn* an example of Local Colour writing?  
.....  
.....
  3. Name one social conflict shown in *Daisy Miller* and explain how it affects the characters.  
.....  
.....

---

**Exercise Four: Mini-Analysis (6 pts)**

Choose ONE of the following passages and analyze it in 6–8 lines.

**Passage A – From *Rip Van Winkle***

“Rip was ready to attend to anybody’s business but his own.”

**Guiding question:**

What does this line reveal about Rip’s personality and how it reflects early American identity?

---

**Passage B – From *The Fall of the House of Usher***

“The entire house seemed to be sinking under the weight of its own gloom.”

**Guiding question:**

How does this description show Gothic atmosphere and psychological tension?

---

**Passage C – From *Daisy Miller***

“She was the most natural young woman he had ever seen.”

**Guiding question:**

What does “natural” suggest about Daisy’s behavior and the cultural conflict in the novel?

## Appendix 7

### Answer Key

Academic Year 2023-2024

## Final Achievement Test S2

### Exercise One: Multiple Choice (4 pts)

1. **b)** Emotion, nature, and individual freedom
  2. **b)** A single main conflict
  3. **c)** A break from colonial identity
  4. **c)** Regional customs, dialects, and landscapes
- 

### Exercise Two: Match the Concepts (4 pts)

- 1 → **d** (American Realism → everyday life, ordinary characters)
  - 2 → **c** (Gothic Short Story → dark atmosphere, psychological fear)
  - 3 → **b** (American Revolution Literature → freedom & democratic principles)
  - 4 → **a** (Genteel Tradition → polite society vs moral conflict)
- 

### Exercise Three: Short Answers (6 pts)

1. **Difference between American & British Romanticism:**  
American Romanticism focuses more on wilderness, individual freedom, frontier experience, and democratic ideals, while British Romanticism emphasizes nature as inspiration, emotion, imagination, and reactions to industrialization.
  2. **Definition + characteristic of Gothic short story:**  
A Gothic short story is a narrative marked by mystery, darkness, and emotional tension. A key characteristic is the use of haunted or decaying settings that create fear and psychological unease.
  3. **Regional element in *Huckleberry Finn*:**  
Mark Twain uses Southern dialects, Mississippi River settings, and regional customs (e.g., steamboats, small-town life), which reflect Local Colour writing.
- 

### Exercise Four: Text Interpretation (6 pts)

1. **Gothic element:**  
A gloomy, oppressive atmosphere (typical of Gothic settings).
2. **Atmosphere reflecting emotional state:**  
The heaviness mirrors the narrator's growing fear, unease, and the decaying, sickly state of the House of Usher and its inhabitants.

3. **How Poe creates fear/mystery (short paragraph):**

Poe uses descriptive language such as “dense,” “heavy,” and “oppressive” to build psychological tension. The sensory details make the reader feel trapped in a suffocating environment, which hints that something is deeply wrong with the house. This emotional atmosphere creates suspense and mystery, pushing readers to anticipate a dark revelation.

## Appendix 8

### Answer Key

Academic Year 2024-2025

## Final Achievement Test S2

### Exercise One: Fill in the Blanks (4 pts)

1. **emotion** (or *imagination*)
  2. **independence**
  3. **resolution**
  4. **customs** (or *dialects, traditions* — any is acceptable)
- 

### Exercise Two: True / False + Justification (4 pts)

1. **False.** Poe's stories use darkness, fear, and psychological horror.
  2. **True.** Realism presents everyday characters and believable situations.
  3. **False.** Rip Van Winkle represents a break from colonial authority.
  4. **True.** The Genteel Tradition emphasizes politeness, restraint, and moral control.
- 

### Exercise Three: Short Paragraph Questions (6 pts)

1. **American Romanticism characteristic:**
    - Example characteristic: *Focus on nature as a source of truth.*
    - Explanation: Writers celebrate wilderness, imagination, and individual emotion. (Example: descriptions of the American landscape in Romantic stories.)
  2. **Local Colour in *Huckleberry Finn*:**
    - Twain uses Southern dialects ("sivilize"), Mississippi River settings, regional customs, and local humor.
    - These features reflect American regional identity.
  3. **Social conflict in *Daisy Miller*:**
    - The main conflict is between American openness and European social rules.
    - Daisy's natural, informal behavior causes misunderstandings and judgment.
- 

### Exercise Four: Mini-Analysis (6 pts)

(Any well-written 6–8 line answer earns full marks. Examples below.)

#### Passage A — Rip Van Winkle

Rip is a man who avoids responsibility and enjoys helping others instead of working. This represents the early American desire for freedom from strict labor and authority. His laziness also symbolizes a rejection of old European discipline and a move toward a more relaxed, democratic identity.

**Passage B — Fall of the House of Usher**

The “sinking” house creates a dark, oppressive Gothic atmosphere. It reflects both physical decay and the emotional collapse of the Usher family. The heavy mood builds psychological tension and suggests something is deeply wrong inside.

**Passage C — Daisy Miller**

Calling Daisy “natural” means she behaves freely without European social restrictions. Her openness conflicts with Old World expectations of controlled, polite behavior. This shows the cultural clash between American spontaneity and European formality.