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SELF-LEARNING MATERIAL



MA ENGLISH

MEN 104 : ENGLISH FICTION I: DEFOE TO DICKENS

w.e.f Academic Session: 2023-24



CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY MEGHALAYA

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Techno City, 9th Mile, Baridua, Ri-Bhoi, Meghalaya, 793101

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UNIT 1 DANIEL DEFOE: ROBINSON CRUSOE

Unit Structure

Learning Objectives

Introduction

About the author Daniel Defoe

Robinson Crusoe Text Analysis

Themes of Robinson Crusoe

Summary of Robinson Crusoe

Answer to check your progress

Model Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit you will be able to:

Understand Defoe's language which is so explicit, it's focus on the irreducible physicality of objects.

Understand that Defoe's prose presents a fictional world curiously lacking in sensuousness

Appreciate Defoe's style of writing that creates a strong impression of formlessness.

INTRODUCTION

Robinson Crusoe is an English adventure novel by Daniel Defoe, first published on 25 April 1719. Written with a combination of Epistolary, confessional, and didactic forms, the book follows the title character (born Robinson Kreutznaer) after he is cast away and spends 28 years on a remote tropical desert island near the coasts of Venezuela and Trinidad, encountering cannibals, captives, and mutineers before being rescued. The story has been thought to be based on the life of Alexander Selkirk, a Scottish castaway who lived for four years on a Pacific island called "Más a Tierra" (now part of Chile) which was renamed Robinson Crusoe Island in 1966. Pedro Serrano is another real-life castaway whose story might have inspired the novel. The first edition credited the work's protagonist Robinson Crusoe as its author, leading many readers to believe he was a real person and that the book was a non-fiction travelogue.[7] Despite its simple narrative style, Robinson Crusoe was well received in the literary world and is often credited as marking the beginning of realistic fiction as a literary genre. It is generally seen as a contender for the first English novel. Before the end of 1719, the book had already run through four editions, and it has gone on to become one of the most widely published books in history, spawning so many imitations, not only in literature but also in film, television, and radio, that its name is used to

define a genre, the Robinsonade. There were many stories of real-life castaways in Defoe's time. Apparently written in six months or less, *Robinson Crusoe* was a publishing phenomenon.

According to Andrew Lambert, author of *Crusoe's Island*, it is a "false premise" to suppose that Defoe's novel was inspired by the experiences of a single person such as Selkirk, because the story is "a complex compound of all the other buccaneer survival stories. However, *Robinson Crusoe* is far from a copy of Rogers' account: Becky Little argues three events that distinguish the two stories:

Robinson Crusoe was shipwrecked while Selkirk decided to leave his ship, thus marooning himself; The island that *Crusoe* was shipwrecked on had already been inhabited, unlike the solitary nature of Selkirk's adventures. The last and most crucial difference between the two stories is that Selkirk was a privateer, looting and raiding coastal cities during the War of Spanish Succession. "The economic and dynamic thrust of the book is completely alien to what the buccaneers are doing," Lambert says. "The buccaneers just want to capture some loot and come home and drink it all, and *Crusoe* isn't doing that at all. He's an economic imperialist: He's creating a world of trade and profit."

ABOUT THE AUTHOR DANIEL DEFOE

Daniel Defoe (1660–1731) was an English journalist, merchant, pamphleteer and spy. He is most famous for his novel *Robinson Crusoe*, published in 1719, which is claimed to be second only to the Bible in its number of translations. He has been seen as one of the earliest proponents of the English novel, and helped to popularise the form in Britain with others such as Aphra Behn and Samuel Richardson. Defoe wrote many political tracts, was often in trouble with the authorities, and spent a period in prison. Intellectuals and political leaders paid attention to his fresh ideas and sometimes consulted him. Defoe was a prolific and versatile writer, producing more than three hundred works—books, pamphlets, and journals—on diverse topics, including politics, crime, religion, marriage, psychology and the supernatural. He was also a pioneer of business journalism and economic journalism.

Daniel Foe (his original name) was probably born in Fore Street in the parish of St Giles Cripplegate, London. Defoe later added the aristocratic-sounding "De" to his name, and on occasion made the false claim of descent from a family named De Beau Faux. "De" is also a common prefix in Flemish surnames. His birthdate and birthplace are uncertain, and sources offer dates from 1659 to 1662, with the summer or early autumn of 1660 considered the most likely. His father, James Foe, was a prosperous tallow chandler of probable Flemish descent, and a member of the Worshipful Company of Butchers. In Defoe's early childhood, he experienced some of the most unusual occurrences in English history: in 1665, seventy thousand were killed by the Great Plague of London, and the next year, the Great Fire of London left only Defoe's and two other houses standing in his neighbourhood. In 1667, when he was probably about seven, a Dutch fleet sailed up the Medway via the River Thames and attacked the town of Chatham in the raid on the Medway. His mother, Alice, had died by the time he was about ten. Defoe was educated at the Rev. James Fisher's boarding school in Pixham Lane in Dorking, Surrey. His parents were Presbyterian dissenters, and around the age of 14, he was sent to Charles Morton's dissenting academy at Newington Green, then a village just north of London, where he is believed to have

attended the Dissenting church there. He lived on Church Street, Stoke Newington, at what is now nos. 95–103. During this period, the English government persecuted those who chose to worship outside the established Church of England.

ROBINSON CRUSOE TEXT ANALYSIS

Robinson Crusoe, as a young and impulsive wanderer, defied his parents and went to sea. He was involved in a series of violent storms at sea and was warned by the captain that he should not be a seafaring man. Ashamed to go home, Crusoe boarded another ship and returned from a successful trip to Africa. Taking off again, Crusoe met with bad luck and was taken prisoner in Saltee. His captors sent Crusoe out to fish, and he used this to his advantage and escaped, along with a slave.

He was rescued by a Portuguese ship and started a new adventure. He landed in Brazil, and, after some time, he became the owner of a sugar plantation. Hoping to increase his wealth by buying slaves, he aligned himself with other planters and undertook a trip to Africa in order to bring back a shipload of slaves. After surviving a storm, Crusoe and the others were shipwrecked. He was thrown upon shore only to discover that he was the sole survivor of the wreck.

Crusoe made immediate plans for food, and then shelter, to protect himself from wild animals. He brought as many things as possible from the wrecked ship, things that would be useful later to him. In addition, he began to develop talents that he had never used in order to provide himself with necessities. Cut off from the company of men, he began to communicate with God, thus beginning the first part of his religious conversion. To keep his sanity and to entertain himself, he began a journal. In the journal, he recorded every task that he performed each day since he had been marooned.

As time passed, Crusoe became a skilled craftsman, able to construct many useful things, and thus furnished himself with diverse comforts. He also learned about farming, as a result of some seeds which he brought with him. An illness prompted some prophetic dreams, and Crusoe began to reappraise his duty to God. Crusoe explored his island and discovered another part of the island much richer and more fertile, and he built a summer home there.

One of the first tasks he undertook was to build himself a canoe in case an escape became possible, but the canoe was too heavy to get to the water. He then constructed a small boat and journeyed around the island. Crusoe reflected on his earlier, wicked life, disobeying his parents, and wondered if it might be related to his isolation on this island.

After spending about fifteen years on the island, Crusoe found a man's naked footprint, and he was sorely beset by apprehensions, which kept him awake many nights. He considered many possibilities to account for the footprint and he began to take extra precautions against a possible intruder. Sometime later, Crusoe was horrified to find human bones scattered about the shore, evidently the remains of a savage feast. He was plagued again with new fears. He explored the nature of cannibalism and debated his right to interfere with the customs of another race.

Crusoe was cautious for several years, but encountered nothing more to alarm him. He found a cave, which he used as a storage room, and in December of the same year, he spied cannibals sitting around a campfire. He did not see them again for quite some time.

Later, Crusoe saw a ship in distress, but everyone was already drowned on the ship and Crusoe remained companionless. However, he was able to take many provisions from this newly wrecked ship. Sometime later, cannibals landed on the island and a victim escaped. Crusoe saved his life, named him Friday, and taught him English. Friday soon became Crusoe's humble and devoted slave.

Crusoe and Friday made plans to leave the island and, accordingly, they built another boat. Crusoe also undertook Friday's religious education, converting the savage into a Protestant. Their voyage was postponed due to the return of the savages. This time it was necessary to attack the cannibals in order to save two prisoners since one was a white man. The white man was a Spaniard and the other was Friday's father. Later the four of them planned a voyage to the mainland to rescue sixteen compatriots of the Spaniard. First, however, they built up their food supply to assure enough food for the extra people. Crusoe and Friday agreed to wait on the island while the Spaniard and Friday's father brought back the other men.

A week later, they spied a ship but they quickly learned that there had been a mutiny on board. By devious means, Crusoe and Friday rescued the captain and two other men, and after much scheming, regained control of the ship. The grateful captain gave Crusoe many gifts and took him and Friday back to England. Some of the rebel crewmen were left marooned on the island.

Crusoe returned to England and found that in his absence he had become a wealthy man. After going to Lisbon to handle some of his affairs, Crusoe began an overland journey back to England. Crusoe and his company encountered many hardships in crossing the mountains, but they finally arrived safely in England. Crusoe sold his plantation in Brazil for a good price, married, and had three children. Finally, however, he was persuaded to go on yet another voyage, and he visited his old island, where there were promises of new adventures to be found in a later account.

Robinson Crusoe is an Englishman from the town of York in the seventeenth century, the youngest son of a merchant of German origin. Encouraged by his father to study law, Crusoe expresses his wish to go to sea instead. His family is against Crusoe going out to sea, and his father explains that it is better to seek a modest, secure life for oneself. Initially, Robinson is committed to obeying his father, but he eventually succumbs to temptation and embarks on a ship bound for London with a friend. When a storm causes the near deaths of Crusoe and his friend, the friend is dissuaded from sea travel, but Crusoe still goes on to set himself up as merchant on a ship leaving London. This trip is financially successful, and Crusoe plans another, leaving his early profits in the care of a friendly widow. The second voyage does not prove as fortunate: the ship is seized by Moorish pirates, and Crusoe is enslaved to a potentate in the North African town of Sallee. While on a fishing expedition, he and a slave boy break free and sail down the African coast. A kindly Portuguese captain picks them up, buys the slave boy from Crusoe, and takes Crusoe to Brazil. In Brazil, Crusoe establishes himself as a plantation owner and soon becomes successful. Eager for slave labor and its economic advantages, he embarks on a slave-gathering expedition to West Africa but ends up shipwrecked off of the coast of Trinidad.

Crusoe soon learns he is the sole survivor of the expedition and seeks shelter and food for himself. He returns to the wreck's remains twelve times to salvage guns, powder, food, and other items. Onshore, he finds goats he can graze for meat and builds himself a shelter. He erects a cross that he inscribes with the date of his arrival, September 1, 1659, and makes a notch every day in order never to lose track of time. He also keeps a journal of his household activities, noting his attempts to make candles, his lucky discovery of sprouting grain, and his construction of a cellar, among other events. In June 1660, he falls ill and hallucinates that an angel visits, warning him to repent. Drinking tobacco-steeped rum, Crusoe experiences a religious illumination and realizes that God has delivered him from his earlier sins. After recovering, Crusoe makes a survey of the area and discovers he is on an island. He finds a pleasant valley abounding in grapes, where he builds a shady retreat. Crusoe begins to feel more optimistic about being on the island, describing himself as its "king." He trains a pet parrot, takes a goat as a pet, and develops skills in basket weaving, bread making, and pottery. He cuts down an enormous cedar tree and builds a huge canoe from its trunk, but he discovers that he cannot move it to the sea. After building a smaller boat, he rows around the island but nearly perishes when swept away by a powerful current. Reaching shore, he hears his parrot calling his name and is thankful for being saved once again. He spends several years in peace.

One day Crusoe is shocked to discover a man's footprint on the beach. He first assumes the footprint is the devil's, then decides it must belong to one of the cannibals said to live in the region. Terrified, he arms himself and remains on the lookout for cannibals. He also builds an underground cellar in which to herd his goats at night and devises a way to cook underground. One evening he hears gunshots, and the next day he is able to see a ship wrecked on his coast. It is empty when he arrives on the scene to investigate. Crusoe once again thanks Providence for having been saved. Soon afterward, Crusoe discovers that the shore has been strewn with human carnage, apparently the remains of a cannibal feast. He is alarmed and continues to be vigilant. Later Crusoe catches sight of thirty cannibals heading for shore with their victims. One of the victims is killed. Another one, waiting to be slaughtered, suddenly breaks free and runs toward Crusoe's dwelling. Crusoe protects him, killing one of the pursuers and injuring the other, whom the victim finally kills. Well-armed, Crusoe defeats most of the cannibals onshore. The victim vows total submission to Crusoe in gratitude for his liberation. Crusoe names him Friday, to commemorate the day on which his life was saved, and takes him as his servant.

SUMMARY

Robinson Crusoe is an Englishman from the town of York in the seventeenth century, the youngest son of a merchant of German origin. Encouraged by his father to study law, Crusoe expresses his wish to go to sea instead. His family is against Crusoe going out to sea, and his father explains that it is better to seek a modest, secure life for oneself. Initially, Robinson is committed to obeying his father, but he eventually succumbs to temptation and embarks on a ship bound for London with a friend. When a storm causes the near deaths of Crusoe and his friend, the friend is dissuaded from sea travel, but Crusoe still goes on to set himself up as merchant on a ship leaving London. This trip is financially successful, and Crusoe plans another, leaving his early profits in the care of a friendly widow. The second voyage does not prove as fortunate: the ship is seized by Moorish pirates, and Crusoe is enslaved to a potentate in the North African town of Sallee. While on a

fishing expedition, he and a slave boy break free and sail down the African coast. A kindly Portuguese captain picks them up, buys the slave boy from Crusoe, and takes Crusoe to Brazil. In Brazil, Crusoe establishes himself as a plantation owner and soon becomes successful. Eager for slave labor and its economic advantages, he embarks on a slave-gathering expedition to West Africa but ends up shipwrecked off of the coast of Trinidad.

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Finding Friday cheerful and intelligent, Crusoe teaches him some English words and some elementary Christian concepts. Friday, in turn, explains that the cannibals are divided into distinct nations and that they only eat their enemies. Friday also informs Crusoe that the cannibals saved the men from the shipwreck Crusoe witnessed earlier, and that those men, Spaniards, are living nearby. Friday expresses a longing to return to his people, and Crusoe is upset at the prospect of losing Friday. Crusoe then entertains the idea of making contact with the Spaniards, and Friday admits that he would rather die than lose Crusoe. The two build a boat to visit the cannibals' land

together. Before they have a chance to leave, they are surprised by the arrival of twenty-one cannibals in canoes. The cannibals are holding three victims, one of whom is in European dress. Friday and Crusoe kill most of the cannibals and release the European, a Spaniard. Friday is overjoyed to discover that another of the rescued victims is his father. The four men return to Crusoe's dwelling for food and rest. Crusoe prepares to welcome them into his community permanently. He sends Friday's father and the Spaniard out in a canoe to explore the nearby land.

Eight days later, the sight of an approaching English ship alarms Friday. Crusoe is suspicious. Friday and Crusoe watch as eleven men take three captives onshore in a boat. Nine of the men explore the land, leaving two to guard the captives. Friday and Crusoe overpower these men and release the captives, one of whom is the captain of the ship, which has been taken in a mutiny. Shouting to the remaining mutineers from different points, Friday and Crusoe confuse and tire the men by making them run from place to place. Eventually they confront the mutineers, telling them that all may escape with their lives except the ringleader. The men surrender. Crusoe and the captain pretend that the island is an imperial territory and that the governor has spared their lives in order to send them all to England to face justice. Keeping five men as hostages, Crusoe sends the other men out to seize the ship. When the ship is brought in, Crusoe nearly faints.

On December 19, 1686, Crusoe boards the ship to return to England. There, he finds his family is deceased except for two sisters. His widow friend has kept Crusoe's money safe, and after traveling to Lisbon, Crusoe learns from the Portuguese captain that his plantations in Brazil have been highly profitable. He arranges to sell his Brazilian lands. Wary of sea travel, Crusoe attempts to return to England by land but is threatened by bad weather and wild animals in northern Spain. Finally arriving back in England, Crusoe receives word that the sale of his plantations has been completed and that he has made a considerable fortune. After donating a portion to the widow and his sisters, Crusoe is restless and considers returning to Brazil, but he is dissuaded by the thought that he would have to become Catholic. He marries, and his wife dies. Crusoe finally departs for the East Indies as a trader in 1694. He revisits his island, finding that the Spaniards are governing it well and that it has become a prosperous colony.

THEMES OF ROBINSON CRUSOE

Christianity and Divine Providence

As much as Defoe's novel is about Robinson's literal, physical journey, it is also about his more metaphorical, spiritual journey toward Christianity. In the beginning of the novel, Robinson disregards Christianity and leads a life that he later looks back on as wicked. He discounts his father's warning that God will not bless him if he goes to sea, and does not thank God when he is rescued from the storm on the way to read analysis of Christianity and Divine Providence

Society, Individuality, and Isolation

At the center of Robinson Crusoe is a tension between society and individuality. As the novel begins, Robinson breaks free of his family and the middle-class society in which they live in order to pursue his own life. If he were to stay at home, he would live a life already arranged for him by

his father and by the constraints of English society. By setting out to sea, Robinson prioritizes his sense of individuality... read analysis of Society, Individuality, and Isolation

Advice, Mistakes, and Hindsight

Robinson Crusoe is constantly disregarding prudent advice. He begins the novel by discounting his parents' advice not to go to sea, disregards the shipmaster's advice to go home after the storm on the way to London, and goes against his own better judgment in trying to voyage from Brazil to Africa. Even at the end of the novel, he disregards the widow's advice in setting out on yet another sea voyage. Each time, Robinson later... read analysis of Advice, Mistakes, and Hindsight.

Strangers, Savages, and the Unknown

Throughout his wandering journeys, Robinson continually encounters the unknown in a variety of forms. He visits unknown lands, sees strange plants and animals, and encounters foreign peoples. His first response to such experiences with various "others" is usually fear. He is especially frightened by the strange beasts he sees in Africa and on his island, as well as by the African natives he sees and the Caribbean "savages," who come to his island. Stemming in... read analysis of Strangers, Savages, and the Unknown.

LET US SUM UP

Robinson Crusoe, as a young and impulsive wanderer, defied his parents and went to sea. He was involved in a series of violent storms at sea and was warned by the captain that he should not be a seafaring man. Ashamed to go home, Crusoe boarded another ship and returned from a successful trip to Africa.

Robinson Crusoe's seafaring adventures are abruptly ended when he is shipwrecked, the solitary survivor on a deserted island. He gradually creates a life for himself, building a house, cultivating the land, and making a companion from the native whose life he saves.

In addition to its superficial appeal as an adventure story, Robinson Crusoe addresses deep and important themes such as the nature of civilization and the individual, God and fate, and the impact of colonialism

Rising action Crusoe disobeys his father and goes out to sea. Crusoe has a profitable first merchant voyage, has fantasies of success in Brazil, and prepares for a slave-gathering expedition. Climax Crusoe becomes shipwrecked on an island near Trinidad, forcing him to fend for himself and his basic needs.

Answer to check your progress

What are the main events in Robinson Crusoe?

What is important about the title?

What are the conflicts in Robinson Crusoe? What types of conflict (physical, moral, intellectual, or emotional) did you notice in this novel?

Model Questions

What are some symbols in Robinson Crusoe? How do they relate to the plot and characters?

How does Daniel Defoe reveal character in Robinson Crusoe?

What are the themes of Robinson Crusoe?

How important is friendship and/or camaraderie to Robinson Crusoe?

UNIT 2 HENRY FIELDING: *Joseph Andrews*

Unit Structure

Objectives

Introduction

Henry Fielding: About the Author

Summary

Characters

Themes

Let Us Sum Up

Model Questions

INTRODUCTION

Henry Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* (1742) is one of the best known comic novels of the eighteenth century. It takes its inspiration from the picaresque novel. The picaresque novel originated in Spain in the mid-16th century as a first-person narrative that relates the adventures of a lovable rascal as he travels from place to place in an episodic structure. The picaro, or adventurer, is a foil to the medieval knight who wanders the countryside looking for opportunities to prove his courage and good character. In contrast, a picaro may lie, cheat, and steal to survive, come from a lower station in life, and serve to reveal the corruption of society through irony or satire. The form grew into a genre emulated in England and Germany.

Don Quixote (Part 1 published in 1605; Part 2 in 1615), by Spanish writer Miguel de Cervantes (1547–1616), is often considered the first modern novel. It uses elements from the picaresque, but in its depiction of a knight far past his prime, the novel transcends the genre as a comedic and humanistic masterpiece featuring numerous diverse characters. In this story, an aging, idealistic, and misguided gentleman becomes obsessed with chivalric knights that he has read about. He sets out one day from his home in La Mancha with his down-to-earth squire, a peasant named Sancho Panza, intent on having adventures while righting the wrongs of the world. Henry Fielding was not the first English writer to make use of elements of the picaresque, but in *Joseph Andrews* he adheres closely to the example set by Cervantes. *Don Quixote* was considered to be a mock epic by Fielding's contemporaries, and Fielding directly refers to his debt to Cervantes on the title page. *Joseph Andrews* features an idealistic knight, Parson Adams, and his gentle but realistic sidekick, the titular character. *Joseph Andrews* is not vulgar and jaded like *Don Quixote's* sidekick Sancho Panza, but he still serves as a foil to the extreme idealism of Parson Adams.

HENRY FIELDING: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Henry Fielding, (April 22, 1707-Oct. 8, 1754), novelist and playwright, who, with Samuel Richardson, is considered a founder of the English novel. Among his major novels are *Joseph Andrews* (1742) and *Tom Jones* (1749). In 1740, however, Samuel Richardson published his novel *Pamela: or, Virtue Rewarded*, which tells how a servant girl so impressed her master by resistance to his every effort at seduction that in the end “he thought fit to make her his wife.” Something new in literature, its success was unparalleled. A crop of imitations followed. In April 1741 there appeared a parody entitled *An Apology for the Life of Mrs. Shamela Andrews*, satirizing Richardson's sentimentality and prudish morality. It was published anonymously and, though Fielding never claimed it, *Shamela* was generally accepted as his work in his lifetime, and stylistic evidence supports the attribution.

Fielding's *Joseph Andrews* was published anonymously in 1742. Described on the title page as "Written in Imitation of the Manner of Cervantes, author of *Don Quixote*," it begins as a burlesque of *Pamela*, with Joseph, Pamela's virtuous footman brother, resisting the attempts of a highborn lady to seduce him. The parodic intention soon becomes secondary, and the novel develops into a masterpiece of sustained irony and social criticism, with, at its centre, Parson Adams, one of the great comic figures of literature and a striking confirmation of the contention of the 19th-century Russian novelist Fyodor Dostoyevsky that the positively good man can be made convincing in fiction only if rendered to some extent ridiculous. Fielding explains in his preface that he is writing "a comic Epic-Poem in Prose." He was certainly inaugurating a new genre in fiction.

SUMMARY

Preface

The author explains that he is presenting his audience with a new genre, an epic poem in prose, or what could also be called a comic romance. He will use elements of burlesque but will take his characters from nature, in the way that a romance might do. His purpose, however, is to bring out the ridiculous rather than the sublime using affectation, which is based on either vanity or hypocrisy, of which the latter is the worse.

Explanation of Book 1

Before beginning his story, the narrator says he wishes to provide his audience with a study of an exemplary life, in the vein of the biographies of Mr. Colley Cibber and Mrs. Pamela Andrews. The subject of his study is [Joseph Andrews](#), the brother of the famous Pamela, who was able to preserve her purity despite being subject to great temptations.

Joseph is the son of humble people, and he is put out as an apprentice at age 10 to Sir Thomas Booby, the local squire. He is given various jobs until, at 17, he has grown into an exceptionally handsome young man, and [Lady Booby](#) makes him her footman. The local parson, Abraham Adams, also notices Joseph and is impressed by the little learning he has accumulated as well as by his piety. He would like to teach him Latin, but Joseph is whisked off to London by Lady Booby.

When Joseph is about 21, Sir Thomas dies, and the widow, who has fallen in love with Joseph, tries to seduce him. When Joseph rebuffs her, she gets angry and dismisses him. Adding to her fury are false rumors planted by Mrs. Slipslop, her gentlewoman-in-waiting, that Joseph has been philandering with the female servants. Mrs. Slipslop also has a crush on Joseph and wishes to sleep with him. In the end Joseph is cast out of the house. He has not seen his fiancée, Fanny Goodwill, in many months, so he immediately sets off from London, headed toward his old parish, since Fanny works on a farm not far from the Booby estate.

Before he can get very far, he is attacked by robbers, who take everything, including his clothes. They beat him and leave him for dead in a ditch. A stagecoach stops and reluctantly picks him up and drops him at the next inn. Coincidentally, Parson Adams has been traveling toward London in the hope of selling his volumes of sermons, and he stops at the same inn. He and Joseph reunite.

Explanation of Book 2

Once Joseph is well enough, the two set off, planning to go in opposite directions. But the parson realizes he doesn't have his sermons in his saddlebags and decides to return home with Joseph. Since they have only one horse between them (the parson's), one man walks and one rides. When the rider catches up to the walker, they switch places. Parson Adams sets off first, but he forgets to pay the board for his horse, so the innkeeper will not let Joseph go. When Joseph is delayed in arriving, the parson steps into an alehouse, where he is caught up on Joseph's situation. Joseph in the meantime has been "rescued" by Mrs. Slipslop and rides up alongside her on Adams's horse. Slipslop invites him to give the horse to the parson and ride in her coach, but he defers to the parson, who becomes a passenger in the coach.

After some time, the coach stops at another inn so people can eat, and they learn that Joseph has arrived there first. The landlady is nursing a wound on his leg. He has fallen under the parson's recalcitrant (difficult to manage) horse, who has a nasty habit of kneeling down unexpectedly. When the woman's husband comes in, he becomes furious to see his wife tending to the handsome stranger. A general fight soon ensues when Parson Adams defends Joseph. Slipslop and the innkeeper's wife also take part in this fisticuffs. When the brawl ends, Joseph replaces Adams in the coach. Later he sees his mentor walking on foot, apparently having forgotten that he has a horse, which he left at the inn.

Adams gets too far ahead of the coach and meets a hunter, who complains about the lack of patriotism and valor among his countrymen until both men hear a woman screaming, clearly in distress. The hunter becomes frightened and runs away, and Adams rushes toward the sounds of distress. He finds a woman fighting off a would-be rapist, and he knocks this man out. Since night

has fallen, the parson calls for help when he sees some young men trying to catch birds, and he calls them over. Adams tells what happened, but the villain, who is only pretending to be unconscious, jumps up and accuses Adams and Fanny of trying to rob him. The youths believe the ruffian, and they take Fanny and Adams into custody and bring them before the magistrate.

Because Fanny and Adams look disheveled, the judge doesn't believe their story and is ready to put them in jail and hold them over for trial. Luckily, a squire in the crowd recognizes Fanny and the parson, and they are let go. After they leave, they stop at an inn because it begins to rain, and they find Joseph there, also waiting out the rain with Slipslop's party. The lovers have a tender reunion, and now Joseph will not get back into the stagecoach because he wants to stay with Fanny. Slipslop leaves in a fury, and the trio now spend the night at the inn, where they wake to discover they cannot pay. Adams visits the farm of a local clergyman to ask for the 14 shillings and finds him to be rich and prosperous, but the man is scandalized when Adams asks for a loan and throws him out after Adams accuses him of not being a Christian.

When Adams gets back to the inn, a poor peddler loans the parson the money and promises to go through his parish at a later date and collect what is owed. At the next alehouse, Adams runs into a trickster, who promises to pay his bill but then disappears. In the morning, the innkeeper provides him with a true history of this liar, who has ruined many people with his false promises. The innkeeper sympathizes with Adams, since he himself was tricked by this man, and he lets Adams's party go.

Explanation of Book 3

On the road again at night, the trio are given hospitality on Mr. Wilson's farm with his family. Wilson tells Adams the story of his life after the others are asleep. The farmer was born a gentleman, but he ran through his inheritance by leading a dissolute life. He ends up in jail because he owes his tailor money. Before he went to jail, he had bought a lottery ticket, and he gives this ticket to a distant relation in exchange for food. Around the same time, the ticket wins 3,000 pounds, and the relation dies. The ticket is now passed on to the man's daughter, a woman Wilson has admired from afar. After she sends him 200 pounds, he is able to get out of jail. When he visits her, she offers to loan him money if he wants to start a business. He confesses his feelings for her, and he learns she feels the same way. The two get married and move to the farm in the country. Wilson is very happy now as a semirecluse, and his only sorrow is that his baby son was kidnapped by gypsies many years ago.

After the trio take leave of this exemplary family, the parson and Joseph have a minor disagreement about whether the man was ruined by public school (private school for rich boys of the upper classes). When they stop to rest and the parson falls asleep, Joseph gives a discourse to Fanny on charity. Then the trio find themselves in the middle of a hunt. The dogs attack a hare in the middle of their camp, mistaking Adams for part of their quarry and tearing at his clothes. Adams wakes up and knocks the dogs off, but when the hunting master arrives, he thinks it will be amusing to set the dogs on the parson. Joseph and Adams now fight the dogs together and kill two of them. When the squire arrives and sees Fanny, he immediately puts on a good face and invites them to his house for dinner.

At the house, Fanny and Joseph eat in the kitchen. Meanwhile, the squire and his vicious toadies play several nasty practical jokes on Adams until he finally realizes what is going on and storms out of the house with Fanny and Joseph. The squire is now enraged because he had planned to get Adams and Joseph drunk so that he could rape Fanny. He sends his toadies after the trio the next day, and they beat and tie up Joseph and Adams and kidnap Fanny. One of them, the captain, brings Fanny back to the squire, but Fanny's loud calls lead to her rescue by Peter Pounce, Lady Booby's steward. Pounce returns to the inn, and Joseph and Adams are freed. Joseph beats the captain, and the servants later let him go. Pounce is traveling with an entourage, so they put Joseph and Fanny on a horse. The parson rides with Pounce until the two of them get into an argument about the meaning of charity, and Adams jumps out of his chariot.

Explanation of Book 4

The entourage arrives at the parish at the same time as Lady Booby, who is in a coach. When Lady Booby sees Joseph, she summons Slipslop to fill her in on what has happened. When she discovers that Joseph is engaged to be married, she is furious. She summons Adams and attempts to persuade him to stop the marriage, but he refuses to fall in with her plans. She next calls on an unscrupulous lawyer, who promises to use an equally unscrupulous judge to drive the couple out of town and prevent them from marrying. Around this time, Lady Booby's nephew, Squire Booby, has come to the parish to visit his aunt with his new wife, Pamela. Pamela is anxious to see her brother Joseph. Squire Booby finds out from the servants that Joseph and Fanny have been sentenced to a month of incarceration in a workhouse, all for stealing a twig from the lawyer's property. Squire Booby convinces the judge to release the couple into his custody.

Pamela and Joseph have a joyful reunion, and he is pressured to stay at the Booby estate, so Fanny goes off with the parson to stay at his house. While Fanny is walking in the woods, two men try

to rape her. She fights off the first one, Beau Didapper, a dandy from London who is visiting the Boobys, but is less successful with his servant, who is much stronger. Joseph arrives in time to save Fanny and beats the man.

The peddler from the inn arrives at Mr. Adams's house, and Joseph invites everyone out for dinner. Afterward, the peddler tells Fanny the true story of her origins. Up until now she thought she was an orphan who had been brought up in the Booby household (as a servant). But the peddler had been in a common-law marriage with a woman who confessed on her deathbed that she had stolen a child. That child was Fanny, taken from the Andrews family. It now appears that Fanny and Joseph are siblings.

When Pamela hears about this development, she is skeptical, so her husband suggests that everyone come to his aunt's house to sort out the mystery. Pamela's family will arrive the next day, so they can ask her parents about it. Because of bad weather, everyone stays over at the Boobys. Didapper attempts to sneak into Fanny's room in the middle of the night, but he goes into Slipslop's room instead. When she screams, the parson bursts in, but he mistakes Didapper for the lady and lets him go. When he realizes he is in Slipslop's room, he bumbles out, this time accidentally going into Fanny's room instead of his own. She is fast asleep, so she doesn't even notice he is there. In the morning, Joseph knocks on her door and finds Adams, but everyone realizes there has been another mix-up, and Adams returns sheepishly to his own room. Joseph and Fanny talk about their new status as brother and sister and decide to live together as platonic friends.

When the Andrews parents arrive, Mrs. Andrews tells how the gypsies stole her girl baby (Fanny) and replaced her with a boy baby (Joseph), who was sickly. Fanny was eventually sold by the gypsies at age four to the Boobys. The peddler has additional information about Joseph, and he says he thinks he knows to whom he belongs, again based on information he got from his dying common-law wife. Mrs. Andrews has mentioned Joseph's strawberry birthmark, and the parson remembers that Wilson also mentioned such a birthmark. Mr. Wilson happens to be passing by, and when he hears this story, he realizes that Joseph is his long-lost son. Fanny and Joseph can now marry. The happy couple go off to live in Mr. Wilson's part of the world. Squire Booby provides money for Fanny, so she and Joseph are able to buy some land near Mr. Wilson. The couple continue happily and are expecting their first child. A disappointed Lady Booby returns to London and takes up with a young captain of the dragoons.

CHARACTERS

Joseph Andrews: oseph's chief attributes are his self-control, his virtue, and his devotion. He is attractive physically, as Lady Booby and Mrs. Slipslop are well aware, and his character matches this exterior excellence. The strength of his pure love for Fanny Goodwill enables him to deal plainly, directly, and even violently with the moral and physical weaklings who cross his path, be it the lustful Lady Booby or the insect of a man, Beau Didapper. Joseph is a man of genuine emotion, and it is this which inspires him to the virtuous *action* which Fielding believed so important: "I defy the wisest man in the world to turn a true good action into ridicule," Joseph comments in Book III. Joseph, however, would be a bore if he were only a knight-like figure. Fielding enhances his moralizing by giving us much rich laughter. It is true that Joseph is always ready to do battle for a stranger, but, throughout the novel, Joseph battles most for his chastity and it is this satiric reversal which is the basis of Fielding's "comic epic-poem."

Fanny

As with Joseph, Fanny's outward beauty is matched by her inner qualities. She has sensibility, sweetness, and gentility; in short, she is the perfect object for Joseph's love, and the way in which she immediately takes to the road in search of Joseph after hearing of his plight testifies that she too has a depth of feeling all too rare in this novel. Yet she also possesses a deep sense of modesty; and, in all honesty, one must admit that Fanny is a little too perfect. But part of her charm is in the way Fielding uses her in his comic contrasts. Whether we are seeing Mrs. Slipslop huffily "forgetting" the name of this "impertinent" girl, or Lady Booby plagued to distraction by the mention of Fanny's beauty, the emphasis is on Fielding's satire of hypocrisy rather than on Fanny's pristine goodness itself.

Parson Adams

Adams is a very good man and yet a very human man; he has his head in the clouds and although his feet are on the ground, they are usually in puddles. Comic though he is, he is the firm pivot of the novel's moral influence. It is his belief in charitable *action* which distinguishes him as a parson from such hypocritical boors as Trulliber. Like Joseph and Fanny, he acts on his feelings, and it is because of this affinity that he is such a fine guardian and guide to the young pair.

Lady Booby

Lady Booby is everything that Joseph and Fanny are not; attached to town life, blind to her own motives and consequently to those of others, shallow in her feelings and thus scornful of those who do feel deeply, her dangerous legal maneuvers in Book IV have extremely unpleasant implications.

Throughout the novel, Lady Booby's reason and her passion are at odds; she is clearly the agent of confusion in Fielding's comic plan. Her mental muddle works against the resolution toward which he is drawing his characters, her selfishness denies the love on which this resolution is based, and her concern for her reputation exile her from the novel's happy ending. Yet the energy and vividness with which Lady Booby is portrayed in her turmoils prevent us from seeing her as a supreme villainess; she is more than a pawn in Fielding's game.

Mrs Slipslop

At the beginning of Chapter 5 (Book I), Fielding points out that he often uses Slipslop as a foil to her mistress, Lady Booby. By making them both fall for Joseph, Fielding can point out the "different operations of this passion of love in the gentle and cultivated mind of Lady Booby, from those which it effected in the less-polished disposition of Mrs. Slipslop." Slipslop is a foil and also a coarse echo of Lady Booby; she is vain and proud and thus is "a mighty affecter of hard words" toward those whom she considers her inferiors, such as Mrs. Grave-airs and Fanny Goodwill. Yet there are also crucial differences between Slipslop and her mistress. Slipslop is ridiculous in a warm way; we laugh kindly at the incongruity of a fat, pimply, red-faced, lame, forty-five-year-old slob pursuing Joseph.

THEMES

Power of Goodness

Goodness was a preoccupation of the *littérateurs* of the eighteenth century no less than of the moralists. In an age in which worldly authority was largely unaccountable and tended to be corrupt, Fielding seems to have judged that temporal power was not compatible with goodness. In his novels, most of the squires, magistrates, fashionable persons, and petty capitalists are either

morally ambiguous or actively predatory; by contrast, his paragon of benevolence, Parson Adams, is quite poor and utterly dependent for his income on the patronage of squires. As a corollary of this antithesis, Fielding shows that Adams's extreme goodness, one ingredient of which is ingenuous expectation of goodness in others, makes him vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous people. Much as the novelist seems to enjoy humiliating his clergyman, however, Adams remains a transcendently vital presence whose temporal weakness does not invalidate his moral power.

Charity and Religion

Fielding's novels are full of clergymen, many of whom are less than exemplary; in the contrast between the benevolent Adams and his more self-interested brethren, Fielding draws the distinction between the mere formal profession of Christian doctrines and that active charity which he considers true Christianity. Fielding advocated the expression of religious duty in everyday human interactions: universal, disinterested compassion arises from the social affections and manifests itself in general kindness to other people, relieving the afflictions and advancing the welfare of mankind.

Town and Country

Fielding did not choose the direction and destination of his hero's travels at random; Joseph moves from the town to the country in order to illustrate, in the words of Martin C. Battestin, "a moral pilgrimage from the vanity and corruption of the Great City to the relative naturalness and simplicity of the country." Joseph develops morally by leaving the city which is a site of vanity and superficial pleasures, for the country, a site of virtuous retirement and contented domesticity. Not that Fielding had any utopian illusions about the countryside; the many vicious characters whom Joseph and Adams meet on the road home attest that Fielding believed human nature to be basically consistent across geographic distinctions. His claim for rural life derives from the pragmatic judgment that, away from the bustle, crime, and financial pressures of the city, those who are so inclined may, as Battestin puts it, "attend to the basic values of life."

Affectation, Vanity, and Hypocrisy

Fielding's Preface declares that the target of his satire is the ridiculous, that "the only Source of the true Ridiculous" is affectation, and that "Affectation proceeds from one of these two Causes, Vanity, or Hypocrisy." Hypocrisy, being the dissimulation of true motives, is the more dangerous of these causes: whereas the vain man merely considers himself better than he is, the hypocrite pretends to be other than he is. Thus, Mr. Adams is vain about his learning, his sermons, and his

pedagogy, but while this vanity may occasionally make him ridiculous, it remains entirely or virtually harmless. By contrast, Lady Booby and Mrs. Slipslop counterfeit virtue in order to prey on Joseph, Parson Trulliber counterfeits moral authority in order to keep his parish in awe, Peter Pounce counterfeits contented poverty in order to exploit the financial vulnerabilities of other servants, and so on. Fielding chose to combat these two forms of affectation, the harmless and the less harmless, by poking fun at them, on the theory that humor is more likely than invective to encourage people to remedy their flaws.

Chastity

As his broad hints about Joseph and Fanny's euphoric wedding night suggest, Fielding has a fundamentally positive attitude toward sex; he does prefer, however, that people's sexual conduct be in accordance with what they owe to God, each other, and themselves. In the mutual attraction of Joseph and Fanny there is nothing licentious or exploitative, and they demonstrate the virtuousness of their love in their eagerness to undertake a lifetime commitment and in their compliance with the Anglican forms regulating marriage, which require them to delay the event to which they have been looking forward for years. If Fielding approves of Joseph and Fanny, though, he does not take them too seriously; in particular, Joseph's "male-chastity" is somewhat incongruous given the sexual double-standard, and Fielding is not above playing it for laughs, particularly while the hero is in London. Even militant chastity is vastly preferable, however, to the loveless and predatory sexuality of Lady Booby and those like her: as Martin C. Battestin argues, "Joseph's chastity is amusing because extreme; but it functions nonetheless as a wholesome antithesis to the fashionable lusts and intrigues of high society."

Class and Birth

Joseph Andrews is full of class distinctions and concerns about high and low birth, but Fielding is probably less interested in class difference *per se* than in the vices it can engender, such as corruption and affectation. Naturally, he disapproves of those who pride themselves on their class status to the point of deriding or exploiting those of lower birth: Mrs. Grave-airs, who turns her nose up at Joseph, and Beau Didapper, who believes he has a social prerogative to prey on Fanny sexually, are good examples of these vices. Fielding did not consider class privileges to be evil in themselves; rather, he seems to have believed that some people deserve social ascendancy while others do not. This view of class difference is evident in his use of the romance convention whereby the plot turns on the revelation of the hero's true birth and ancestry, which is more prestigious than everyone had thought. Fielding, then, is conservative in the sense that he aligns high class status with moral worth; this move amounts not so much to an endorsement of the class

system as to a taking it for granted, an acceptance of class terms for the expression of human value.

LET US SUM UP

From this unit, you learnt about the novel *Joseph Andrews* which is seen as one of the classic works of comic writing in the eighteenth century. You have been introduced to the form of novel called the picaresque novel and you will be able to illustrate the characteristics of the same from this novel. The characterization and themes of the novel are in keeping with the time when it was composed in England.

MODEL QUESTIONS

1. What is a picaresque novel? Discuss.
2. Write an essay on the life and works of Henry Fielding.
3. Critically examine the different characters in the novel from your reading of the same.
4. Discuss the themes in the novel *Joseph Andrews*.

UNIT 3- JANE AUSTEN: *PRIDE AND PREJUDICE*

UNIT STRUCTURE

1. Learning Objectives
2. Introduction:
 - 2.1 The Life and Times of Jane Austen
 - 2.2 The Regency Era and the English novel
3. Check your progress
4. *Pride Prejudice*
 - 4.1 Summary of the novel
 - 4.2 Form of the novel
 - 4.3 Major characters

4.4 Analysis of Major themes

5. Let us sum up

6. Answers to Check Your Progress

7. Model Questions

1. LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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

- Form an idea of the nineteenth century English novel, particularly the form of the Regency novel
 - Learn about the life and works of Jane Austen
 - Understand the sociocultural realities portrayed in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* through an in-depth analysis of the characters portrayed and the themes explored
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2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 The Life and Times of Jane Austen

Jane Austen (1775-1817) is one of the finest novelists of her generation, or indeed, any generation of novelists in the English language. Her quietly penetrating vision of man as a social animal, her ironic presentation of the tensions between spontaneity and convention, and between the claims of personal morality and those of economic propriety, as well as her polished and controlled wit, has produced some of the greatest novels in English. She began writing at an early age, though only for her family. Jane Austen was born on the 16th of December, 1775 at Steventon in Hampshire. She was the seventh of the eight children of the Rev. George Austen who was the local rector, and his wife Cassandra, (nie Leigh). Jane Austen's father had a fairly respectable income of about 600 a year, and belonged to the landed gentry, but was certainly not a rich man.

Jane Austen's novels present a transitional phase in English history, just before the Industrial Revolution changed for the worse so much of the face of the country, especially its tranquil rural landscape. Jane Austen's work does take into account the two opposing sets of impulses that emerged in the two decades (1798-1818) when she wrote most of her novels.. Meenakshi Mukherjee sees Jane Austen's major contribution as the extension of the 'self (which had so far been all-male) to include women. Jane Austen wrote and published her novels when the Romantic movement in literature was slowly making itself known. She ridicules the hypocrisy of humans, the disingenuous displays of sentiment and lack of psychological veracity in the treatment of character in the novels of sensibility and the gothic novels which enjoyed great popularity in her time. Her first novel, *Northanger Abbey* (published in 1817 after her death) exposes through parody the sentiments and perceptions associated with gothic romances and *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) similarly points out the danger of an uncritical acceptance of the cult of sensibility.

2.2 The Regency Era and the English Novel

The Regency era in the United Kingdom is the period between 1811 and 1820, when King George III was deemed unfit to rule and his son, later George IV, was instated to be his proxy as prince regent. It was a decade of particular manners and fashions and overlaps with the Napoleonic period in Europe. The period of the Regency was, in many ways, considered to be a period of decline, because an incapacitated King was something the British had not been used to. Politically, the decline was evident in the rule of the Prince Regent over England and its colonies. It was also a period of instability as George IV was not really considered to be a monarch but only a Regent. The monarchy could, therefore, not project its might the way it was supposed to. Socially, this period was marked by numerous upheavals and unrests, including the Luddite movement and the large-scale riots in Glasgow in 1811. In terms of international eminence, Britain seemed weak in the face of Napoleon Bonaparte's meteoric rise to power in France and his exploits.

Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* because of the time it was published in, is referred to as a Regency novel, although it also contains features of what is known as a novel of manners. Emerging in the nineteenth century, the novel of manners was a kind of realist novel that focused on the customs, conversations and ways of thinking and valuing of the upper class. As we shall see in the following sections, *Pride and Prejudice* is a very keen exploration of such themes, and it also carries a sense of the historical context of the Regency era.

3. CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- A) Which period is referred to as the Regency period in England?
- B) What was the name of Jane Austen's first novel?
- C) What is a novel of manners?

4. PRIDE AND PREJUDICE

4.1 Summary of the novel

Initially titled “First Impressions”, *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) is by far Austen’s most popular novel. It follows the lives of the five Bennet sisters- Jane, Elizabeth, Mary, Lydia and Kitty, although the narrative is primarily centred around the older sisters, namely, Jane and Elizabeth. It explores the different pressures the sisters face in the hands of their mother, Mrs Bennet, who is obsessed with finding suitable husbands for her daughters. The main action of the novel is set off by the arrival of rich gentleman Charles Bingley in the neighbouring Netherfield Park. When the Bennet daughters meet him at a local ball, they are impressed by his outgoing personality and friendly disposition. They also meet Fitzwilliam Darcy, a landowning aristocrat who is too proud to speak to any of the locals and whom Elizabeth Bennet overhears refusing to dance with her and immediately decides unworthy of any concession.

Bingley and Jane soon develop feelings for each other. However, their relationship is opposed by Bingley's sister, who does not approve of Jane as a wife for Bingley because of her social status, and also by Darcy who believes that Jane is indifferent to Bingley and also is unimpressed by her

family's lack of sophistication. Despite his poor opinion of the Bennets, Darcy finds himself attracted to Elizabeth, who is quick-witted and expressive, unlike Jane, who is shy and comely.

As Darcy grows more interested in Elizabeth, Elizabeth continues to despise him and instead becomes infatuated with George Wickham, a handsome and militia officer. Wickham tells Elizabeth that his father worked for Darcy's father and that he and Darcy grew up together. Stating that he was favoured by Darcy's father, Wickham claims that Darcy disobeyed his father's bequest of a clergyman's revenue to Wickham out of selfish resentment. Wickham's tale makes Darcy appear not only proud but cruel, and Elizabeth accepts Wickham's account without question, disliking Darcy even more because of it.

In the midst of Jane and Elizabeth's developing relationships, the Bennet family is visited by Mr. Bennet's cousin, William Collins, a clergyman who will inherit Mr. Bennet's estate when he dies as the closest male heir. He offers a marriage proposal to Elizabeth, a prospect that is also supported by Mrs Bennet who wants the family property to be accessible to her daughters, but is stunned and offended when she refuses him. He quickly turns his attention to Elizabeth's older friend, Charlotte Lucas, who chooses to marry for security rather than love, and the two are soon engaged and married. At the same time, Jane is dismayed to find out that Bingley and the entire Netherfield party have unexpectedly left for London. Caroline Bingley writes to Jane that they do not intend to return, and she predicts a match between Bingley and Darcy's sister, Georgiana, who is also in London. Although Jane quietly resigns herself to a life without Bingley, Elizabeth is angry for her sister and suspects that Bingley's sisters and Darcy are trying to keep him from Jane.

Elizabeth visits Charlotte at her new home in Hunsford, Kent, and meets Mr. Collins' patroness and Darcy's aunt, Lady Catherine De Bourgh, an overbearing woman who thrives on meddling in other people's lives. Soon after Elizabeth's arrival in Kent, Darcy visits his aunt with his cousin, Colonel Fitzwilliam. He surprises Elizabeth by proposing but she rejects him and accuses him for indirectly breaking her sister's heart. The next day, Darcy gives her a letter explaining his role in influencing Bingley away from Jane and details the facts of Wickham's situation. A careful examination of the facts reveals that Darcy, while proud, is innocent of wrongdoing, leaving Elizabeth mortified at her discovery of how her own pride prejudiced her against Darcy.

After returning home for a month, Elizabeth goes on a trip with her aunt and uncle Gardiner to Derbyshire, where they visit Darcy's estate of Pemberley. There they meet Darcy unexpectedly and are all surprised at how graciously he treats them. He calls on Elizabeth at her inn, introduces her to his sister, and invites her to Pemberley for dinner. Darcy is still in love with Elizabeth, and Elizabeth begins to have similar feelings for him. This reintroduction, which allows Darcy to propose to Elizabeth and be refused, marks the turning point in the relationship of these two, for the refusal is followed by Darcy's letter of explanation about Wickham. It also marks the movement of Darcy away from pride to a genuine awareness of values outside his class-bound scheme of things, and a similar movement in Elizabeth away from undue dependence on her own judgement and a greater empathy for social concessions. For these two originally represented the two extremes, each of which must be modified if happiness is to be achieved- the extreme of putting social position and obligation before private feeling and the extreme of depending entirely on individual judgement rather than on the public or social view. Society is kept going by its members continually compromising between the individual impression and desire on the one hand and public tradition and duty on the other.

The revelation of his goodness to his tenants, of which Elizabeth learns after her sudden visit to Pemberly, and in general to his playing the part of the landowner who understands the social duties that ownership implies represents a crucial stage. Austen has a strong sense of class duty and a contempt for any claims of superiority based merely on noble birth or social snobbery. Jane Austen of course accepts the class structure of English society as she knew it; but she accepts it as a type of human society, in which privilege implies duty.

In the midst of this promising situation, Elizabeth receives two letters from Jane telling her that Lydia has eloped with Wickham, causing Elizabeth and the Gardiners to leave for home immediately. Elizabeth fears that Lydia and the Bennet family are permanently disgraced and that her newly-discovered love for Darcy is hopeless. When Lydia is found, however, she and Wickham marry. After the wedding, Elizabeth discovers that Darcy was instrumental in orchestrating the marriage, thereby saving the reputation and marriageability of the other Bennet daughters.

Bingley returns to Netherfield and soon asks Jane to marry him. Jane, of course, accepts, and Mrs. Bennet's exultation is only lessened by her irritation at Darcy's occasional presence. Meanwhile,

Elizabeth's happiness for her sister is interrupted by a visit from Lady Catherine De Bourgh, who has heard a rumour that Darcy and Elizabeth are engaged, which they are not. She lectures Elizabeth on the imprudence of such a match, and then demands that Elizabeth promise not to accept any proposal from Darcy. Elizabeth refuses, causing Lady Catherine to tell Darcy about Elizabeth's impertinence and to scold him about the folly of an engagement between them. Lady Catherine's description of Elizabeth's response to her demands gives Darcy hope that Elizabeth has had a change of heart. He proposes again and Elizabeth happily accepts.

4.2 Form of the novel

The nineteenth century realist novel was perfected in the hands of Jane Austen. Through the portrayal of complex characters with mixed motives who are rooted in social class, who operate in a developed social structure, and who interact with other characters, and undergo plausible, everyday modes of experience, Austen's novels provide valuable insight into the lived realities of nineteenth century England. *Pride and Prejudice* has one of the most famous opening sentences in the history of the English novel, that is not only an introduction to the major themes of the novel, but also to Austen's narratorial position

“It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune, must be in want of a wife”

There are few novelists in English who can achieve so much meaning with a simple descriptive sentence: with a few brief strokes Jane Austen can give the reader the sense of a solidly based social world. *Pride and Prejudice* is written in the form of free indirect discourse. It is a method of conveying a character's internal thoughts by embedding them within the narration, rather than expressing them directly. David Lodge, in a reading of Jane Austen which draws upon formalist and structuralist criticism, shows how she incorporates elements of the sentimental novel and the comedy of manners into the method of realism. Structurally the love story consists of the delayed fulfilment of a desire. This delay doesn't just refer to the heroine's desire, but also the reader's desire to know whether she will get the man she loves or not. The delay puts the heroine under stress and this generates the "sentiment" i.e. the feelings, anxieties, and moral choices that forms much of the sentimental novel. In *Pride and Prejudice*, it allows the reader to be particularly aware of the complex relationship between Mr. Darcy and Elizabeth. In Elizabeth's mind, Darcy is a prideful and arrogant person who thinks he is above everyone simply because of his status and monetary worth. Once these opinions of Darcy are cemented in Elizabeth's mind, every action

Darcy takes is perceived through that standard. Austen makes ample use of wit and irony through which she has expressed the inner nature, follies, foibles and weaknesses of her characters which give rise to deep humour in the novel. Her wit is often ironic and her irony is often witty. But the use of her wit and irony is neither situational or dramatic but mostly verbal.

Pride is used as a lens to explore how an individual feels trapped within social structures, and how they might want to assert their individuality often at the cost of the fellow human. In some cases, however, a qualitative difference in the nature of pride is brought out. Two such forms are explicitly distinguished from each other in the rather pedantic definitions of "pride" and "vanity" provided by Mary Bennet, according to whom "Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us". As far as events and revelations of character in the course of the narrative appear to bear out her opinion that pride involves a sense (perhaps even an excessive sense) of self-esteem or self-regard. Still, the more important distinction working behind this difference is that while a sense of dignity and self-respect are substantially present in one form of pride, they are almost negligible in the other.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

- D) What are the names of the five Bennet sisters?
- E) What was the name of Darcy's estate?
- F) Why did Darcy dislike Wickham?
- G) Who was Elizabeth visiting when she heard the news of Lydia's elopement?

4.3 Major characters

- Elizabeth Bennet: The protagonist of the novel Elizabeth is her father's favourite child and her mother's least favourite. Her sharp tongue and tendency to make hasty judgments often lead her astray. Elizabeth must not only cope with a hopeless mother, a distant father, two badly behaved younger siblings, and several snobbish, antagonising females, she must also overcome her own mistaken impressions of Darcy, which initially lead her to reject his proposals of marriage. Her charms are sufficient to keep him interested, fortunately, while she navigates familial and social turmoil. As she gradually comes to recognize the nobility of Darcy's character, she realizes the error of her initial prejudice against him.
- Fitzwilliam Darcy: Darcy is, of course, of the gentleman class, but when the community of mainly females first meet him they do not rate him highly as a

gentleman, in spite of his ten thousand pounds a year and the rapidly circulating reports of his magnificent stately mansion, Pemberly: he does not behave in the way they expect a gentleman to behave. Manners are so important that they seem almost more important than the wealth of this single young man. The novel explores Darcy's developing yet conflicted feelings about Elizabeth as he struggles with his attempts to either forget her or secure her affections. His haughty, arrogant manner, instilled in him through his upbringing by aristocratic parents, misses the expected gentlemanly mark. It struggles against his deeper and truer decency and obscures his generosity and nobleness of character.

- Charles Bingley: Bingley, the single man in possession of a good fortune (Ch. 1, p.5) who sets the book going, is kind, easy-going, attracted by beautiful young women with whom he enjoys dancing, and, compared to his friend Darcy, somewhat unreflective. It is this difference between them that Darcy likes: the easiness, openness, ductility of his temper (Ch. 4, p. 16). Chapter 7 to 12 when Elizabeth stays at Netherfield Park are worth rereading with care in the light of what happens later in the novel, as they lay the foundation for many of the book's themes, such as the nature of character, friendship and pride. The most striking example of Bingley's 'ductility' is the way he allows Darcy to persuade him to leave Netherfield. In the book's resolution he is equally ductile, falling easily back in love with Jane, now that he enjoys the approval of this friend. He is the perfect mate for Jane. They share the same sunny optimism with regard to human behaviour. Being less 'intricate' means that neither develop as characters, in contrast with the other pair at the centre of the book's interests, Elizabeth and Darcy.
- Mr Collins: He is marked by a grotesqueness. By his proposal to Elizabeth, he points up another side of the marriage-seeking business: economic security can be won at great cost too. When Elizabeth's friend Charlotte Lucas accepts Mr Collins, we are for the first time made fully aware of the ugly realities underlying the social dynamics. He is also an opportunistic social climber who reveals an obsession for wealth and status through his comic servility to Lady Catherine de Bourgh.
- Charlotte Lucas: Rather than being left with no prospect of social or economic security in an age when few means of earning an independent livelihood were open to young middle class women- Charlotte Lucas, an intelligent girl, who enjoys the pleasures of life like Elizabeth, marries the grotesque Mr Collins. She knows it is her last chance, and she takes it deliberately, weighing her future husband's intolerable character

against the security and social position that he offers. Elizabeth is shocked, but Austen carefully informs her readers that Charlotte's choice was in fact the lesser of the two evils. Elizabeth's visit to the Collins' after their marriage gives the author her opportunity of clarifying this aspect of marriage and showing how calmly and deliberately Charlotte makes a liveable life out of her situation- a scene in which Austen shows her underlying compassionate awareness of the ordinariness of ordinary life.

- Lady Catherine de Bourgh: In a novel that explores the precarity of middle class women, Catherine de Bourgh provides an interesting contrast, and also highlights power and wealth does not automatically build solidarity among women. Lady Catherine de Bourgh is a caricature of Dracy: she represents pride without intelligence, moral sense, or understanding of the obligations conferred by rank.

4.4 Analysis of major themes

- **Love and marriage**

Marriage is analysed on two levels - in terms of external obstacles like patriarchy and property relations and in terms of the characters' personal attributes. Pride seems to be among the most harmful of such attributes since it has to be overcome by a process of self-education before love can culminate in marriage. The Bennet sisters have beauty and intelligence, but inconsiderable fortune. Mrs Bennet's desire to have them married, though her expression of that desire reveals the defects of her character in a richly comic manner, is itself natural and laudable; for girls of negligible fortune must secure their man while they may, or face a precarious shabby spinsterhood with little or no social standing.

Austen provides a compassionate portrayal of the Collins household and displays how marriage without romance still has an important social function. The episode of Wickham and Lydia's elopement presents another aspect of the marriage economy in Austen's universe. The desperate search for Lydia comes from a genuine fear of losing Lydia to the hopeless lot of "fallen women". It is significant that the shock of Lydia's behaviour forces Mr Bennet for once out of his mood of sardonic teasing into genuine suffering and self-reproach. The final event that seals the relationship between Elizabeth and Darcy is the intrusion of Lady Catherine de Bourgh. In the end, Elizabeth and Darcy discover each other after a respective loss of their pride and prejudice.

There is another negative attitude which Jane Austen takes more seriously -that of the materialism and economic individualism of the up-coming middle classes. Jane Austen deliberately shows the

love relationship slowly gaining strength and maturing by contending against the pull of this negative force present everywhere. The varied forms it can take are brought out vividly before us through different characters in *Pride and Prejudice*. We can see it in its grosser forms in the dullness and pomposity of Mr. Collins or the obtrusively meddlesome and domineering behaviour of Lady Catherine. It is present in characters like Mrs. Philip who loves to collect and transmit idle gossip. We can also see it in the supercilious finickiness of the Bingley sisters. Mrs. Bennet, too, is governed by this spirit as her obsessive concern for the marriage of her daughters is based on the presumption that daughters are perishable commodities to be disposed of quickly before their market value goes down and the young man to whom they are to be married off are reluctant customers to be assiduously cultivated to make them agree to complete the transaction.

- **Social position of women**

In *Pride and Prejudice*, Austen explores women's dependence on marriage for social security. Notions of womanhood in her works were derived from her culture and her contemporaries. All her women are portrayed as pious, pure, submissive, and dependent on men in their lives. Some scholars have remarked that, although the Napoleonic Wars were going on throughout Jane Austen's writing career, she kept mention of them out of her novels, in which soldiers appear only as attractions for the girls or in some other similar social capacity. This is not evidence of her narrow point of view but rather it shows the calm accuracy with which Austen treats the subject matter at hand. In the days when wars were fought by small professional armies the impact of the fighting on the daily life of people living in small country towns was negligible, and it would have been unrealistic as well as artistically inappropriate for Austen to have expanded her horizon to include discussion of world affairs which were not relevant to the situations that she was presenting. The narrative insulation mirrored the insulated reality that the young women of these times lived in.

In *Pride and Prejudice*, there are a number of scenes where women have to display their accomplishments in a social situation. Mary, since she lacks beauty, is forced to rely on her musical abilities in order to be noticed in society, and she is described as "always impatient for display". There is a conversation on the subject of women's accomplishments at Netherfield where Bingley expresses surprise at the number of skills young ladies are expected (and do) possess. These skills are detailed, and they include painting tables, covering 'screens', netting purses, singing, dancing, drawing, and an acquaintance with "the modern languages", and Darcy adds to this list by saying that a woman ought to also be well-read. Later on Lady Catherine interrogates

Elizabeth about her accomplishments, lectures her on how to improve her piano- playing, and makes the extremely dubious assertion that "If I had ever learnt, I should have been a great proficient." Even though women were expected to be wives and mothers, middle class society still expected some kind of refinement in them, which allowed people to pretend like they cared for the betterment of women's lives. Austen explores this efficiently and attacks this hypocrisy vehemently.

5.LET US SUM UP

Jane Austen is one of the most prominent English novelists. In her works we see the English novel mature into a critical art form, and through a close analysis of her most famous work, *Pride and Prejudice*, we saw how she pushed the boundaries of the form, and also used it to represent the voices of women. Through the use of irony and wit, she presents a microcosm of English society with all its faults.

6. Answers to Check your Progress

- A. 1811-1820
- B. *Northanger Abbey*
- C. The novel of manners was a kind of realist novel that focused on the customs, conversations and ways of thinking and valuing of the upper class
- D. Elizabeth, Jane, Mary, Kitty and Lydia
- E. Pemberly Manor
- F. Because he took advantage of his sister, Georgiana
- G. The Gardiners

7. MODEL QUESTIONS

- A. Discuss *Pride and Prejudice* as a novel of manners

- B. Through light on Austen’s treatment of marriage in *Pride and Prejudice*, and its influence on the lives of women.
- C. What are the different kinds of romances in *Pride and Prejudice*? Discuss through a comparative study of all the major relationships in the novel
- D. Discuss Austen’s use of irony and in the narrative of *Pride and Prejudice*
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UNIT 4.1: WUTHERING HEIGHT

UNIT STRUCTURE

Learning

Objectives

Background

Introduction

Chronology

Themes

Let Us Sum Up

Model Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to understand that *Wuthering Heights* is a novel where the main themes of this novel are love, passion, and vengeance. It is the love between Heathcliff and Catherine that permeates the novel, though it assumes dangerous proportions as the plot thickens. Catherine rejects Heathcliff choosing instead Edgar Linton.

BACKGROUND

Wuthering Heights was published 1847, the only novel written by Emily Bronte. It was

published under the 'pen name' of Ellis Bell. Her life had been largely confined to the village of Haworth, Yorkshire, where her father was a local vicar. Mrs. Bronte died when the children were quite young and were reared by maiden aunts and housekeepers. Very little formal education was experienced by the Brontes until they decided on careers. All three sisters became published writers. Charlotte; "Jane Eyre", Anne; "The Tenant of Wildfell Hall" and Emily; "Wuthering Heights". The novel was written between 1845 and 1847 and its first edition succeeded in selling only seven copies. The death of Emily in 1849 prompted Charlotte to write a preface to the second edition, published in 1851. As Charlotte was a well known author in this height, the book gained popularity and by the twentieth century, the love story of Heathcliff and Catherine became a classic of literature. The novel was influenced by the two styles of the

late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The late 18th century was dominated by the Gothic novel, in which the supernatural played the role. This reached its highest point with the publication of "Dracula" by Bram Stoker. This also influenced Mary Shelley to write "Frankenstein". The early nineteenth century was dominated by the novels of Sir Walter Scott and Jane Austen. These novelists were influenced by the romantic movement of Wordsworth and Coleridge. Both of these influences are seen in "Wuthering Heights", where the house itself and its inhabitants, the servants and the dogs are typical of the Gothic novel, where Thrushcross Grange by contrast is more typical of the world of Jane Austen. Therefore, Wuthering Heights can be interpreted as a compendium as both the Gothic and romantic novels of the periods immediately preceding 1847. Emily Bronte herself was the youngest of six children. Her father was born Patrick Prunty on the 17 March 1777 in Co. Down. He was ambitious and won a place at Cambridge, a magnificent achievement for the son of a storyteller. He changed the spelling of his name to Bronte in about 1799, after Nelson was created Duke of Bronte. When he left Cambridge he became a Church of England clergyman and he married Marie Branwell in 1812. She was from Penzance in Cornwall, they had six children, five girls and one boy, Branwell. In 1820, the family moved to Haworth Parsonage in Yorkshire, which was located on the edge of the Yorkshire moors, the family lived there until he died in 1861. In 1821, tragedy struck the family with the death of Marie, and the task of raising the family was then taken on by the mother's sister. Her personality is reproduced in the character of Joseph in Wuthering Heights. In 1824, four of the girls were sent to Cowanbridge Boarding School, to begin their education, within a month two were dead due to the inhumane regime. The others, Emily and Charlotte, returned home to be educated by their father. He had inherited his father's story-telling talents and he entertained his children in the Parsonage. In 1826, Branwell received a present of a box of toy soldiers, the children gave each soldier a name, invented a land where these characters would live, called Angria, while Emily and Anne in turn invented another place called, Gondal, a practice then began of the children writing chronicles of their own fabled country. In 1835, Emily was again sent to the school of RoeHead, where Charlotte was a teacher, however she returned home after 3 months. In 1837, she spent six months as a teacher in Halifax. Charlotte was of the opinion that the sisters should open their own school, so in 1842, they went to Brussels to approve their proficiencies in European languages, however they soon had to return home for the funeral of their aunt and Emily never left Haworth again. Charlotte then published a collection of their poems which sold only two copies. The sisters then each decided to write a novel, Emily's Wuthering Heights seemed to be both a commercial and literature failure when it was published in 1847. Meanwhile, their

brother Branwell died in September 1848 and while attending his funeral, Emily caught a chill and it developed into consumption, she refused all medical aid and died on 19th December 1848. In 1850, Charlotte published a second edition of *Wuthering Heights* to which she had written a preface, on this occasion it met with both critical and commercial success, and by the end of the century it was regarded as one of the greatest novels ever written.

Wuthering Heights focuses on a person Heathcliff, who is a mysterious gypsy-like person. Heathcliff rises in the family who had adopted him and then he was reduced to the status of a servant there. Further, he ran away from the young woman whom he loved very much and decided to marry another.

In the late winter months of 1801, a man named Lockwood rents a manor house called Thrushcross Grange in the isolated moor country of England. Here, he meets his dour landlord, Heathcliff, a wealthy man who lives in the ancient manor of *Wuthering Heights*, four miles away from the Grange. In this wild, stormy countryside, Lockwood asks his housekeeper, Nelly Dean, to tell him the story of Heathcliff and the strange denizens of *Wuthering Heights*. Nelly consents, and Lockwood writes down his recollections of her tale in his diary; these written recollections form the main part of *Wuthering Heights*.

Nelly remembers her childhood. As a young girl, she works as a servant at *Wuthering Heights* for the owner of the manor, Mr. Earnshaw, and his family. One day, Mr. Earnshaw goes to Liverpool and returns home with an orphan boy whom he will raise with his own children. At first, the Earnshaw children—a boy named Hindley and his younger sister Catherine—detest the dark-skinned Heathcliff. But Catherine quickly comes to love him, and the two soon grow inseparable, spending their days playing on the moors. After his wife's death, Mr. Earnshaw grows to prefer Heathcliff to his own son, and when Hindley continues his cruelty to Heathcliff, Mr. Earnshaw sends Hindley away to college, keeping Heathcliff nearby.

Three years later, Mr. Earnshaw dies, and Hindley inherits *Wuthering Heights*. He returns with a wife, Frances, and immediately seeks revenge on Heathcliff. Once an orphan, later a pampered and favored son, Heathcliff now finds himself treated as a common laborer, forced to work in the fields. Heathcliff continues his close relationship with Catherine, however. One night they wander to Thrushcross Grange, hoping to tease Edgar and Isabella Linton, the cowardly, snobbish children who live there. Catherine is bitten by a dog and is forced to stay at the Grange to recuperate for five weeks, during which time Mrs. Linton works to make her

a proper young lady. By the time Catherine returns, she has become infatuated with Edgar, and her relationship with Heathcliff grows more complicated.

When Frances dies after giving birth to a baby boy named Hareton, Hindley descends into the depths of alcoholism, and behaves even more cruelly and abusively toward Heathcliff. Eventually, Catherine's desire for social advancement prompts her to become engaged to Edgar Linton, despite her overpowering love for Heathcliff. Heathcliff runs away from Wuthering Heights, staying away for three years, and returning shortly after Catherine and Edgar's marriage.

When Heathcliff returns, he immediately sets about seeking revenge on all who have wronged him. Having come into a vast and mysterious wealth, he deviously lends money to the drunken Hindley, knowing that Hindley will increase his debts and fall into deeper despondency. When Hindley dies, Heathcliff inherits the manor. He also places himself in line to inherit Thrushcross Grange by marrying Isabella Linton, whom he treats very cruelly. Catherine becomes ill, gives birth to a daughter, and dies. Heathcliff begs her spirit to remain on Earth—she may take whatever form she will, she may haunt him, drive him mad—just as long as she does not leave him alone. Shortly thereafter, Isabella flees to London and gives birth to Heathcliff's son, named Linton after her family. She keeps the boy with her there.

Thirteen years pass, during which Nelly Dean serves as Catherine's daughter's nursemaid at Thrushcross Grange. Young Cathy is beautiful and headstrong like her mother, but her temperament is modified by her father's gentler influence. Cathy grows up at the Grange with no knowledge of Wuthering Heights; one day, however, wandering through the moors, she discovers the manor, meets Hareton, and plays together with him. Soon afterwards, Isabella dies, and Linton comes to live with Heathcliff. Heathcliff treats his sickly, whining son even more cruelly than he treated the boy's mother.

Three years later, Cathy meets Heathcliff on the moors, and makes a visit to Wuthering Heights to meet Linton. She and Linton begin a secret romance conducted entirely through letters. When Nelly destroys Cathy's collection of letters, the girl begins sneaking out at night to spend time with her frail young lover, who asks her to come back and nurse him back to health. However, it quickly becomes apparent that Linton is pursuing Cathy only because Heathcliff is forcing him to; Heathcliff hopes that if Cathy marries Linton, his legal claim upon Thrushcross Grange—and his revenge upon Edgar Linton—will be complete.

One day, as Edgar Linton grows ill and nears death, Heathcliff lures Nelly and Cathy back to Wuthering Heights, and holds them prisoner until Cathy marries Linton. Soon after the marriage, Edgar dies, and his death is quickly followed by the death of the sickly Linton. Heathcliff now controls both Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange. He forces Cathy to live at Wuthering Heights and act as a common servant, while he rents Thrushcross Grange to Lockwood.

Nelly's story ends as she reaches the present. Lockwood, appalled, ends his tenancy at Thrushcross Grange and returns to London. However, six months later, he pays a visit to Nelly, and learns of further developments in the story. Although Cathy originally mocked Hareton's ignorance and illiteracy (in an act of retribution, Heathcliff ended Hareton's education after Hindley died), Cathy grows to love Hareton as they live together at Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff becomes more and more obsessed with the memory of the elder Catherine, to the extent that he begins speaking to her ghost. Everything he sees reminds him of her. Shortly after a night spent walking on the moors, Heathcliff dies. Hareton and Cathy inherit Wuthering Heights and Thrushcross Grange, and they plan to be married on the next New Year's Day. After hearing the end of the story, Lockwood goes to visit the graves of Catherine and Heathcliff.

CHRONOLOGY

The story of *Wuthering Heights* is told through flashbacks recorded in diary entries, and events are often presented out of chronological order—Lockwood's narrative takes place after Nelly's narrative, for instance, but is interspersed with Nelly's story in his journal. Nevertheless, the novel contains enough clues to enable an approximate reconstruction of its chronology, which was elaborately designed by Emily Brontë. For instance, Lockwood's diary entries are recorded in the late months of 1801 and in September 1802; in 1801, Nelly tells Lockwood that she has lived at Thrushcross Grange for eighteen years, since Catherine's marriage to Edgar, which must then have occurred in 1783.

We know that Catherine was engaged to Edgar for three years, and that Nelly was twenty-two when they were engaged, so the engagement must have taken place in 1780, and Nelly must have been born in 1758. Since Nelly is a few years older than Catherine, and since Lockwood comments that Heathcliff is about forty years old in 1801, it stands to reason that Heathcliff and Catherine were born around 1761, three years after Nelly. There are several other clues like this in the novel (such as Hareton's birth, which occurs in June, 1778). The following chronology is based on those clues, and should closely approximate the timing of the novel's

important events. A “~” before a date indicates that it cannot be precisely determined from the evidence in the novel, but only closely estimated.

ADVERTISEMENT

1500: The stone above the front door of Wuthering Heights, bearing the name of Hareton Earnshaw, is inscribed, possibly to mark the completion of the house.

1758: Nelly is born.

1761: Heathcliff and Catherine are born.

1767: Mr. Earnshaw brings Heathcliff to live at Wuthering Heights.

1774: Mr. Earnshaw sends Hindley away to college.

1777: Mr. Earnshaw dies; Hindley and Frances take possession of Wuthering Heights; Catherine first visits Thrushcross Grange around Christmastime.

1778: Hareton is born in June; Frances dies; Hindley begins his slide into alcoholism.

1780: Catherine becomes engaged to Edgar Linton; Heathcliff leaves Wuthering Heights.

1783: Catherine and Edgar are married; Heathcliff arrives at Thrushcross Grange in September.

1784: Heathcliff and Isabella elope in the early part of the year; Catherine becomes ill with brain fever; her daughter Cathy is born late in the year; Catherine dies.

1785: Early in the year, Isabella flees Wuthering Heights and settles in London; Linton is born.

1785: Hindley dies; Heathcliff inherits Wuthering Heights.

1797: Young Cathy meets Hareton and visits Wuthering Heights for the first time; Linton comes from London after Isabella dies (in late 1797 or early 1798).

1800: Cathy stages her romance with Linton in the winter.

1801: Early in the year, Cathy is imprisoned by Heathcliff and forced to marry Linton; Edgar Linton dies; Linton dies; Heathcliff assumes control of Thrushcross Grange. Late in the year, Lockwood rents the Grange from Heathcliff and begins his tenancy. In a winter storm, Lockwood takes ill and begins conversing with Nelly Dean.

1801-1802: During the winter, Nelly narrates her story for Lockwood.

1802: In spring, Lockwood returns to London; Cathy and Hareton fall in love; Heathcliff dies; Lockwood returns in September and hears the end of the story from Nelly.

1803: On New Year's Day, Cathy and Hareton plan to be married.

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THEMES

Catherine and Heathcliff's passion for one another seems to be the center of *Wuthering Heights*, given that it is stronger and more lasting than any other emotion displayed in the novel, and that it is the source of most of the major conflicts that structure the novel's plot. As she tells Catherine and Heathcliff's story, Nelly criticizes both of them harshly, condemning their passion as immoral, but this passion is obviously one of the most compelling and memorable aspects of the book.

It is not easy to decide whether Brontë intends the reader to condemn these lovers as blameworthy or to idealize them as romantic heroes whose love transcends social norms and conventional morality. The book is actually structured around two parallel love stories, the first half of the novel centering on the love between Catherine and Heathcliff, while the less dramatic second half features the developing love between young Cathy and Hareton. In contrast to the first, the latter tale ends happily, restoring peace and order to *Wuthering Heights* and Thrushcross Grange.

The differences between the two love stories contribute to the reader's understanding of why each ends the way it does. The most important feature of Cathy and Hareton's love story is that it involves growth and change. Early in the novel Hareton seems irredeemably brutal, savage, and illiterate, but over time he becomes a loyal friend to Cathy and learns to read. When Cathy first meets Hareton he seems completely alien to her world, yet her attitude also evolves from contempt to love.

Catherine and Heathcliff's love, on the other hand, is rooted in their childhood and is marked by the refusal to change. In choosing to marry Edgar, Catherine seeks a more genteel life, but she refuses to adapt to her role as wife, either by sacrificing Heathcliff or embracing Edgar. In Chapter XII she suggests to Nelly that the years since she was twelve years old and her father died have been like a blank to her, and she longs to return to the moors of her childhood. Heathcliff, for his part, possesses a seemingly superhuman ability to maintain the same attitude and to nurse the same grudges over many years. Moreover, Catherine and Heathcliff's love is based on their shared perception that they are identical. Catherine declares, famously, "I *am* Heathcliff," while Heathcliff, upon Catherine's death, wails that he cannot live without his "soul," meaning Catherine. Their love denies difference, and is strangely asexual. The two do not kiss in dark corners or arrange secret trysts, as adulterers do.

Given that Catherine and Heathcliff's love is based upon their refusal to change over time or embrace difference in others, it is fitting that the disastrous problems of their generation are overcome not by some climactic reversal, but simply by the inexorable passage of time, and the rise of a new and distinct generation. Ultimately, *Wuthering Heights* presents a vision of life as a process of change, and celebrates this process over and against the romantic intensity of its principal characters.

As members of the gentry, the Earnshaws and the Lintons occupy a somewhat precarious place within the hierarchy of late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century British society. At the top of British society was the royalty, followed by the aristocracy, then by the gentry, and then by the lower classes, who made up the vast majority of the population. Although the gentry, or upper middle class, possessed servants and often large estates, they held a nonetheless fragile social position. The social status of aristocrats was a formal and settled matter, because aristocrats had official titles.

Members of the gentry, however, held no titles, and their status was thus subject to change. A man might see himself as a gentleman but find, to his embarrassment, that his neighbors did not share this view. A discussion of whether or not a man was really a gentleman would consider such questions as how much land he owned, how many tenants and servants he had, how he spoke, whether he kept horses and a carriage, and whether his money came from land or "trade"—gentlemen scorned banking and commercial activities.

Considerations of class status often crucially inform the characters' motivations in *Wuthering Heights*. Catherine's decision to marry Edgar so that she will be "the greatest woman of the neighborhood" is only the most obvious example. The Lintons are relatively firm in their gentry status but nonetheless take great pains to prove this status through their behaviors. The Earnshaws, on the other hand, rest on much shakier ground socially. They do not have a carriage, they have less land, and their house, as Lockwood remarks with great puzzlement, resembles that of a "homely, northern farmer" and not that of a gentleman. The shifting nature of social status is demonstrated most strikingly in Heathcliff's trajectory from homeless waif to young gentleman-by-adoption to common laborer to gentleman again (although the status-conscious Lockwood remarks that Heathcliff is only a gentleman in "dress and manners").

Revenge is a central focus of Heathcliff's life and, in fact, drives most of the decisions he makes later in the novel. Though Heathcliff gains some bitter satisfaction through causing pain for others, he does not achieve any personal happiness. Instead, his single-minded pursuit of revenge leaves him empty and exhausted. After being tormented by Hindley as a child, Heathcliff becomes obsessed with the idea of getting revenge. By taking advantage of Hindley's debt, Heathcliff gains control of *Wuthering Heights* and becomes the master of the house, a great irony considering he was once forced to work there as a de facto servant.

Heathcliff seeks further revenge on Hindley by raising Hareton, who should have grown up to be a gentleman and a landowner, like a common servant, forcing on the boy the same indignity Hindley had once heaped on Heathcliff. Heathcliff is fully aware of his cruelty. As he explains to Nelly, he understands and desires Hareton's suffering: "I know what he suffers now, for instance, exactly—it is merely a beginning of what he shall suffer, though." Moreover, Heathcliff has the perverse pleasure of knowing Hareton loves and respects him no matter how badly he treats him.

Heathcliff eventually achieves his entire plan of revenge, including marrying Cathy and Linton so that he also gains control of the Grange. However, Heathcliff's death, alone and desperate for his lost love, represents the futility of his struggle. Though he achieved his desired revenge on those, living and dead, who had wronged him, he remains unfulfilled in his true desire—to be reunited with Catherine, which can only be achieved in death.

Social class is presented as an ambivalent theme in the novel. On one hand, Brontë seems to argue that social class is an arbitrary distinction that prevents people from being happy. On the

other, she shows disruptions to social class as negative forces that have to be eliminated in order for peace and order to be restored. As a young child, the fact that Heathcliff is treated differently simply because of his family background seems to be clearly unfair. Nelly tries to console him by suggesting that he imagine the background he might have: “I would frame high notions of my birth and the thoughts of what I was should give me courage and dignity to support the oppressions of a little farmer.” This consolation is particularly poignant coming from a servant who also has to reconcile herself with her own class position even though she is essential to everyone’s lives.

However, while Brontë seems to be sympathetic to Heathcliff’s frustration with the class system, she also implies that he goes too far when he tries to disrupt it and insert himself. Nelly pointedly calls Hareton “the last of the ancient Earnshaw stock” and later refers to him as someone who “should be the first gentleman of the neighborhood.” When Heathcliff dies, Joseph thanks God that “the lawful master and the ancient stock were restored to their rights.” Interestingly, it is servants who express the strongest support for proper inheritance and tradition. Peace and happiness are restored to both houses only when Heathcliff and his son have passed away, and Hareton and Cathy are united as the inheritors of the Linton and Earnshaw legacies. Heathcliff achieves his vision of lying next to the elder Catherine for eternity, but he has to be wiped out of the class system if anyone can lead happy and peaceful lives.

LET US SUM UP

Reading "Wuthering Heights" can offer several real-life lessons, including: The destructive power of obsession and revenge: The novel portrays how Heathcliff’s obsessive love for Catherine leads to destructive consequences for both himself and those around him, highlighting the dangers of unchecked emotions.

MODEL QUESTIONS

1. Write a brief note on the novel Wuthering Heights.
2. Why do Catherine and Heathcliff develop such a strong bond?
3. Where does the story take place? Discuss the significance of the setting

4. Discuss the themes in the novel *Wuthering Heights*.

UNIT 4.2: GREAT EXPECTATIONS

UNIT STRUCTURE

Learning

Objectives

Introduction

Themes

Let Us Sum Up

Model

Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will be able to see how *Great Expectations* emerged out of prevalent popular cultural forms, especially the fairytale and also its themes.

INTRODUCTION

The major conflict of *Great Expectations* revolves around Pip's ambitious desire to reinvent himself and rise to a higher social class. His desire for social progress stems from a desire to be worthy of Estella's love: "She's more beautiful than anybody ever was, and I admire her dreadfully, and I want to be a gentleman on her account." The plot gets underway when Pip is invited to go to Satis House, and first encounters Estella and Miss Havisham. The inciting action, however, has actually been earlier when Pip had a seemingly random encounter with an escaped convict; neither he nor the reader will know for a long time that this encounter will

actually determine the course of his life. The rising action progresses as Pip becomes increasingly dissatisfied with the prospect of living a simple life as a country blacksmith. As he explains, "I never shall or can be comfortable ... unless I can lead a very different sort of life from the life I lead now."

Pip receives news that he is going to be financially supported by an anonymous benefactor and moves to London, where he becomes more refined and sophisticated while also becoming extravagant and self-absorbed. After some years, Pip is astonished to discover that his benefactor is actually Magwitch the convict. This discovery intensifies the conflict around

Pip's desire to be perceived as a gentleman and be loved by Estella, since he is now tainted by an association with a criminal. The rising conflict forces Pip to declare his love to Estella, since he is planning to leave England in order to cover up his secret. He tells her that "you are part of my existence, part of myself," but she explains that she plans to marry another man. This conversation resolves part of the conflict, making it clear to Pip that Estella is incapable of loving him.

The conflict surrounding Pip's shame at his social background and desire to be a gentleman continues as he struggles to protect Magwitch and get him to safety. Along the way, Pip realizes that Magwitch is Estella's father. This discovery transforms Pip's understanding of social position and criminality. Up to this point, Pip has considered Estella and the criminal underworld Magwitch represents as oppositional to one another, but now Pip understands that Estella and Magwitch have always been interconnected. At the novel's climax, Pip confides to a dying Magwitch that his lost child "is living now. She is a lady and very beautiful. And I love her!" By showing kindness to a criminal and describing Estella as both a lady and the daughter of a convict, Pip shows that he no longer thinks about social position in a black or white way. The conflict resolves with Pip letting go of his social aspirations in order to focus on reconciling with the characters who have been loyal to him all along, paying off his debts, and earning an honest living.

THEMES

The moral theme of *Great Expectations* is quite simple: affection, loyalty, and conscience are more important than social advancement, wealth, and class. Dickens establishes the theme and shows Pip learning this lesson, largely by exploring ideas of ambition and self-improvement—ideas that quickly become both the thematic center of the novel and the psychological mechanism that encourages much of Pip's development. At heart, Pip is an idealist; whenever he can conceive of something that is better than what he already has, he immediately desires to obtain the improvement. When he sees Satis House, he longs to be a wealthy gentleman; when he thinks of his moral shortcomings, he longs to be good; when he realizes that he cannot read, he longs to learn how. Pip's desire for self-improvement is the main source of the novel's title: because he believes in the possibility of advancement in life, he has "great expectations" about his future.

Ambition and self-improvement take three forms in *Great Expectations*—moral, social, and educational; these motivate Pip’s best and his worst behavior throughout the novel. First, Pip desires moral self-improvement. He is extremely hard on himself when he acts immorally and feels powerful guilt that spurs him to act better in the future. When he leaves for London, for instance, he torments himself for behaving so wretchedly toward Joe and Biddy. Second, Pip desires social self-improvement. In love with Estella, he longs to become a member of her social class, and, encouraged by Mrs. Joe and Pumblechook, he entertains fantasies of becoming a gentleman. The working out of this fantasy forms the basic plot of the novel; it provides Dickens the opportunity to gently satirize the class system of his era and to make a point about its capricious nature. Significantly, Pip’s life as a gentleman is no more satisfying—and certainly no more moral—than his previous life as a blacksmith’s apprentice. Third, Pip desires educational improvement. This desire is deeply connected to his social ambition and longing to marry Estella: a full education is a requirement of being a gentleman. As long as he is an ignorant country boy, he has no hope of social advancement. Pip understands this fact as a child, when he learns to read at Mr. Wopsle’s aunt’s school, and as a young man, when he takes lessons from Matthew Pocket. Ultimately, through the examples of Joe, Biddy, and Magwitch, Pip learns that social and educational improvement are irrelevant to one’s real worth and that conscience and affection are to be valued above erudition and social standing.

Throughout *Great Expectations*, Dickens explores the class system of Victorian England, ranging from the most wretched criminals (Magwitch) to the poor peasants of the marsh country (Joe and Biddy) to the middle class (Pumblechook) to the very rich (Miss Havisham). The theme of social class is central to the novel’s plot and to the ultimate moral theme of the book—Pip’s realization that wealth and class are less important than affection, loyalty, and inner worth. Pip achieves this realization when he is finally able to understand that, despite the esteem in which he holds Estella, one’s social status is in no way connected to one’s real character. Drummle, for instance, is an upper-class lout, while Magwitch, a persecuted convict, has a deep inner worth. Perhaps the most important thing to remember about the novel’s treatment of social class is that the class system it portrays is based on the post-Industrial Revolution model of Victorian England. Dickens generally ignores the nobility and the hereditary aristocracy in favor of characters whose fortunes have been earned through commerce. Even Miss Havisham’s family fortune was made through the brewery that is still connected to her manor. In this way, by connecting the theme of social class to the idea of work

and self-advancement, Dickens subtly reinforces the novel's overarching theme of ambition and self-improvement.

The theme of crime, guilt, and innocence is explored throughout the novel largely through the characters of the convicts and the criminal lawyer Jaggers. From the handcuffs Joe mends at the smithy to the gallows at the prison in London, the imagery of crime and criminal justice pervades the book, becoming an important symbol of Pip's inner struggle to reconcile his own inner moral conscience with the institutional justice system. In general, just as social class becomes a superficial standard of value that Pip must learn to look beyond in finding a better way to live his life, the external trappings of the criminal justice system (police, courts, jails, etc.) become a superficial standard of morality that Pip must learn to look beyond to trust his inner conscience. Magwitch, for instance, frightens Pip at first simply because he is a convict, and Pip feels guilty for helping him because he is afraid of the police. By the end of the book, however, Pip has discovered Magwitch's inner nobility, and is able to disregard his external status as a criminal. Prompted by his conscience, he helps Magwitch to evade the law and the police. As Pip has learned to trust his conscience and to value Magwitch's inner character, he has replaced an external standard of value with an internal one.

In *Great Expectations*, Pip becomes obsessed with a desire to be sophisticated and takes damaging risks in order to do so. After his first encounter with Estella, Pip becomes acutely self-conscious that "I was a common labouring-boy; that my hands were coarse, that my boots were thick." (pg. 59). Once he moves to London, Pip is exposed to a glamorous urban world "so crowded with people and so brilliantly lighted," and he quickly begins to "contract expensive habits." As a result of spending money on things like a personal servant and fancy clothes, Pip quickly falls into debt, and damages Herbert's finances as well as his own. Even more troubling, Pip tries to avoid anyone who might undermine his reputation as a sophisticated young gentleman. In the end, sophistication is revealed as a shallow and superficial value because it does not lead to Pip achieving anything, and only makes him lonely and miserable. Education functions as a force for social mobility and personal growth in the novel. Joe and Biddy both use their education to pursue new opportunities, showing how education can be a good thing. Pip receives an education that allows him to advance into a new social position, but Pip's education improves his mind without supporting the growth of his character. Biddy takes advantage to gather as much learning as she can, with Pip observing that she "learns everything I learn," and eventually becomes a schoolteacher. Biddy also teaches Joe to read

and write. Pip’s education does not actually provide him with practical skills or common sense, as revealed when Pip and Herbert completely fail at managing their personal finances. Pip’s emotional transformation once he learns the identity of his benefactor is what ultimately makes him into the man he wants to be, not anything he has learned in a classroom.

Although Pip and Estella both grow up as orphans, family is an important theme in the novel. Pip grows up with love and support from Joe, but fails to see the value of the unconditional love Joes gives him. He eventually reconciles with Joe after understanding his errors. Estella is exposed to damaging values from her adopted mother, Miss Havisham, and gradually learns from experience what it actually means to care about someone. For both characters, learning who to trust and how to have a loving relationship with family members is a major part of the growing-up process. As Estella explains at the end of the novel, “suffering has been stronger than all other teaching.” Both Estella and Pip make mistakes and live with the consequences of their family histories, but their difficult family experiences also helps to give them perspective on what is truly important in life.

LET US SUM UP

Great Expectations is filled with examples illustrating how a person's value as a human being is uncorrelated to their social status. The young Pip appears to follow sound principles. He strives to become a better person, he reads books and tries to learn as much as possible. When coming into money, things change

MODEL QUESTIONS

- **Write a brief note on the novel Great Expectations.**
- **Who are Estella’s parents?**
- **What are the great expectations in Great Expectations?**



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