PERIYAR UNIVERSITY

(NAAC 'A++' Grade with CGPA 3.61 (Cycle - 3)
State University - NIRF Rank 56 - State Public University Rank 25)
SALEM - 636 011

CENTRE FOR DISTANCE AND ONLINE EDUCATION
(CDOE)

B.A ENGLISH
SEMESTER - II

CORE IV - AMERICAN LITERATURE-I
(Candidates admitted from 2024 onwards)

Prepared by:

Centre for Distance and Online Education - CDOE
Periyar University
Salem – 636011.

UNIT	Details
I	**Poetry – I** E.M. Forster – The Prologue Passage to India (Lines 1-68) Walt Whitman – O Captain, My Captain!
II	**Poetry – II** Sherman Alexie – Crow Testament, Evolution Edgar Allan Poe – The Raven Emily Dickinson – Because I Could Not Stop for Death.
III	**Prose** Edgar Allan Poe – The Philosophy of Composition Martin Luther King Jr. – I Have a Dream Abraham Lincoln – Gettysburg Address
IV	**Drama** Tennessee Williams – The Glass Menagerie Eugene O'Neill – The Emperor Jones
V	**Fiction** Harriet Beecher Stowe – Uncle Tom's Cabin Herman Melville – Billy Budd Washington Irving – The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Rip Van Winkle

II Semester Hours/Week: 90

24DUEN04 Credits: 3

Core IV

AMERICAN LITERATURE II

Course Objectives:

1. To understand the growth and development of American literature.
2. To critically examine how various genres developed and progressed.
3. Learn about prominent writers and famous works in American literature.
4. To closely examine the various themes and methodologies present in Britishliterature.
5. To create an aptitude for critically probing through the text.

Course Outcomes:

1. Analyze and discuss works of American literature from arange of genres (e.g., poetry, nonfiction, slave narrative,captivity narrative, literary fiction, genre fiction, sermon, public proclamations, letters, etc.).They can differentiate primary and secondary institutions in thesociety.
2. Identify relationships between moments in American history, colonialism, and culture and their representation in works of American literature.The students can explain the evolutionary changes of Economic and Political Organizations among tribe population.
3. Articulate ways that American literature reflects complexhistorical and cultural experiences.
4. Produce a mix of critical, creative, and/or reflective worksabout American literature to 1865.
5. Analyze and describe American literature using standard literary terminology and other literary conventions.

Unit I Poetry I

E.M. Forster – The Prologue

Passage to India (Lines 1-68)

Walt Whitman – O Captain, My Captain!

Unit II Poetry II

Sherman Alexie – Crow Testament, EvolutionEdgar

Allan Poe – The Raven

Emily Dickinson – Because I Could Not Stop for Death.

Unit III Prose

Edgar Allan Poe – The Philosophy of CompositionMartin Luther King Jr. – I Have a Dream

Abraham Lincoln – Gettysburg Address

Unit IV Drama

Tennessee Williams – The Glass Menagerie

Eugene O'Neill – The Emperor Jones

Unit V Fictiom

Harriet Beecher Stowe – Uncle Tom's Cabin

Herman Melville – Billy Budd

Washington Irving – The Legend of Sleepy Hollow, Rip Van Winkle

References:

1. Dickinson, Emily, and Johanna Brownell. Emily Dickinson: Poems. ChartwellBooks, 2015.
2. Gould, Jean. American Women Poets: Pioneers of Modern Poetry. Dodd,Mead, 1980.
3. Poe, Edgar Allan, et al. Poetry for Young People: Edgar Allan Poe. Sterling Pub.Co., 1995.
4. Kallen, Stuart A., and Terry Boles. The Gettysburg Address. Abdo & Daughters,1994.

Web Sources:

1. "Harriet Beecher Stowe's Uncle Tom's Cabin." 2003. https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315812113.
2. Mason, Ronald. "Herman Melville and 'Billy Budd.'" Tempo, no. 21, 1951, pp.6–8. https://doi.org/10.1017/s0040298200054863

Books Prescribed:

1. Levine, Robert S., et al. The Norton Anthology of American Literature. W.W.Norton & Company, 2022.

Unit I

Poetry I

UNIT- I POETRY

CONTENT OF UNIT- I

- Passage to India (The Prologue lines 1 to 68) by E.M. Forster
- O Captain, My Captain! by Walt Whitman

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Gain intense knowledge of poetry
2. Understand the literary terms and devices
3. Critically analyse poetry
4. Identify patterns in terms of sound, form, and ideas
5. Create simple poem by using literary devices

Section 1.1 Passage to India (The Prologue)

1.1.1 Introduction to E.M. Forster

E.M. Forster, born Edward Morgan Forster on January 1, 1879, in London, is one of the most significant English novelists of the 20th century. He is known for his keen social observations and deep humanism. Forster's work often critiques the social mores and class structures of his time. His novels frequently explore the complexities of human relationships and the conflicts that arise from cultural and societal differences.

Forster's masterpiece, *A Passage to India*, published in 1924, is a profound exploration of the British colonial presence in India and its effects on both the colonizers and the colonized. Set against the backdrop of the waning days of the British Raj, the novel examines the intricate and often strained relationships between the British and the Indian people. Through the experiences of its characters, the novel delves into themes of friendship, prejudice, and the pervasive misunderstandings that arise from cultural divides.

After *A Passage to India,* Forster was awarded a Benson Medal in 1937. In the 1930s and 1940s Forster became a notable broadcaster on BBC Radio, and while George Orwell was the BBC India Section talks producer from 1941 to 1943, he commissioned from Forster a weekly book review. Forster became publicly associated with the British Humanist Association. In addition to his broadcasting, he advocated individual liberty and penal reform and opposed censorship by writing articles, sitting on committees and signing letters.

His first novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905), tells of Lilia, a young English widow who falls in love with an Italian, and of the efforts of her bourgeois relatives to get her back from Monteriano (based on San Gimignano). Philip Herriton's mission to retrieve her from Italy has features in common with that of Lambert Strether in Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. Forster discussed James' novel ironically and somewhat disapprovingly in his book *Aspects of the Novel* (1927). The novel was adapted as a 1991 film directed by Charles Sturridge.

Next, Forster published *The Longest Journey* (1907), an inverted Bildungsroman following the lame Rickie Elliott from Cambridge to a career as a struggling writer and then as a schoolmaster, married to an unappealing Agnes Pembroke. In a series of

scenes on the Wiltshire hills, which introduce Rickie's wild half-brother Stephen Wonham, Forster attempts a kind of sublime related to those of Thomas Hardy and D. H. Lawrence. Forster and his mother stayed at Pensione Simi, now Hotel Jennings Riccioli, Florence, in 1901. Forster took inspiration from this stay for the Pension Bertolini in *A Room with a View*.

Forster's third novel, *A Room with a View* (1908), is his lightest and most optimistic. It was started in 1901, before any of his others, initially under the title Lucy. It explores young Lucy Honeychurch's trip to Italy with a cousin, and the choice she must make between the free-thinking George Emerson and the repressed aesthete Cecil Vyse. George's father Mr Emerson quotes thinkers who influenced Forster, including Samuel Butler. It was adapted as a film of the same name in 1985 by the Merchant Ivory team, starring Helena Bonham Carter and Daniel Day-Lewis, and as a televised adaptation of the same name in 2007 by Andrew Davies.

1.1.2. Introduction to "The Prologue"

The prologue of *A Passage to India* by E.M. Forster sets the stage for a grand and symbolic journey to India, exploring themes of exploration, spirituality, and human connection. It invokes imagery of ancient and mythical journeys, like those of Atlantis and Odysseys, and presents a vision of a vast, mysterious, and eternal quest. The prologue emphasizes the continuity of human aspiration, linking the ancient past with the modern world. It speaks to the universal and timeless nature of the search for understanding and enlightenment, blending historical, mythical, and prophetic elements to foreshadow the deeper narrative and themes of the poem.

1.1.3. Summary

In the prologue of E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, the opening lines (1-68) introduce the setting and atmosphere of the fictional city of Chandrapore. Here is a detailed summary of the lines:

Setting Introduction: The passage begins with a vivid description of Chandrapore, emphasizing its unimpressive and unremarkable appearance from a distance. The city is depicted as typical and somewhat squalid, lying beside the River Ganges. This initial depiction sets the tone for the reader's perception of the place.

Detailed Landscape: Forster paints a picture of the landscape, focusing on the river, the plain, and the Marabar Hills. The river is portrayed as a significant yet not particularly beautiful feature. The plain is hot and dry, with a monotonous landscape that contrasts with the hills in the distance.

Marabar Caves: The Marabar Hills are notable for containing the famous Marabar Caves, which are described as ancient and mysterious. These caves are depicted with an aura of mystique and play a critical role in the novel's events. The hills themselves are barren, suggesting a stark and somewhat ominous presence.

Contrast with British Sector: The narrative then shifts to highlight the contrast between the native part of Chandrapore and the British colonial sector. The British civil station, separated from the main city, is described as more orderly and pleasant, with well-maintained bungalows, a club, and a hospital. This contrast underscores the segregation and different standards of living between the colonizers and the colonized.

Social Commentary: Forster subtly introduces social commentary through these descriptions. The division between the native city and the British sector hints at the racial and cultural divides central to the novel's themes. The descriptions are imbued with a sense of colonial critique, foreshadowing the tensions that will unfold in the narrative.

Mood and Atmosphere: The mood set by the prologue is one of unease and anticipation. The detailed, almost clinical, description of the setting builds a sense of foreboding, suggesting that the outward simplicity and apparent mundanity of Chandrapore and its surroundings hide deeper complexities and conflicts. Through these opening lines, Forster effectively establishes the physical and social setting of *A Passage to India*, laying the groundwork for the exploration of themes related to colonialism, cultural clash, and the human condition.

1.1.3.1 Poetic Lines

"Not yet, not yet, O earth, hast thou

Completed thy great cycle, half, as yet,

Of eons and of spaces past. A sky
Invisible and changeless bends above,
O'erall a changeless earth, while here and there
Along its surface, neath the larger stars,
Lie sphinxes in whose eyes, and not in man's,
The meaning of the stars and of the earth
Lives, while man sees but changes and in these
Hoping some secret of the changeless sky,
Looks, as of old, and finds it not, and dies.

So looked, and looked in vain, and died at last,
Of those who on this hill of heaven, before
Its shining gates and bars, are fallen and gone,
Dead centuries ago, and all in vain;
And many more, and some of these the best
And noblest of their time, the fruit of life,
Who came to find some meaning in the sky
Or in the earth some secret of their fate,
And, as they came, they found a lovely vale,
A valley of sweet waters, and therein
A city and a temple, and a throne,
But not the sign they sought, for all in vain.

And he who found this place did build himself
A city and a temple, and his throne
He set thereon, and life came up to him,

And earth looked kindly on him, and the sky
Smiled as if glad to see his state, but yet
His soul was not at peace, for all in vain.

And he who built this city in the vale,
And built therein a temple and a throne,
And bade life come to him, and all the earth
Lay round him as a garden, and the sky
Looked kindly on his joy, yet found it not,
The peace he sought, nor yet the sign he sought,
The secret of the stars, and, seeking, died.

And many another came, and many an age
Found him a place and temple in this vale,
A lovely valley watered by sweet streams,
A place of pleasant waters, and the sky
Was kind to him, and earth lay round his state,
And life came up to him, but not the sign
He sought, and all in vain his seeking, so
He passed, as passed before him all his kin.

Not yet, not yet, O earth, hast thou fulfilled
Thy cycle and the ages of thy law
Perfected all thy purpose and thy will,
changeless earth, O heaven that cannot change.
So in our time when came the seekers here

They came and found a valley and a throne,

And on this hill of heaven, neath the stars,

They built a lovely city, and the earth

Smiled on their toil, and all was theirs but peace.

And seeking still for peace they died, and so

Shall die till earth is changed and heaven is changed.

Not yet, not yet, O earth, hast thou fulfilled

Thy cycle and the ages of thy law."

1.1.4 Analysis

E.M. Forster's novel *A Passage to India* opens with a richly descriptive prologue that introduces the fictional city of Chandrapore. In the first 68 lines, Forster not only sets the physical stage for the narrative but also subtly hints at the broader themes of colonialism, cultural divide, and the enigmatic nature of India itself. This essay explores how the prologue serves as a microcosm of the novel's central concerns, establishing an atmosphere of foreboding and highlighting the contrasts between the British and Indian worlds.

The prologue begins with a description of Chandrapore that emphasizes its ordinary and somewhat unattractive nature. From a distance, the city appears unimpressive, lying beside the Ganges River. Forster's language here is deliberately understated, suggesting that Chandrapore, like many colonial outposts, lacks any remarkable features that would distinguish it from countless other towns in India. This initial depiction sets the tone for the reader's perception of the place as mundane and unexceptional.

As Forster delves deeper into the landscape, he introduces the Marabar Hills, a significant geographic and symbolic element in the novel. The hills, with their ancient and mysterious Marabar Caves, stand in stark contrast to the flat, hot plains surrounding them. The caves, described with an aura of mystique, are depicted as ancient and enigmatic, suggesting that they hold secrets and complexities beyond the grasp of the colonial mind. This description foreshadows their pivotal role in the

narrative and hints at the broader theme of the inscrutability of India to the British colonizers.

The narrative then shifts to the British sector of Chandrapore, highlighting the stark contrast between the native city and the colonial enclave. The British civil station, with its orderly bungalows, club, and hospital, stands apart from the squalor and chaos of the native city. This physical separation underscores the social and racial divides that define the colonial experience. The British sector is depicted as a bubble of relative comfort and familiarity amidst the alien environment of India, reflecting the colonizers' attempts to recreate a semblance of home while maintaining their distance from the native population.

Forster's detailed and almost clinical descriptions serve a dual purpose. On one level, they provide a vivid and tangible sense of place, immersing the reader in the physical environment of Chandrapore. On another level, they function as a form of social commentary, subtly critiquing the colonial enterprise. The division between the native city and the British sector is not merely a matter of geography but a reflection of deeper cultural and racial divides. Forster's prose captures the uneasy coexistence of these two worlds, foreshadowing the tensions and conflicts that will drive the novel's plot.

The mood established by the prologue is one of unease and anticipation. The detailed descriptions of the setting create a sense of foreboding, suggesting that beneath the outward simplicity and apparent mundanity of Chandrapore and its surroundings lies a world of hidden complexities and potential conflicts. The Marabar Caves, in particular, are imbued with a sense of mystery and danger, symbolizing the unknown and unknowable aspects of India that will challenge the characters' perceptions and beliefs.

In conclusion, the prologue of *A Passage to India* serves as a microcosm of the novel's central themes and concerns. Through his vivid descriptions of the physical setting, Forster establishes the atmosphere and sets the stage for the exploration of colonial tensions, cultural divides, and the enigmatic nature of India. The contrasts between the native city and the British sector highlight the social and racial divides that

define the colonial experience, while the mysterious Marabar Caves foreshadow the deeper complexities and conflicts that will unfold. In this way, the prologue not only introduces the reader to the world of Chandrapore but also invites them to consider the broader implications of the colonial encounter.

1.1.5. Themes

The Difficulty of English-Indian Friendship

A Passage to India begins and ends by posing the question of whether it is possible for an Englishman and an Indian to ever be friends, at least within the context of British colonialism. Forster uses this question as a framework to explore the general issue of Britain's political control of India on a more personal level, through the friendship between Aziz and Fielding. At the beginning of the novel, Aziz is scornful of the English, wishing only to consider them comically or ignore them completely. Yet the intuitive connection Aziz feels with Mrs. Moore in the mosque opens him to the possibility of friendship with Fielding. Through the first half of the novel, Fielding and Aziz represent a positive model of liberal humanism: Forster suggests that British rule in India could be successful and respectful if only English and Indians treated each other as Fielding and Aziz treat each other—as worthy individuals who connect through frankness, intelligence, and good will.

Yet in the aftermath of the novel's climax—Adela's accusation that Aziz attempted to assault her and her subsequent disavowal of this accusation at the trial—Aziz and Fielding's friendship falls apart. The strains on their relationship are external in nature, as Aziz and Fielding both suffer from the tendencies of their cultures. Aziz tends to let his imagination run away with him and to let suspicion harden into a grudge. Fielding suffers from an English literalism and rationalism that blind him to Aziz's true feelings and make Fielding too stilted to reach out to Aziz through conversations or letters. Furthermore, their respective Indian and English communities pull them apart through their mutual stereotyping. As we see at the end of the novel, even the landscape of India seems to oppress their friendship. Forster's final vision of the possibility of English-Indian friendship is a pessimistic one, yet it is qualified by the possibility of friendship on English soil, or after the liberation of India. As the landscape

itself seems to imply at the end of the novel, such a friendship may be possible eventually, but “not yet.”

The Unity of All Living Things

Though the main characters of A Passage to India are generally Christian or Muslim, Hinduism also plays a large thematic role in the novel. The aspect of Hinduism with which Forster is particularly concerned is the religion’s ideal of all living things, from the lowliest to the highest, united in love as one. This vision of the universe appears to offer redemption to India through mysticism, as individual differences disappear into a peaceful collectivity that does not recognize hierarchies. Individual blame and intrigue is forgone in favor of attention to higher, spiritual matters. Professor Godbole, the most visible Hindu in the novel, is Forster’s mouthpiece for this idea of the unity of all living things. Godbole alone remains aloof from the drama of the plot, refraining from taking sides by recognizing that all are implicated in the evil of Marabar. Mrs. Moore, also, shows openness to this aspect of Hinduism. Though she is a Christian, her experience of India has made her dissatisfied with what she perceives as the smallness of Christianity. Mrs. Moore appears to feel a great sense of connection with all living creatures, as evidenced by her respect for the wasp in her bedroom.

Yet, through Mrs. Moore, Forster also shows that the vision of the oneness of all living things can be terrifying. As we see in Mrs. Moore’s experience with the echo that negates everything into “boum” in Marabar, such oneness provides unity but also makes all elements of the universe one and the same—a realization that, it is implied, ultimately kills Mrs. Moore. Godbole is not troubled by the idea that negation is an inevitable result when all things come together as one. Mrs. Moore, however, loses interest in the world of relationships after envisioning this lack of distinctions as a horror. Moreover, though Forster generally endorses the Hindu idea of the oneness of all living things, he also suggests that there may be inherent problems with it. Even Godbole, for example, seems to recognize that something—if only a stone—must be left out of the vision of oneness if the vision is to cohere. This problem of exclusion is, in a sense, merely another manifestation of the individual difference and hierarchy that Hinduism promises to overcome.

The "Muddle" of India

Forster takes great care to strike a distinction between the ideas of "muddle" and "mystery" in *A Passage to India*. "Muddle" has connotations of dangerous and disorienting disorder, whereas "mystery" suggests a mystical, orderly plan by a spiritual force that is greater than man. Fielding, who acts as Forster's primary mouthpiece in the novel, admits that India is a "muddle," while figures such as Mrs. Moore and Godbole view India as a mystery. The muddle that is India in the novel appears to work from the ground up: the very landscape and architecture of the countryside is formless, and the natural life of plants and animals defies identification. This muddled quality to the environment is mirrored in the makeup of India's native population, which is mixed into a muddle of different religious, ethnic, linguistic, and regional groups.

The muddle of India disorients Adela the most—indeed, the events at the Marabar Caves that trouble her so much can be seen as a manifestation of this muddle. By the end of the novel, we are still not sure what actually has happened in the caves. Forster suggests that Adela's feelings about Ronny become externalized and muddled in the caves, and that she suddenly experiences these feelings as something outside of her. The muddle of India also affects Aziz and Fielding's friendship, as their good intentions are derailed by the chaos of cross-cultural signals.

Though Forster is sympathetic to India and Indians in the novel, his overwhelming depiction of India as a muddle matches the manner in which many Western writers of his day treated the East in their works. As the noted critic Edward Said has pointed out, these authors' "orientalizing" of the East made Western logic and capability appear self-evident, and, by extension, portrayed the West's domination of the East as reasonable or even necessary.

The Negligence of British Colonial Government

Though A Passage to India is in many ways a highly symbolic, or even mystical, text, it also aims to be a realistic documentation of the attitudes of British colonial officials in India. Forster spends large sections of the novel characterizing different typical attitudes the English hold toward the Indians whom they control. Forster's satire is most harsh toward Englishwomen, whom the author depicts as overwhelmingly racist,

self-righteous, and viciously condescending to the native population. Some of the Englishmen in the novel are as nasty as the women, but Forster more often identifies Englishmen as men who, though condescending and unable to relate to Indians on an individual level, are largely well-meaning and invested in their jobs. For all Forster's criticism of the British manner of governing India, however, he does not appear to question the right of the British Empire to rule India. He suggests that the British would be well served by becoming kinder and more sympathetic to the Indians with whom they live, but he does not suggest that the British should abandon India outright. Even this lesser critique is never overtly stated in the novel, but implied through biting satire.

1.1.6 Literary Devices

Genre

A Passage to India is a Modernist novel. It is also a psychological novel.

Narrator

Forster uses an unnamed third-person narrator in the novel.

Point of View

The novel's third-person narrator is omniscient and is attuned both to the physical world and the inner states of the characters.

Tone

Forster's tone in *A Passage to India* is often poetic and sometimes ironic or philosophical.

Tense

The novel is told in the immediate past tense.

Setting

A Passage to India is set in India—specifically the cities of Chandrapore and Mau—and takes place in the 1910s or 1920s.

Rising Action

Rising action in the novel includes Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore's arrival in India; the women befriending of Dr. Aziz; Adela's reluctant engagement to Ronny

Heaslop; Ronny and the other Englishmen's disapproval of the women's interaction with Indians; Dr. Aziz's organization of an outing to the Marabar Caves for his English friends; Adela's and Mrs. Moore's harrowing experiences in the caves; Adela's public insinuation that Dr. Aziz assaulted her in the caves; and the inflammation of racial tensions between the Indians and English in Chandrapore.

Climax

The climax occurs during Aziz's trial; Adela's final admission that she is mistaken in her accusations and that Aziz is innocent; the courtroom's subsequent eruption; Dr. Aziz's release; and the English community's rejection of Adela.

Falling Action

Falling actions include Fielding's conversations with Adela; Fielding and Dr. Aziz's bickering over Dr. Aziz's desire for reparations from Adela; Dr. Aziz's assumption that Fielding has betrayed him and will marry Adela; Dr. Aziz's increasingly anti-British sentiment; Fielding's visit to Aziz with his new wife, Stella; and Dr. Aziz's befriending of Ralph and forgiveness of Fielding.

1.1.7. Sum Up

In the prologue of E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, the setting and atmosphere of the fictional city of Chandrapore are introduced, laying the groundwork for the novel's exploration of colonial India. The city is depicted as unimpressive and somewhat squalid, lying beside the Ganges River. The landscape is described with a sense of monotony, characterized by a hot and dry plain. In the distance, the Marabar Hills rise, containing the mysterious and ancient Marabar Caves, which play a crucial role in the story.

The narrative highlights the stark contrast between the native part of Chandrapore and the British colonial sector. The British civil station is separate, depicted as orderly and pleasant, with well-maintained bungalows, a club, and a hospital, reflecting the segregation and differing standards of living between the colonizers and the colonized. This division foreshadows the racial and cultural tensions central to the novel's themes.

Forster's detailed descriptions create an atmosphere of unease and anticipation, suggesting that beneath the outward simplicity and mundanity of Chandrapore lie deeper complexities and potential conflicts. The prologue effectively sets the stage for the exploration of themes related to colonialism, cultural clash, and the enigmatic nature of India.

1.1.8 Self Assessment

Objective Questions:

1. What is the primary river mentioned in the prologue of *A Passage to India*?
   a) Yamuna
   b) Ganges
   c) Indus
   d) Brahmaputra
2. How is Chandrapore first described in the prologue?
   a) Impressive and grand
   b) Unimpressive and squalid
   c) Beautiful and lush
   d) Bustling and modern
3. What geographical feature lies in the distance from Chandrapore?
   a) A dense forest
   b) The Marabar Hills
   c) A vast desert
   d) A high mountain range
4. What significant natural feature is associated with the Marabar Hills?
   a) A waterfall
   b) The Marabar Caves
   c) A large lake

d) A sacred temple

5. Which part of Chandrapore is depicted as orderly and well-maintained?

a) The native city

b) The British civil station

c) The marketplace

d) The industrial area

6. What is one of the key facilities mentioned in the British sector of Chandrapore?

a) A university

b) A club

c) A cinema

d) A shopping mall

7. What theme is foreshadowed by the description of the Marabar Caves?

a) Adventure and exploration

b) The beauty of nature

c) Mystery and the unknown

d) Technological advancement

8. What does the separation between the native city and the British sector symbolize?

a) Economic disparity

b) Environmental conservation

c) Racial and cultural divides

d) Political instability

9. What type of mood is established in the prologue through the description of the setting?

a) Joyful and celebratory

b) Tense and foreboding

c) Peaceful and serene

d) Exciting and adventurous

10. What does Forster's detailed description of Chandrapore's landscape suggest about the city?

a) It is a tourist attraction

b) It hides deeper complexities

c) It is a cultural hub

d) It is rapidly modernizing

Answer Key

1. b) Ganges
2. b) Unimpressive and squalid
3. b) The Marabar Hills
4. b) The Marabar Caves
5. b) The British civil station
6. b) A club
7. c) Mystery and the unknown
8. c) Racial and cultural divides
9. b) Tense and foreboding
10. b) It hides deeper complexities

Short Answer Questions

1. What river is Chandrapore situated beside?

The Ganges River.

2. How does Forster initially describe the appearance of Chandrapore?

As unimpressive and somewhat squalid.

3. Which geographical feature in the distance contrasts with the plain surrounding Chandrapore?

The Marabar Hills.

4. What notable feature is found within the Marabar Hills?

The Marabar Caves.

5. How is the British civil station described in contrast to the native city?

It is described as orderly and well-maintained.

6. What types of facilities are found in the British sector of Chandrapore?

Bungalows, a club, and a hospital.

7. What does the presence of the Marabar Caves foreshadow in the narrative?

Mystery and the unknown.

8. What broader themes does the separation between the native city and the British sector reflect?

Racial and cultural divides.

9. What mood is created by Forster's description of Chandrapore and its surroundings?

A mood of unease and anticipation.

10. What does Forster's detailed description of the landscape suggest about the nature of Chandrapore?

It suggests that Chandrapore hides deeper complexities beneath its outward simplicity.

Essay Questions:

1. Discuss the significance of the Ganges River in the prologue of "A Passage to India." How does Forster use this river to set the tone and context of the story?

2. Analyze the contrasting descriptions of the native city and the British civil station in the prologue. What do these descriptions reveal about colonial attitudes and the social dynamics in Chandrapore?

3. Explore the symbolism of the Marabar Caves as introduced in the prologue. How do these caves foreshadow events and themes that will unfold later in the novel?

4. Discuss how the caves might symbolize mystery, the unknown, and the cultural misunderstandings central to the novel's plot.

5. How does Forster create an atmosphere of foreboding in the prologue? Identify and analyze the literary techniques he uses to establish this mood.

6. Consider elements such as word choice, imagery, and tone, and explain how they contribute to the overall sense of unease and anticipation.

Glossary:

1. Passage to India: Refers to a journey to India, evoking themes of exploration, spiritual quest, and discovery.
2. Prologue: The introductory section of the poem, setting the stage for the themes and journey.
3. Seest: An archaic form of "see," meaning to perceive or to look at.
4. Thee: Archaic form of "you," used to address someone directly.
5. Surging: Moving in a powerful, swelling manner, often associated with waves or large crowds.
6. Prophetic: Foretelling or predicting the future, often with a sense of spiritual or divine insight.
7. Environed: Surrounded, encircled.
8. Navigators: Those who steer or direct the course of ships or other vehicles.
9. Fabled: Legendary or mythical, often referring to stories passed down through generations.
10. Odysseys: Long, adventurous journeys, often filled with challenges and personal growth.
11. Atlantis: A mythical island mentioned by the philosopher Plato, often associated with advanced civilizations and mysterious disappearances.
12. Vast: Enormous, immense in size or scope.
13. Mysterious: Difficult to understand or explain; full of secrets.
14. Subtler: More delicate or refined; not immediately obvious.
15. Infinite: Without limits or end; immeasurable.
16. Immortal: Living forever; not subject to death.
17. Gently: Softly, with kindness or care.
18. Bards: Poets, especially those who recite epic poems and stories.
19. Seer: A person who is able to see what the future holds; a prophet.
20. Archaic: Ancient, old-fashioned.

21. Vistas: Views or prospects, often of beautiful landscapes or scenes.
22. Primal: Original, first, or fundamental.
23. Savannahs: Grassy plains, often found in tropical and subtropical regions.
24. Ethereal: Light, airy, or heavenly; not earthly.
25. Aerial: Related to the air; high up or lofty.
26. Haughtiest: Most proud or arrogant.
27. Moderns: People of contemporary times, often contrasted with those from ancient times.
28. Epochs: Periods of time in history, marked by significant events or changes.
29. Volcanic: Relating to or resembling a volcano; explosive or fiery.
30. Titanic: Enormous, powerful, and awe-inspiring.
31. Battles: Fights or conflicts, often on a large scale.
32. Genesis: The origin or beginning of something; also the first book of the Bible, which describes the creation of the world.
33. Civilizations: Complex societies with established institutions, cultures, and technologies.
34. Agonistic: Striving or contending, especially in a competitive or combative way.
35. Vivid: Bright, clear, and lively; producing strong, clear images in the mind.
36. Transits: Passages or movements from one place to another.
37. Eternal: Lasting forever; without beginning or end

Section 1.2. O Captain, My Captain! by Walt Whitman

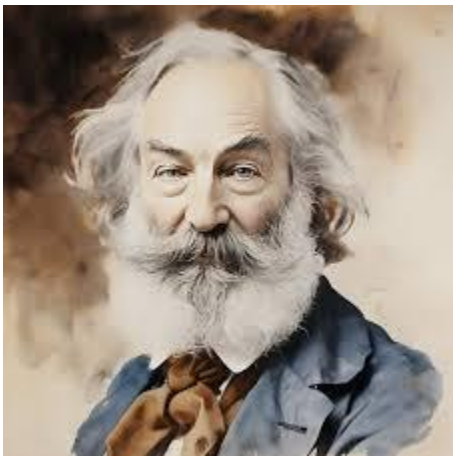
1.2.1 Introduction to Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman (born May 31, 1819, West Hills, Long Island, New York, U.S.—died March 26, 1892, Camden, New Jersey) was an American poet, journalist, and essayist whose verse collection *Leaves of Grass*, first published in 1855, is a landmark in the history of American literature.

Whitman continued practicing his new style of writing in his private notebooks, and in 1856 the second edition of Leaves of Grass appeared. This collection contained revisions of the poems of the first edition and a new one, the “Sun-down Poem” (later to become “Crossing Brooklyn Ferry”). The second edition was also a financial failure, and once again Whitman edited a daily newspaper, the Brooklyn Times, but was unemployed by the summer of 1859. In 1860 a Boston publisher brought out the third edition of *Leaves of Grass*, greatly enlarged and rearranged, but the outbreak of the American Civil War bankrupted the firm. The 1860 volume contained the “Calamus” poems, which record a personal crisis of some intensity in Whitman’s life, an apparent homosexual love affair (whether imagined or real is unknown), and “Premonition” (later entitled “Starting from Paumanok”), which records the violent emotions that often drained the poet’s strength. “A Word out of the Sea” (later entitled “Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking”) evoked some sombre feelings, as did “As I Ebb’d with the Ocean of Life,” “Chants Democratic,” “Enfans d’Adam,” “Messenger Leaves,” and “Thoughts” were more in the poet’s earlier vein.

Leaves of Grass

Walt Whitman is known primarily for *Leaves of Grass*, though it is actually more than one book. During Whitman's lifetime it went through nine editions, each with its own distinct virtues and faults. Whitman compared the finished book to a cathedral long under construction, and on another occasion to a tree, with its cumulative rings of growth. Both metaphors are misleading, however, because he did not construct his book unit by unit or by successive layers but constantly altered titles, diction, and even motifs and shifted poems—omitting, adding, separating, and combining. Beginning with the third edition (1860), he grouped the poems under such titles as "Chants Democratic," "Enfans d'Adam" (later "Children of Adam"), "Calamus," "Poems of Joy," and "Sea-Drift." Some of his later group titles were highly connotative, such as "Birds of Passage," "By the Roadside," "Autumn Rivulets," "From Noon to Starry Night," and "Songs of Parting," suggesting a life allegory. But the poems were not arranged in order of composition, either within a particular group or from one group to another. After 1881 Whitman made no further shifts in groups or revisions of poems within the groups, merely adding the poems of "Sands at Seventy" and "Good-Bye My Fancy."



Whitman's aim was to transcend traditional epics, to eschew normal aesthetic form, and yet by reflecting American society to enable the poet and his readers to realize themselves and the nature of their American experience. He has continued to hold the attention of very different generations because he offered the welcome conviction that "the crowning growth of the United States" was to be spiritual and heroic and because he was able to uncompromisingly express his own personality in poetic

form. Modern readers can still share his preoccupation with the problem of preserving the individual's integrity amid broader social pressures. Whitman invigorated language, he could be strong yet sentimental, and he possessed scope and inventiveness. He portrayed the relationships of an individual's body and soul and the universe in a new way, often emancipating poetry from contemporary conventions. He had sufficient universality to be considered one of the greatest American poets.

1.2.2. Background of the poem

Walt Whitman established his reputation as a poet in the late 1850s to early 1860s with the 1855 release of *Leaves of Grass*. Whitman intended to write a distinctly American epic and developed a free verse style inspired by the cadences of the King James Bible. The brief volume, first released in 1855, was considered controversial by some, with critics particularly objecting to Whitman's blunt depictions of sexuality and the poem's "homoerotic overtones". Whitman's work received significant attention following praise for *Leaves of Grass* by American transcendentalist lecturer and essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson.

At the start of the American Civil War, Whitman moved from New York to Washington, D.C., where he held a series of government jobs—first with the Army Paymaster's Office and later with the Bureau of Indian Affairs. He volunteered in the army hospitals as a nurse. Whitman's poetry was informed by his wartime experience, maturing into reflections on death and youth, the brutality of war, and patriotism. Whitman's brother, Union Army soldier George Washington Whitman, was taken prisoner in Virginia in September 1864, and held for five months in Libby Prison, a

Confederate prisoner-of-war camp near Richmond. On February 24, 1865, George was granted a furlough to return home because of his poor health, and Whitman travelled to his mother's home in New York to visit his brother. While visiting Brooklyn, Whitman contracted to have his collection of Civil War poems, Drum-Taps, published. In June 1865, James Harlan, the Secretary of the Interior, found a copy of *Leaves of Grass* and, considering the collection vulgar, fired Whitman from the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

1.2.3. O Captain, My Captain!

O Captain! my Captain! our fearful trip is done,

The ship has weather'd every rack, the prize we sought is won,

The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,

While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;

But O heart! heart! heart!

O the bleeding drops of red,

Where on the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;

Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills,

For you bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for you the shores a-crowding,

For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;

Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!

It is some dream that on the deck,

You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still,

My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will,

The ship is anchor'd safe and sound, its voyage closed and done,

From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;

Exult O shores, and ring O bells!

But I with mournful tread,

Walk the deck my Captain lies,

Fallen cold and dead.

1.2.4 Summary

The poem begins with the speaker addressing someone as his captain. He wants to inform him that the 'fearful trip' is complete. The ship has returned home from a dreadful voyage. It has survived (weathered) every storm (rack). And it's been a success; they have won the prize they have been fighting for.

Here one must recognize the speaker of the poem. He is none but a sailor. The readers are informed about the grueling journey that the crew of this ship has gone through to bring home the prize they fought for. We are so far not sure what the prize actually is. Have they won a game or even maybe a battle with a great outcome?

The ship is nearing the port. The church bells can be heard ringing. People are all celebrating (exulting) in joy. They are staring at the steady ship (keel) coming to the harbour. The ship now looks 'grim and daring'.

The ship is 'grim' because it has come back from a long hard voyage and has worn out. It is 'daring' because it has not only survived many hardships but has also been successful in its mission. The two words 'steady' and 'grim' associated with the ship in the final line stand in sharp contrast to the exulting and celebratory mood of the people on the shore. It brings a sense of gloom and uncertainty. Is something bad going to happen?

It looks like the speaker is utterly shocked, almost dumbstruck! He sees drops of blood on the ship. His captain's body lies on the board. The captain who was supposed to be welcomed grandly by the masses is now fallen on the deck, lifeless and cold.

The sailor calls the dead captain to rise up and hear the sound of the bells. The people have gathered to welcome their captain. They are waving the flag and playing

the bugle for him. They have brought bouquets and wreaths with ribbon to give him a grand welcome. The crowd is cheering for the captain. They are calling out to him. Their 'eager faces' say they can't wait to see their beloved captain. The profound admiration and reverence people hold for the captain is evident in the above extract.

The speaker puts his arms under the captain's head and tries to raise him as he calls him 'dear father'. Though the captain is not probably his father literally, he has done something of great responsibility to have earned that respect.

However, the speaker wishes that it is some dream he is going through. He cannot accept the reality that his dear captain is now dead and fallen on the deck.

The captain is not answering the speaker's repeated calls. His lips are now pale and motionless. He doesn't feel the speaker's hand under his head as he has no pulse now and no will power. It is no wonder that a dead man won't respond to calls and won't have feelings. But these lines actually highlight the unbearable pain and grief the speaker is going through at the death of the captain. It also suggests a great loss to the people.

As the ship has now been anchored safely at the harbour. Its journey is over. After a long tumultuous journey (fearful trip), the ship has now come back victorious (victor ship) with its mission fulfilled (object won). The speaker addresses the crowd on the shore and calls for celebration. He wants the bells ringing and the crowd cheering. After all, they are celebrating the homecoming of their ship and the success of the mission.While the crowd keeps erupting in joy, the speaker cannot join them. He stays all alone on the ship. Grief-stricken, he walks slowly towards where his beloved captain lies on the deck, cold and dead.

To understand the poem well, you must know that it is an extended metaphor in which the victory of the Union over the Confederacy in the American Civil War is compared to a ship returning home after a victory. The captain here is Abraham Lincoln, the former President of America, who guided the nation to the great victory. People exulting on shore indicates to the Union's joy and celebration after a long painful journey or war.

1.2.5 Analysis

Lines 1–4 The speaker is a crewman on a ship. He tells his Captain that their difficult trip is over and it has been a success. They're nearing the port, where a crowd waits to celebrate their return. On a figurative level, the opening lines introduce the metaphorical comparisons in the poem:

- The Captain is Abraham Lincoln.
- The ship is America.
- The "fearful trip" successfully completed is the Civil War.

The speaker also refers to "my" Captain, indicating a more personal relationship than that between a superior and subordinate.

Lines 5–8

The speaker reveals their success came at a high cost. The Captain is dead. The speaker is dejected.

The repetition of "heart" in the fifth line works to establish the speaker's grief over the Captain's death. Figuratively, it could represent the nation's initial reaction to Lincoln's death. There's a repetition of "my" Captain, emphasizing the feeling the speaker has for his superior.

Lines 9–12

The speaker implores his Captain to get up because everything's for him. The bells, the music, the flowers, the wreaths and the flag are all for him. The gathered crowd is there to celebrate the Captain, and they can't wait to see him. The speaker shows denial by asking someone he knows is dead to "rise up". He can't fully accept that it's true. Metaphorically, America celebrated President Lincoln after the Union's victory in the Civil War. The feeling was short-lived, as the celebratory feeling will be in these lines. All of the things waiting at the dock work for a celebration and a funeral:

- Bells and bugle trills can be used for a victory or for mourning.

- A flag can be flown to give glory or at half-mast.
- Bouquets, wreaths, and a gathered crowd are common to both events.

"My" Captain appears for the third time.

Lines 13–16

The crewman now refers to his Captain as "dear father," showing he viewed him as much more than a commanding officer. His denial continues as he says the Captain's death must be a dream. As a metaphor, Lincoln is being called a "father"—he was more than a leader as well, as America looked to him as a father-figure. Many Americans would have found it hard to believe Lincoln was dead, thinking it must be a dream.

Lines 17–20

The speaker isn't talking to his Captain now. He's beginning to accept that he's dead. The ship reaches port safely. He reaffirms that they've completed their objective. Likewise, individual Americans would eventually accept that Lincoln was dead. The fact remains that the Civil War was successfully fought. Again, the speaker says "my" Captain and adds "my" father. There's no doubt the speaker has lost much more than a commanding officer. The Captain has seen him through a difficult trip; his judgment has saved the speaker and the rest of the crew. He views himself as his Captain's son, as someone who was guided into maturity.

Lines 21–24

The crowd will celebrate the ship's triumphant return. The speaker, however, will mournfully walk the deck where his Captain died. Similarly, the nation in general will rejoice over their victorious military campaign. Some, however, like the speaker, will be in mourning over Lincoln's death. This tragedy will overshadow the greater victory.

The last use of "my" Captain shows the speaker forgoing the celebration to continue mourning. He's not ready to live on his own, even though soon, he will have to In the first stanza, Whitman calls upon the Captain (Lincoln) of the Ship (USA) that ‘fearful trip (dreadful Civil War) has come to an end. The people have won the victory at last, which they quested for i.e. the victory of the union.

Poet tells the captain that port (home) is very near and now he can hear the sound of temple bells and the cries of the enthusiastic people who are eagerly waiting for him. The enthusiasm increases as the ship reach near the port. Keel has been thrown off the ship so as to keep ship stable.

In the second stanza, Whitman tries to talk to the Captain, who, he knows well, is dead. This technique of talking to the dead is called apostrophe. The poet asks the captain to rise up as for him, bells are being rung, flags are being hoisted, musical instruments are being rung, flowers are being curled etc.

In the 3rd stanza, we find the duality of emotions. Whitman experiences the euphoria of their victory but at the same time laments over the death of Lincoln, which is a big loss for the nation. The poet says that now the captain is dead. His lips are pale. He can neither feel the arms of the poet not his heart is beating. It is such a time when the ship has arrived at its destination. The 'fearful trip' i.e. horrors of the Civil War is over now and there is relief among the people. People are rejoicing but the poet is mourning over the death of Lincoln. The 'deck' here refers to the cemetery of Lincoln. Poet, moving around this place, laments over his death. Hence the poem ends with both victories as well as loss.

1.2.6. Themes

Death and Mourning

As you already know, Whitman's poem "O Captain! My Captain!" is an elegy, mourning the death of President Abraham Lincoln at the end of the American Civil War.

Through this poem the poet pays a homage to his admired leader and it gives an expression to the nation's collective grief after the President's death. So, mourning a death is the main concern of the poem.

Victory and Loss

Victory and loss are two opposite ideas but they can go together. Often, when a battle is won, the winning side sees it as a great victory. But at the same time, there goes a sense of loss – loss of limitless lives and property in war.

Here in "O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman, the poet develops a similar theme when he portrays the victory of the Union in the Civil War and the death of President Lincoln at the same time. On one side, we see people on the shore exulting in joy and celebrating the victory, and on the other, there is the speaker mourning the death of the captain who guided the metaphorical ship ashore.

The Costs of Victory

The scene narrated in "O Captain! My Captain!" plays out against a backdrop of conflicting moods, as a ship sails back into its home port after a long and perilous ocean voyage. On the one hand, the poem is flooded with the jubilant celebration of crowds gathered along the shore, ringing their bells and blaring their bugles. On the other hand, the poem's speaker is on the deck of the ship cradling the head of his beloved captain, who has died before he could revel in his successful homecoming. These conflicting moods of celebration and mourning could be read simply as the product of unfortunate circumstances related to the captain's tragic and untimely death. However, it's important to remember that the poem's central scenario is an extended metaphor for the United States at the end of the Civil War. The captain is therefore a stand-in for President Abraham Lincoln, who led the Northern states to victory over the Confederacy, but then was assassinated before the passions of war could cool. In this way, the captain's death isn't just untimely; it also reflects Lincoln's own death, which Whitman presents as one of the tragic costs of victory.

Grief and the Challenge of Accepting Loss

The poem follows the speaker as he passes through three of the key stages of grief: shock, denial, and acceptance. In the first stanza, Whitman juxtaposes the

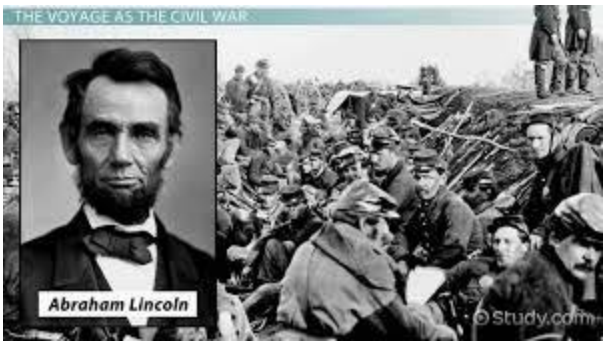
crowd's celebratory atmosphere with the speaker's mournful attitude. The starkness of this contrast becomes especially pronounced when the speaker interrupts his description of jubilant crowds with his pained cry: "O heart! heart! heart!" (line 5). Evidently, his captain's death has caused him quite a shock. Such a shock, in fact, that in the following stanza the speaker passes into a state of denial. He directly addresses his captain, acting as though he isn't dead and begging him to get up (lines 9–12):

Eventually, though, the speaker realizes that he has momentarily fallen into "some dream" (line 15), and that his captain is indeed deceased. Hence, in the poem's final stanza, as he examines his captain for vital signs, the speaker moves out of denial (lines 17–18). No longer using the second-person pronoun "you," the speaker now comprehends that his captain is irrevocably lost. As such, he at last enters the final phase of grief: acceptance.

Patriotism as a Form of Love

The speaker of Whitman's poem has a strong emotional reaction to the death of his captain, suggesting that he cared deeply for his superior officer. In fact, at two points in the poem the speaker addresses his captain as "father." Both times, the speaker is engaged in a moment of intimate care, cradling the captain's head with his arm and checking for signs of life. As an example, consider the opening of the third stanza (lines 17–18)

The speaker's shift from "Captain" to "father" indicates something more than mere respect for a superior officer. Indeed, the speaker clearly feels a great deal of love for his captain. Here, it's important to recall that the scenario set forth in the poem is an extended metaphor for the United States of America. The ship symbolizes the state, which the "captain"—that is, President Abraham Lincoln—has successfully navigated through the rough seas of the Civil War. With this in mind, the speaker's love for his captain may be said to stand in for the love Whitman feels for Lincoln. In other words, Whitman frames his own patriotism as a form of love for the man who led the nation through dire straits.



1.2.7. Literary Devices

Setting:

On the surface, the poem takes place on a ship that has reached the end of a long and dangerous ocean voyage, and which is now sailing into its home port. However, the scenario set forth in the poem also serves as an extended metaphor for the United States of America. The ship symbolizes the state, which the "captain"—that is, President Abraham Lincoln—has successfully navigated through the rough seas of the Civil War. The poem is thus better described as taking place in America, just as the Union secured victory and prevented the secession of the Confederacy. The end of the Civil War brought with it a contradictory atmosphere of celebration and devastation. Though glad for the restoration of peace, the nation remained torn apart by four years of violence. To add further to the turbulence of the time, President Lincoln was assassinated just five days after the South's surrender. Whitman reflects the contradictory emotions that attended the Civil War's end by depicting the speaker mourning his dead captain amid the jubilant sounds of celebration, as in lines 3–8: Despite "the people all exulting," the speaker still feels overcome with sadness.

Meter and Rhyme

In "O Captain! My Captain!" the first four lines in each stanza loosely follows an iambic meter (a duple or disyllabic meter where a stressed syllable comes after an unstressed one) and the rhyme scheme used is ABAB. But the next four lines doesn't seem to follow a particular metrical pattern and the rhyme scheme here is CDED.

O Cap- | tain! my | Captain! | our fear– | ful trip | is done,

The above line is in iambic hexameter (six feet) with an exception of a trochee (stressed-unstressed) in the third foot. The difference in the meter and the rhyme scheme between the first four and the last four lines in each stanza is also deliberate like the length of the lines. As the first quatrain speaks of the people's joy and celebration, it has a rather regular metrical pattern, suggesting a rhythm of life there. But the next quatrain mourns the loss at the captain's death. That is why it's lacking the rhythm.

Apostrophe

Apostrophe (uh-PAW-struh-fee) is a rhetorical figure in which a speaker makes a direct and explicit address, usually to an absent person or to an object or abstract entity. Whitman introduces this figure at the very beginning, with the expostulation "O Captain!" He then develops it in the poem's second stanza (lines 9–16), where the speaker directly addresses his captain using the second-person pronoun, "you":

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
*Rise up—for **you** the flag is flung—for **you** the bugle trills,*
*For **you** bouquets and ribbon'd wreaths—for **you** the shores a-crowding,*
*For **you** they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;*
Here Captain! dear father!
*This arm beneath **your** head!*
It is some dream that on the deck,
***You've** fallen cold and dead.*

The speaker's use of apostrophe in this passage is powerful precisely because he's calling out to a man he knows has died. In this regard, the speaker's use of apostrophe implies a form of denial. It's as if he's thinking, *How can you be dead when all this celebration is meant for you? I must be dreaming: you can't be dead! "Rise up" and greet the masses!* It's telling that the speaker ceases to use the second-person address in the third stanza. Once again referring to his dead leader as "My Captain" and

"My father" (lines 17 and 18), the speaker now seems to accept the truth of the man's passing.

Assonance and Consonance

Assonance and consonance are sibling concepts, in that they both refer to the repetition of certain sounds in adjacent or nearby words. *Assonance* specifically refers to the repetition of vowel sounds, whereas *consonance* refers to the repetition of consonant sounds. Whitman makes use of both techniques, often weaving them together as he does in line 10:

Rise up—for you the flag is flung—for you the bugle trills

The use of consonance here is perhaps most obvious, since four of the words begin with the same F sound: "**f**or you the **f**lag is **f**lung—**f**or you." As an example of consonance that occurs at the beginning of successive or nearby words, this technically counts as an example of *alliteration* (uh-LIT-er-AY-shun). More subtle in this same line is Whitman's use of assonance, which occurs in the oscillation between **U** and *OO* sounds: "Rise **u**p—for *you* the flag is fl**u**ng—for *you* the b*u*gle trills." Assonance and consonance appear elsewhere in the poem in similarly shifting ways. Consider, for example, lines 2–3, where repeating **A** and *EH/EE* oscillate with I and O sounds:

*The sh**i**p h**a**s wea**the**r'd every r**a**ck, the pr**i**ze we sought **i**s won,*
*The port **i**s near, the bells **I** hear, the people **a**ll exulting*

Also note, in these same lines, the subtle repetition of **P** and *R* sounds:

*The shi**p** has weather'd **e**v**e**ry rack, the **p**rize we sought is won,*
*The **p**ort is nea*r*, the bells I hea*r*, the **p**eople all exulting*

These and other examples of consonance enhance the overall rhetorical power of Whitman's language.

Extended Metaphor

An extended metaphor functions in the same way as an ordinary metaphor, but it differs in the amount of space allotted for its development. Whereas an ordinary metaphor may be mentioned in passing, an extended metaphor unfolds over the course of many lines. In “O Captain! My Captain!,” Whitman uses the conceit of a ship returning from a dangerous ocean voyage as an extended metaphor for the United States at the end of the Civil War. It’s worth noting that the poem itself doesn’t clarify the metaphorical nature of its conceit. That is, the poem doesn’t offer any telling clues that the ship represents the American nation, nor that the titular captain symbolizes President Abraham Lincoln.

1.2.8 Sum Up

The speaker of Whitman’s poem is a crew member on a ship that’s just survived a dangerous voyage. This fact alone suggests two things. First, the speaker is male, since only men were allowed to crew ships in the nineteenth century. Second, the speaker likely hasn’t reached middle age, since only younger men tended to have the fortitude to survive the exhaustion of life at sea. Other than that, the speaker would appear to be an ordinary man, one who is fiercely loyal to his captain—so loyal that he feels devastated in the wake of the man’s death. Of course, it’s important to recall that the poem’s conceit of a ship returning from an ocean voyage serves as an extended metaphor for the United States at the end of the Civil War. In this light, the speaker might best be understood as an ordinary American citizen. This man is motivated by a strong sense of patriotism that is aligned with the ideology of the Northern states that made up the Union. As such, the fierce loyalty he feels for his “captain” symbolizes a patriotic dedication to the leader of the Union: President Abraham Lincoln.

1.2.9. Self Assessment

Objective Questions

. 1. Which President is *O Captain! My Captain* based on?

a. Andrew Jackson

b. George Washington

c. Abraham Lincoln

d. John Adams

2. What consequence had the ship come upon?

a. Great stress.

b. Bad weather.

c. Death.

d. Everything was just right.

3. The story is connected with the _____ of Abraham Lincoln.

a. Death

b. Birth

c. Childhood

d. None of these

4. What did the ship win?

a. Competition.

b. A Prize

c. Emancipation.

d. Ship design

5. After the death of the captain, what had dropped on the deck?

a. His knife.

b. His hat.

c. His blood.

d. All of the above.

6. "Dear Father" means...

a. "Father of Our Nation"

b. "Our Country"

c. "God"

d. "Our People in Hands"

7. What does it mean to "rise up and hear the bells?"

a. Nothing happens.

b. Destiny.

c. Spirits are always wondering.

d. Live again.

8. What are the feelings of the people after the death?

a. Happy and joyful.

b. Relaxed and calm.

c. Not affected

d. Helpful and depressed.

9. What is "Will" being used as?

a. Spirit.

b. Alive.

c. Dead and gone.

D. Angle.

10. What is the meaning of "bugle?"

a. Instrument.

b. Decoration.

c. Angel.

d. Feelings and Emotions.

Answer Key:

1. C. Abraham Lincoln
2. A. Great stress
3. A. Death
4. B. A Prize
5. C. His blood.
6. A. "Father of Our Nation"
7. D. Live again.
8. D. Helpful and depressed.
9. A. Spirit.
10. A. Instrument.

Short Answer Questions

1. Who is the "Captain" referred to in the poem "O Captain! My Captain!"?

The "Captain" refers to Abraham Lincoln, the 16th President of the United States.

2. What is the "fearful trip" mentioned in the poem?

The "fearful trip" refers to the American Civil War.

3. What does the ship symbolize in "O Captain! My Captain!"?

The ship symbolizes the United States.

4. What is the mood of the crowd on the shore in the poem?

The mood of the crowd on the shore is celebratory and joyful.

5. What tragic event is revealed in the poem?

The tragic event revealed is the death of the Captain (Abraham Lincoln).

6. How does the speaker feel about the Captain's death?

The speaker feels deep sorrow and mourning for the Captain's death.

7. What does the phrase "the ship is anchored safe and sound" imply?

The phrase implies that the nation (the ship) has survived the Civil War and is now secure.

8. What literary device is predominantly used throughout the poem?

The poem predominantly uses extended metaphor, with the ship and Captain representing the nation and Lincoln.

9. Why is the poem considered an elegy?

The poem is considered an elegy because it mourns the death of a leader (Abraham Lincoln).

10. What is the significance of the repeated line "O Captain! My Captain!"?

The repeated line emphasizes the speaker's deep admiration and grief for the fallen leader, creating an emotional resonance

Essay Questions

1. Why is "O Captain! My Captain!" considered an elegiac poem?
2. Evaluate "O Captain! My Captain" as a historical poem.
3. How is the ship and its captain greeted in "O Captain! My Captain!"?
4. What does the speaker in "O Captain! My Captain!" see on the ship's deck?
5. What celebration is happening at the port in "O Captain! My Captain!"?
6. What is the literal and figurative journey in "O Captain! My Captain!" by Walt Whitman?
7. How does Whitman's "O Captain! My Captain!" capture feelings about Lincoln's assassination and the ship's captain imagery?
8. Who suggested Whitman write "O Captain! My Captain!"?
9. Where had the ship in "O Captain! My Captain!" been and why?
10. How do we learn of the captain's death in "O Captain! My Captain!"? What is the poem's most repeated phrase in the second stanza?

Glossary

1. Keel - one of the main longitudinal beams of the hull of a vessel
2. Vessel - a craft designed for water transportation
3. Grim - harshly uninviting or formidable in manner or appearance
4. Trill - sing or play alternating with the half note above or below
5. Bouquet - an arrangement of flowers that is usually given as a present
6. Wreath - a circular band of flowers or other foliage
7. Sway - move back and forth

8. Exult - feel extreme happiness or elation
9. Mournful - filled with or evoking sadness
10. Tread - a step in walking or running

Unit II

Poetry II

UNIT- II POETRY - II

CONTENT OF UNIT- II

- Sherman Alexie- Crow Testament, Evolution
- Edgar Allan Poe - The Raven
- Emily Dickinson - Because I Could Not Stop for Death.

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Gain intense knowledge of poetry
2. Understand the literary terms and devices
3. Critically analyse poetry
4. Identify patterns in terms of sound, form, and ideas
5. Create simple poem by using literary devices

2.1. Sherman Alexie- Crow Testament, Evolution

2.1.1 Introduction to Sherman Alexie

Alexi Sherman has published 26 books including his recently released memoir, You Don't Have to Say You Love Me, his first picture book, Thunder Boy Jr, and young adult novel, The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, all from Little, Brown Books; What I've Stolen, What I've Earned, a book of poetry, from Hanging Loose Press; and Blasphemy: New and Selected Stories, from Grove Press. We will try to examine the fundamental questions across all of his works: "What does it mean to live as an Indian in this time? What does it mean to be an Indian man? Finally, what does it mean to live on an Indian reservation?" The protagonists in most of his literary works exhibit a constant struggle with themselves and their own sense of powerlessness in white American society. The two poems selected for detailed discussions allow all the scope that we need to understand. We take up a para wise discussion to underline the

significant issues related to Native American identity in relation to the larger framework of American literature.

Sherman Alexie was born in 1966 in Spokane, Washington. He is a Spokane/Coeur d'Alene tribal member and grew up on the Spoken Indian Reservation. After a childhood plagued with illness, he attended Jesuit Gonzaga University before transferring to Washington State University in 1987. It was here that he first began to write poetry and prose. 48 Alexie has published a number of prize winning books that detail the lives of Native Americans living on reservations. One of his most well-known works, the collection of short stories, The Lone Ranger and Tonto Fistfight in Heaven, won a PEN/Hemingway Award. Additionally, his poetic works earned him the World Heavyweight Poetry title, which he held for four years.

2.1.2 Summary and Analysis

Stanza 1

Cain lifts Crow, that heavy black bird
and strikes down Abel.
Damn, says Crow,
I guess this is just the beginning.

Summary

In Sherman Alexie's poem, the poet draws a parallel between the biblical story of Cain and Abel and the relationship between Cain and Crow. Cain lifts Crow, a heavy black bird, which is an allusion to the biblical story of Cain killing his brother Abel. The poem also references the biblical narrative, where Cain becomes jealous of Abel and kills him, often considered the first murder in human history. Crow, witnessing the murder, acknowledges the violence and bloodshed as the beginning of a pattern of conflict that will persist.

Analysis

The poem uses biblical allusion and symbolism to explore the enduring theme of violence in human history and society. The lines reference the biblical story of Cain and Abel, where Cain's jealousy and anger lead to fratricide. Crow, a symbol of wisdom and insight, reflects the human capacity for violence and its enduring nature. The poem also

encourages reflection on the darker aspects of human nature, such as jealousy, anger, and violence, which have been present in humans since the beginning and continue to manifest in contemporary society.

Stanza 2

The white man, disguised
as a falcon, swoops in
and yet again steals a salmon
from Crow's talons.
Damn, says Crow, if I could swim
I would have fled this country years ago.

Summary

The author portrays a meeting between a Crow and a white man in these lines from the poem, who is represented by a falcon. The falcon swoops down and grabs a salmon from Crow's talons. Crow laments the situation and suggests that, if it had been possible, he would have fled the nation to avoid the ongoing oppression.

Analysis

The poem uses metaphors and imagery to represent the ongoing struggle and oppression faced by Native American communities. The white man is represented as a falcon, symbolizing power, aggression, and predatory behavior. The theft of the salmon from Crow's talons symbolizes the ongoing injustices suffered by Native American communities. Crow's response to the theft is a mix of frustration and resignation, reflecting his longing for escape. The theme of injustice is also conveyed through Crow's voice, highlighting the enduring impact of colonization and the sense of dispossession felt by indigenous peoples. The metaphor of swimming, referring to the inability to swim, can also be interpreted as a desire for freedom and liberation from oppression.

Stanza 3

The Crow God as depicted
in all of the reliable Crow bibles
looks exactly like a Crow.
Damn, says Crow, this makes it
so much easier to worship myself.

Summary

These lines from the poem talk about how the Crow God is portrayed in “reliable Crow bibles.” The Crow God is described as appearing exactly like a crow, which enables Crow to express comfort in worshipping himself.

Analysis

These lines explores the connection between the Crow people’s spirituality, cultural identity, and the natural world, highlighting the Crow God’s resemblance to a crow and the importance of self-affirmation and cultural pride. The lines also mention reliable Crow Bibles, sacred texts that guide the Crow people’s spiritual practices. The Crow God’s resemblance to nature reflects a deep connection to nature and a sense of identity. The lines encourage reflection on the relationship between spirituality, cultural identity, and the natural world, suggesting that the natural world serves as a source of spiritual connection and affirmation.

Stanza 4

Among the ashes of Jericho,
Crow sacrifices his firstborn son.
Damn, says Crow, a million nests
are soaked with blood.

Summary

These lines from the poem describe Crow offering a sacrifice in the ruins of Jericho. Specifically, Crow sacrifices his firstborn son, and as a result, a large number of nests are drenched in blood. The word “Damn” is used to describe Crow’s response to this act and its consequences.

Analysis

The poem explores themes of sacrifice, consequences, and spirituality in indigenous culture and biblical allusion. Crow’s sacrifice in Jericho resembles the Battle of Jericho, where the walls collapsed due to Israelites’ actions. The aftermath of the sacrifice results in a multitude of nests being soaked in blood, symbolizing the consequences of significant actions. The exclamation “Damn” reflects Crow’s reaction, highlighting the complex aspects of spirituality and ritual. The image of nests soaked in blood symbolizes the destruction and disruption of natural processes. The narrative

ambiguity invites the reader to contemplate the meaning and significance of Crow's sacrifice and its impact on the natural world.

Stanza 5

When Crows fight Crows
the sky fills with beaks and talons.
Damn, says Crow, it's raining feathers.

Summary

In these lines from the poem, the poet describes a dispute or fight among crows. When crows fight, the sky fills with their beaks and talons, resulting in a cascade of feathers. In response to this episode, Crow exclaims, "Damn," showing his displeasure with the falling feathers.

Analysis

The poem depicts a crow fight, highlighting the intelligence and complex social behaviors of these birds. The sky is filled with beaks and talons, symbolizing the intensity of the fight. The crows shed feathers, representing freedom, transformation, or spirituality. The crow's reaction, "Damn," humanizes the bird and emphasizes its relatability. The poem also contains symbolism and ambiguity, highlighting the complexities of nature and life, and emphasizing the intricate relationships and dynamics within the natural world. Overall, the poem highlights the multifaceted aspects of existence and the complexities of nature and life.

Stanza 6

Crow flies around the reservation
and collects empty beer bottles
but they are so heavy
he can only carry one at a time.
So, one by one, he returns them
but gets only five cents a bottle.
Damn, says Crow, redemption
is not easy.

Summary

These lines from the poem show Crow flying over a reserve and gathering empty beer bottles. However, the bottles are heavy, and Crow can only hold one at a time. Despite his efforts, he can only redeem them for five cents each. Crow responds with an outburst, highlighting that redemption is not easy.

Analysis

These lines depict Crow collecting empty beer bottles on the reservation, highlighting the challenges faced by Native American reservations. The limited carrying capacity reflects the struggle to address social issues and addiction. The concept of "redemption" carries symbolic weight, symbolizing the efforts to overcome problems related to alcohol consumption. The meager return of five cents per bottle highlights economic disparity and limited opportunities. Crow's exclamation of "Damn" expresses frustration or disillusionment with the task and limited rewards. These lines serve as social commentary, addressing issues like alcoholism, poverty, and the challenges of reservation life. Despite the challenges, Crow continues his task, showcasing resilience and determination to make a positive difference.

Stanza 7

Crow rides a pale horse
into a crowded powwow
but none of the Indian panic.
Damn, says Crow, I guess
they already live near the end of the world.

Summary

Crow is portrayed in these lines of the poem as riding a pale horse into a crowded powwow, a Native American gathering or celebration. Interestingly, despite the strange sight of Crow on a pale horse, none of the Native Americans in attendance panicked. In response, Crow says, "Damn," indicating astonishment or realizing that the attendants of the powwow are already close to the end of the world.

Analysis

The image of a Crow riding a pale horse symbolizes change and foreboding in Native American culture. The powwow, a gathering central to Native American culture,

is a symbol of cultural resilience and continuity. Crow's absence of panic suggests acceptance and resilience in the face of change or unusual events. His response, "Damn," conveys surprise and realization that the people at the powwow are accustomed to living in a world where unusual events may be the norm. The statement about living near the end of the world may refer to historical and ongoing challenges faced by Native American communities, such as displacement, cultural suppression, and environmental degradation. These lines offer social commentary on the experiences and perspectives of Native American communities, highlighting their resilience and adaptability in the face of adversity.

2.1.3. Literary Devices

Structure & Form

"Crow Yesterday" is a free-verse poem that does not contain a set rhyme scheme or meter. It consists of seven sections and each is different in respect to its subject matter. The overall poem is written in the manner of episodes of a larger body of work. What is ironic about the content is that Alexie has nothing more to add except a few lines in each section. It hints at how the European settlers destroyed the Indigenous American culture. The poet finds it difficult to recollect enough details to present in each section.

The overall text consists of several couplets and tercets. In each section, the poet first details the scene and then reveals what the crow's life is damned. Besides, the poet uses a pellucid style and easy-to-digest lines to present the story of the crow. Regarding the meter, the lines are written in a combination of iambic-trochaic feet.

Poetic Devices Alexie makes use of a number of poetic devices in "Crow Testament" that include the following ones.

- **Allusion:** Alexie's poem does not only contain several biblical allusions but also contains some contemporary references. The text begins with an allusion to Cain and Abel, the children of Adam and Eve. Alexie alludes to the episode where Cain kills Abel with a stone. Then the poet alludes to the biblical accounts of the

Battle of Jericho, Redemption, and Revelation or Apocalypse. The contemporary allusions include the building of the Grand Coulee Dam on the Colorado River, the First Salmon ceremony of the Native Americans, and their powwow.

- **Enjambment:** It occurs throughout the poem. Alexie uses this device to internally connect the lines. For example, this device is used in "Cain lifts Crow, that heavy black bird/ and strikes down Abel."
- **Repetition:** The phrase, "Damn, says Crow" is repeated in the last stanza of each section. Besides, the poet uses the repetition of the word "crow" as this poem centers on the creature's metaphorical testament.
- **Simile:** It occurs in "The white man, disguised/ as a falcon" and "looks exactly like a Crow".
- **Metaphor:** In this poem, the "crow" is a metaphor of Native American people. Alexie also uses this device in "a million nests/ are soaked with blood". Here, the poet compares the indigenous people's habitation to "nests".
- **Alliteration:** It occurs in "**C**ain lifts **C**row", "**b**lack **b**ird", "**s**teals a **s**almon", "**C**rows fight **C**rows", "**b**eer **b**ottles", etc.
- **Irony:** This device is used in a number of instances. For example, the lines "If I could swim/ I would have fled this country years ago", "in all of the reliable Crow bibles/ looks exactly like a crow", "so much easier to worship myself", etc.

Symbolism

Alexie's "Crow Testament" is a symbolic poem regarding the destruction of native American culture and their sufferings. The first symbol that is used in the poem is the very title itself. It refers to the testament of native Americans. Let's have a look at some important symbols that are used in the poem.

- **Crow:** The crow is used as a symbol of native Americans. It also stands for humankind as a whole.
- **Cain:** In the biblical narrative, "Cain" is a symbol of crime, brutality, and vice. He is the first murderer of humankind. Here, the poet uses this reference to symbolically hint at the Europeans.

- **Falcon:** It is a symbol of cruel and greedy settlers.
- **Salmon:** It acts as a symbol of native American culture.
- **Crow God:** This is an important symbol. It refers to God that is made by men for fulfilling their evil motives.
- **Ashes of Jericho:** This symbol refers to the large-scale killing of innocent men and women. It is a symbol of death and destruction.
- **Beer Bottle:** It symbolizes alcoholism among native Americans.
- **Pale Horse:** This convention symbol stands for death and destruction.

2.1.4 Themes

Sherman Alexie explores some of the recurring themes of his poetry in "Crow Testament". The main idea of the poem revolves around Native American culture and identity. It also taps on the themes of culture, identity, loss, and religion. The poet does not explore all these themes in their broad sense. Rather, he specifically points out how these themes apply to his own culture that is Indigenous American culture. Throughout this piece, Alexie reveals how white settlers affected their lives in several ways. It is not limited to cultural destruction. Rather they killed several innocent people, made them fight with one another, or used them for evil purposes. In the end, their lives are doomed as the crow states, "they already live near the end of the world."

"Crow Testament" as a Critique of Christianity

Alexie's "Crow Testament" is an ironic representation of the biblical narrative. The poet refers to a few episodes from the Bible, especially those revealing the negative side of humankind. There are some episodes that reflect how religion promotes violence in the name of "God". One such episode is the Battle of Jericho, mentioned in the Old Testament. Not only that, in the third section of the poem, Alexie shows how the settlers used religion as a tool of colonization. The inherent flaws of institutionalized religion and religious narratives are portrayed to show how innocent humans are killed from earlier times. Throughout the text, the poet critiques Christianity from the perspective of an outsider (an indigenous American) on whom Europeans

imposed it.

Historical Context

"Crow Testament" is written by the Native American poet Sherman Alexie Jr. In his poems, he draws on the experiences of Indigenous Americans. The major themes of his works include despair, poverty, violence, and alcoholism among Native American people in modern times. He also explores the history of indigenous people in order to express his disgust for the Europeans who distorted their cultural identity. Alexie started publishing his poetry in the 1990s. In "Crow Testament," one of his best-known poems, he explores the flaws of Christianity, the destruction of his own culture, and the suffering of indigenous tribes after the advent of white settlers.

2.1.5 Sum up

The poem begins with the speaker describing a scene from Genesis in which Cain kills his brother Abel. In this section, Crow is being used as a weapon. Additionally, the presence of Cain and Abel in the poem sets the stage for an intricate commentary about the way white men and women treat one another and the role made for Native Americans in this narrative. The narrative follows Crow as he is taken advantage of by the white man in the form of a falcon, and abused by, and from within the wars that men wage.

The poem continues on, passing more commentary on the way that man uses the bible to justify his actions. Native Americans are placed in the battle of Jericho and are born into the ashes of the fallen city. This is their past and future, as further represented in the following stanzas. Alexie's speaker states that Crow is able, through the collection of beer bottles, to make 5 cents at a time. This pitiful amount is gained through the suffering of the population, many of whom are afflicted with alcoholism, and the suffering of Crow who is only able to take one bottle at a time.

2.1.6 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. What animal is central to the poem "Crow Testament"?
    a) Wolf
    b) Crow
    c) Eagle
    d) Bear
2. In "Crow Testament," which biblical figure is Crow compared to?
    a) Moses
    b) Jesus
    c) Judas
    d) Cain
3. What does Crow witness in the poem "Crow Testament"?
    a) A battle
    b) The creation of the world
    c) The suffering and struggles of humanity
    d) The end of the world
4. Which element of nature does Crow frequently interact with in "Crow Testament"?
    a) Fire
    b) Water
    c) Earth
    d) Wind
5. What is one of the main themes explored in "Crow Testament"?
    a) Technology
    b) Nature
    c) Betrayal
    d) Love
6. What establishment does Buffalo Bill open in the poem "Evolution"?
    a) A casino

b) A pawn shop
c) A trading post
d) A museum

7. What does Buffalo Bill purchase from Native Americans in "Evolution"?
   a) Their land
   b) Their artifacts and cultural items
   c) Their livestock
   d) Their homes
8. What happens to the items Buffalo Bill buys from the Native Americans?
   a) He resells them at a profit
   b) He destroys them
   c) He returns them to the Native Americans
   d) He donates them to a museum
9. What does the pawn shop in "Evolution" symbolize?
   a) Prosperity
   b) Exploitation and loss
   c) Cultural exchange
   d) Economic opportunity
10. What does the closing of the poem "Evolution" suggest about the fate of Native American culture?
    a) It is being preserved
    b) It is thriving
    c) It is being exploited and erased
    d) It is being revitalized

Answer Key:

b) Crow

d) Cain

c) The suffering and struggles of humanity

a) Fire

c) Betrayal

b) A pawn shop

b) Their artifacts and cultural items

a) He resells them at a profit

b) Exploitation and loss

c) It is being exploited and erased

Short Answer Questions

1. What is the poem “Crow Testament” about?

   Sherman Alexie’s “Crow Testament” is a poem of protest written using the symbol of the crow. This piece explores the history of the indigenous people of America after the settlement of Europeans. Alexie implicitly showcases their history by referring to a number of biblical episodes.
2. What does the poem “Crow Testament” symbolize?

   The poem “Crow Testament” symbolizes the history of Native Americans. In the text, the “Crow” is a symbol of the indigenous people who were mistreated by the falcons or white settlers.
3. What is the theme of the poem “Crow Testament”?

   Alexie explores the themes of cultural loss, identity, suffering, and flaws of religion in his poem.
4. When was “Crow Testament” published?

   The poem was published in 1992. It appears in Sherman Alexie’s first collection of poetry, *I Would Steal Horses*.
5. What does the “falcon” symbolize in “Crow Testament”?

   In this poem, the “falcon” symbolizes the white settlers. They treacherously snatch the native Americans’ resources away.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the use of biblical allusions in "Crow Testament." How do these references enhance the themes of the poem?

2. Examine the role of the Crow in "Crow Testament." How does the Crow's perspective influence the narrative and themes of the poem?
3. Explore the symbolism of the pawn shop in "Evolution." What does it represent, and how does it contribute to the overall message of the poem?

Section 2.2. Edgar Allan Poe - *The Raven*

2.2.1 Introduction to Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe (1809-1849) was an American writer, poet, editor, and literary critic, best known for his macabre and gothic tales and his pioneering contributions to the detective fiction genre. Poe was born on January 19, 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts. His parents, David and Elizabeth Poe, were both actors. His father abandoned the family, and his mother died when he was just three years old. Poe was taken in by John and Frances Allan of Richmond, Virginia, though they never formally adopted him. Poe attended the University of Virginia but left due to financial difficulties and conflicts with his foster father. He later enrolled at the United States Military Academy at West Point but was expelled for neglecting his duties. Poe began his literary career with the 1827 publication of "Tamerlane and Other Poems," attributed only to "a Bostonian."

Poe worked as an editor for several literary journals, including the Southern Literary Messenger, where he gained a reputation as a scathing critic. In 1845, Poe published "The Raven," which became a literary sensation and made him a household name. Poe's works often explore themes of death, horror, and the macabre, with notable stories such as "The Tell-Tale Heart," "The Fall of the House of Usher," and "The Masque of the Red Death."

In 1836, Poe married his 13-year-old cousin, Virginia Clemm. Their relationship was close but marred by her chronic illness. Virginia died of tuberculosis in 1847, which deeply affected Poe. After Virginia's death, Poe's health and financial situation deteriorated. He struggled with alcoholism and depression. Poe died on October 7, 1849, under mysterious circumstances. He was found delirious in Baltimore, Maryland,

and the exact cause of his death remains unknown, with theories ranging from alcohol poisoning to rabies.

Poe is considered a master of gothic literature and a pioneer of the modern detective story with works like "The Murders in the Rue Morgue." His literary innovations and unique style have influenced countless writers and continue to captivate readers around the world. Poe's poems, such as "The Raven" and "Annabel Lee," and his short stories remain staples in the study of American literature and continue to be widely read and analyzed for their psychological depth and stylistic brilliance.

2.2.2 Summary

An unnamed speaker sits in his chamber on a dreary December night, reading old, esoteric books. He dearly misses his love, Lenore, who presumably died recently, and he hopes that reading will distract him from his loss. He has nearly fallen asleep when he suddenly hears someone—or something—knocking on the door. He's instantly uneasy but reassures himself that it's probably just a visitor. He calls out, apologizing for his delayed response. However, when he opens the door, no one is there. He whispers, "Lenore," to the darkness outside but hears only his words echo back at him. Ominously, the knocking continues, this time from the window. The speaker assumes it is the wind but still feels uneasy. He opens the window shutters, and a raven hops in, perching on a bust of the Greek goddess Pallas Athena above the chamber door. The sight of the bird relieves the speaker momentarily. He jokingly asks the bird's name. To his utter shock, the raven cries out, "Nevermore."

The speaker is stunned and unsure of the raven's meaning. He regains his composure and whispers that the bird will fly away soon. The raven responds again, "Nevermore!" Still trying to console himself, the speaker theorizes that the bird must have an owner who taught it to say that one hopeless word. Curious, the speaker moves his chair in front of the raven. He lounges in the chair, pondering the raven for a few moments. He thinks about how Lenore will never again lounge upon this chair. He admonishes himself—God has granted him this one respite from his guilt, and still he thinks of Lenore. He tells himself to forget Lenore. As if in response, the raven says

again, “Nevermore.” Now the speaker addresses the bird, calling it “evil” and a “prophet.” He asks if he will ever find relief. The raven says, “Nevermore.” He asks whether he will hold Lenore when he reaches Heaven. The raven replies, “Nevermore.” Enraged, the speaker orders the raven to leave him alone in his chamber. He accuses the raven of lying and shouts for it to get out. Without moving at all, the bird repeats its sole refrain—"Nevermore.” The speaker concludes that the raven still sits upon the bust of Pallas Athena, casting a shadow over his soul that will always linger.

2.2.3 Analysis

The poem follows the unnamed speaker as he succumbs to his grief over the loss of his love, Lenore. Even before the raven appears, the speaker is “weak and weary,” presumably from the strain of grief. His worn-out state makes him restless and uneasy, which is clear when he has to remind himself that the knock at his door is probably from a visitor and not anything more sinister. Nevertheless, in the first few stanzas, the speaker appears relatively in control of his emotions, despite signs that his nerves are fraying. When he initially sees the raven, he acts amused, asking it its name in comically dramatic, lofty terms. Even after it first states its ominous refrain, the speaker rationalizes the bird’s behavior instead of succumbing to panic or despair.

Stanza 13 marks a turning point for the speaker’s mental state because the word “nevermore” reminds him that he will never see Lenore again. He tries to force himself to forget Lenore, but then, in Stanza 15, he begins addressing the raven with pointed questions about her, as if begging the bird to give him some hope that his grief will end. As far as the speaker knows, the bird can only say, “Nevermore.” Thus, these questions represent the speaker projecting his own hopelessness onto the raven, forcing it to remind him that he will never see Lenore again and never be able to forget her. The speaker is not really asking the bird for answers so much as torturing himself with its refrain. That he then lashes out at the bird for providing the answer he knows it will give shows how fragile his mental state has become. The poem ends with the speaker defeated by grief, which he depicts by describing the raven’s shadow hanging over his soul.

Lenore is gone forever. By the end of the poem, the speaker realizes how fully cut off he is from Lenore, both physically and spiritually. When the speaker first discusses Lenore in Stanza 2, he notes that, in his world, she's now forever "nameless," indicating that she has died. When he hears the knock on the door, he describes himself as "dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before." That is, he harbors an impossible hope that Lenore has returned from the grave. In Stanza 13, he again thinks of how he will never see her again, focusing on her physical absence by considering that she will never again "press" into the velvet of his chair.

The speaker's thoughts turn to spiritual matters, namely angels and seraphim, as he imagines forgetting Lenore, shutting himself away from memory. Although the speaker cannot forget, as the raven echoes, he believes himself spiritually alienated from Lenore. When the raven tells him he will never embrace Lenore in Heaven, it implies that the speaker is damned. Because the raven only appears to say one word, it remains ambiguous whether this curse merely reflects the speaker's darkest fears or whether the raven truly knows his grim fate. Either way, the speaker ends the poem with the belief that he has lost Lenore in both this life and the next.

The speaker's grief will never fade. The poem follows the speaker as he comes to terms with the fact that Lenore's memory will always haunt him. Although he states at the beginning of the poem that he's reading books to distract himself from memories of Lenore, this approach clearly hasn't worked because when he first opens the door to investigate the tapping, he calls out her name. In Stanza 2, the speaker states that Lenore will forever be nameless in his world, implying that he cannot even bear to mention her name; however, he repeats her name over and over throughout the poem, highlighting the futility of forgetting her. Even the novelty of seeing a talking raven in his room cannot fully distract him, as we see in Stanza 13, when he thinks about how Lenore will never sit in the chair in his chamber again. After admonishing himself to forget Lenore, the speaker takes advantage of the raven's refrain to wallow in his grief, asking questions that he knows the bird will have one response to: "Nevermore." This

demonstrates that the speaker doesn't truly desire to forget Lenore. He opts to dwell in his grief and uses the raven's presence to do so.

In addition to the events of the poem highlighting the endlessness of grief, the poem's structure urges the reader to remember Lenore's name. In the rhyme scheme—ABCBBB—the B rhyme that repeats for more than half of each stanza is always "Lenore" or a word that rhymes with it. The sound of her name echoes throughout the poem, reminding the speaker and the reader of the unending nature of the speaker's grief. Ultimately, by the end, the speaker knows that he will forever have the cloud of Lenore's loss hanging over him.

Madness triumphs over sanity. Throughout the poem, the speaker's grief and guilt overcome his rational thought, drowning out his sanity. At the beginning, the speaker appears rational, yet melancholy. He is reading books, which is usually an act of expanding one's mind, and sits in a room that has a bust of the Greek goddess of wisdom on display. We can infer that he is a person who values rational thought and education. Furthermore, throughout the early stanzas, the speaker attempts to find rational explanations for the eerie sounds he hears—telling himself it's a visitor or the wind. These are signs of a mind still operating on the basis of logic. Although asking a bird its name seems odd, the speaker's amusement and relief suggests that he initially begins talking to the bird as a kind of joke.

However, the raven's first word represents a turning point for the speaker. Once the bird says, "Nevermore," the speaker asks increasingly desperate questions that he has no evidence the bird will have the true answer to. Indeed, as far as he knows, the bird can repeat only one word, implying that the speaker imbues this word with his own dark meanings. Finally, he calls the bird a liar for repeating the very word he knew it would say, projecting his own guilt and fear onto the raven. At the end of the poem, the dark, ominous bird, associated with death and perched upon the bust of Athena, serves as a visual representation of madness and grief clouding sanity and allowing the very worst and darkest recesses of the mind to take over.

2.2.4 Literary Devices

There are three primary symbols in “The Raven”: the raven, the bust of Pallas, and the speaker’s chamber. All of these symbols work together to form a portrait of the speaker’s grief.

The Raven

The titular raven represents the speaker’s unending grief over the loss of Lenore. Ravens traditionally carry a connotation of death, as the speaker himself notes when he refers to the bird as coming from “Night’s Plutonian shore,” or the underworld. The raven’s constant refrain of “nevermore” reminds the speaker of the finality of Lenore’s absence, that he will never see her again in this life or the next, and the impossibility of forgetting her. Therefore, the primary action of the poem—the raven interrupting the speaker’s seclusion—symbolizes how the speaker’s grief intrudes upon his every thought. At the end, when the speaker describes the raven’s shadow as hanging over his soul, he refers to the way his grief clouds his very existence.

The Bust of Pallas

“Pallas” refers to the Greek goddess of wisdom, Pallas Athena. The bust of Pallas that the raven perches upon represents sanity, wisdom, and scholarship. When the raven perches upon this statue of Athena, it visually represents the way the speaker’s rationality is threatened by the raven’s message. The bird’s refusal to move from the statue to either leave the chamber entirely or perch anywhere else in the room further demonstrates how the speaker’s grief is immovable and gradually blocking his rational thought.

The Chamber

The chamber is the setting of this poem, and it symbolizes the speaker’s attempt to shut himself away from his grief. Although he’s not entirely successful at reading to distract himself from thoughts of Lenore, it is not until he opens the door to check on the knocking that he actively allows himself to pursue thoughts of her. In this light, the raven entering his chamber symbolizes the way grief has invaded the speaker’s life. Even his

solitary chamber is not impenetrable or secure against the madness that results from the loss of his beloved.

The Isolating Power of Grief

Eagerly I wished the morrow;—vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow—sorrow for the lost Lenore—

These lines appear in Stanza 2 as the speaker describes his actions before the raven's intrusion. It's the first time the speaker mentions Lenore in the poem, and he immediately establishes that she weighs on his thoughts, creating a sadness that not even books can distract him from. The prominence of Lenore in the speaker's thoughts demonstrates how his grief has disrupted his daily life.

But whose velvet-violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!"

These lines appear in Stanza 13. As the speaker considers what the raven might mean by "nevermore," he's reminded very sharply that he'll never see Lenore in person again, which creates the intense emotion that overcomes him in the last five stanzas of the poem. The visceral image of Lenore's body compressing the velvet of the chair emphasizes her physical presence, making her loss almost tangible. Faced with the finality of Lenore's absence from his life, the speaker falls into a spiral of grief.

Psychological Terror

And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me—filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before . . .

These lines appear in Stanza 3, emphasizing the haunted and suggestible nature of the speaker's mind. Before the raven appears, the noises of the stormy night already have the speaker jumping at shadows and imagining monsters. The speaker's mind plays tricks on him, and he is so frightened, he expects the worst.

'Prophet!' said I, 'thing of evil!—prophet still, if bird or devil!—
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore . . .'

These lines appear in Stanza 15 when the speaker begins asking the raven directly about his beloved Lenore after realizing that he will never forget her. Previously, the speaker had treated the raven as a real, albeit strange, bird, but now he imbues it with the mystical power of a prophet. This moment demonstrates that the speaker has begun to let his fears overwhelm him. Because he has no actual evidence that the bird is a supernatural creature, the power and fear he ascribes to it may lie entirely in the speaker's mind.

Hopelessness

'Is there—*is* there balm in Gilead?—tell me—tell me, I implore!'

This line appears in Stanza 15 when the speaker begins to ask the raven questions about Lenore for the first time. Here he pleads with the bird to tell him whether he will ever find relief for the anguish Lenore's loss has caused him. Because as far he knows, the raven will only say, "Nevermore," the speaker actually dooms himself to receive a negative, ominous answer. The speaker imbues the raven with the power of prophecy, knowing that it will only prophesy in a way that increases his despair.

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted—nevermore!

These final lines of the poem show the speaker left in unending despair. The shadow here refers to the raven's shadow, symbolizing how the speaker's grief over Lenore's death will never leave him. The way the speaker describes his soul as being under a shadow "on the floor" creates a sense of heaviness and finality. The speaker feels trapped in his hopelessness with no sign of reprieve.

Once upon a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore—

While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.

The opening lines of the poem set an eerie scene. The “dreary” night and tomes of “forgotten lore,” which many scholars interpret to mean books on the occult or dark magic, add a sense of gothic horror. That the tapping rouses the speaker from his dozing suggests that the room is silent.

Ah, distinctly I remember it was in the bleak December;
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.

This description begins Stanza 2, continuing the gothic and eerie mood set in Stanza 1. The speaker describes his fire that is slowly fading, and with each “dying ember,” the chamber grows more dim. The use of “ghost” here implies that the flickering embers produce spooky shadows, furthering the creepy atmosphere.

But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door—
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door—

These lines appear in Stanza 7 when the raven first enters the room. The bust of Pallas Athena is one of the few concrete details we have of the speaker’s chamber, and the presence of the bust suggests that he may be a scholar, since Pallas Athena was the goddess of wisdom. This quote also sets the physical scene for the ensuing conversation: a dark bird perched on a sculpture, staring down at the speaker.

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

These lines come in Stanza 14 just after the speaker connects the word “nevermore” to Lenore’s absence. Although the speaker compares the growing denseness of the air to angelic incense, here it seems to suffocate and increase his tension instead of soothing him. This shift in atmosphere coincides with the spiraling shift in the speaker’s mental state toward desperation.

And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, 'Lenore?'
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, 'Lenore!'—

In this quote, which appears in Stanza 5, the speaker investigates the tapping on his door and, seeing no one, calls out Lenore's name into the darkness. The eerie atmosphere of the night and the mysterious knock have prompted the speaker to hope his beloved Lenore, albeit dead, could somehow be his visitor. This moment shows the speaker's suggestible state of mind and how Lenore is at the forefront of his thoughts.

Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!
Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'

These lines from Stanza 8 introduce the raven's famous refrain. By suggesting that the raven has come from "Night's Plutonian shore"—which refers to Pluto, the Roman god of the underworld—the speaker implies that the raven is a messenger from the dark underworld, associating it actively with death. The word "nevermore" highlights the hopelessness of the speaker's situation and his unending grief.

'Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe and forget this lost Lenore!'

The speaker says this line, which appears in Stanza 14, quietly to himself after the raven's refrain causes him to reflect on Lenore's absence. He refers to "nepenthe," which is a mystical drug, found in ancient Greek literature, that helps one forget. He admonishes himself to take advantage of the distraction and forget Lenore, but his mood starts to become more desperate as he struggles to find succor for his grief. He finds Lenore's memory so painful that he believes only forgetting her can relieve him.

Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!—quit the bust above my door!'

These lines from Stanza 17 contain the speaker's last words to the raven. The speaker's mental state has completely deteriorated, leaving him to rage at the raven for

answering his questions with the word “nevermore,” despite only ever hearing the bird say that one word. Because we can read the raven as representative of the speaker’s grief, when he asks it to leave without a trace, he is effectively ordering his sorrow over Lenore’s death to leave him.

2.2.5 Themes

Theme 1: Grief

Grief is the overwhelming emotion in "The Raven," and the narrator is absolutely consumed by his grief for his lost love, Lenore. At the beginning of the poem, he tries to distract himself from his sadness by reading a "volume of forgotten lore", but when the raven arrives, he immediately begins peppering it with questions about Lenore and becomes further lost in his grief at the raven's response of "nevermore." By the end of the poem, the narrator is seemingly broken, stating that his soul will never again be "lifted" due to his sadness.

Poe stated that the raven itself was a symbol of grief, specifically, that it represented "mournful and never-ending remembrance." He purposely chose a raven over a parrot (a bird species better known for its ability to speak) because he thought a raven suited the dark tone of the poem better.

Edgar Allan Poe had experienced a great deal of grief by the time he wrote "The Raven," and he had seen people close to him leave, fall gravely ill, or die. He would have been well aware of the consuming power that grief can have and how it has the ability to blot everything else out.

Theme 2: Devotion

It's the narrator's deep love for Lenore that causes him such grief, and later rage and madness. Even though Lenore has died, the narrator still loves her and appears unable to think of anything but her. In the poem, he speaks of Lenore in superlatives, calling her "sainted" and "radiant." In his mind, she is completely perfect, practically a saint. His

love for this woman who is no longer here distracts him from everything in his current life. With this theme, Poe is showing the power of love and how it can continue to be powerful even after death.

Theme 3: Rationality vs Irrationality

At the beginning of the poem, the narrator is rational enough to understand that Lenore is dead and he will not see her again. When the raven first begins repeating "nevermore," he realizes that the answer is the bird's "only stock and store," and he won't get another response no matter what he asks. He seems to even find the bird vaguely amusing.

However, as the poem continues, the narrator's irrationality increases as he asks the raven questions it couldn't possibly know and takes its repeated response of "nevermore" to be a truthful and logical answer. He then descends further into madness, cursing the bird as a "devil" and "thing of evil" and thinking he feels angels surrounding him before sinking into his grief. He has clearly come undone by the end of the poem.

In "The Raven," Poe wanted to show the fine line between rational thought and madness and how strong emotions, such as grief, can push a person into irrationality, even during mundane interactions like the one the narrator had with the raven.

2.2.6 Sum up

The poem begins with the narrator, a weary student, reading and attempting to forget his sorrow over the loss of his beloved Lenore. It is a bleak December night, and as he nods off, he hears a tapping at his chamber door. Initially dismissing it as a visitor, he finds no one there upon opening the door.

He hears the tapping again, this time at his window. When he opens it, a raven flies in and perches on a bust of Pallas Athena above his door. The narrator is amused by the

bird and begins to ask it questions, noting its grave and serious appearance. The raven responds to each question with a single word: "Nevermore."

As the narrator continues to converse with the bird, he asks increasingly desperate questions about whether he will see Lenore again in the afterlife and whether his sorrow will ever end. The raven's repeated response of "Nevermore" drives the narrator into a state of despair and madness.

In the final stanza, the narrator realizes that the raven will remain forever, casting a shadow over his soul, which will be lifted "Nevermore."

Themes

"The Raven" explores themes of grief, loss, and mourning. The raven symbolizes the narrator's unending sorrow and the permanence of death. The poem also delves into the human tendency to seek meaning and solace in the face of despair, even when confronted with inevitable truths.

2.2.7 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. What is the narrator doing at the beginning of "The Raven"?
    a) Sleeping
    b) Reading
    c) Writing
    d) Eating
2. What time of year is it in "The Raven"?
    a) Spring
    b) Summer
    c) Autumn
    d) Winter
3. Who is the narrator mourning in "The Raven"?
    a) Lenore

b) Annabel Lee

c) Virginia

d) Helen

4. Where does the raven perch when it enters the narrator's chamber?
    a) On the window sill
    b) On the floor
    c) On a bust of Pallas Athena
    d) On the narrator's shoulder
5. What is the first word the narrator speaks to the raven?
    a) "Lenore"
    b) "Nevermore"
    c) "Prophet"
    d) "Tell me"
6. What repeated word does the raven say in response to the narrator's questions?
    a) "Forevermore"
    b) "Nevermore"
    c) "No more"
    d) "Evermore"
7. What emotion does the narrator feel as the raven continues to repeat its refrain?
    a) Joy
    b) Anger
    c) Despair
    d) Indifference
8. What is the setting of the poem?
    a) A forest
    b) A castle
    c) A chamber
    d) A garden
9. What does the raven symbolize in the poem?
    a) Hope
    b) Wisdom

c) Death and sorrow

d) Freedom

10. What does the narrator realize at the end of the poem?

a) The raven will leave

b) The raven is a hallucination

c) The raven will stay forever, casting a shadow over his soul

d) The raven is a messenger from Lenore

Answer Key:

1. b) Reading
2. d) Winter
3. a) Lenore
4. c) On a bust of Pallas Athena
5. d) "Tell me"
6. b) "Nevermore"
7. c) Despair
8. c) A chamber
9. c) Death and sorrow
10. c) The raven will stay forever, casting a shadow over his soul

Short Answer Questions

1. What is the setting of "The Raven"?

The poem is set in the narrator's chamber at midnight on a bleak December night.

2. What word does the raven repeatedly say in response to the narrator's questions?

"Nevermore."

3. Who is the narrator mourning in "The Raven"?

The narrator is mourning the loss of his beloved Lenore.

4. Where does the raven perch when it enters the narrator's chamber?

The raven perches on a bust of Pallas Athena above the narrator's chamber door.

5. What does the raven symbolize in the poem?

The raven symbolizes the narrator's unending sorrow and the permanence of loss and death.

Essay Questions

1. Analyze the use of symbolism in "The Raven." How does Poe use the raven and other elements in the poem to convey deeper meanings?
2. Examine the theme of grief and loss in "The Raven." How does the narrator's interaction with the raven reflect his emotional state?
3. Discuss the role of the setting in creating the mood and atmosphere of "The Raven." How does Poe use descriptive language to enhance the poem's gothic tone?
4. Explore the structure and meter of "The Raven." How do Poe's choices in rhyme scheme and rhythm contribute to the poem's musicality and impact?
5. Interpret the significance of the raven's refrain, "Nevermore." How does this single word influence the narrator's psyche and the poem's overall meaning?

Section 2.3 Emily Dickinson - *Because I Could Not Stop for Death*

2.3.1 Introduction to Emily Dickinson

Emily Dickinson (1830-1886) lived most of her life in Amherst, Massachusetts. While her mother (another Emily) was cold and aloof, her father Edward was a public figure. He worked as a lawyer and a trustee of Amherst College, which was founded in part by his father. (This was not the founder Lord Jeffrey Amherst, who used smallpox blankets as biological warfare against the Delaware people.) Dickinson's brother, Austin, attended Amherst College and Harvard Law School before joining Edward's law practice. Neither Emily nor her sister Lavinia were allowed a college education. They attended Amherst Academy, a former all-boys school. After seven years there, Dickinson went to a female seminary in 1848. Ten months later she returned home, where she settled into a life that many a young lady succumbed to in her time. (She baked.)

Around this time, a religious revival called the Second Great Awakening was taking place in Amherst. Unsurprisingly, Dickinson dipped a finger in the holy water, so to speak. In fact, her ancestors had come to New England some 200 years prior, during the Great Puritan Migration. Yet while her ancestors had crossed an ocean for religious freedom, Dickinson's fervor for organized religion didn't last. By 1852, poetry had replaced her Church.

Dickinson's complicated relationship with spirituality offers readers insight into her deep preoccupation with death. So too do her real-life encounters with death, which began at an early age. The passing of Sophia Holland, a close friend and second cousin, traumatized her. Given the daily dangers and contagions of the time, including typhus and tuberculosis, it's no surprise that more close friends would follow. This list includes Benjamin Franklin Newton, Dickinson's first writing mentor.

Emily Dickinson's secret writing life took off in the summer of 1858. This period of prolific writing lasted through 1865. (I say secret, though her family knew she wrote. Still, after Dickinson's death, Lavinia was astounded to come upon sixty packets of poetry containing around 900 poems.) Dickinson took inspiration from a range of Romantic and Transcendental writers. She loved the Brontë sisters, who, like Dickinson, had lived opposite a cemetery. They knew a thing or two about the way gloomy weather could mirror the inner atmosphere of the soul. Yet Dickinson's writing style became uniquely her own. In 1863, she sent four poems to the publisher Thomas Wentworth Higginson, asking if her poems "breathed." Decades later, Higginson would write of her "wholly new and original poetic genius." And yet, he rejected Dickinson's poetry in 1863, believing it was "odd" and "*too delicate*—not strong enough to publish."

(Ironically, Higginson would first publish Dickinson's poetry after her death. Unprepared for her progressive artistic choices—slant rhymes, dashes, mysterious capitalization—he edited her work heavily. He corrected rhymes, standardized meter, removed jargon, and replaced unusual metaphors with ones he deemed appropriate.)

By 1865, Dickinson rarely left her house. Her world narrowed to the size of her family and those who came to visit, including cyclical visitors to her beloved gardens. Some speculate that her seclusion resulted from sickness. Others hypothesize that Dickinson's failed relationships (with her sister-in-law, or with a married minister) left her utterly dejected. We cannot discount the devastating rejection from Higginson. Soon after, Dickinson's poetry began to address a new fear: her work would go unrecognized. Today, we can see that Dickinson's poetry is built on this isolation and fear. It is equally tied to a deep capacity for feeling and an uncanny understanding of death.

2.3.2 Summary

In this poem, Dickinson's speaker is communicating from beyond the grave, describing her journey with Death, personified, from life to afterlife. In the opening stanza, the speaker is too busy for Death ("Because I could not stop for Death—"), so Death—"kindly"—takes the time to do what she cannot, and stops for her.

This “civility” that Death exhibits in taking time out for her leads her to give up on those things that had made her so busy—“And I had put away/My labor and my leisure too”—so they can just enjoy this carriage ride (“We slowly drove – He knew no haste”).

In the third stanza we see reminders of the world that the speaker is passing from, with children playing and fields of grain. Her place in the world shifts between this stanza and the next; in the third stanza, “We passed the Setting Sun—,” but at the opening of the fourth stanza, she corrects this—“Or rather – He passed Us –“—because she has stopped being an active agent, and is only now a part of the landscape.

In this stanza, after the realization of her new place in the world, her death also becomes suddenly very physical, as “The Dews drew quivering and chill—,” and she explains that her dress is only gossamer, and her “Tippet,” a kind of cape usually made out of fur, is “only Tulle.”

After this moment of seeing the coldness of her death, the carriage pauses at her new “House.” The description of the house—“A Swelling of the Ground—“—makes it clear that this is no cottage, but instead a grave. Yet they only “pause” at this house, because although it is ostensibly her home, it is really only a resting place as she travels to eternity.

The final stanza shows a glimpse of this immortality, made most clear in the first two lines, where she says that although it has been centuries since she has died, it feels no longer than a day. It is not just any day that she compares it to, however—it is the very day of her death, when she saw “the Horses’ Heads” that were pulling her towards this eternity.

2.3.3 Analysis

Dickinson’s poems deal with death again and again, and it is never quite the same in any poem. In “Because I could not stop for Death—,” we see death personified. He is no frightening, or even intimidating, reaper, but rather a courteous and gentle guide, leading her to eternity. The speaker feels no fear when Death picks her up in his carriage, she just sees it as an act of kindness, as she was too busy to find time for him.

It is this kindness, this individual attention to her—it is emphasized in the first stanza that the carriage holds just the two of them, doubly so because of the internal rhyme in "held" and "ourselves"—that leads the speaker to so easily give up on her life and what it contained. This is explicitly stated, as it is "For His Civility" that she puts away her "labor" and her "leisure," which is Dickinson using metonymy to represent another alliterative word—her life.

Indeed, the next stanza shows the life is not so great, as this quiet, slow carriage ride is contrasted with what she sees as they go. A school scene of children playing, which could be emotional, is instead only an example of the difficulty of life—although the children are playing "At Recess," the verb she uses is "strove," emphasizing the labors of existence. The use of anaphora with "We passed" also emphasizes the tiring repetitiveness of mundane routine.

The next stanza moves to present a more conventional vision of death—things become cold and more sinister, the speaker's dress is not thick enough to warm or protect her. Yet it quickly becomes clear that though this part of death—the coldness, and the next stanza's image of the grave as home—may not be ideal, it is worth it, for it leads to the final stanza, which ends with immortality. Additionally, the use of alliteration in this stanza that emphasizes the material trappings—"gossamer" "gown" and "tippet" "tulle"—makes the stanza as a whole less sinister.

That immorality is the goal is hinted at in the first stanza, where "Immortality" is the only other occupant of the carriage, yet it is only in the final stanza that we see that the speaker has obtained it. Time suddenly loses its meaning; hundreds of years feel no different than a day. Because time is gone, the speaker can still feel with relish that moment of realization, that death was not just death, but immortality, for she "surmised the Horses' Heads/Were toward Eternity –." By ending with "Eternity –," the poem itself enacts this eternity, trailing out into the infinite.

2.3.4 Literary Devices

Personification appears in the figure of "Death," a male "he." This "Death" figure stops the carriage and accompanies the narrator throughout the journey, as seen in the pronoun "we." (Meanwhile, the narrator remains nameless and genderless. Readers are free to imagine the narrator as they like. "I" could be Emily Dickinson, or me, or you. In fact, it's easy to identify with the narrator and place ourselves in their shoes.) The "Setting Sun" and "Immortality" can also be seen as personified, though I like to think of Immortality as more of an atmosphere in the carriage. Overall, personification works to create company for the narrator, ultimately acting as a buffer against the loneliness we fear when facing death.

We can also count **alliteration** among the primary poetic devices in our "Because I could not stop for death" analysis. It pops up in phrases like "Recess – in the Ring," "Gazing Grain" and "Setting Sun." Alliteration creates a sense of charming tidiness. It sounds pleasant, which is soothing in the context of confronting one's mortality.

Enjambement works as a practical device for Dickinson to string together ideas that are longer than a tetrameter. It also adds a sense of forward momentum. For example, it appears in lines 6-7: "And I had put away / My labor and my leisure too."

Finally, Dickinson uses her trademark **dashes, capitalizations, and slant rhymes**. We find them throughout Emily Dickinson's death poems, and even in her letters. Apart from giving her poetry unique identifiable characteristics, I believe they work to uproot, unsettle, and beguile us. Poetry readers wish for originality above all. These particular features made Dickinson's work singular and timeless.

2.3.5 Themes

Theme 1: The Inevitability of Death

We already know that the process of dying is central to "Because I could not stop for Death." Even more specific than that, though, is the idea that death is inevitable.

We can see that the speaker is facing the inevitability of death from the very first stanza. The speaker saying that they "could not stop for Death" shows they had not necessarily planned to die--but Death came for them anyway.

If we look at the meaning of "stopped" in the poem, we can get a better idea of how the speaker was *feeling* about the inevitability of Death's approach. "Stopped" seems to mean "picked up" or "collected" in the context of the poem—at least when referring to Death stopping for the speaker. In other words, "stopped" doesn't mean that Death halted its pursuit of the speaker to search for another mortal. It *actually* means that Death is making a stop to pick her up, similar to a taxi or bus.

But "stopped" is also used in the first line of the poem when the speaker says that she "could not stop for Death." So what's up with that? **T**he use of "stop" in the first line could imply that the speaker was too busy living their life to acknowledge Death's approach. Instead of the speaker traveling to meet Death, Death came for them...regardless of the speaker's original plans.

The first line could also be interpreted another way. Perhaps the speaker could not stop for Death because she was too afraid. (In that way, this could be read a lot like Dylan Thomas' "Do not go gentle into that good night." In this reading, the speaker "could not stop" because they were nervous about what accepting Death would be like.

Regardless of how you interpret the speaker's position--whether they were too busy or too scared to stop--the speaker *definitely* can't avoid their trip with Death**.** When Death stops for them, they have to go with Death.

While perhaps too apprehensive or preoccupied to stop for Death at first, once she settles into the carriage ride, **t**he speaker is put at ease by Death's civility and the leisurely pace he takes on the journey. The path the speaker travels isn't frantic--there's no rush! This gives the speaker the time to reflect on all the beautiful things of life and consider what's to come at the end of the journey.

In fact, Dickinson's speaker paints Death in a favorable light here. Death isn't the terrifying grim reaper who shows up with a sickle and whisks you away to the afterlife. Nor is the trip with Death like a Final Destination movie where everything is scary. In fact, Death is described as "civil," or courteous, in line eight. The journey that the speaker takes to "Eternity" (mentioned in the last line of the poem) is calm, quiet, and pensive.

Death isn't cheery in this poem--but it's also not a terrifying, horrible process. In this case, Death gives the speaker a chance to reflect on life from beginning (symbolized by the playing children) all the way to the end (symbolized by the setting sun).

Theme 2: The Connection of Life and Death

The second theme that we'll cover here is the beauty of life**.** From beginning to end, "Because I could not stop for Death" portrays how the process of dying is actually characterized by the vibrancy and fullness of life.

Like we talked about earlier, this poem is all about the journey with Death as a person transitions from life to Eternity. But the carriage ride isn't what you might expect! It's not full of sadness, darkness, and...well, dead people.

Instead, the speaker sees a series of vignettes: of children playing, fields of growing grain, and the setting sun. Each of these images represents a phase of life**.** The children represent the joy and fun of childhood, the grain represents our growth and productiveness as adults, and the setting sun represents the final years of life.

As the speaker dies, they are able to revisit these peaceful and joyful moments again. In that way, dying is as much about experiencing life one final time as it is about making it to your final rest.

Theme 3: The Uncertainty of the Afterlife

The final theme that's prominent in "Because I could not stop for Death" is the uncertainty of the afterlife. The speaker seems to imply that, just as much as we can't

control when Death stops for us, we can't control what happens (or doesn't happen) in the afterlife.

This theme pops up pretty explicitly when the speaker mentions Immortality in line four**.** At the end of the poem's first stanza, the speaker states that Immortality came along for the carriage ride. Presumably, Death picked Immortality up along the way to the speaker's house.

So what are Death and Immortality doing riding in the same carriage? Well, the poem doesn't actually make that totally clear. But we can make some inferences based on the remainder of the poem!

After the first stanza, the speaker doesn't mention Immortality explicitly again. This might mean that, like us, the speaker is unsure about what Immortality is going to do at the end of the carriage ride, which ends at the speaker's grave. Will Immortality leave the speaker to rest peacefully in Death? Or will Immortality take over the journey when Death's responsibilities end?

The truth is, we just don't know—and it seems that the speaker doesn't either. That's reinforced by the end of the poem, where the speaker reflects on guessing that Death's carriage horses heads were pointed toward "Eternity." Readers never get an image or explanation of what Eternity's like. The afterlife remains a mystery to the reader...just as it was for the speaker while they were on their journey.

This uncertainty can be frustrating for readers, but it's actually kind of the point! It's as if the speaker views the ***possibility*** of immortality as something we can build into our process of coming to terms with the inevitability of death. While Death is inevitable, the speaker is saying that Immortality, or the afterlife, is unknowable.

Immortality seems to be an idea that we can choose to take along with us on the carriage ride with Death. What Immortality will do when we reach our destination isn't something we can know for sure when we're alive—but Dickinson is leaving the possibility of Immortality through the afterlife totally open.

This is sometimes read as evidence of Dickinson's reinvigorated Christian faith...or as a throwback to her conservative Calvinist upbringing. But, those factors aside, **I**mmortality is presented as a potential companion to the speaker—a belief or presence that can give comfort and peace as she faces the inevitability of Death.

2.3.6 Sum up

"Because I Could Not Stop for Death" is a poem by Emily Dickinson that personifies Death as a courteous and gentle guide. Here's a brief summary: The poem begins with the speaker noting that she could not stop for Death, so Death kindly stops for her. Death is portrayed as a polite and patient suitor who drives a carriage. The speaker and Death embark on a journey in the carriage, accompanied by Immortality.

As they travel, the speaker reflects on the stages of life. They pass a school where children are playing, symbolizing childhood; fields of gazing grain, representing maturity; and the setting sun, signifying the end of life. The carriage ride is leisurely, suggesting a calm acceptance of Death's inevitability.

Eventually, they pause before a house that appears to be a grave. The speaker realizes that this is her final resting place. The poem concludes with the speaker reflecting on the centuries that have passed since her death, which feel shorter than the day of her initial journey with Death.

2.3.7 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. Who is the speaker in the poem "Because I Could Not Stop for Death"?
    a) Emily Dickinson
    b) Death
    c) Immortality
    d) The speaker
2. What mode of transportation does Death use to take the speaker on their journey?

a) Horse
b) Carriage
c) Boat
d) Chariot

3. What do the fields of grain symbolize in the poem?
    a) Childhood
    b) Maturity
    c) Old age
    d) Death
4. Where does Death eventually take the speaker?
    a) Heaven
    b) A grave
    c) A school
    d) A castle
5. What time of day is it described in the poem?
    a) Morning
    b) Afternoon
    c) Evening
    d) Night
6. What role does Immortality play in the poem?
    a) It drives the carriage
    b) It guides Death
    c) It accompanies the speaker and Death
    d) It represents eternal life
7. How does the speaker feel about Death's arrival?
    a) Fearful
    b) Anxious
    c) Indifferent
    d) Accepting
8. What is the overall tone of the poem?
    a) Joyful

b) Sad

c) Mournful

d) Calm

9. What does the setting sun symbolize in the poem?

a) The end of life

b) Renewal

c) Hope

d) Childhood

10. What does the speaker realize about time at the end of the poem?

a) Time has stopped

b) Time moves faster after death

c) Centuries have passed since the journey

d) Time is eternal

Answer Key:

1. d) The speaker
2. b) Carriage
3. b) Maturity
4. b) A grave
5. c) Evening
6. c) It accompanies the speaker and Death
7. d) Accepting
8. d) Calm
9. a) The end of life
10. c) Centuries have passed since the journey

Short Answer Questions

1. Who is the main character in the poem?

   The main character is the speaker, who personifies Death as a gentle guide.

2. What is the central metaphor used to describe Death?

Death is metaphorically depicted as a courteous suitor who stops for the speaker.

3. What stages of life does the speaker observe during the carriage ride with Death?

   The speaker observes childhood (represented by a school), maturity (fields of grain), and the end of life (the setting sun).

4. What is waiting for the speaker at the end of the journey?

   At the end of the journey, the speaker realizes that a grave or burial place awaits her.

5. What does the presence of Immortality in the carriage symbolize?

   The presence of Immortality suggests that the soul lives on after death, continuing the journey beyond physical life.

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the personification of Death in Emily Dickinson's poem. How does the portrayal of Death as a courteous suitor contribute to the poem's themes?
2. Examine the journey motif in "Because I Could Not Stop for Death." How does Dickinson use the carriage ride as a metaphor for the passage from life to death?
3. Analyze the role of Immortality in the poem. What does Immortality symbolize, and how does its presence affect the speaker's perception of death?
4. Discuss the significance of the poem's setting, including the school, fields of grain, and the setting sun. How do these images contribute to the poem's thematic exploration?
5. Explore the poem's tone and mood. How does Dickinson's choice of language and imagery create a contemplative atmosphere regarding mortality?

Unit III

Prose

UNIT III - PROSE

CONTENT OF UNIT- III

- Edgar Allan Poe – The Philosophy of Composition
- Martin Luther King Jr. – I Have a Dream
- Abraham Lincoln – Gettysburg Address

UNIT OBJECTIVES

- To identify and analyse literary elements like plot, setting, characters, theme, and point of view.
- To analyse how author's use language, symbolism, imagery, and tone to convey meaning.
- To improve critical reading skills through close reading and discussion.
- To explore how cultural and historical contexts shape prose texts.
- To practice writing analytical responses supported by textual evidence.

Section 3.1. Edgar Allan Poe – The Philosophy of Composition

3.1.1 Introduction to Edgar Allan Poe

Edgar Allan Poe was born on January 19, 1809, in Boston, Massachusetts. His parents were actors who died when he was young. Poe was then taken in by John Allan, a wealthy tobacco exporter, and lived in Richmond, Virginia, except for five years in England. In 1826, Poe started attending the University of Virginia but left within a year due to gambling debts. After a falling out with his foster father, he moved to Boston in 1827 and joined the Army under the name Edgar A. Perry. That same year, he published his first book, *Tamerlane, and Other Poems*, but it went unnoticed.

By 1829, Poe had been promoted to sergeant major and was honorably discharged. His second book, *Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane, and Minor Poems*, was well received. He briefly attended West Point Military Academy but left in less than a

year. In 1831, with help from his friends, he published *Poems*. Poe then moved to Baltimore to live with his aunt and cousin. He submitted short stories to contests, winning one in 1833 with “MS. Found in a Bottle.” Despite continuous writing efforts, he struggled financially. In 1835, he became an editor for the *Southern Literary Messenger*, where he published many stories and began establishing his reputation through literary criticism.

In 1836, Poe married his cousin, Virginia Clemm. After disagreements at the *Messenger*, he moved to New York in 1837, where he wrote *The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym*. Finding no work in New York, he moved to Philadelphia and published the story “Ligeia.” In 1839, he joined the editorial staff of *Burton’s Gentlemen’s Magazine*, where he published notable works like “The Fall of the House of Usher” and “William Wilson.”

Poe and Virginia Clemm remained together until her death from tuberculosis in 1847. Poe continued to give lectures, and after a series of lectures in Norfolk and Richmond, he passed away in a Baltimore hospital in 1849. The exact cause of his death remains unknown.

The ambiguous horror story—in which the supernatural parts of the story can actually be explained (or explained away) with a psychological explanation—was invented by Edgar Allan Poe. In addition, he was a science fiction pioneer. In fact, his prose poem Eureka from 1848 foretells the Big Bang theory by about 80 years. Despite being one of his least read pieces of prose today, Poe regarded this book as his masterpiece.

Poe wrote many classic short stories, including ‘The Pit and the Pendulum’, ‘The Murders in the Rue Morgue’, ‘The Tell-Tale Heart’, and numerous other well-known tales.

3.1.2. Summary

Poe emphasises in the opening lines of his essay the significance of writing with a goal in mind. To this end, he quotes a letter he got from Charles Dickens, in which Dickens mentions that William Godwin wrote his novel Caleb Williams backwards. Poe thinks that even though he is unsure if Godwin actually accomplished this, he must have had some notion of the novel's finale or conclusion when he wrote it.

Poe informs us that he looks for the impression he wants to leave on the reader's thoughts and emotions before starting any new work of writing. Next, in order to help him achieve that effect, he looks for the ideal tone or flow of events (in a story).

He wishes that the processes writers use to create their works were given greater attention. According to him, most writers would rather keep their techniques a secret from their readers out of "autorial [sic] vanity," creating the illusion that they are working in a "fine frenzy" of inspiration. Poe does concede, however, that many writers might only be vaguely aware of these processes while they happen and hence not be able to remember them later.

Poe, on the other hand, claims to have selected his poem "The Raven," written in 1845, as an example, and he can easily recollect the steps necessary to produce it. He contends that for a literary work to have an impact, it shouldn't be very lengthy. A poem or narrative should be able to be read in one sitting; otherwise, the reader will be distracted by outside events and the effect would be diminished. In essence, long poems are just a collection of short poetic devices put together. Novels, on the other hand, don't strive for this unity of "effect" in the same manner. He determined that "The Raven" should have roughly 100 lines when he sat down to write it.

He then decided on the message he wanted "The Raven" to deliver. He intended for the poem to emphasise "Beauty" above all else. "Truth" and "passion," if they are included in a poem, should always take a backseat to the poem's main theme of Beauty.

The next thing he needed to select was the tone he wanted the poem to have, and he chose sadness. After deciding on the poem's length, effect, and tone, Poe could get to work writing it. He made the choice to end each stanza with the same line, or refrain, in order to organise his poetry. He considered the literary device known as a "refrain," which is a term or phrase repeated twice. He contends that the reader enjoys this kind of repetition. He did discover, though, that the effect would be greater if the repeated word had a different meaning each time it appeared. He came to the conclusion that the refrain should just be one word and that it must be succinct. The refrain must also be "sonorous" because it will appear at the conclusion of each stanza. The longest "o" sound when coupled with a "r" sounds best for this effect. "Nevermore" is a melancholic phrase that makes those sounds. Poe then had to explain why he had used this word so often. He concluded that an animal should do it since it is hard to conceive a human repeating the same word multiple times. Given that it fits the poem's tone, a raven was a wise choice.

The ideas presented in the remaining stanzas of the poem vary, however the repetition of this refrain stays constant throughout. This is because the poet just chose one word to use throughout the entire poem.

Poe informs us that once he came up with the concept for the one-word refrain "Nevermore," he thought it would be beneficial to have a non-human speaker repeat this sentence. He thought about a parrot at first, but then decided a raven would fit the intended tone of his poetry better. Death is the "most melancholy" topic, he responds, adding that death is most poetic when it is in harmony with beauty. He also explains that “the death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world—and equally is it beyond doubt that the lips best suited for such topic are those of a bereaved lover.” Poe understood that the death of a lovely woman—a recurrent theme in his work—would be appropriate for the poem's death, in line with his intended focus on beauty.

Poe then chose how to incorporate the refrain and the poem's subject. One way to resolve this would be for the refrain to be a response to the lover's inquiries,

and for the lover to grow increasingly desperate in order to get the raven's response. As a result, Poe changed the setting each time, making the raven's reactions progressively more ominous until the poem's conclusion, which discloses the lover's immense anguish. Poe restates that by writing this climax first, he was able to set the proper metre and cadence, intensify the lover's queries, and more.

Poe talks about rhyme and metre as formal components. Every verse is composed of units called "feet," which are made up of both long and short syllables. There are verses of eight feet, seven and a half, and three and a half feet. The poem's uniqueness comes from the way various metres are combined, even though they have all been used previously. Alliteration and rhyme also support this idea.

Selecting a location for the meeting between the raven and the lover was the next stage. He came to the conclusion that because the lover is surrounded by memories of the beloved, an enclosed space—the lover's chamber—strengthens the desired impact. The bird's flying wings also create the impression that someone is knocking on the door—possibly the lover's ghost. Poe created a contrast between the inside and outside of the room by setting the poem on a stormy night and providing an explanation for the raven's entrance. The poem opens with a whimsical, even humorous, description of a bird landing on a goddess Pallas bust in a lover's chamber. However, the tone grows more sombre when the raven keeps using the term "nevermore" in response to the lover's queries. The final line of the poem builds gradually to the lover's question of if he will see his lady again in an other life, to which he is met with the same dismal response.

Poe asserts that his poetry is based on the boundaries of reality. To improve the poem, he has included the "suggestiveness" of a supernatural dimension. The lover pleads with the raven to remove its beak from his heart in the last few words. Poe claims that the reader won't comprehend that the raven can be interpreted as a symbol until this point.

This gets us to one of the most intriguing points of Poe's thesis in "The Philosophy of Composition": he argues that a writer's originality is "less of invention than negation," meaning that it has less to do with "impulse or intuition" and more to do with rejection. An original writer approaches his work in a novel way by reading widely and deeply and then discarding any ideas that do not align with his approach.

Poe admits in "The Raven" that the metre and rhythm of the poem are not novel in and of themselves, but he has combined them in a unique style.

The remainder of "The Philosophy of Composition" focuses on demonstrating how Poe combines various components to create something that seems both organic and full of meaning. In the end, the raven represents or signifies the young man's memory of his departed sweetheart, Lenore.

3.1.3. Analysis

Poe makes his case for the need of "unity of impression" or "unity of effect" right away. Poe, one of the most influential writers of short stories, made a similar argument in his 1842 essay "The Importance of the Single Effect in the Prose Tale," arguing that before starting to write, a writer must first envision the desired ending for the plot (in the case of a short story) or the effect they want to have on the reader (in the case of a poem). The author must start at the conclusion of the literary work and work their way backward, adding the occurrences and details that lead up to the climax and the one desired result.

The Romantic notion that the poet is an inventive genius who depends on "Eureka" moments of inspiration to produce his works is rejected by Poe in "The Philosophy of Composition," which is one of the book's most significant features.

Though he was in many ways a Romantic, Poe disputes the idea that these inspirations serve as the primary means of producing literary works. Rather, he highlights the "painful erasures and interpolations" that occur during the creative process, such as the numerous rewrites, deletions, and redrafts. In fact, Poe's critique of literary "originality" and creativity foreshadows in some ways the opinions of critics and poets of the twentieth century, such T. S. Eliot.

In his well-known 1919 essay "Tradition and the Individual Talent," Eliot argued that every poet creates his own "originality" by building upon the accomplishments of other poets. This almost seems paradoxical—originality cannot exist without pulling from the works of others. The new poet expresses his "originality," in whatever minute form, by subtly altering the works of previous poets.

Poe's perspective on the subject of "effect" is another facet of his argument in "The Philosophy of Composition" that anticipates Eliot's own influential thesis in the

future. In 1919, Eliot presented his theory of the "objective correlative" in another essay titled "Hamlet and his Problems." This theory describes a formula (a collection of objects or, in a play or narrative work, a series of events) that allows a writer to achieve the desired effect with his work.

The focus, as with Poe, is on the ultimate result: the author must write with a specific objective in mind (e.g., the main character's death, the union of the two love interests, and so on). Once again, some of Eliot's later arguments are hinted at by Poe's "philosophy" in his essay. Certain critics have proposed that Poe, who was previously recognised for engaging in pranks and deceiving his audience, might have been light-hearted in his authoring of "The Philosophy of Composition," considering it more of a light-hearted piece of philosophical literary criticism.

Poe admits that the poem's tone would not have supported a parrot, therefore it begs the question of whether he ever gave serious thought to including the bird in his lamentation of tragically lost love. However, Poe is making some very valid arguments about the structure of poetry in this essay, and any admirer or student of his writing should be aware of these issues and the implications for Poe's body of work.

3.1.5.Sum Up

In Edgar Allan Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe provides insight into his creative process, particularly in crafting his poem "The Raven." He emphasizes the meticulous planning and design involved in composing a successful work of literature, highlighting the importance of unity of effect and the careful selection of themes, symbols, and imagery to evoke a specific emotional response in the reader.

3.1.6. Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. According to Edgar Allan Poe, what is the most important element in writing a successful poem?

a. Spontaneity

b. Length

c. Originality
d. Unity of effect

2. In "The Philosophy of Composition," Poe emphasizes the importance of:
a. Writing from personal experience
b. Meticulous planning and design
c. Inspiration and intuition
d. Collaboration with other writers

3. Poe argues that the best length for a poem is:
a. 50 to 100 lines
b. 100 to 200 lines
c. Short enough to be read in one sitting
d. Long enough to be serialized

4. According to Poe, what should be the primary focus of a writer when composing a work?
a. Thematic depth
b. Aesthetic beauty
c. Emotional impact
d. Moral message

5. In his essay, Poe claims that the initial consideration when writing "The Raven" was:
a. The refrain "Nevermore"
b. The setting of the poem
c. The character of the narrator
d. The length of the poem

6. Poe suggests that a literary work should be designed with the end in mind. What term does he use to describe this approach?
a. Retrospective composition
b. Teleological method
c. Preconceived design

d. Progressive elaboration

7. What does Poe identify as the most melancholy topic in literature?
   a. War
   b. Unrequited love
   c. Death
   d. Poverty

8. According to Poe, which aspect of "The Raven" contributes most to its overall effect?
   a. The complexity of the plot
   b. The simplicity of the language
   c. The unity of tone
   d. The detailed descriptions

Answer Key:

1. A) Unity of effect
2. B) Meticulous planning and design
3. C) Short enough to be read in one sitting
4. C) Emotional impact
5. A) The refrain "Nevermore"
6. C) Preconceived design
7. C) Death
8. C) The unity of tone

Short Answer Questions

1. What is the central argument of Poe's "The Philosophy of Composition"?
2. According to Poe, what is the most important element in writing a successful poem?
3. What length does Poe recommend for a poem, and why?
4. How did Poe determine the refrain "Nevermore" in "The Raven"?
5. What does Poe consider the “most melancholy” topic in literature?

Essay Questions

1. Discuss the concept of "unity of effect" as presented by Poe in "The Philosophy of Composition." How does this concept influence the structure and elements of a literary work?
2. Analyze Poe's methodical approach to writing "The Raven" as described in "The Philosophy of Composition." How does this approach challenge the common notion of spontaneous creativity in writing?
3. Evaluate Poe's assertion that the “most melancholy” topic in literature is the death of a beautiful woman. How does this theme manifest in "The Raven," and what does it reveal about Poe's views on beauty and tragedy?
4. Poe argues that a poem should be short enough to be read in one sitting. Discuss the implications of this argument for both the writer and the reader. How does this principle affect the overall impact of a poem?
5. Examine Poe's views on the role of originality in literary composition. How does he reconcile the need for originality with the use of universally resonant themes and structures?

Glossary

1. Vanity - Excessive pride in or admiration of one's own appearance or achievements.
2. Diminished - Made smaller or less; reduced in size, importance, or intensity.
3. Nevermore - Never again; a word made famous by Edgar Allan Poe's poem "The Raven"
4. Melancholy - A rhythmic flow of sounds or words; the beat, time, or measure of rhythmical motion or activity.
5. Cadence - A rhythmic flow of sounds or words; the beat, time, or measure of rhythmical motion or activity.
6. Obtrusiveness - The quality of being noticeable or prominent in an unwelcome or intrusive way.
7. Tenable - Capable of being held, maintained, or defended.
8. Probity- The quality of having strong moral principles; honesty and decency.
9. Peculiar - Strange or odd; unusual.

10. Propounded - Put forward (an idea, theory, or point of view) for consideration by others.
11. Propriety - Conformity to conventionally accepted standards of behavior or morals.
12. Delineation - The action of describing or portraying something precisely.
13. Novelty - The quality of being new, original, or unusual.
14. Precepts - General rules intended to regulate behavior or thought.
15. Vexed - Annoyed, frustrated, or worried.
16. Analogous-Comparable in certain respects, typically in a way that makes clearer the nature of the things compared.
17. Induction- The process or action of bringing about or giving rise to something.
18. Rhythmical- Having or relating to rhythm.
19. Epigram- A pithy saying or remark expressing an idea in a clever and amusing way.
20. Supererogation - The performance of more work than duty requires.

Section 3.2. Martin Luther King Jr. – I Have a Dream

3.2.1. Introduction to Martin Luther King

Atlanta, Georgia, was the birthplace of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1929.

Segregation, or the division of people based on race in establishments like restaurants, transportation, and schools, was legal at the time in that region of the nation. From an early age, he was subjected to racial prejudice, which motivated him to commit his life to the pursuit of justice and equality for all Americans, regardless of race. King thought that the most effective approach to affect social change was through nonviolently refusing to follow unfair laws.

During his life, King was arrested multiple times. He participated in a sit-in at a segregated lunch restaurant with Black college students in 1960. John F. Kennedy, a presidential candidate, is credited with helping Kennedy win the presidency by intervening to get King out of jail.

King studied the writings and lived example of Mohandas K. Gandhi in India, who had a significant impact on his nonviolent philosophy. King declared, "Non-violence is not sterile passivity, but a powerful moral force which makes for social transformation," when accepting the Nobel Peace Prize from Gunnar Jahn, president of Nobel Prize Committee, on December 10, 1964. King recognised the strategic benefit of nonviolence, just like Gandhi did: "We have neither the techniques nor the numbers to win a violent campaign." He opposed the Vietnam War despite the concerns of many in the civil rights movement because he was committed to nonviolence and saw the links between materialism, militarism, and racism.

On April 4, 1968. James Earl Ray shot King from the Lorraine Motel's balcony. King continued to be the most well-known African American leader of his day in the years following his passing. The successful campaign to create a national holiday in his honour in the United States and the construction of a King memorial on the Mall in Washington, D.C., close to the Lincoln Memorial—the location of his well-known

1963 "I Have a Dream" speech—confirmed his status as a significant historical figure. King has been honoured by state holidays, public sculptures and artworks, and street, school, and other namesake designations by numerous states and towns.

Historical Context

August 1963 saw the March on Washington, where Martin Luther King Jr. gave his "I Have a Dream" address before an audience of more than 250,000 people. One of the biggest civil rights demonstrations in American history, the march took place at a pivotal point in the long fight for civil rights. The Civil Rights Acts of 1957 and 1960 were passed as a direct result of the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955 and 1956 and the nationwide lunch counter sit-ins of the early 1960s. Despite these victories, segregation remained in place in America and minorities' ability to vote was still being threatened, particularly in the South. The speech was important historically because it exerted political pressure on the Kennedy administration to keep pushing for more civil rights legislation. King's speech also increased his profile internationally; later in 1963, TIME magazine named him Man of the Year, and in 1964, he received the Nobel Peace Prize. The speech is recognised by many as both an important historical record and a masterwork of rhetoric.

3.2.2. Summary

Minister and civil rights activist Martin Luther King Jr. urges his audience to keep their nation responsible to its own foundational promises of freedom, justice, and equality in his "I Have a Dream" speech, outlining the lengthy history of racial injustice in the United States.

King reminds the more than two hundred thousand people who attended the August 1963 March on Washington that the Emancipation Proclamation, which abolished slavery in America, was signed into law more than a century ago before he starts his speech. The "manacles of segregation" and the "chains of discrimination" still define the Black experience in America, despite the fact that Black Americans are officially free from slavery. King contends that it is now necessary for African Americans to seek "the riches of freedom and the security of justice" and to "cash

[the] cheque" they were promised a century ago. King claims that since we are in the "sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent" and the nation has reached a breaking point, there is no more time to lose trying to find a gradual solution to racism.

King exhorts individuals fighting for civil rights to not allow "bitterness and hatred" dictate their activities, even as he calls for the "whirlwinds of revolt" to begin. They cannot allow the "degeneracy into physical violence" of their campaign for justice. King urges his audience to continue their peaceful resistance in the "majestic heights" and to stop viewing their white comrades as rivals. King asserts that unity and adherence to the principles of nonviolent solidarity are essential for achieving true justice for all Americans, regardless of race.

King recognises that many of his listeners have already had protracted and challenging conflicts; he is aware that individuals engaged in the civil rights movement have suffered beatings, insults, and incarcerations. Nevertheless, full of faith in the worth and potential of their struggle, he exhorts them to return from the march to wherever they may call home—whether it be the oppressive South or the "ghettos of the northern cities."

Then King speaks of his dream for America, which is that one day the nation will "live out the true meaning of its creed" and establish the idea that "all men are created equal." In his fantasy world, Black and White children will grow up to be sisters and brothers and live in a society where people will judge them on the content of their character rather than the colour of their skin.

3.2.3. Analysis

Promises and Potential of America

Civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. outlined the nation's failure to uphold its basic ideals—freedom, equality, and justice for all—in his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. King Jr. specifically addressed the nation's failure to uphold its commitments to Black Americans. Speaking to a crowd of hundreds of thousands at the August 1963 March on Washington, King notably brought up the reality that Black Americans were denied freedom and justice while the majority of White Americans did. King does, however, express optimism that America will soon live up

to its foundational principles throughout the address. King made the case to those present at the march that it was their right to demand that America keep its promises to them and that it was their duty to keep fighting until the nation realised its potential by outlining the failed promises made by the country while still holding onto his faith in its potential.

King opens his address by quoting the Emancipation Proclamation, which guaranteed freedom to all Americans who were held as slaves in 1863. According to King, the Emancipation Proclamation "came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves," and he exhorts his listeners to picture the proclamation's intended "joyous daybreak to end the long night of [...] captivity." However, King notes that "one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free." When King delivered his speech in 1963, Black Americans were still subjected to police abuse, were not allowed to interact socially with White Americans, and were kept in actual or imagined "ghettos" where social mobility was unattainable. King suggests that the freedom promised by the Emancipation Proclamation is not this. Despite the fact that Black Americans were promised fair treatment and equal rights following the Civil War, America has deliberately broken those promises in the years since. The social equality, material wealth, and political representation that White Americans have enjoyed since the founding of the nation have never been extended to Black Americans in America.

King remains optimistic that his nation will eventually fulfil its promises of freedom and equality, even though they haven't been fulfilled by the US yet. King declares, "We refuse to believe that there are not enough money in the great vaults of opportunity in this country." In making this statement, King—along with a great number of other Black Americans—clearly states that he is certain that the United States can offer similar chances to all Americans, regardless of race, having personally witnessed how it serves its white residents. He suggests that there is plenty of money to go around by framing opportunity as a type of currency. Therefore, in his view, the United States has not betrayed its promises of freedom and opportunity because those resources are limited. In fact, he thinks that opportunity may be distributed fairly without causing any harm to White Americans. King acknowledges that "the promises of democracy" have not yet been "made real," but he yet believes in them.

King's belief that America may fulfil its unfulfilled promises rests on each and every citizen accepting responsibility for holding their nation to its own standards of justice and freedom. King explains to his audience that although America has failed to fulfil its obligation to Black Americans, they still need to "cash this check"—the promise of equality and freedom included in the country's founding documents, of course. King utilises the metaphor of money to illustrate his point. Minorities in America won't receive "the riches of freedom and the security of justice" unless they demand the rights that were promised to them as a group. King asserts, "This is not the time to indulge in the luxury of cooling off." Here, he portrays "cooling off"—that is, putting the struggle for civil rights on hold—as a "luxury" that no American, regardless of colour, can afford. King begs his audience not to presume that America will automatically grant them what is rightfully theirs.

"Deeply rooted in the American dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed—we hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal," is how King sums up his own vision for America's future towards the end of his address. Here, King reaffirms his conviction that progress is still possible in America even though its promises haven't been fulfilled yet. He is aware that, with enough effort on the part of citizens, America can establish a society in which everyone is treated fairly.

Together Against Racism

Martin Luther King Jr. denounces the "shameful condition" of racism in the United States and begs for an end to the humiliation of segregation in "I Have a Dream." However, he concedes that white Americans' support is necessary for the realisation of his vision of a free and just America, where Black people are valued for the content of their character rather than the colour of their skin. King contends that unity in the pursuit of justice is the only effective strategy against racism's "vicious" and polarising effects.

King emphasises how pernicious racism is and makes the argument that no one can afford to put up with it any longer. King, for example, emphasises how dehumanising segregation is for African Americans. Black people are restricted to "slums" and "ghettos," they are the targets of police brutality, they are not allowed to stay in certain hotels and motels, and some of them are not allowed to vote because

they feel that they have "nothing for which to vote." Segregation, in King's words, places African Americans in a "dark and desolate valley." King indicates that segregation has an effect equivalent to exile rather than being "separate but equal" by use terminology associated with incarceration and isolation. King also suggests that racial relations in America have reached a breaking point by illustrating how physically and emotionally oppressive racism is through the use of terminology related to heat and suffocation. He claims that "the heat of injustice" is "sweltering" and intolerable, and that if things don't change soon, America will be stuck in a dangerous "quicksand" from which it may never be able to escape.

King calls for both Black and White Americans to put aside their differences and accept that cooperation is necessary to defeat prejudice. King addresses African Americans directly several times throughout his speech, pleading with them not to let their pursuit of justice to breed "a distrust of all white people." Ultimately, a great deal of "white brothers" have attended the March on Washington, D.C., after learning that the freedom of white Americans is "inextricably bound" to that of Black Americans. King argued that White Americans must assist Black Americans in breaking free from "the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination" in order for Black Americans to be genuinely free. Black Americans do not require White Americans' assistance in overcoming racism and injustice. According to King's statements, no one can be fully freed as long as there remains oppression of even one group of people.

King also addresses white Americans specifically and directly in his speech. In their protracted fight against racism, Black Americans "cannot walk alone," he exhorts his white listeners to realise. In order to bring about any meaningful change, King tells the white audience that they must defend their Black colleagues by calling for a "biracial army" to rise up against "the battlements of injustice." In order to understand the importance of "working together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together" with their Black brethren, King wants his white audience to grasp this. If White Americans do not put themselves at danger for Black liberty, nothing will change. White Americans, who enjoy social privilege, have an obligation to fight together in opposition to black Americans' harsher and more unjust punishments until real freedom is achieved.

King contends that all Americans won't be genuinely "free at last" unless people of various races unite. For its time, King's claim that segregation and racism would not end for White Americans until all Americans were free was radical since it implied that racism not only dehumanised and humiliated Black people but also all people. King implies that everyone, regardless of colour, has a stake in eradicating racism and pursuing true equality by painting it as a stain on America.

Dream, Faith and Hope

A major part of "I Have a Dream," a stirring speech about civil rights that is formatted like a sermon, is dedicated to religious faith. King presents a vision of an America where people of all races and faiths coexist in peace and respect after exposing the horrible realities of racism in the country. Even though King has experienced despair, his faith in the equality of "all God's children" allows him to dream of a future in which Black and White children hold hands, the South changes from a racist hellhole into a tranquil oasis, and his children are judged on the content of their character rather than their race. King suggests that even in the face of pessimism, one must hold onto one's faith in order to create a more just future.

King acknowledges the helplessness that many of his listeners may have by sharing his own desperation with them. Segregation, police brutality, and widespread disenfranchisement are just a few examples of the horrible racism that his audience has to deal with; many activists have also experienced particular demoralisations in their efforts to effect change. In the fight for justice, some audience members have suffered beatings, taunts, or even jail time; other activists have lost their lives. It makes sense that some audience members might become hopeless in the face of all this "unearned suffering," but King exhorts them to view their suffering as "redemptive." King likens his audience to Christ in this way: just as Christ endured suffering on the cross to save humanity, civil rights activists also endure insults and injuries in order to save future generations from the agony that King's generation endured. King is saying that rather of making his audience feel hopeless, pain may actually be a source of hope if they have a little faith.

King expresses his hopes for America's future, picturing a country characterised by racial harmony and fair justice, as another means of overcoming hopelessness. By encouraging the audience to recall their own aspirations for the

country and for themselves, sharing these dreams not only helps the movement's desired future appear more real but also keeps the audience engaged and focused. King links faith—religious and secular—with his visions as he explains them. The last of the six visions he describes is overtly biblical, alluding to a line from Isaiah. According to him, his dream is for "every valley [to] be exalted," "every hill and mountain [to be made low," "crooked places" to become "straight," and "rough places" to be smoothed out. These serve as symbols for justice and equality, illustrating how all that is unfair (referred to as "crooked") will be put right and everyone who is low will be elevated. King expressly grounds his cause in Scripture by referencing a passage from Isaiah, much as he has grounded the civil rights movement in America's foundational texts. This conveys the idea that God supports the movement.

However, as King closes off his remarks, he keeps bringing up a "faith" that isn't specifically religious. He states, "This is the faith that I go back to the South with," referring to both his belief in the imminent realisation of his particular goals of justice and equality as well as his Christian religion. By doing this, he addresses to both individuals who are strictly secular in their faith and those who are part of the Christian activist tradition, of which King was a member. King maintains that faith alone—be it faith in God or the movement's shared dreams—is what will keep the movement inspired and cohesive, regardless of the audience's particular religious beliefs. “With this faith,” he says, “we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.”

A secular sermon, the "I Have a Dream Speech" has religious connotations but also overtones. It asserts that suffering for the sake of others is strong and valuable, teaches the gospel of freedom, equality, and justice, and exhorts listeners to have trust in their country's future despite whatever challenges they may encounter. King says the movement will achieve their goals if they have this unwavering trust.

Non Violence King praised the possibilities of nonviolent action as a means of bringing about change, contending that the civil rights movement had to avoid responding to violence with violence if it was to be successful.

At the March on Washington, King advised all in attendance to abstain from violence and to rid themselves of aggressive urges. King cautioned his audience, saying, "We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence." "We must rise to the majestic heights of meeting soul force with physical force again and again." King emphasised the value of choosing the moral high ground and resisting the urge to spiral into chaos or cruelty by asserting that using physical force as a form of protest was the "degenerated" form.

King claimed that the purest form of resistance was "creative protest," or coming up with fresh and inventive ways for people to stand up together against injustice because it was rooted in the spirit and the heart rather than the body. King believed that physical violence was commonplace, uninspired, and terrible. However, devising alternative protest strategies that would appeal to growth and openness rather than fear or compulsion would advance their cause. Speaking to the crowd during the march, King declared, "Unearned suffering is redemptive." King was transforming suffering from something that should incite violence into something that should be embraced as a pleasant experience by urging listeners to accept their undeserved suffering. King encouraged the "veterans of creative suffering" he addressed during the march to provide an example of more moral and just behaviour rather than imitating the violent methods of those who had wronged them. Many of these "veterans of creative suffering" had experienced violence and survived.

Even while King opposed violence, he acknowledged and validated the anger of his audience and urged them to use that anger to drive purposeful, nonviolent action. In order to "shake the foundations of [the] nation," King exhorted his audience to put up unceasing effort in promoting the rights of African Americans and to unleash "the whirlwinds of revolt." While acknowledging the marchers' "thirst for freedom," King cautioned against trying to quench that thirst "by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred." He wanted their wrath to motivate them rather than keep them mired in bitterness; he didn't want them to resort to violence or cruelty. King also commended the civil rights movement and the Black people for their "marvellous new militancy." However, he did not support "militancy" in the sense of using force; rather, he thought that the civil rights movement would be "militant" if it remained cohesive and structured in the face of injustice. He urged everyone who

listened to him to stay fully committed to change and not give up or turn to violent means, even when it didn't happen immediately.

King often hinted during his address that freedom would finally resound throughout America by peaceful action and the ideal of peace, not unbridled militancy or bloodshed. "The jangling discords of [his] nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood" was King's vision. His goal was to straighten the "crooked places" and smooth out the "rough places" in America. He desired for "sitting down together at the table of brotherhood" the descendants of slaves and the descendants of slaveowners. King believed that a new America could not be achieved by force, brutality, or bloodshed. King said that reiterating the violent power structures that sustained racism and segregation would not lead to true freedom. In order to bring real change to America, King and his supporters would have to find a new way forward—one that radically rejected violent action as well as violent thoughts.

3.2.4. Sum Up

In Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, he eloquently articulates his vision for racial equality and justice. King emphasizes the importance of nonviolent protest and the need to address the ongoing oppression and discrimination faced by African Americans. He draws upon the principles of freedom and equality enshrined in documents like the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, calling for an end to segregation and the realization of the American dream for all citizens.

3.2.5. Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. Martin Luther King Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech during which event?
   A) The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
   B) The Montgomery Bus Boycott
   C) The Selma to Montgomery March
   D) The Birmingham Campaign

2. In his speech, Martin Luther King Jr. refers to which important American document to highlight the promise of freedom and equality?
   A) The Declaration of Independence

B) The Constitution

C) The Emancipation Proclamation

D) The Gettysburg Address

3. Martin Luther King Jr. describes his dream as being deeply rooted in which tradition?

A) The American dream

B) The Christian tradition

C) The Civil Rights Movement

D) The African tradition

4. What metaphor does Martin Luther King Jr. use to describe the condition of African Americans in the United States?

A) Living in a palace of prosperity

B) Stuck in a dark valley of segregation

C) Standing on the threshold of a new era

D) Chained to the past

5. King dreams of a day when his children will be judged not by the color of their skin but by what?

A) The content of their character

B) Their achievements

C) Their intelligence

D) Their social status

6. In his speech, Martin Luther King Jr. emphasizes the importance of what kind of protest?

A) Violent protest

B) Nonviolent protest

C) Economic protest

D) Legal protest

7. Which of the following is NOT one of the geographic locations Martin Luther King Jr. mentions in his speech?

A) New York

B) Alabama

C) Mississippi

D) Georgia

8. Martin Luther King Jr. states that the struggle for civil rights will continue until what happens?

A) Justice rolls down like waters

B) African Americans are given reparations

C) Segregation is completely abolished

D) America is rebuilt from the ground up

9. What does Martin Luther King Jr. mean when he says, "We will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream"?

A) He wants immediate change

B) He is willing to wait for gradual change

C) He expects change to come from the government

D) He foresees a peaceful transition

Answer Key:

1. A) The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom
2. A) The Declaration of Independence
3. A) The American dream
4. B) Stuck in a dark valley of segregation
5. A) The content of their character
6. B) Nonviolent protest
7. A) New York
8. A) Justice rolls down like waters
9. A) He wants immediate change

Short Answer Questions

1. What was the Martin Luther King Jr.'s purpose for his, "I Have a Dream" speech?
2. What is the main message of the "I Have a Dream" speech?
3. What are the issues mentioned in "I have a Dream" speech?
4. Why was the "I Have a Dream" speech important?

5. What are the lasting effects of the "I Have a Dream" speech on American society?

Essay Questions

1. Discuss Martin Luther King Jr.'s take on freedom and equality
2. Evaluate the social and political impacts of the "I Have a Dream" speech on the Civil Rights Movement.
3. Explain the themes of justice, freedom, and equality in the "I Have a Dream" speech.
4. How does the "I Have a Dream" speech address issues of racial inequality and segregation?
5. Reflect on the relevance of the "I Have a Dream" speech in today's society and the ongoing fight for civil rights.

Glossary

1. Dream - A vision or aspiration for the future.
2. Segregation - The enforced separation of different racial groups, especially in public places.
3. Discrimination - Unfair treatment of individuals or groups based on characteristics such as race, gender, or religion.
4. Injustice - Lack of fairness or justice; unfair treatment or behavior.
5. Oppression - Prolonged cruel or unjust treatment or control.
6. Emancipation Proclamation - An executive order issued by President Abraham Lincoln on January 1, 1863, which declared that all enslaved people in Confederate-held territory were to be set free.
7. Declaration of Independence - A document adopted by the Second Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, which declared the thirteen American colonies independent from British rule.
8. Constitution - The fundamental laws and principles that govern a country, especially the United States Constitution.
9. Civil Rights Movement - A social and political movement advocating for equal rights and treatment for African Americans in the United States.

10. Desegregation - The process of ending the separation of different racial groups, especially in schools, housing, and public facilities.
11. Integration - The process of bringing together different racial or ethnic groups into a unified whole.
12. Nonviolent Protest - A peaceful form of protest or resistance against injustice or unfair treatment.
13. Equality - The state of being equal, especially in status, rights, and opportunities.
14. Justice - Fairness and impartiality in the treatment of others; the quality of being just or righteous.
15. Freedom - The power or right to act, speak, or think without hindrance or restraint; liberty.
16. Solidarity - Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest or purpose.
17. Brotherhood - A feeling of kinship or unity among people, regardless of differences such as race or ethnicity.
18. Promissory note - A written promise to pay a specified sum of money at a stated time or on demand.
19. Nullification - The act of cancelling or making legally void.
20. Interposition - The action of interposing someone or something; intervention.

Section 3. 3. Abraham Lincoln – Gettysburg Address

3.3.1. Introduction to Abraham Lincoln

On February 12, 1809, Abraham Lincoln was born to illiterate parents in a log cabin in Kentucky. For approximately a year, he attended school intermittently, but he taught himself by reading books that he borrowed. Lincoln's mother passed away when he was nine years old. His father, a farmer and carpenter, eventually settled in Illinois after getting remarried and moving his family further west.

Lincoln held jobs as a surveyor, postmaster, soldier, storekeeper, and flatboat navigator in his early adulthood. He was elected to Springfield, Illinois's city government at the age of 25. After moving there, he started a legal firm, taught himself the law, and gained the moniker "Honest Abe."

He lost two bids for the U.S. Senate, although he was a member of the House of Representatives for one time. However, the discussions he had regarding human enslavement with Stephen Douglas, his 1858 Senate opponent, aided him in securing the candidature for president two years later. (Lincoln was against the expansion of slavery in the US.) Among the four contenders for the presidency in 1860, Lincoln received the most votes.

The US was not entirely united in 1861, when Lincoln assumed office. The debate over state autonomy over slavery and the authority to enslave individuals had raged for years in this country. Now, a war seemed imminent between the North and the South. Lincoln forbade the spread of slavery to other states that were already in existence as well as states that may subsequently join the Union, although he did let it to continue in the southern states after taking office.

The leaders of the South chose to secede, or leave, the country because they disagreed with this proposal. Ultimately, in opposition to the 23 northern states that persisted in the Union, 11 southern states established the Confederate States of America. On April 12, 1861, Confederate troops stormed the American fort at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, sparking the start of the Civil War.

Holding the nation together was President Lincoln's main objective. It didn't seem likely that he would succeed for a while. The South was winning the war in the early going. The war did not turn in the Union's favour until July 1863, at the Battle of Gettysburg in Pennsylvania.

Lincoln inspired Northerners to continue fighting in addresses like the Gettysburg Address. Lincoln demanded the abolition of slavery in his Emancipation Proclamation speech earlier that year.

Lincoln's greatest accomplishment as president was leading the Union through the Civil War, but it wasn't his only victory. He created the Department of Agriculture in collaboration with Congress, encouraged the building of a transcontinental railroad, passed the Homestead Act, which allowed for the opening of land to settlers, and drafted the 13th Amendment, which outlawed human slavery.

The nation was in sorrow once more less than a week after the Civil War's end. Lincoln was shot on April 14, 1865, making him the first assassinated president. He was watching a play in Washington, D.C. with his wife, Mary Todd Lincoln, the night he was shot. The actor John Wilkes Booth was able to enter because the access to their box seats was not properly guarded. Booth wanted to assassinate Lincoln in order to further the Confederate cause. After taking a bullet to Lincoln's back, he left the theatre. Two weeks later he was apprehended. During his final capture, he was shot, and the wounds caused his death. The president, injured and rendered unconscious, was taken to a boarding house on the opposite side of the street, where he passed away early on April 15, 1865. Although Lincoln's presidency was tragically cut short, his accomplishments to the US guaranteed that he would go down in history as one of the country's most significant leaders.

3.3.2. Historical Context

Confederate armies advanced as far north as Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, during the Civil War. The Union forces prevailed at Gettysburg following a three-day struggle from July 1st to July 3rd, 1863, but a victorious assault into the northern states may have led to the seizure of Washington, D.C. Although the Civil conflict was definitively turned around in favour of Union triumph at the Battle of Gettysburg, Lincoln still required the backing of his nation since the conflict was far from done.

Lincoln gave a brief speech to a crowd of 15,000 people for the dedication of a national cemetery on the site of the conflict, which resulted in the deaths of 51,000 soldiers in action and was the most expensive battle in American history. Lincoln explained the democratic significance of the war in the Gettysburg Address, which he had previously discussed in an earlier war speech in 1861, without criticising the Confederacy or descending into jingoism: "On the side of the Union, it [the war] is a struggle for maintaining in the world, that form, and substance of government, whose leading object is, to elevate the condition of men—to lift the artificial weights from all shoulders—to clear the paths of laudable pursuit for everyone—to afford everyone, an unfettered start, and a fair chance, in the race of life." Lincoln's Gettysburg Address became a standard of American discourse and a conclusive declaration of the fundamental principles of the nation.

3.3.3. Summary

Lincoln reminds the audience at the outset of the Gettysburg Address of the nation's history, particularly that of the founding fathers who created a country based on the principles of liberty and equality, and that the nation's existence as well as everything it stands for are in jeopardy due to the ongoing Civil War. Lincoln devotes the second portion of his speech to the subject at hand, paying tribute to the soldiers who died in combat and dedicating the new national cemetery at Gettysburg. Lincoln, however, claims that since the troops themselves have already consecrated the location by giving their lives, commemoration is, in a sense, pointless. Rather, Lincoln begs the audience to remember the soldiers' sacrifices by resolving to back the war, the country's continued existence, and its core democratic principles.

3.3.4. Analysis

Lincoln alludes to the past in the first sentence of his speech before moving into the present in the second. By utilising inclusive language, particularly the pronoun "we," he engages his audience. After all, everyone is involved in the conflict, not just generals, presidents, troops, and legislators. Lincoln calls on his listeners to comprehend the gravity of the nation's disastrous divisions and the horrifying deaths of the previous two years in this queue. Lincoln believed that the American people

were on the verge of extinction and that the Civil War represented the last best chance to uphold the nation's founding democratic principles. Furthermore, the war's effects go beyond ensuring the continued existence of American democracy to include the survival of other countries built on like principles.

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Lincoln quotes the Declaration to conclude, saying, "All men are created equal." This clear allusion refers to the system of slavery in southern states and its possible spread to new U.S. territories, which was the primary cause of the Civil War. Lincoln makes a point of referring to the Declaration of Independence rather than the Constitution, which was the federal government's foundational document that originally supported slavery, and was ratified in 1787. Lincoln appropriates Thomas Jefferson's words and implicitly views them as covering the enslaved people for whom the war is being waged, even though Jefferson may not have intended for equal rights to extend to slaves when he wrote the Declaration of Independence in 1776. By emphasising the fundamental idea of the United States as a country founded upon the idea of equality for everyone, including slaves—a value that superseded the Constitution as it stood in 1863—Lincoln thus reinterprets not only the Declaration of Independence but also American history. Lincoln further expands on one of the Declaration's major ideas in this statement, which also serves as an introduction to one of the speech's main themes: liberty, equality, and freedom.

Past, Present and the Future

Lincoln ties together the past, present, and future in his Gettysburg speech to motivate his listeners to take action. He invokes the past in the opening line of his

speech, calling attention to the United States' founding as a country "conceived in liberty" and "dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal." This provides the framework for Lincoln's comparison of the past, or the history of the country, with the present, or the ongoing Civil War and the continued existence of the United States and its basic ideals. The audience views the present and the issues at stake in this battle through the prism of national values derived from a common past. Lincoln moves from remembrance to commemoration when he speaks of the task at hand—dedicating the location of the valiant troops' battle at Gettysburg. Lincoln claims that although the troops' sacrifices had hallowed the ground more than words could, dedicating this ground—the speech's stated goal—is not essential. Lincoln, on the other hand, calls on his listeners to commit themselves to a continuing cause: the freedom for which the warriors gave their lives. Lincoln, however, steers clear of the gory, violent parts of combat by bringing the past into the present, viewing the American Civil combat as a fight for democracy, and urging the audience to secure the country's survival in the future.

Life, Death and Sacrifice

Lincoln compares the formation of the United States to the birth of a child in the opening line of his Gettysburg speech, saying that the country was "conceived in liberty" and "brought forth" by "our fathers." Lincoln is able to make a comparison for the audience between the troops' and the nation's mortality by personifying the country as a living being. The life of the country is just as vulnerable and should be preserved as human life. Lincoln uses the concept of sacrifice to connect the nation's life and the soldiers' deaths, which he is charged with remembering, rather than considering them as distinct subjects. Lincoln interprets the soldiers' deaths as sacrifices made to guarantee the survival of the United States, placing the Gettysburg casualties and the tragedy of the Civil War in context as the address goes on. All three themes come together at the end of the speech when he speaks of "a new birth of freedom" because of the troops' selfless deaths at Gettysburg. Lincoln therefore links ideas of life and death with sacrifice, giving context and meaning to what his audience may have seen to be senseless killing. This thematic connection helps him achieve his goals of supporting the war and national values while also paying respect to the fallen.

Liberty Equality and Freedom

In the Gettysburg Address, Lincoln surprisingly says very nothing about liberty, equality, or freedom. Actually, this patriotic trifecta only has these terms appear once: In the opening sentence, Lincoln states that the United States is a country "conceived in liberty" and dedicated to the idea that "all men are created equal." He then goes on to speak of "a new birth of freedom" in the country. But all of the speech's content, including Lincoln's message to the audience—that the Civil War is a test of the principles that make the United States of America—is subtly influenced by these ideas. In addition to allowing the "nation to survive," soldiers "gave their lives" so that the principles of liberty, equality, and freedom might endure. Moreover, Lincoln's audience—the leaders of the country who uphold its core values—is just as important to the survival of these ideals as the combatants. Lincoln believed that in order to maintain freedom, everyone—especially "the living"—must respect the deceased by continuing the job that the troops "nobly advanced" in order to uphold these principles. Therefore, in order to preserve the country and advance the nation that the founding fathers intended to be a global emblem of democracy, the audience must dedicate themselves to both the war and the nation's principles.

Life and Death as Symbols

Life and death function as emblems of the nation's survival throughout the speech. Lincoln personifies the founding fathers' "conceived in liberty" as the beginning of the United States' history in the first statement. He addresses the soldiers fighting in the Civil War and the listeners to his speech as "the living," referring to the lives of the soldiers who fought at Gettysburg. Images of death, particularly the deaths of the Union troops who gave their lives at Gettysburg, are used to counterbalance references to life. With the dedication of the living audience, the "honoured dead" have made it possible for the United States to continue existing and for the possibility of a "new birth of freedom."

Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address, delivered during the American Civil War, commemorates the soldiers who sacrificed their lives in the Battle of Gettysburg. Lincoln reaffirms the nation's commitment to the principles of democracy and liberty,

describing the Civil War as a test of whether a government "of the people, by the people, for the people" can endure. He calls for a "new birth of freedom" and urges the nation to honor the soldiers' sacrifice by ensuring that the United States remains a unified and just society.

3.3.5. Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. Who delivered the Gettysburg Address?
   A. George Washington
   B. Thomas Jefferson
   C. Abraham Lincoln
   D. Ulysses S. Grant

2. When was the Gettysburg Address delivered?
   A. July 4, 1776
   B. November 19, 1863
   C. December 7, 1941
   D. April 15, 1865

3. Where was the Gettysburg Address delivered?
   A. Washington, D.C.
   B. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
   C. Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
   D. Richmond, Virginia

4. How long is the Gettysburg Address?
   A. Approximately 2 minutes
   B. Approximately 5 minutes
   C. Approximately 10 minutes
   D. Approximately 20 minutes

5. What battle does the Gettysburg Address reference?
   A. Battle of Bunker Hill

B. Battle of Gettysburg

C. Battle of Antietam

D. Battle of Yorktown

6. How does the Gettysburg Address begin?

A. "Four score and seven years ago..."

B. "We the people..."

C. "I have a dream..."

D. "Ask not what your country can do for you..."

7. What does Lincoln mean by "a new birth of freedom"?

A. The end of British rule

B. The abolition of slavery

C. The start of the Industrial Revolution

D. The expansion of U.S. territory

8. Which phrase is part of the Gettysburg Address?

A. "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness"

B. "Government of the people, by the people, for the people"

C. "We hold these truths to be self-evident"

D. "With malice toward none, with charity for all"

9. What was the main purpose of the Gettysburg Address?

A. To declare independence from Britain

B. To dedicate the Soldiers' National Cemetery

C. To announce the end of the Civil War

D. To launch Lincoln's re-election campaign

10. How did Lincoln describe the significance of the soldiers' sacrifice at Gettysburg?

A. As a minor skirmish in the war

B. As a forgotten moment in history

C. As a way to ensure that democracy survives

D. As an unnecessary loss of life

Answer Key:

1. C. Abraham Lincoln
2. B. November 19, 1863
3. C. Gettysburg, Pennsylvania
4. A. Approximately 2 minutes
5. B. Battle of Gettysburg
6. A. "Four score and seven years ago..."
7. B. The abolition of slavery
8. B. "Government of the people, by the people, for the people"
9. B. To dedicate the Soldiers' National Cemetery
10. C. As a way to ensure that democracy survives

Short Answer Questions

1. How does the Gettysburg Address redefine the purpose of the Civil War?
2. What is the significance of the phrase "government of the people, by the people, for the people"?
3. How did the audience react to the Gettysburg Address?

Essay Questions

4. Evaluate the lasting significance of the Gettysburg Address on American political thought.
5. Explain the themes of unity, democracy, and sacrifice in the Gettysburg Address.
6. How did Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address redefine the American ideals of liberty and equality?
7. Discuss the role of the Gettysburg Address in the context of the 1863 dedication ceremony at the Soldiers' National Cemetery.
8. How does the brevity of the Gettysburg Address contribute to its power and effectiveness?

Glossary

1. Four score and seven years ago - Refers to eighty-seven years before the time of Lincoln's speech, which was the duration since the signing of the Declaration of Independence.

2. Conceived in Liberty - Means the United States was founded based on principles of freedom.
3. Dedicate - To set apart for a special purpose or to honor.
4. Proposition - A fundamental idea or principle.
5. Civil War - A conflict between groups within the same country.
6. Hallow - To honor as sacred.
7. Government of the people, by the people, for the people - A description of democracy where citizens elect and control the government.
8. New birth of freedom - A renewed commitment to principles of freedom and equality.
9. Perish - To die or come to an end.
10. Last full measure of devotion - Extreme dedication and sacrifice.

Unit IV

Drama

UNIT – IV DRAMA

CONTENT OF UNIT - IV

- Tennessee Williams - The Glass Menagerie
- Eugene O' Neil – Emperor Jones

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the key elements and structure of drama, including plot, character, setting, dialogue, and theme.

2. To analyse dramatic techniques such as foreshadowing, symbolism, and stage directions, and their impact on the meaning of a play.

3. To explore different genres of drama, including tragedy, comedy, and absurdist drama, and understand their conventions and characteristics.

4. To study the works of significant playwrights and their contributions to the development of drama.

5. To engage in script analysis and develop a deeper understanding and appreciation of drama.

Section 4.1 Tennessee Williams - The Glass Menagerie

4.1.1 Introduction to Tennessee Williams

Tennessee Williams, born Thomas Lanier Williams III on March 26, 1911, in Columbus, Mississippi, was one of America's greatest playwrights of the 20th century. His life was marked by personal struggles, artistic triumphs, and a relentless pursuit of truth in his writing.

Williams was the second of three children born to Cornelius Coffin Williams, a traveling salesman, and Edwina Dakin Williams, a descendant of Southern gentry. His family's move to St. Louis when he was eight years old profoundly influenced his later works, as the city served as a backdrop for many of his plays.

Williams attended the University of Missouri for a short time before dropping out to pursue writing full-time. His early attempts at playwriting were met with limited success, but he continued to hone his craft and eventually found his voice as a playwright.

Williams achieved his first major success with "*The Glass Menagerie*" in 1944, a semi-autobiographical play that catapulted him to fame. The play, which drew heavily from his own family experiences, received critical acclaim and established Williams as a leading voice in American theater.

Throughout his career, Williams explored themes of desire, loneliness, and the search for connection in works such as "*A Streetcar Named Desire*" (1947), "*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*" (1955), and "*The Night of the Iguana*" (1961). His characters, often outsiders or misfits, grapple with inner turmoil and societal pressures, reflecting Williams' own struggles with mental health and identity.

Williams battled with depression, alcoholism, and drug addiction throughout his life, which had a profound impact on his work. His tumultuous relationships and personal demons found expression in his plays, imbuing them with a raw emotional intensity that resonated with audiences.

Williams received numerous awards and accolades for his contributions to American theater, including two Pulitzer Prizes for Drama for "*A Streetcar Named Desire*" and "*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*." He was also awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1980, recognizing his significant impact on American culture and literature.

In his later years, Williams continued to write prolifically, though critical reception to his later works was mixed. He died on February 25, 1983, in New York City at the age of 71. Despite his struggles and the challenges he faced throughout his life, Williams left behind a lasting legacy as one of America's greatest playwrights.

Tennessee Williams' life and work are a testament to the transformative power of art and the human capacity for resilience in the face of adversity. His plays continue to be performed around the world, captivating audiences with their vivid characters, poetic language, and profound insights into the human condition.

Through his enduring contributions to American theatre, Williams remains a towering figure in the pantheon of great playwrights.

4.1.2. Characters

Amanda

If Tennessee Williams's dramatic work is characterised by any one character type, it is without a doubt the faded Southern belle. Amanda is an obvious example of this kind. A Tennessee Williams faded belle typically comes from a well-known Southern family, had a conventional upbringing, and has experienced a turnabout in her social and financial circumstances at some time in her life. Similar to Amanda, all of these ladies struggle to adjust to their new social standing and, in fact, to modern society's overall disregard for the social distinctions that they were raised to appreciate. They zealously uphold the ideals of their past and have tumultuous relationships with men and their family. Similar to Amanda, their upholding of polite behaviour in extremely ungenteel environments can come across as tragic, hilarious, or even horrific. Amanda is the most dramatic and outgoing character in the play and one of the most sought-after female parts in contemporary American drama.

Although Amanda's persistent badgering of Tom and her inability to accept Laura for who she truly is are despicable, Amanda also exhibits a level of sacrifice for her loved ones that is, in many respects, unmatched in the play. To improve Laura's chances of getting married, she puts up with the dehumanising grind of subscription sales without ever raising an indignation. The best conclusion to make is that Amanda has many flaws but is not evil. Actually, the drama, humour, and dramatic flare of her character are largely due to her shortcomings. Similar to her kids, Amanda escapes into imagination. She is always trying to interact with people and the outside world since, in contrast to them, she is certain that she is not. Although Amanda's monologues to Jim, her kids, and over the phone all expose her psychological and moral faults, they also contain some of the play's most vivid and memorable lines.

Tom Wingfield

In *The Glass Menagerie*, Tom plays two roles that highlight the conflict between memory's warping of truth and the dramatic truth that is portrayed

objectively. He plays both the character whose memories the play recounts and the character who acts within those recollections. In contrast to the other characters, Tom occasionally speaks directly to the audience in an effort to offer a more objective explanation and evaluation of what has been occurring onstage. However, he also exhibits genuine, occasionally childlike feelings while engaging in the play's action. This dichotomy can make it difficult to understand Tom since it makes it difficult to determine if he is a reliable character or one who lets his feelings influence his decisions. It also demonstrates how problematic memory is since recalling the past frequently entails facing a less moral version of oneself than one is now. We can apply this observation about the nature of memory to Williams's recollections of his own childhood because The Glass Menagerie is partially autobiographical and because Tom represents the playwright himself (Williams's real name was Thomas, and he, too, spent a portion of his youth in St. Louis with an unstable mother and sister and an absent father most of the time).

Tom is a contradictory figure even when viewed as a singular entity. He writes poems, reads literature, and harbours aspirations of better things, adventure, and escape. However, he appears to be inescapably linked to the filthy, small-world Wingfield household. His reading habits and political observations about Europe are known to us, but other than that, little is known about his intellectual life. We don't know what Tom thinks about Lawrence, nor do we know what the subject matter of Tom's poetry is. All that is revealed to us is his thoughts on his mother, sister, and work at the warehouse—exactly the things he says he wishes to get away from.

Tom's treatment of Amanda and Laura has left some perplexed. He obviously cares for them, but he often acts callous and even nasty towards them. He expresses his intense affections for Laura in his speech at the play's conclusion. However, he brutally leaves Amanda and her behind, and throughout the play, he never acts compassionately or affectionately towards Laura—not even after he smashes her glass zoo. According to critics, Tom's erratic actions are a sign of his incestuous attraction to his sister and his embarrassment about it. This argument sheds intriguing light on a few scenes in the play, such as the one where Tom and Amanda talk about Laura at the close of one Five. While Amanda (and later Jim) asserts that Laura's oddness is a positive thing, Tom's conviction that Laura is hopelessly strange and cannot thrive in the outside world may have as much to do

with his possessive wish to keep his sister to himself as it does with Laura's peculiarities.

Laura

Laura, the only character in the drama who never does anything to injure anybody else, is physically and mentally disabled. The tears she sobs over Tom's sadness, as Amanda describes in Scene Four, show her pure compassion despite the weight of her own issues. This compassion contrasts sharply with the Wingfield household's reluctance to sacrifice and self-centeredness. In the play, Laura has the fewest lines, which adds to her air of altruism. Nonetheless, the story revolves around her, and the most notable symbols—the glass unicorn, the blue roses, and the entire zoo of glass animals—all serve as metaphors for her. Laura is as fragile as a glass figurine, and she is as unique and unusual as a blue rose or a unicorn.

It seems that other characters believe Laura can change colour at will, much like a clear piece of glass that is colourless until light is shining on it. As a result, Amanda hopes to recreate her youth through Laura and highlights the beauty of her own youth by drawing attention to the differences between the two of them. Laura is seen by both Tom and Jim as an exotic being that is wholly and charmingly alien to the rest of the world. Although Laura is reportedly frail, her crush on Jim, the high school hero, is quite common among schoolgirls, and she could barely withstand the days she spends wandering the streets in the freezing weather to escape typing class.

Jim O Conor

Jim is described in Williams's notes as "a nice, ordinary young man," which stands in stark contrast to the melancholy and lonesome dreamers that make up the Wingfield family. Jim is not leading the life he had imagined, much like the Wingfields. He used to be a popular golden boy in high school, and everyone thought he was going to be really big, but now he works in the same warehouse as Tom. Even though Jim is obviously frustrated by his loss, he never stops looking forward to the future because he believes in his own potential and growth. Because he thinks there is room for progression in the radio sector, he networks there, attends night classes, and is aiming towards an executive position. As he tells Laura about it, “Knowledge — Zzzzzp! Money — Zzzzzzp! — Power! That’s the cycle

democracy is built on!" To put it another way, Jim firmly believes in the American dream and that, if he keeps pushing himself forward, he would be able to achieve infinite success. In that regard, Jim is a dreamer as well, but he lives in the real world rather than running away from it since his fantasy fits in with the way his society operates.

Jim's forward look is momentarily interrupted by Laura's talk. Laura presents Jim with a romanticised image of his history; it's as if everything is dreamier and softer in the candlelit chamber, and Jim begins to succumb to the Wingfield illusion of escape. The stage direction instructs Jim's actor to handle Laura's copy of the Torch, their school yearbook, "reverently," treating this documentation of his prior accomplishments with great reverence. Though he is unlikely to sing again, he autographs her old programme from the school performance of The Pirates of Penzance, joking that his signature might be worth something someday. There is still more to this temporal displacement into the past. Rather, he regales Laura with self-help lectures, connecting his previous grandeur to his projected future prosperity. Because of Laura's adoration for him, he is able to minimise his lacklustre current situation and talk as though his success on radio is inevitable. It also appears that his motivation for dancing and kissing Laura is mostly her unqualified appreciation. Jim, though, is too focused on advancement to indulge in escape. Jim realises he's strayed too far into another era as he kisses Laura and retreats, returning to the present.

Mr. WingField

Mr. Wingfield, the father of Tom and Laura and Amanda's spouse, departed from his family well before the performance started. Mr. Wingfield never makes a physical appearance, but his enormous, happy photograph haunts the entire performance. Given that the play is situated in Tom's memory, the portrait's scale is indicative of how much of an influence Mr. Wingfield has on Tom—while undoubtedly serving the audience's interests as well. This excessive attention is probably caused in part by jealously and hatred. Tom is stuck becoming the family's breadwinner because Mr. Wingfield abandoned them. Furthermore, Williams characterises Mr. Wingfield's smile in the picture as implying, "I will be smiling forever," as if making fun of Tom for feeling enslaved and miserable unable to be joyful.

But there are also similarities between Tom and Mr. Wingfield that are highlighted by the looming portrait. Amanda constantly warns Tom not to become like his father, mainly by drinking too much but also by implying that he should not flee. As a result, Mr. Wingfield's constant absence is also a condemnation of Tom, a reminder of the pain he has caused and the ways in which he did become like his father.

4.1.3. Outline Summary

The Glass Menagerie is a memory play, and its action is drawn from the memories of the narrator, Tom Wingfield. Tom is a character in the play, which is set in St. Louis in 1937. He is an aspiring poet who toils in a shoe warehouse to support his mother, Amanda, and sister, Laura. Mr. Wingfield, Tom and Laura's father, ran off years ago and, except for one postcard, has not been heard from since.

Amanda, originally from a genteel Southern family, regales her children frequently with tales of her idyllic youth and the scores of suitors who once pursued her. She is disappointed that Laura, who wears a brace on her leg and is painfully shy, does not attract any gentlemen callers. She enrols Laura in a business college, hoping that she will make her own and the family's fortune through a business career. Weeks later, however, Amanda discovers that Laura's crippling shyness has led her to drop out of the class secretly and spend her days wandering the city alone. Amanda then decides that Laura's last hope must lie in marriage and begins selling magazine subscriptions to earn the extra money she believes will help to attract suitors for Laura. Meanwhile, Tom, who loathes his warehouse job, finds escape in liquor, movies, and literature, much to his mother's chagrin. During one of the frequent arguments between mother and son, Tom accidentally breaks several of the glass animal figurines that are Laura's most prized possessions.

Amanda and Tom discuss Laura's prospects, and Amanda asks Tom to keep an eye out for potential suitors at the warehouse. Tom selects Jim O'Connor, a casual friend, and invites him to dinner. Amanda quizzes Tom about Jim and is delighted to learn that he is a driven young man with his mind set on career advancement. She prepares an elaborate dinner and insists that Laura wear a new dress. At the last minute, Laura learns the name of her caller; as it turns out, she had a devastating crush on Jim in high school. When Jim arrives, Laura answers the

door, on Amanda's orders, and then quickly disappears, leaving Tom and Jim alone. Tom confides to Jim that he has used the money for his family's electric bill to join the merchant marine and plans to leave his job and family in search of adventure. Laura refuses to eat dinner with the others, feigning illness. Amanda, wearing an ostentatious dress from her glamorous youth, talks vivaciously with Jim throughout the meal.

As dinner is ending, the lights go out as a consequence of the unpaid electric bill. The characters light candles, and Amanda encourages Jim to entertain Laura in the living room while she and Tom clean up. Laura is at first paralyzed by Jim's presence, but his warm and open behaviour soon draws her out of her shell. She confesses that she knew and liked him in high school but was too shy to approach him. They continue talking, and Laura reminds him of the nickname he had given her: "Blue Roses," an accidental corruption of pleurosis, an illness Laura had in high school. He reproaches her for her shyness and low self-esteem but praises her uniqueness. Laura then ventures to show him her favourite glass animal, a unicorn. Jim dances with her, but in the process, he accidentally knocks over the unicorn, breaking off its horn. Laura is forgiving, noting that now the unicorn is a normal horse. Jim then kisses her, but he quickly draws back and apologizes, explaining that he was carried away by the moment and that he actually has a serious girlfriend. Resigned, Laura offers him the broken unicorn as a souvenir.

Amanda enters the living room, full of good cheer. Jim hastily explains that he must leave because of an appointment with his fiancée. Amanda sees him off warmly but, after he is gone, turns on Tom, who had not known that Jim was engaged. Amanda accuses Tom of being an inattentive, selfish dreamer and then throws herself into comforting Laura. From the fire escape outside of their apartment, Tom watches the two women and explains that, not long after Jim's visit, he gets fired from his job and leaves Amanda and Laura behind. Years later, though he travels far, he finds that he is unable to leave behind guilty memories of Laura.

4.1.3. Scene-wise Summary

Scene One

The Wingfield apartment faces an alley in a lower-middle-class St. Louis tenement. There is a fire escape with a landing and a screen on which words or images periodically appear. Tom Wingfield steps onstage dressed as a merchant sailor and speaks directly to the audience. According to the stage directions, Tom "takes whatever license with dramatic convention is convenient to his purposes." He explains the social and historical background of the play: the time is the late 1930s, when the American working classes are still reeling from the effects of the Great Depression. The civil war in Spain has just led to a massacre of civilians at Guernica. Tom also describes his role in the play and describes the other characters. One character, Tom's father, does not appear onstage: he abandoned the family years ago and, except for a terse postcard from Mexico, has not been heard from since. However, a picture of him hangs in the living room.

Tom enters the apartment's dining room, where Amanda, his mother, and Laura, his sister, are eating. Amanda calls Tom to the dinner table and, once he sits down, repeatedly tells him to chew his food. Laura rises to fetch something, but Amanda insists that she sit down and keep herself fresh for gentlemen callers. Amanda then launches into what is clearly an oft-recited account of the Sunday afternoon when she entertained seventeen gentlemen callers in her home in Blue Mountain, Mississippi. At Laura's urging, Tom listens attentively and asks his mother what appear to be habitual questions. Oblivious to his condescending tone, Amanda catalogues the men and their subsequent fates, how much money they left their widows, and how one suitor died carrying her picture.

Laura explains that no gentlemen callers come for her, since she is not as popular as her mother once was. Tom groans. Laura tells Tom that their mother is afraid that Laura will end up an old maid. The lights dim as what the stage directions term "the 'Glass Menagerie' music" plays.

Scene Two

An image of blue roses appears on the screen as the scene begins. Laura is polishing her collection of glass figurines as Amanda, with a stricken face, walks up

the steps outside. When Laura hears Amanda, she hides her ornaments and pretends to be studying a diagram of a keyboard. Amanda tears up the keyboard diagram and explains that she stopped by Rubicam's Business College, where Laura is supposedly enrolled. A teacher there informed her that Laura has not come to class since the first few days, when she suffered from terrible nervousness and became physically ill. Laura admits that she has been skipping class and explains that she has spent her days walking along the streets of winter, going to the zoo, and occasionally watching movies.

Amanda wonders what will become of the family now that Laura's prospects of a business career are ruined. She tells Laura that the only alternative is for Laura to get married. Amanda asks her if she has ever liked a boy. Laura tells her that, in high school, she had a crush on a boy named Jim, the school hero, who sat near her in the chorus. Laura tells her mother that once she told Jim that she had been away from school due to an attack of pleurosis. Because he misheard the name of the disease, he began calling her "Blue Roses." Laura notes that at graduation time he was engaged, and she speculates that he must be married by now. Amanda declares that Laura will nonetheless end up married to someone nice. Laura reminds her mother, apologetically, that she is "crippled"—that one of her legs is shorter than the other. Amanda insists that her daughter never use that word and tells her that she must cultivate charm.

Scene Three

The words "After the fiasco—" appear on the screen as the scene opens. Tom stands on the fire escape landing and addresses the audience. He explains that in the wake of what Tom refers to as the "fiasco" with Laura's college attendance, Amanda has become obsessed with procuring a gentleman caller for Laura. The image of a young man at the house with flowers appears on the screen. Tom says that in order to make a little extra money and thereby increase the family's ability to entertain suitors, Amanda runs a telephone subscription campaign for a magazine called The Homemaker's Companion.

The cover of a glamour magazine appears on the screen, and Amanda enters with a telephone. She makes a cheerful, elaborate, unsuccessful sales pitch to an

acquaintance on the telephone, and then the lights dim. When they come up again, Tom and Amanda are engaged in a loud argument while Laura looks on desperately. Tom is enraged because his mother affords him no privacy and, furthermore, has returned the D. H. Lawrence novel he was reading to the library. She states that she will not permit that kind of “filth” in her house. Tom points out that he pays the rent and attempts to end the conversation by leaving the apartment. Amanda insists that Tom hear her out. She attributes his surly attitude to the fact that he spends every night out—doing something shameful, in her opinion—though he insists that he spends his nights at the movies. Amanda asserts that, by coming home late and depriving himself of sleep, he is endangering his job and, therefore, the family’s security. Tom responds with a fierce outburst. He expresses his hatred for the factory, and he claims to envy the dead whenever he hears Amanda’s daily call of “Rise and Shine!” He points out how he goes to work each day nonetheless and brings home the pay, how he has put aside all his dreams, and, if he truly were as selfish as Amanda claims, how he would have left long ago, just like his father.

Tom makes a move toward the door. Amanda demands to know where he is going. When she does not accept his response that he is going to the movies, he declares sarcastically that she is right and that he spends his nights at the lairs of criminals, opium houses, and casinos. He concludes his speech by calling Amanda an “ugly—babbling old—witch” and then grabs his coat. The coat resists his clumsy attempts to put it on, so he throws it to the other side of the room, where it hits Laura’s glass menagerie, her collection of glass animal figurines. Glass breaks, and Laura utters a cry and turns away. The words “The Glass Menagerie” appear on the screen. Barely noticing the broken menagerie, Amanda declares she will not speak to Tom until she receives an apology. Tom bends down to pick up the glass and glances at Laura as if he would like to say something but says nothing. The “Glass Menagerie” music plays as the scene ends.

Scene Four

A bell tolls five times as Tom returns home. He has been drinking. After painstakingly extracting his key from a jumble of cast-off items in his pockets, he drops it into a crack on the fire-escape landing. Laura hears him fumbling about and opens the door. He tells her that he has been at the movies for most of the night and

also to a magic show, in which the magician changed water to wine to beer to whiskey. Tom then gives Laura a rainbow-colored scarf, which he says the magician gave to him. He describes how the magician allowed himself to be nailed into a coffin and escaped without removing a nail. Tom remarks wryly that the same trick could come in handy for him but wonders how one could possibly get out of a coffin without removing a single nail. Mr. Wingfield's photograph lights up, presenting an example of someone who has apparently performed such a feat. The lights dim.

At six in the morning, Amanda calls out her habitual "Rise and Shine!" This time, though, she tells Laura to pass the message on to Tom because Amanda refuses to talk to Tom until he apologizes. Laura gets Tom out of bed and implores him to apologize to their mother. He remains reluctant. Amanda then sends Laura out to buy groceries on credit. On the way down the fire escape, Laura slips and falls but is not hurt. Several moments of silence pass in the dining room before Tom rises from the table and apologizes. Amanda nearly breaks into tears, and Tom speaks gently to her. She speaks of her pride in her children and begs Tom to promise her that he will never be a drunkard. She then turns the discussion to Laura as the "Glass Menagerie" music begins to play. Amanda has caught Laura crying because Laura thinks that Tom is not happy living with them and that he goes out every night to escape the apartment. Amanda claims to understand that Tom has greater ambitions than the warehouse, but she also expresses her worry at seeing him stay out late, just as his father, a heavy drinker, used to do. She questions Tom again about where he goes at night, and Tom says that he goes to the movies for adventure, which, he laments, is so absent from his career and life in general. At the mention of the word "adventure," a sailing vessel appears on the screen. "Man is by instinct a lover, a hunter, a fighter," Tom says, and he points out that the warehouse does not offer him the chance to be any of those things. Amanda does not want to hear about instinct. She considers it the function of animals and not a concern of "Christian adults."

Tom is impatient to get to work, but Amanda holds him back to talk about her worry over Laura's future. Amanda has tried to integrate Laura into the rest of the world by enrolling her in business college and taking her to Young People's League meetings at church, but nothing has worked. Laura is unable to speak to people outside her family and spends all her time with old records and her glass menagerie.

Amanda tells Tom that she knows that he has gotten a letter from the merchant marine and is itching to leave, but she asks him to wait until Laura has someone to take care of her. She then asks him to find some decent man at the warehouse and bring him home to meet Laura. Heading down the fire escape, Tom reluctantly agrees. Amanda makes another call for the magazine subscription drive, and then the lights fade.

Scene Five

The screen reads “Annunciation.” Some time has passed since the last scene, and it is now the spring of 1937. Amanda and Laura clear the table after dinner. Amanda nags Tom about his dishevelled appearance and his smoking habits. Tom steps onto the fire-escape landing and addresses the audience, describing what he remembers about the area where he grew up. There was a dance hall across the alley, he tells us, from which music emanated on spring evenings. Rainbow refractions from the hall’s glass ball were visible through the Wingfields’ windows, and young couples kissed in the alley. Tom says that the way youth entertained themselves at the dance hall was a natural reaction to lives that, like his own, lacked “any change or adventure.” He notes, however, that his peers would soon be offered all the adventure they wanted as America prepared to enter World War II.

Amanda joins Tom on the landing. They speak more gently than before, and each makes a wish on the moon. Tom refuses to tell what his wish is, and Amanda says that she wishes for the success and happiness of her children. Tom announces that there will be a gentleman caller: he has asked a nice young man from the warehouse to dinner. Amanda is thrilled, and Tom reveals that the caller will be coming the next day. This information agitates Amanda, who is overwhelmed by all the preparations that will need to be made before then. Tom tells her not to make a fuss, but he cannot stem the tide of her excitement. As she leads Tom back inside, Amanda frets about the linen, the silver, new curtains, chintz covers, and a new floor lamp, all the while despairing the lack of time to repaper the walls.

Amanda proceeds to brush Tom’s hair while interrogating him about the young gentleman caller. Her first concern is that he not be a drunkard. Tom thinks she is being a bit hasty in assuming that Laura will marry the visitor. Amanda continues to press him for information and learns that the caller, who is named Jim

O'Connor, is a shipping clerk at the warehouse. Tom reveals that both sides of Jim's family are Irish and that Jim makes eighty-five dollars a month. Jim is neither ugly nor too good-looking, and he goes to night school to study radio engineering and public speaking and is a proponent of self-improvement. Amanda is pleased by what she hears, particularly about his ambition. Tom warns her that Jim does not know that he has been invited specifically to meet Laura, stating that he offered Jim only a simple, unqualified invitation to dinner. This news does not matter to Amanda, who is sure that Laura will dazzle Jim. Tom asks her not to expect too much of Laura. He reminds Amanda that Laura is crippled, socially odd, and lives in a fantasy world. To outsiders who do not love her as family, Tom insists, Laura must seem peculiar. Amanda begs him not to use words like "crippled" and "peculiar" and asserts that Laura is strange in a good way.

Tom gets up to leave. Amanda demands to know where he is going. He replies that he is going to the movies and leaves despite his mother's objections. Amanda is troubled, but her excitement quickly returns. She calls Laura out onto the landing and tells her to make a wish on the moon. Laura does not know what she should wish for. Amanda, overcome with emotion, tells her to wish for happiness and good fortune.

Scene Six

Tom leans against the rail of the fire-escape landing, smoking, as the lights come up. He addresses the audience, recollecting the background of the gentleman caller. In high school, Jim O'Connor was a star in everything he did—an athlete, a singer, a debater, the leader of his class—and everyone was certain that he would go far. Yet things did not turn out according to expectations. Six years out of high school, Jim was working a job that was hardly better than Tom's. Tom remembers that he and Jim were on friendly terms. As the only one at the warehouse who knew about Jim's past glories, Tom was useful to Jim. Jim called Tom "Shakespeare" because of his habit of writing poems in the warehouse bathroom when work was slow.

Tom's soliloquy ends, and the lights come up on a living room transformed by Amanda's efforts over the past twenty-four hours. Amanda adjusts Laura's new dress. Laura is nervous and uncomfortable with all the fuss that is being made, but

Amanda assures her that it is only right for a girl to aim to trap a man with her beauty. When Laura is ready, Amanda goes to dress herself and then makes a grand entrance wearing a dress from her youth. She recalls wearing that same dress to a cotillion (a formal ball, often for debutantes) in Mississippi, to the Governor's Ball, and to receive her gentlemen callers. Finally, her train of memories leads her to recollections of Mr. Wingfield.

Amanda mentions Jim's name, and Laura realizes that the visitor is the same young man on whom she had a crush in high school. She panics, claiming that she will not be able to eat at the same table with him. Amanda dismisses Laura's terror and busies herself in the kitchen making salmon for dinner. When the doorbell rings, Amanda calls for Laura to get it, but Laura desperately begs her mother to open it instead. When Amanda refuses, Laura at last opens the door, awkwardly greets Jim, and then retreats to the record player. Tom explains to Jim that she is extremely shy, and Jim remarks, "It's unusual to meet a shy girls nowadays."

Jim and Tom talk while the women are elsewhere. Jim encourages Tom to join him in the public speaking course he is taking. Jim is sure that he and Tom were both meant for executive jobs and that "social poise" is the only determinant of success. However, Jim also warns Tom that, if Tom does not wake up, the boss will soon fire Tom at the warehouse. Tom says that his own plans have nothing to do with public speaking or executive positions and that he is planning a big change in his life. Jim, bewildered, asks what he means, and Tom explains vaguely that he is sick of living vicariously through the cinema. He is bored with "the movies" and wants "to move," he says. Unbeknownst to Amanda, he has taken the money intended to pay for that month's electric bill and used it to join the Union of Merchant Seamen. Tom announces rather proudly that he is taking after his father.

Amanda enters, talking gaily and laying on the Southern charm as she introduces herself to Jim. She praises Laura to him and, within minutes, gives him a general account of her numerous girlhood suitors and her failed marriage. Amanda sends Tom to fetch Laura for dinner, but Tom returns to say that Laura is feeling ill and does not want to eat. A storm begins outside. Amanda calls Laura herself, and Laura enters, stumbling and letting out a moan just as a clap of thunder explodes. Seeing that Laura is truly ill, Amanda tells her to rest on the sofa in the living room.

Amanda, Jim, and Tom sit down at the table, where Amanda glances anxiously at Jim while Tom says grace. Laura, in the living room alone, struggles to contain a sob.

Scene Seven

A half hour later, dinner is winding down. Laura is still by herself on the living-room couch. The floor lamp gives her face an ethereal beauty. As the rain stops, the lights flicker and go out. Amanda lights candles and asks Jim to check the fuses, but of course, he finds nothing wrong with them. Amanda then asks Tom if he paid the electric bill. He admits that he did not, and she assumes that he simply forgot, as Jim's good humour helps smooth over the potentially tense moment. Amanda sends Jim to the parlour with a candelabra and a little wine to keep Laura company while Amanda and Tom clean up.

In the living room, Jim takes a seat on the floor and persuades Laura to join him. He gives her a glass of wine. Tongue-tied at first, Laura soon relaxes in Jim's engaging presence. He talks to her about the Century of Progress exhibition in Chicago and calls her an "old-fashioned" girl. She reminds him that they knew each other in high school. He has forgotten, but when she mentions the nickname he gave her, Blue Roses, he remembers. They reminisce about high school and Jim's glories. Laura also remembers the discomfort and embarrassment she felt over the brace on her leg. Jim tells her that she was far too self-conscious and that everybody has problems. Laura persuades him to sign a program from a play he performed in during high school, which she has kept, and works up the nerve to ask him about the girl to whom he was supposedly engaged. He explains that he was never actually engaged and that the girl had announced the engagement out of wishful thinking.

In response to his question about what she has done since high school, Laura starts to tell Jim about her glass collection. He abruptly declares that she has an inferiority complex and that she "low-rates" herself. He says that he also suffered from this condition after his post–high school disappointment. He launches into his vision of his own future in television production. Laura listens attentively. He asks her about herself again, and she describes her collection of glass animals. She shows him her favourite: a unicorn. He points out lightly that unicorns are "extinct" in modern times.

Jim notices the music coming from the dance hall across the alley. Despite Laura's initial protests, he leads her in a clumsy waltz around the room. Jim bumps into the table where the unicorn is resting, the unicorn falls, and its horn breaks off. Laura is unfazed, though, and she says that now the unicorn can just be a regular horse. Extremely apologetic, Jim tells her that she is different from anyone else he knows, that she is pretty, and that if she were his sister he would teach her to have some self-confidence and value her own uniqueness. He then says that someone ought to kiss her.

Jim kisses Laura on the lips. Dazed, Laura sinks down onto the sofa. He immediately begins chiding himself out loud for what he has done. As he sits next to her on the sofa, Jim confesses that he is involved with an Irish girl named Betty, and he tells her that his love for Betty has made a new man of him. Laura places the de-horned unicorn in his hand, telling him to think of it as a souvenir.

Amanda enters in high spirits, carrying refreshments. Jim quickly becomes awkward in her presence. She insists that he become a frequent caller from now on. He says he must leave now and explains that he has to pick up Betty at the train station—the two of them are to be married in June. Despite her disappointment, Amanda bids him farewell graciously. Jim cheerily takes his leave.

Amanda calls Tom in from the kitchen and accuses him of playing a joke on them. Tom insists that he had no idea that Jim was engaged and that he does not know much about anyone at the warehouse. He heads to the door, intending to spend another night at the movies. Amanda accuses him of being a "dreamer" and rails against his selfishness as he leaves. Tom returns her scolding. Amanda tells him that he might as well go not just to the movies but to the moon, for all that he cares about her and Laura. Tom leaves, slamming the door.

Tom delivers his passionate closing monologue from the fire-escape landing as Amanda inaudibly comforts Laura inside the apartment and then withdraws to her room. Tom explains that he was fired soon after from the warehouse for writing a poem on a shoebox lid and that he then left the family. He says that he has travelled for a long time, pursuing something he cannot identify. But he has found that he cannot leave Laura behind. No matter where he goes, some piece of glass or quality

of light makes it seem as if his sister is at his side. In the living room, Laura blows the candles out as Tom bids her goodbye.

4.1.4. Analysis

The Glass Menagerie follows Tom's memories of the time period leading up to his eventual abandonment of his mother and sister. As he remembers the intolerable situation he once lived in, with a boring job that he had to take on in order to be nearly the sole breadwinner for his overbearing, delusional mother and his timid, ghost-like sister, he nevertheless shows himself to be similar to them. Each of the Wingfields is trapped in their own private drama of illusions and despair, and each of their illusions serves to hurt the other members of the family. Amanda's escapism into her past places intolerable pressure on Tom and Laura. Laura's refusal to work toward a future puts financial strain on Tom and Amanda. Tom's desire to leave means abandoning Amanda and Laura. As the only member to escape this toxic dynamic, Tom narrates the play as if to explain why he had to leave, but ultimately finds himself unable to let go of Laura.

Tom's misery is apparent from the beginning as he trades barbs with Amanda at the dinner table. Amanda turns dinner into an entire production despite their poverty by reminiscing about her glorious youth in Blue Mountain. The way she forces the whole dinner to fit into the context of her illusions creates a claustrophobic atmosphere with palpable strain between Amanda and Tom. The primary inciting incident occurs in scene two, when Amanda discovers that Laura has dropped out of business college because of her anxiety. The looming reality that Laura will likely never be independent throws Amanda into a frenzy. The more agitated Amanda gets, the more trapped Tom feels. He constantly goes to the movies, both to physically escape his mother's delusions and to imagine a life where he is free to have adventures on his own terms. The more Tom leaves, the more frightened Amanda becomes that he will leave for good, just like his father. Finally, Amanda begs Tom to find Laura a "gentleman caller," a potential husband who could help take some pressure off them both.

Thus, when Tom finally relents and invites Jim over, Amanda responds with almost manic joy. At the beginning of the play, Tom describes Jim as "the long delayed but always expected something we live for," a dream, the prospect of a

future. For the Wingfield family, Jim is a potential escape from their personal miseries, a suitor for Laura, which would provide stability for Laura and Amanda. In addition, Tom reveals to Jim just before they arrive at his house that he used his last paycheck to enlist in the merchant marines instead of paying the electricity bill. Although Tom does not really believe Jim and Laura will marry, him complying with Amanda's wishes and bringing Jim to dinner implicitly make Tom's planned exit less of an abandonment, as if he's leaving having done everything he could. This is the first shattered illusion as just after dinner the lights go out.

The ensuing scene with Jim and Laura sees her romantic fantasies destroyed. Laura reminisces over an almost heroic past version of Jim, whom she had a crush on in high school, and she allows him to relive his glory days. Caught up in the romance of the candlelight, his glory days, and Laura's fawning, Jim leads Laura in a dance, accidentally breaking her favourite glass unicorn. At first, this destruction and Laura's calm rationalization of it seem to indicate that she might be abandoning her illusions for the real world, but tragedy looms. At the climax of the play, Jim kisses Laura, caught up in the beautiful past she's conjured and her flattery. However, his illusion is instantly shattered. He remembers where and when he is, and that he is engaged. Laura is shell shocked, but she gives him the broken unicorn as a souvenir, as if asking him to take her dream of romance with him. With all of Amanda's expectations unfulfilled, she turns all her anger on Tom, who leaves, this time for good.

The play ends with Tom's monologue, describing his travels all over the world, living out the adventure he desired so badly, and yet, he still always sees Laura in his mind. Him thinking that he could simply leave Laura, whom he did care for, without feeling guilt was in and of itself an illusion. When Tom carelessly invited Jim over knowing Amanda's expectations for the evening and didn't pay the electric bill, he hurt Laura when it was Amanda he was truly angry at. He begs Laura to blow her candles out, which would shroud her image in darkness so he no longer has to see her, the innocent casualty of his escape plan.

4.1.5 Themes

The Difficulty of Accepting Reality

Among the most prominent and urgent themes of The Glass Menagerie is the difficulty the characters have in accepting and relating to reality. Each member of the Wingfield family is unable to overcome this difficulty, and each, as a result, withdraws into a private world of illusion where he or she finds the comfort and meaning that the real world does not seem to offer. Of the three Wingfields, reality has by far the weakest grasp on Laura. The private world in which she lives is populated by glass animals—objects that, like Laura's inner life, are incredibly fanciful and dangerously delicate. Unlike his sister, Tom is capable of functioning in the real world, as we see in his holding down a job and talking to strangers. But, in the end, he has no more motivation than Laura does to pursue professional success, romantic relationships, or even ordinary friendships, and he prefers to retreat into the fantasies provided by literature and movies and the stupor provided by drunkenness. Amanda's relationship to reality is the most complicated in the play. Unlike her children, she is partial to real-world values and longs for social and financial success. Yet her attachment to these values is exactly what prevents her from perceiving a number of truths about her life. She cannot accept that she is or should be anything other than the pampered belle she was brought up to be, that Laura is peculiar, that Tom is not a budding businessman, and that she herself might be in some ways responsible for the sorrows and flaws of her children. Amanda's retreat into illusion is in many ways more pathetic than her children's, because it is not a wilful imaginative construction but a wistful distortion of reality.

Although the Wingfields are distinguished and bound together by the weak relationships they maintain with reality, the illusions to which they succumb are not merely familial quirks. The outside world is just as susceptible to illusion as the Wingfields. The young people at the Paradise Dance Hall waltz under the short-lived illusion created by a glass ball—another version of Laura's glass animals. Tom opines to Jim that the other viewers at the movies he attends are substituting on-screen adventure for real-life adventure, finding fulfilment in illusion rather than real life. Even Jim, who represents the "world of reality," is banking his future on public speaking and the television and radio industries—all of which are means for the

creation of illusions and the persuasion of others that these illusions are true. The Glass Menagerie identifies the conquest of reality by illusion as a huge and growing aspect of the human condition in its time.

The Impossibility of True Escape

At the beginning of Scene Four, Tom regales Laura with an account of a magic show in which the magician managed to escape from a nailed-up coffin. Clearly, Tom views his life with his family and at the warehouse as a kind of coffin—cramped, suffocating, and morbid—in which he is unfairly confined. The promise of escape, represented by Tom's missing father, the Merchant Marine Service, and the fire escape outside the apartment, haunts Tom from the beginning of the play, and in the end, he does choose to free himself from the confinement of his life.

The play takes an ambiguous attitude toward the moral implications and even the effectiveness of Tom's escape. As an able-bodied young man, he is locked into his life not by exterior factors but by emotional ones—by his loyalty to and possibly even love for Laura and Amanda. Escape for Tom means the suppression and denial of these emotions in himself, and it means doing great harm to his mother and sister. The magician is able to emerge from his coffin without upsetting a single nail, but the human nails that bind Tom to his home will certainly be upset by his departure. One cannot say for certain that leaving home even means true escape for Tom. As far as he might wander from home, something still "pursue[s]" him. Like a jailbreak, Tom's escape leads him not to freedom but to the life of a fugitive.

The Unrelenting Power of Memory

According to Tom, *The Glass Menagerie* is a memory play—both its style and its content are shaped and inspired by memory. As Tom himself states clearly, the play's lack of realism, its high drama, its overblown and too-perfect symbolism, and even its frequent use of music are all due to its origins in memory. Most fictional works are products of the imagination that must convince their audience that they are something else by being realistic. A play drawn from memory, however, is a product of real experience and hence does not need to drape itself in the conventions of realism in order to seem real. The creator can cloak his or her true story in unlimited layers of melodrama and unlikely metaphor while still remaining confident of its substance and reality. Tom—and Tennessee Williams—take full

advantage of this privilege. The story that the play tells is told because of the inflexible grip it has on the narrator's memory. Thus, the fact that the play exists at all is a testament to the power that memory can exert on people's lives and consciousness. Indeed, Williams writes in the Production Notes that "nostalgia . . . is the first condition of the play." The narrator, Tom, is not the only character haunted by his memories. Amanda too lives in constant pursuit of her bygone youth, and old records from her childhood are almost as important to Laura as her glass animals. For these characters, memory is a crippling force that prevents them from finding happiness in the present or the offerings of the future. But it is also the vital force for Tom, prompting him to the act of creation that culminates in the achievement of the play.

4.1.6. Sum Up

The Glass Menagerie by Tennessee Williams is a memory play that revolves around the Wingfield family: Amanda, her son Tom, and her disabled daughter Laura. Amanda is a faded Southern belle who is obsessed with finding a suitor for Laura, while Tom dreams of escaping his stifling home life. The play explores themes of memory, illusion, and escape.

4.1.7. Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. What is the setting of "The Glass Menagerie"?

   A. New York City
   B. St. Louis
   C. Chicago
   D. New Orleans

2. What physical condition does Laura Wingfield suffer from?

   A. Blindness
   B. Polio
   C. Heart disease
   D. Epilepsy

3. What is the significance of Laura's glass menagerie?

A. It represents her dream world.

B. It symbolizes her wealth.

C. It is a gift from her father.

D. It represents her career.

4. What does Tom Wingfield work as to support his family?

A. Writer

B. Salesman

C. Factory worker

D. Accountant

5. Who is the "gentleman caller" that Amanda hopes will marry Laura?

A. Jim O'Connor

B. Richard Thompson

C. John Smith

D. George Wilson

6. Why does Amanda Wingfield constantly reminisce about her past?

A. To escape the present

B. To impress Tom and Laura

C. To plan her future

D. To criticize her children

7. What does Tom frequently do to escape his frustrations with his life?

A. Goes for long walks

B. Writes poetry

C. Watches movies

D. Drinks alcohol

8. What event leads to the breaking of Laura’s glass unicorn?

A. Tom knocks it over

B. Laura accidentally drops it

C. Amanda throws it

D. Jim dances with Laura and it falls

9. How does Tom ultimately leave his family?

A. He finds another job.

B. He enlists in the army.

C. He runs away.

D. He marries and moves out.

10. What does Amanda sell to make a living?

A. Cakes

B. Magazines

C. Dresses

D. Encyclopedias

Answer Key:

1. B. St. Louis
2. B. Polio
3. A. It represents her dream world.
4. C. Factory worker
5. A. Jim O'Connor
6. A. To escape the present
7. C. Watches movies
8. D. Jim dances with Laura and it falls
9. C. He runs away.
10. B. Magazines

Short Answer Questions

1. Describe the character of Amanda Wingfield. What are her key traits and motivations?
2. What does Laura's glass menagerie symbolize in the play?
3. How does Tom Wingfield feel about his job and his responsibilities to his family?
4. Explain the significance of the fire escape in the Wingfield apartment.
5. What is the outcome of the visit from Jim O'Connor, the gentleman caller?
6. How does Amanda's past influence her actions and attitudes towards her children?

7. Why does Tom frequently go to the movies, and what does this reveal about his character?
8. Describe the relationship between Laura and Tom Wingfield.
9. What role does memory play in the structure and narrative of "The Glass Menagerie"?
10. How does Laura react to Jim's revelation that he is engaged to be married?

Essay Questions

1. Analyse the theme of escape in "The Glass Menagerie." How do different characters seek escape from their realities, and what are the consequences of their attempts?
2. Discuss the significance of the glass menagerie as a symbol in the play. How does it relate to Laura's character and her interactions with other characters?
3. Examine the role of Amanda Wingfield in the play. How does her character influence the lives of Tom and Laura, and what does she represent in the broader context of the play's themes?
4. Explore the concept of memory in "The Glass Menagerie." How does Tennessee Williams use memory to shape the narrative, and what impact does it have on the storytelling?
5. Evaluate the relationship between Tom and Amanda. How do their conflicting desires and responsibilities create tension in the play?
6. Discuss the impact of Jim O'Connor's visit on the Wingfield family. How does this event serve as a turning point in the play?
7. Analyse the use of lighting and music in "The Glass Menagerie." How do these elements enhance the mood and themes of the play?
8. Examine the theme of responsibility in the play. How do the characters deal with their responsibilities, and what are the outcomes of their actions?
9. Discuss the influence of the absent father on the Wingfield family. How does his absence shape the characters and their relationships?
10. Analyse the ending of "The Glass Menagerie." How does it resolve (or fail to resolve) the central conflicts of the play, and what message does it convey to the audience?

Glossary

1. Discreet - showing prudence or circumspection
2. Eloquent - well-spoken
3. Gallant - brave, noble, chivalrous
4. Gesticulate - to gesture
5. Imperious - dominating in a haughty manner
6. Incandescent - glowing
7. Inducted - introduced into office
8. Insolence - rudeness
9. Jaunty - easy and sprightly
10. Jonquils - Southern name for daffodils
11. Menagerie - collection of wild or unusual animals
12. Monogrammed - stitched with initials
13. Motley - assorted, mismatched, varied
14. Paragon - a model of excellence
15. Portieres - heavy curtain hung across a doorway
16. Querulous - full of complaints
17. Slacken - to loosen
18. Solitary - alone
19. Vivacity-liveliness

Section 4. 2. Eugene O’ Neil – Emperor Jones

4.2.1. Introduction to Eugene O’ Neil

Eugene O'Neill one of America’s most distinguished playwrights, was born on October 16, 1888, in a Broadway hotel room in New York City. His full name, Eugene Gladstone O'Neill, heralded a life that would later be marked by dramatic achievements and tumultuous personal experiences. Known as the father of American drama, O'Neill's life and work were deeply intertwined, reflecting his relentless pursuit of artistic truth and personal reconciliation.

Eugene O'Neill was born into a theatrical family. His father, James O'Neill, was a successful actor famous for his role in the play "The Count of Monte Cristo," a performance he reprised over a thousand times, achieving financial success but artistic stagnation. Eugene's mother, Ella Quinlan O'Neill, was a devout Catholic who struggled with addiction to morphine, a dependency that began after Eugene's difficult birth. The contrasting influences of his parents – the commercial success of his father and the tragic addiction of his mother – profoundly impacted Eugene's outlook on life and art.

O'Neill attended various boarding schools and later Princeton University, but his formal education was erratic and unfulfilling. He was expelled from Princeton after a year for a prank and subsequently embarked on a series of adventures and misadventures, including working as a sailor, prospecting for gold in Honduras, and attempting journalism. These experiences exposed him to the harsh realities of life, which would later inform the gritty realism of his plays.

After a failed marriage and a bout of tuberculosis in 1912, which forced him to convalesce in a sanatorium, O’Neill turned to playwriting with a newfound seriousness. This period of introspection and recovery was pivotal, allowing him to focus on his writing and recognize theatre as his true calling.

O'Neill’s early works were first produced by the Provincetown Players, a small but influential theatre group dedicated to producing new and experimental plays. His first major success came with the one-act play "*Bound East for Cardiff*" in 1916, which was soon followed by more significant works such as "*The Emperor*

Jones" (1920) and "*Anna Christie*" (1921). The latter won him his first Pulitzer Prize, setting the stage for a prolific career.

His work during this period was characterized by an exploration of human psychology, complex characters, and themes of existential despair. O'Neill drew heavily from his personal experiences, infusing his plays with a sense of authenticity and depth that resonated with audiences and critics alike.

Eugene O'Neill is credited with revolutionizing American theatre, steering it away from melodrama and towards a more serious, contemplative form of art. His groundbreaking works include: *The Emperor Jones* (1920): This play broke new ground with its experimental structure and exploration of racial themes. It tells the story of Brutus Jones, an African American who declares himself emperor of a Caribbean island, only to be haunted by his past.

The Hairy Ape (1922): A powerful expressionist drama that examines industrialization and alienation, depicting the struggles of Yank, a stoker on a transatlantic liner who grapples with his identity and place in a mechanized world.

Mourning Becomes Electra (1931): A trilogy that reinterprets Aeschylus' Oresteia in a post-Civil War American setting, showcasing O'Neill's ability to blend classical influences with contemporary themes. *Long Day's Journey Into Night* (1956): Often considered his masterpiece, this autobiographical play delves into the tormented dynamics of the Tyrone family, mirroring O'Neill’s own troubled family life. It was awarded the Pulitzer Prize posthumously, highlighting its enduring impact on American drama.*The Iceman Cometh* (1946): A dark, sprawling narrative set in a bar, where patrons confront their delusions and failures. The play's pessimistic tone and complex characters illustrate O'Neill's mature style.

O' Neill's personal life was fraught with difficulty. He battled alcoholism, experienced turbulent relationships, and suffered from depression. Despite these challenges, he maintained a rigorous dedication to his craft, often working in isolation to perfect his plays. His marriages, particularly to his third wife Carlotta Monterey, were marked by intense, often tumultuous interactions, reflecting the emotional turmoil that permeated much of his work.

In his later years, O'Neill was plagued by health issues, including a debilitating neurological disorder that made writing increasingly difficult. Despite this, he continued to produce significant works, driven by a relentless pursuit of artistic expression.

Eugene O'Neill's contribution to American theatre is immeasurable. He was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1936, the only American playwright to receive this honour. His influence extends beyond his own prolific output, having paved the way for subsequent generations of playwrights who sought to address complex psychological and social themes in their work.

O'Neill's plays are still performed worldwide, attesting to their universal appeal and enduring relevance. His exploration of human frailty, existential despair, and the search for meaning has left an indelible mark on the world of theatre.

Eugene O'Neill's life and career were characterized by a profound commitment to uncovering the depths of the human experience through the medium of drama. From his early struggles and formative experiences to his groundbreaking contributions to American theatre, O'Neill's legacy as a playwright remains unparalleled. His works continue to challenge, inspire, and resonate with audiences, securing his place as a titan of modern drama. Through his art, O'Neill not only transformed American theatre but also provided an enduring reflection on the complexities of human existence.

4.2.2.Characters

Brutus

Brutus Jones, the protagonist of the play, is a black American who has become the emperor of an unnamed island in the West Indies. Prior the start of the play, Jones worked for ten years as a porter on Pullman sleeper trains, where he learned from listening to white passengers that "big stealing" is far more profitable than "little stealing." Jones is incarcerated when he kills a black man, Jeff, for cheating him at a dice game, and then he murders a white prison guard before escaping to the island in the Caribbean where he sets himself up as emperor. Jones uses what he learned from his time in the United States to exert power over his black native subjects, and he elevates himself to the level of a god. To complete the

façade, Jones also tells the natives that he can only be killed by a silver bullet and has one made in case he ever needs to commit suicide. When Jones first learns from Smithers that the natives are revolting, Jones shows that he's a quick thinker and is flexible in his plans, as he immediately moves up his escape plan and leaves that night. However, Jones's cockiness and belief in his own success brings about his undoing. As he wanders through the forest, the natives send apparitions that make Jones progressively more terrified and more human. The apparitions force Jones to reckon with his personal past by sending both Jeff and the prison guard to haunt him, as well as apparitions of the history of slavery in the United States. Though Jones tries to fight these apparitions by praying and insisting they're not real, he works his way through his five lead bullets and finally uses his silver bullet to kill the crocodile god summoned by the witch doctor. In doing so, he symbolically kills his own charade of godliness. At this point, once Jones is truly a man, the natives are able to kill him and remove him from power.

Smithers

Smithers is a cantankerous white sailor and a friend of sorts of Jones's. From his opening conversation with Jones, the viewer learns that Smithers gave Jones his start on the island by employing him, which allowed Jones to eventually become emperor. However, it also becomes clear that Smithers is exceptionally racist: he can barely contain his rage that Jones is a powerful emperor, and he speaks poorly of the black natives as well. Though at times Smithers seems to feel some genuine affection and admiration for Jones, his racism colors everything he says and does in relation to Jones and the natives. Jones points out that in ten years of trading with the natives, Smithers hasn't learned a word of their language even though doing so would certainly help him profit—an indication that Smithers doesn't see anything the natives do as worth his time or consideration. Because Smithers appears only in the first and last scenes and isn't a strictly necessary character in terms of plot, the play situates Smithers as a narrator of sorts and asks the reader and viewer to identify with him and with his interpretation of events. This reinforces Smithers's racist point of view as "correct" per the logic of the play.

Lem

Lem is the chief of the natives on the island in the West Indies. He's an older man and very wise—he is spare with his words and says, simply and confidently, that he and the other natives will catch Jones. Finally, he explains to Smithers that he and the natives spent the night melting silver coins to cast silver bullets to kill Jones, a canny plan that is ultimately successful.

The Witch Doctor

The witch doctor is an old man from Congo who is sent to Jones as an apparition. He dances a story about fighting evil spirits and at the end he attempts to sacrifice Jones to a crocodile god. Jones uses his final silver bullet to destroy the crocodile god and the witch doctor.

4.2.3 Summary

It's late afternoon in the emperor's whitewashed throne room. An old black native woman pokes her head around a doorway and when she decides the coast is clear, she begins to sneak across the room. An old white sailor, Smithers, intercepts her halfway across the floor. When Smithers threatens her with a whip, the woman explains that all the natives have run away to the hills. As the woman runs away, Smithers whistles.

Moments later, Brutus Jones, the emperor, enters the throne room with an annoyed, sleepy look on his face. He's wearing a heavily decorated uniform. Jones yells and threatens to hurt whoever woke him up. Smithers catches Jones's attention, admits that he woke Jones up, and tells Jones that he has news. Jones sits on his throne and demands that Smithers tell him the news. Smithers sarcastically asks Jones where the court and the servants are, but Jones just yawns and says they're drinking rum in town—and Smithers should know this, given how much time he spends drinking with the natives. When Smithers scoffs that drinking is part of his job, Jones sneers. Smithers angrily reminds Jones that he helped Jones when he first arrived on the island. Jones puts a hand on his revolver and reminds Smithers to be polite. When Smithers apologizes, Jones insists that he's an entirely different person now. Smithers retorts that nobody else would hire Jones once it got out that he'd been in jail in the United States, but Jones simply looks at Smithers and says that he knows Smithers has been in jail too.

Jones explains that he's not acting as emperor for the glory: he puts on a show to entertain the natives, but he just wants their money. When Smithers says that the natives are out of money, Jones laughs and says that's not true, since he's still emperor. Smithers asks Jones about his law-breaking habits. Jones insists that the emperor doesn't have to follow the laws, especially since "big stealin'" like he does is what made him emperor. Smithers declares that Jones truly did trick the natives, and remarks on Jones's good luck. Jones is offended, but Smithers says that Jones's story about the silver bullet was luck: when Jones first came to the island, he got into an altercation with one of the natives and when the man's gun misfired, Jones shot him and then said that he could only be killed by silver bullets. The natives bought it, and Jones laughs that the natives are fools. Smithers asks Jones if the rumours are true and he had a silver bullet made. Jones says they are, and explains that he told the natives that he'll kill himself with it. Jones pulls out the bullet and tells Smithers that it's his good luck charm.

Jones explains that at the first whiff of trouble, he'll resign, take his money, and leave. Smithers knowingly asks Jones if he won't go back to the states, and Jones says he could, since he wasn't ever in jail there. Smithers is disbelieving and asks Jones about the stories that Jones killed white men in the states. Jones insists he's not scared of lynching. Further, Jones says he'll kill Smithers if he doesn't straighten up. Smithers tries to laugh, and Jones tells more of his story: he suggests he might've gone to jail for killing a black man who cheated him at dice, and then he might've also killed a prison guard. He says that all of this might not be true, but Jones will kill Smithers for telling anyone. Smithers seems terrified and reminds Jones that he's always been a friend, and finally tells Jones his news. When Jones rings the bell to call his servants, nobody comes. Jones is enraged. After a moment, he composes himself and declares that it's time to resign. Smithers warns Jones about Lem, the native chief, as Lem hates Jones. Smithers also warns Jones about the creepiness of the forest, but Jones brushes off these warnings. He insists that the natives are stupid, his escape will be easy, and if the natives do catch him, he'll commit suicide with his silver bullet. The sound of a tom-tom reaches the palace. Smithers explains that the natives have begun to prepare to cast spells. Jones insists he's not scared and reminds Smithers that he's an upstanding member of the Baptist Church. Smithers laughs and Jones bids him goodbye.

As night falls, Jones reaches the edge of the forest. The heat is oppressive and he mops sweat off his brow. Jones listens to the tom-tom and wonders if the natives have begun to cross the plain. To calm his nerves, Jones decides it's time to eat and he scans the ground in search of his white stone. He finds it, but instead of finding food under it, there's nothing. Jones discovers that there are many white stones, none of which have food under them—he's in the wrong spot. Jones is distraught and lights a match to see better. The tom-tom's rhythm quickens, and Jones flings the match away. He decides that lighting it was stupid, as it'll give his location away. Jones turns around to scan the plain as the "little formless fears," grub-like creatures with glittering eyes, crawl out of the forest. Jones turns to face the forest and asks the forest if it's mocking him. The formless fears laugh in reply, and Jones leaps in fright. He yells, pulls out his gun, and shoots at them. They scuttle into the forest, and Jones listens to the tom-tom. He tells himself that the fears were just pigs and urges himself into the forest.

Several hours later, the moonlight illuminates a clearing. Jeff, the black man Jones killed in the States, crouches and throws dice on the ground. Jones comes into view on the edge of the clearing and tries to cheer himself up. He picks at his uniform, which is torn. As Jones enters the clearing, he hears the clicking sound of the dice. He sounds afraid as he remarks that it sounds like dice. Suddenly, he notices Jeff. Jones is transfixed and he addresses Jeff, wondering with fear how Jeff ended up on the island. Jones asks Jeff if he's a ghost. Jeff doesn't reply, and Jones shoots Jeff. When the smoke clears, Jeff is gone. The tom-tom's beat gets faster, and Jones runs back into the forest.

Just before midnight, Jones stumbles upon a road. His uniform is even more torn, and he yells that he's melting in the heat. Jones pulls off his coat and flings it away. As Jones rests, he wonders where the road came from. He's never seen it before and becomes terrified that there are ghosts around. Jones prays to God that he doesn't see any more ghosts. As Jones studies the moon, a silent chain gang of black convicts walks onto the road, supervised by a white prison guard. When Jones notices the chain gang, the gang begins working on the road. The guard looks angrily at Jones and motions for him to join the convicts, and Jones obeys as though he's in a trance. Jones has no shovel but he matches the shovelling motions of the others; despite this, the guard whips him anyway. Angry, Jones lifts

his arms over his head as though he has a shovel in his hands to hit the guard over the head with. When he finally realizes he has no shovel, he pleads with the convicts to lend him one of theirs. Cursing, Jones pulls out his revolver and shoots the guard in the back. As he does, the forest and the chain gang disappear, the tom-tom increases tempo, and Jones crashes away into the woods.

A few hours later, Jones reaches a clearing with a stump in the middle of it. He falls to his knees to plead with Jesus to forgive him for killing Jeff and the prison guard, and for stealing from the natives. Jones looks at his tattered shoes and decides they're making his feet hurt more. He takes them off and holds them in his lap as a silent crowd of white Southerners, dressed in clothing from the 1850s, enters the clearing. They gather around the stump as an attendant leads in a group of slaves. Jones notices nothing until the auctioneer calls the crowd to attention and taps Jones on the shoulder, motioning for him to get on the stump. Jones leaps up in an attempt to get away, and the auctioneer describes Jones's strengths to the assembled planters. When the auctioneer begins the bidding, Jones realizes he's being sold at a slave auction. A planter finally purchases Jones and the auctioneer pushes Jones towards the man. Angrily, Jones draws his gun and shoots both the auctioneer and his purchaser. The clearing disappears and the tom-tom beats faster. Jones runs away.

After wandering for another two hours, Jones wanders into a clearing that's long and skinny, with vines creating an arched ceiling. His pants are so torn, he's wearing little more than a loincloth. Jones wails to God wondering what he'll do, since he only has his silver bullet left. He decides he needs to rest and throws himself onto the ground. The moonlight brightens incrementally and two rows of black men, also wearing loincloths, come into view. They sit along each side if the clearing, swaying as though they're in a ship. They begin to wail rhythmically, and Jones notices them. Though he tries to ignore them, Jones raises his voice to join theirs. As the voices fade, Jones continues his mad dash through the forest.

Early in the morning, Jones enters another clearing by a river, still wailing. He moves as though he's in a trance and sinks to his knees beside a pile of rocks that resemble an altar. Jones asks God to protect him as a Congo witch doctor jumps out from behind a tree. The witch doctor begins to dance and chant to the

beat of the tom-tom, and Jones watches in fascination. The doctor dances a story of being pursued by devils and as the tension rises, Jones begins chanting and beating the ground in time. Suddenly, the witch doctor motions to Jones, and Jones understands that he's going to be offered as a sacrifice. From the river, the witch doctor calls a crocodile god. The crocodile stares at Jones as the witch doctor motions for Jones to approach it. The tom-tom reaches a fever pitch as Jones cries out, grabs his gun, and shoots the crocodile with his silver bullet. The crocodile returns to river and the witch doctor disappears, but Jones just lies facedown and cries.

At dawn, Lem, his soldiers, and Smithers approach the edge of the forest from the clearing. One soldier discovers the spot where Jones entered the forest. Smithers is disgusted, but Lem calmly tells Smithers that they'll catch Jones. As Smithers continues to insult the natives, Lem continues to reply with the same thing. When they hear snapping twigs in the forest, Lem sends in soldiers. Smithers reasons that the snapping could be Jones and the sound of rifles comes from the woods. Lem smiles and tells Smithers that Jones is dead. He explains that he and his men spent the night casting charms and melting their money to make silver bullets. Smithers laughs when he learns that the natives truly believe Jones's assertion that he can only be killed by silver bullets, and he calls Lem crazy. Soldiers emerge from the forest carrying Jones's dead body. Smithers mocks Jones's body and mocks the natives as they carry Jones away.

4.2.4. Analysis

Emperor Jones was not the first American play to rise above the grotesque distortions of 19th and early 20th century minstrelsy, the enormously popular and overtly racist variety shows that caricatured the shuffling “happy darky” for white American audiences. In fact, two of O’Neill’s early plays, *The Moon of the Caribbees* and *The Dreamy Kid* had black characters; but the 1918 production of Moon had an all-white cast, and the cast of The Dreamy Kid, produced the following year, was all black. Furthermore, Edward Sheldon’s *The Nigger*, a highly controversial answer to Thomas Dixon’s profoundly racist *The Clansman* (1905; later made into the 1915 silent film *The Birth of a Nation* by D. W. Griffith), also preceded Emperor Jones. But Johnson submits that while Torrence and O’Neill may not have been the first

American playwrights “to experiment with the Negro as a theme for theatre . . . they were the first to use the Negro and Negro life as pure dramatic material” (185), rather than as political or racist polemical devices.

Just as he would with its immediate successor,The Hairy Ape, O’Neill structured *Emperor Jones* in eight scenes. The middle six, as O’Neill critic Virginia Floyd describes them, “form one prolonged dramatic monologue, part dialogue . . . part soliloquy” (205): The first three—scenes 2–4— delve into Jones’s burdensome conscience, which is deftly symbolic of black life after enslavement; the next three—scenes 5–7—take us back through the black collective consciousness (thus adopting the approach of psychologist Carl Jung, whose work in the burgeoning field of psychoanalysis made a great impression on O’Neill) of Africans during and before their enslavement. Scenes 1 and 8 bracket the expressionism of the middle six scenes with comparatively realistic settings and dialogue. The “*Little Formless Fears*” of scene 2 symbolize the everyday, indistinct anxieties that virtually all people suffer, though few of us recognize their provenance. But as the play moves forward, the nightmares become more distinctive, referencing specific causes for the external stimuli that trigger traumatic psychological responses.

O’Neill applies Jung’s theory of a dark “shadow” lurking within our psyches here. Jung believed that the shadow side of our psyches should be considered “evil,” but the more we consciously acknowledge our shadow, the less it manifests itself in destructive behaviour on ourselves and others. In his later experimental play Lazarus Laughed, we find one of the most Shakespearean lines in the O’Neill canon, one that reflects Carl Jung’s shadow concept and explains the “formless little fears.” Lazarus explains that “men are too cowardly to understand” the meaning of eternity, “And so the worms of their little fears eat them and grow fat and terrible and become their jealous gods they must appease with lies!” (2:611).

Brutus Jones’s ghostly avatars from the past— his “han’ts,” as he calls them—reflect the bizarre distortions of expressionistic theatre that employed grotesque and exaggerated effects to highlight characters’ psyches. Eerily, none of the “han’ts” are given dialogue; The movements of Jeff and the members of the chain gang are “those of automatons—rigid, slow, and mechanical” (1:1,050); the southern slave owners are “marrionettish” (1:1,053), like the Fifth Avenue

pedestrians in scene 5 of *The Hairy Ape*; and the characters seem to regress toward their natural origins as Jones moves backward in time, away from the modern black world of prison and enslavement.

O'Neill innovatively employs two additional stage techniques that propel the action forward. One is the use of a tom-tom drum, which begins near the end of scene 1 at the normal pulse of the human heart, 72 beats per minute, but "continues at a gradually accelerating rate from this point uninterruptedly to the very end of the play" (1:1,041). The drumbeat gets faster as the rebels close in on Jones's position and while Jones's nightmares increasingly horrify him. Before writing, *Emperor Jones*, O'Neill read about "religious feasts in the Congo" where tribal members begin drumming at 72 beats per minute; then the beat "is slowly intensified until the heartbeat of everyone present corresponds to the frenzied beat of the drum. . . . There was an idea and an experiment," O'Neill continued, "how would this sort of thing work on an audience in the theater?" (quoted in Clark 104). This drum technique, however, was not unique. The American dramatist Austin Strong used virtually the same idea in his 1915 melodrama *The Drums of Oude* (Clark 105). But when the drums combine with the terrifying imagery of Jeff, the chain gang, the auction, the slave galley, and the crocodile god—along with the lights progressively dimming as we dive ever-deeper into Jones's conscience and his African lineage—the dramatic effect, if done well, is spellbinding.

The play's potential to expand the boundaries of experimental theatre are limitless. Most recently, the Wooster Group shocked audiences by having a white woman (Kate Valk) play Brutus Jones in blackface. Along with the disturbing fact that blackface was still able to provoke racial outrage by the late 1990s, this potentially odious idea, Johan Callens argues, is meant to demonstrate "the unstable, homologous positions of the so-called hierarchical and immutable differences underlying the racial (and gender) ideology, exposing the latter as a case of the 'primitive' mythological thinking which the black emperor supposedly substantiates" (46). With this in mind, Nathan Irvin Huggins, the prominent historian of black America, is particularly instructive when he remarks of Brutus Jones's character that "here was no stereotype of the negro character.Emperor Jones' ultimate fall, although superstition is involved, occurs because the artifices that have propped him up have been removed. So, exposed and defenceless Jones—like any other man—

falls victim to his fear and his essential, primitive nature" (quoted in Shaughnessy 162n).

Along with the more evident race issues in the play, many of O'Neill's political ideas stem from his early education in philosophical anarchism. There is no good or evil, the founding father of philosophical anarchism Max Stirner insisted in his treatise *The Ego and His Own*, as one can murder freely so long as it is legal, which makes "morality nothing else than *loyalty*" (65). But he continues that "according to our theories of penal law, with whose 'improvement in conformity to the times' people are tormenting themselves in vain, they want to punish men for this or that 'inhumanity'; and therein they make the silliness of these theories especially plain by their consistency, *hanging the little thieves and letting the big ones run*" (153), a line Jones applies to his own brand of criminality in scene 1 (1:1,035).

Emperor Jones is O'Neill's most resonant imaginative enacting of this worldview. Smithers is greedy, treacherous, and lazy, not coincidentally the three characteristics most commonly associated with blackness in the white mainstream American mind but also, in the context of philosophical anarchism, with the business interests that propel corrupted states (and to the anarchist, all of them are) forward. In scene 1, Smithers has informed Jones of a native revolt against his sovereignty, and Jones is preparing to flee into the jungle forest, with a plan to escape by boat:

> Smithers—(with curiosity) And I bet you got yer pile o' money 'id safe some place.
>
> Jones—(with satisfaction) I sho' has! And it's in a foreign bank where no pusson don't ever git it out but me no matter what come. You didn't s'pose I was holdin' down dis Emperor job for de glory in it, did you? Sho'! De fuss and glory part of it, dat's only to turn de heads o' de low-flung, bush niggers dat's here. Dey wants de big circus show for deir money. I gives it to 'em an' I gits de money. (with a grin) De long green, dat's me every time! (then rebukingly) But you ain't got no kick agin me, Smithers. I'se paid you back all you done for me many times. Ain't I pertected you and winked at all de crooked tradin' you been doin' right out in de broad day. Sho'. I has—and me makin' laws to stop it at de same time! (He chuckles.)

Smithers—(grinning) But, meanin' no 'arm, you been grabbin' right and left yourself, ain'tyer? Look at the taxes you've put on 'em! Blimey! You've squeezed 'em dry!

Jones—(chuckling) No, deyain't all dry yet. I'se still heah, ain't I?

Smithers—(smiling at his secret thought) They're dry right now, you'll find out. (changing the subject abruptly) And as for me breakin' laws, you've broke 'em all yerself just as fast as yer made 'em.

Jones—Ain't I de Emperor? De laws don't go for him. (judicially) You heah what I tells you, Smithers. Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does. For de little stealin' dey gits you in jail soon or late. For de big stealin' dey makes you Emperor and puts you in de Hall o' Fame when you croaks. (reminiscently) If dey's one thing I learns in ten years on de Pullman ca's listenin' to de white quality talk, it's dat same fact. And when I gits a chance to use it I winds up Emperor in two years. (1:1,035) Significantly, the only line that survives in the 1933 Hollywood adaptation with Paul Robeson as Jones is the Stirnerian line "Dere's little stealin' like you does, and dere's big stealin' like I does." The idea that it was white businessmen on the Pullman trains who taught him "big stealin'" is omitted.

Contemporary African political theorists contend that the most important explanation for the continent's current ongoing turmoil—the police states, corruption, AIDS, religious persecution, and genocide that have plagued the continent since the end of the colonial period—is that once freed from European rule, the only models African nations had to emulate were the police states, corruption, rape, religious restrictions, and random acts of murder that colonial powers had employed to control African nations for decades. Jones is, at bottom, a race traitor, lending some connection to his treacherous namesake—Brutus, Julius Caesar's betrayer. Keeping this in mind, along with Jones's misguided adoption of white methods of dominance, it is reasonable to read O'Neill's ending as a warning to African Americans not to take on white political, religious, and cultural forms to replace or deny their African roots. By not sacrificing himself to the god of his ancestors, Jones is, after all, destroyed by the victims of white colonialism and the silver currency that motivated them both.

4.2.5 Themes

Racism

The Emperor Jones tells the story of Brutus Jones, a porter on a train car who, after killing a black man and then a white prison guard in the United States, escapes to a Caribbean island. On the island, he quickly sets up an empire, with himself as emperor. He amasses vast wealth by levying heavy taxes on the black natives and by engaging in various forms of corruption. When he learns from a white trader named Smithers that his black native subjects are planning to revolt against him, he embarks on a journey through the forest to escape by sea. As Jones wanders through the forest at night, with the sound of the natives' drums constantly beating in the background, he is faced with various native-summoned apparitions that force him to confront the fact that in making himself emperor and exploiting the natives, he was "performing whiteness"—putting into practice the lessons he learned by watching the white people who mistreated and exploited him in the United States. Furthermore, he comes to realize that his race and all that comes with it isn't something that he can escape or deny.

The play opens with Jones already having established himself as emperor. He is extremely powerful—the natives believe that he is charmed and can only be killed by silver bullets. He's rich from the taxes and other sorts of corrupt business that his role allows him to engage in without consequences. In one sense, by turning himself into a rich and powerful emperor, Jones overturns the racist situation that defined his life of exploitation and impoverishment in the United States. However, the play's take on racism isn't nearly that simple. Jones doesn't just set himself up as an emperor; rather, he makes himself emperor over other black people and uses his position to exploit and oppress those black people in order to enrich himself. Jones seeks power and exploits the less powerful, just as he himself was exploited by white people in the United States.

Furthermore, Jones explicitly states that he was able to successfully install himself as emperor and tax the natives dry by using what he learned from white people during his time working as a porter: that "big stealin'" brings fame and fortune. With this, the play then connects whiteness and white people to exploitation, corruption, and seeking power. It also makes the case that Jones, in making himself

emperor, is acting like a white person. To this point, Jones does hold what can be described as "racist" views toward the natives he oppresses, whom he views as dumb and gullible. More broadly, this dynamic suggests that white racism and exploitation create a kind of cycle, in which white culture defines the terms of success—power and wealth—and then anyone who tries to gain that success will necessarily have to act like a white person in order to achieve it. White racism and exploitation, the play suggests, create only more exploitation and more racism.

After learning of the natives' imminent revolt against him, Jones flees into the forest, and confronts apparitions summoned by the natives. His interactions with these apparitions force him to relive his own personal history (which took place in the early twentieth century) and the history of slavery in the United States. As he wanders, he encounters apparitions of the black man and the white prison guard he killed, and then experiences being sold at a slave auction, being a passenger on a slave ship bound for the US, and finally, a sacrificial ceremony performed by a witch doctor in the Congo. As Jones descends through time and confronts these apparitions, the things that signify his façade of white power get stripped away and his belief in his own power erodes until he's nothing more than a scared, animalistic man with no power of any sort. Through these apparitions, the natives force Jones to admit that he's black, thereby insisting that it's impossible to escape this knowledge no matter how high he climbs. Within the logic of the play and in the light of the rampant racism of the time period in which it was written (around 1920), the play leaves the viewer with the assertion that black individuals like Jones who seek to better themselves by performing whiteness are doing so futilely: that they'll never escape the fact that they're black and will always be seen as such, and that even in trying to escape they are only ever reenacting the exploitation and racism that afflicted them in the first place.

The play's exploration of race is further complicated by the character of Smithers, a cantankerous, racist white sailor who seems to be enriching himself through Jones's own corrupt practices. Smithers appears in the first and last scenes of the play, and in those scenes he functions as a kind of narrator. In the first scene Smithers introduces Jones to the audience and in the last, he accompanies the black natives to the edge of the forest where they then kill Jones. By having Smithers open and close the play, he is established as an interpreter of events, and the viewer is

encouraged to identify with him and with his interpretation. Put another way, the play literally sets up Jones to be viewed through a lens of whiteness, as provided by Smithers. There are a few implications of this structural dynamic. First, the fact that Smithers appears to respect Jones more than he does the natives highlights even further the way that Jones's own ascent to power is based on the racist and exploitative viewpoints he learned from white men. Second, even though Smithers occupies a very small place in the action itself, his role as interpreter affords him a great deal of power: his way of interpreting those events is given precedence. So, in a play about a black emperor, it is still a white man who holds the most power. Essentially, both thematically and structurally, the play seems to suggest that there is no escape for black people, no matter how high they ascend, from white racism and oppression.

History and Collective Memory

As Jones runs into the forest to escape the rebelling natives, he encounters apparitions summoned by the natives that force him to confront his history, both on a personal level and on a much grander scale. By forcing Jones to watch and experience his past and a condensed history of the black slave experience over the previous 200 years, the play asserts that it's impossible for a black person to truly escape the legacy of slavery, as that legacy continues to inform the lives of the black community regardless of what they do or where in the world they go.

Jones's initial relocation to the island in the Caribbean is an attempt to escape his own past and the larger history of slavery in the United States. He escapes to the island after first murdering another man in a dice game, which can be seen as exemplifying the kind of black on black violence that occurs specifically under a regime of white power that deprives black people of any other significant means of gaining money than illicit gambling. While imprisoned for the first murder, Jones then kills a white prison guard and escapes to the Caribbean. In doing so he literally kills a representative figure of white authority in the United States, and then escapes to a country where no such authority exists. Once in the Caribbean, Jones operates under the assumption that he'll truly be able to escape his past by escaping the place—the United States—in which that past took place. Jones does find that on the island he can elevate himself far higher than he ever would've been able to in the

US. It's also significant that he undertakes this entire endeavour alone. By acting alone, Jones seems to feel that he is able to divorce himself from the biases and cultural narratives that keep him trapped in the collective memory of slavery in the United States. Put another way, Jones seems to initially believe that memory and the past are inseparable from locale and community, and that simply by changing locale, a person can escape their past, escape their community, and go on to rewrite the direction of their future.

As Jones begins his journey through the forest, he sets out believing that he's going to remain separated from his past and the slavery-ridden history of his former black community and ancestors. However, the apparitions that the natives send to torment Jones make it abundantly clear that Jones's initial belief that he left his past behind in the United States is foolish and impossible. The apparitions first force Jones to accept his personal history by sending the ghost of Jeff, the black man he murdered, and then apparitions of the prison guard and other black convicts who also worked on the chain gang. They then immerse Jones in a slave auction, a slave ship, and finally, a religious sacrifice in the Congo. As these apparitions progress from one to the next, Jones interacts with them progressively more and more—though he only talks to Jeff (and in doing so, seems aware that Jeff is long dead), Jones participates unwillingly in the chain gang, and later seems unable to resist joining the black slaves in their wails and rocking in the slave ship. By making it seem with these later apparitions as though Jones participates out of instinct, the play suggests that Jones's very identity as an American black man inherently includes his slave ancestry and his even earlier African ancestry. Standing on the auction block and participating in tribal rituals are things that are, per the logic of the play, branded into the collective memories of African Americans, and are therefore part of Jones's history that cannot be ignored.

Though Eugene O'Neill's identity as a white man and the era in which the play was written complicates some of these ideas (it's possible, for instance, to read a very sinister message to black viewers that African Americans will never escape slavery and achieve any sense of equality) in a contemporary context, the same message serves as a poignant reminder that there are still racist systems at work in American society that oppress and dehumanize people of colour daily.

Power and Systemic Oppression

The Emperor Jones takes place in the time period in which it was written (late 1910s, possibly into the early 1920s), and it's very important to consider the play in the context of its time. As an African American and a Pullman porter, Jones would have been subjected to Jim Crow laws and other forms of systemic oppression that reminded him daily that he was black and therefore powerless. The Emperor Jones, then, explores what happens when someone like Jones internalizes these systems of power, and then goes on to perpetuate them in his own empire once he's given the chance to do so.

Prior to the start of the play, Jones spent ten years working as a porter on Pullman sleeper trains. In this line of work (which was considered one of the most desirable jobs for African Americans at the time), Jones would have been in close contact with white people in an environment that considered black porters to be lesser than the white passengers. Through immersion in this oppressive environment, Jones had the opportunity to listen to his white passengers speak and by doing so, he developed his own ideas about how people gain power. He comes to believe that small crime lands people in jail, while crimes on a larger scale—what he calls "big stealin'"—earn people fame and fortune.

Jones's realization about the way the world works reflects the greater system of race relations in the United States: Jim Crow laws and other legalized forms of oppression made it legal to jail or otherwise punish African Americans for crimes that weren't policed nearly as harshly if the perpetrator was white. In fact, most racially motivated white crime, no matter how brutal, wasn't prosecuted at all. Jones and Smithers discuss lynching at one point, a practice of extra-judicial hanging of black people that white people used to create an environment of intense fear and exert often unchecked power over their black neighbours. This entire system—both the legal system that privileged white people and the extrajudicial violence that ensured black people were too frightened to fight against the system—enabled not just an environment in which it was possible for white people to commit these humanitarian crimes of disempowering, killing, and intimidating African Americans, but also allowed them to reap major economic benefits for doing so by exploiting black labour. In essence, then, Jones's recognition of "big stealin'" functions as a

condemnation of the entire system of racist white society, which legally functioned as a kind of theft of black bodies, labour, and wealth.

Coming out of this system after serving time in jail for killing both a black man and a white prison guard, Jones escapes to an island in the Caribbean to install himself as emperor. Rather than take the opportunity to dismiss the systems that kept him down in the United States, Jones instead perpetuates them with disastrous results. Upon arrival on the island, Jones doesn't choose to view the black natives as people worthy of respect, just like he is. Instead, he conceptualizes them as dumb and gullible and takes the opportunity to subjugate them in much the same way white people did to him when he lived in America. Jones taxes the natives as much as he possibly can and keeps them functioning in a state of fear at all times, which consequently allows him to live in luxury as the emperor of the island. Further, though the play never includes scenes in which Jones speaks to the natives, it implies that he enjoys talking down to them—or at the very least, he enjoys talking badly about them to others. Interestingly too, even before he learns that the natives have already begun their revolt, Jones is acutely aware of the fact that a native uprising is inevitable. This in turn suggests an understanding—on both Jones's and the play's part—that existing under these circumstances is untenable and damaging, and cannot last.

When considered in terms of the racial oppression that Jones faced in the United States during the 1910s, the play suggests that these systems of power are insidious and, horrifically, are internalized by the victims. Though Jones seeks to remedy his own oppression by seizing power and subjugating others, his eventual death at the hands of his subjects makes the consequences of perpetuating systems like this abundantly clear. In this way, the play offers the possibility that the only way to truly escape oppression is to escape the system that enables that oppression.

Godliness, Humanity, and Fear

When Brutus Jones crowns himself emperor of the Caribbean island, he elevates himself to the level of a god. His subjects are forced to worship and serve him without question, and he conceptualizes himself as far superior to them in every way. As a final touch, Jones plays into the natives' superstitions by telling them that he can only be killed by a silver bullet. However, after the natives revolt against him

and Jones journeys through the forest to escape the uprising, he slowly sheds the things that mark him as a powerful, godlike figure and must then accept his own humanity. Ultimately he must face his death, as all humans must.

When the audience first meets Jones, he's storming through his white palace and is dressed in an ostentatious military uniform. Both the colour of the palace and his uniform are intended to convey the fact that he's a powerful figure who is above being treated like any other man. The myth surrounding his ability to be killed only by a silver bullet supports this façade, as it implies that he's not truly a human man and is instead something above and beyond humanity. Further, Jones sees the fact that he was able to convince the natives that this is true as proof that he is truly superior, suggesting in turn that his godliness comes in part from his ability to hoodwink his subjects by using their beliefs to his advantage. The one thing that Jones lacks, and the one thing that therefore sets him apart from the rest of humanity per the logic of the play, is fear. For example, though Jones believes that an eventual native uprising is inevitable, he's entirely confident in his escape plan, which will allow him to escape unscathed, rich, and able to move on and continue living in luxury elsewhere.

With fear, or the lack of it, established as the one thing that separates Jones from his subjects, the apparitions that the natives send to torment Jones through his night in the forest can be seen as an attempt, first and foremost, to reintroduce fear into his understanding and consequently to reconnect him with his humanity. When Jones first sets off, he's jaunty, cocky, and confident in his escape. He's prepared with sturdy boots, his pistol loaded with five lead bullets and one silver bullet (in case he needs to commit suicide to keep up the charade with the natives), and enough food stashed at the edge of the forest to last him through the night. He believes both that his plan is too airtight to fail, and that the natives are too dumb to be able to successfully give chase.

The natives, however, are prepared to return Jones to a human state by reintroducing fear into his emotional vocabulary. At the same time, they've also found a way to reduce Jones from his godlike state by treating it in a pragmatic way: since Jones has convinced the natives that he can only be killed by a silver bullet, they spend the night fabricating silver bullets to kill him. As Jones travels through the woods, he becomes progressively more dishevelled and sheds his uniform, ending

the play wearing little more than a loincloth. This is a physical representation of his loss of his sense of his own godliness and a return to his own humanity—in the end, his body is all he has. Similarly, as Jones encounters the natives' apparitions, he becomes increasingly more fearful. He uses his lead bullets to destroy each apparition, and finally, uses his silver bullet to destroy the crocodile god summoned by the witch doctor—a symbolic representation of the death of Jones's own sense of godliness. By the time Jones completes his circular journey and returns to the edge of the woods where he began, mostly naked and without bullets, Jones is truly human, terrified of what he's created in the natives and scared for his own life. The natives promptly take his life, using their own silver bullets.

Though Smithers mocks the natives' use of silver bullets as ridiculous (he is fully aware that Jones can absolutely be killed with lead bullets), there is a symbolic power to it. In using silver bullets to kill Jones, the natives simultaneously kill Jones the man and the idea of Jones the god. Jones's death, then, truly brings Jones down to earth by asserting his humanity and mortality as inarguable facts. The fact of his death exemplifies the cost of believing oneself to be above death and other worldly consequences, and exposes his initial belief in his own godliness—or, more broadly, the thought that anyone is superior to others in such a way as to act as a god over them—as the foolish and dangerous thought that it always was.

4.2.6 Sum up

The Emperor Jones by Eugene O'Neill follows the rise and fall of Brutus Jones, an African American man who declares himself emperor of a Caribbean island after escaping from prison. The play delves into themes of power, fear, and the psychological effects of guilt as Jones is haunted by his past while fleeing through the jungle.

4.2.7 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. What role does Emperor Jones hold at the beginning of the play?

A. President
B. Governor

C. Emperor
D. Chief

2. What does Emperor Jones use to assert his power over the natives?

A. His physical strength
B. His intellect
C. His gun
D. His wealth

3. How does Emperor Jones initially gain control over the natives?

A. By winning a war
B. By pretending to have supernatural powers
C. By being elected
D. By bribing the local leaders

4. What is the significance of the silver bullet in the play?

A. It symbolizes Jones' invincibility.
B. It represents the only way Jones can die.
C. It is a token of his past life.
D. It is a gift from the natives.

5. Which character serves as a foil to Emperor Jones in the play?

A. Smithers
B. Lem
C. Jeff
D. The Witch Doctor

6. What recurring auditory motif represents Jones' psychological torment throughout the play?

A. Drumming
B. Whistling
C. Gunshots
D. Chanting

7. What is the setting of most of the play's action?

A. A palace
B. A forest

C. A village
D. A city

8. What triggers Jones' hallucinations and memories during the play?

A. Lack of sleep
B. The drumming
C. The presence of Smithers
D. Hunger

9. Who does Emperor Jones see in his first hallucination?

A. His mother
B. A slave auctioneer
C. Jeff, a man he killed
D. A witch doctor

10. What ultimately happens to Emperor Jones at the end of the play?

A. He escapes the island.
B. He is overthrown and killed by the natives.
C. He is rescued by Smithers.
D. He surrenders and becomes a slave.

Answer Key:

1. C. Emperor
2. C. His gun
3. B. By pretending to have supernatural powers
4. B. It represents the only way Jones can die
5. A. Smithers
6. A. Drumming
7. B. A forest
8. B. The drumming
9. C. Jeff, a man he killed
10. B. He is overthrown and killed by the natives

Short Answer Questions

1. Describe the main character of "The Emperor Jones." What are his key traits and how do they influence his actions?

2. What role does Smithers play in the story and how does his relationship with Emperor Jones evolve?
3. How does the use of drumming throughout the play contribute to the atmosphere and Jones' psychological state?
4. Explain the significance of the forest setting in "The Emperor Jones." How does it affect Jones' journey?
5. What is the importance of the silver bullet in the narrative, and what does it symbolize?
6. Who is Jeff and what is his significance in Jones' hallucinations?
7. Discuss the role of race and power dynamics as presented in "The Emperor Jones."
8. How does Emperor Jones' past in the United States influence his behaviour and decisions on the island?
9. What themes are explored through Emperor Jones' descent into madness?
10. Describe the role of the natives in the play and their relationship with Emperor Jones.

Essay Questions

1. Analyse the psychological journey of Emperor Jones throughout the play. How do his hallucinations reflect his internal conflicts and past traumas?
2. Discuss the theme of power and corruption in "The Emperor Jones." How does Eugene O'Neill depict the transformation of power and its corrupting influence on the protagonist?
3. Evaluate the role of symbolism in "The Emperor Jones." Consider the silver bullet, the forest, and the drumming. How do these symbols enhance the narrative and themes of the play?
4. Examine the racial themes in "The Emperor Jones." How does Eugene O'Neill address issues of race and identity through the characters and their interactions?
5. Compare and contrast the characters of Emperor Jones and Smithers. How do their backgrounds, motivations, and actions drive the plot and contribute to the play's themes?

6. Discuss the use of expressionism in "The Emperor Jones." How does O'Neill's use of this style influence the presentation of the protagonist's psychological state?
7. Analyse the ending of "The Emperor Jones." What is the significance of Jones' death, and how does it bring resolution to the play's central conflicts?
8. Explore the theme of escapism in "The Emperor Jones." How does Jones' attempt to escape his past and his eventual downfall illustrate this theme?
9. Discuss the role of the supernatural in "The Emperor Jones." How do the apparitions and hallucinations Jones experiences impact the narrative and reveal deeper truths about his character?
10. Evaluate the structure of "The Emperor Jones." How does the progression of scenes contribute to the development of the plot and the unfolding of Jones' character?

Glossary

1. Portico - a structure consisting of a roof supported by columns at regular intervals, typically attached as a porch to a building.
2. Vista- a pleasing view, especially one seen through a long, narrow opening.
3. Tom-tom - a drum beaten with the hands, associated with North American Indian, African, or Eastern cultures.
4. Bloody - A British colloquialism used to express anger, annoyance, or shock, or simply for emphasis.
5. Blimey - An informal Britishism used to express one's surprise, excitement, or alarm.
6. Souse - Soak in or drench with liquid. Informally, to get drunk.
7. Cockney- A native of East London, traditionally one born within hearing of Bow Bells.
8. Stowaway - A person who secretly boards a vehicle, such as a ship, an aircraft, a train, cargo truck or bus, in order to travel without paying and without being detected.
9. Craps - a gambling game played with two dice, chiefly in North America. A throw of 7 or 11 is a winning throw, 2, 3, or 12 is a losing throw; any other throw must be repeated.

10. Martinique - An insular region of France located in the Lesser Antilles of the West Indies in the eastern Caribbean Sea.
11. Gunboat - a small, fast ship with mounted guns, for use in shallow coastal waters and rivers.
12. Spade - An offensive term for a black person.
13. Feverish - dangerously, grievously, hazardously
14. Grub - The larva of an insect, especially a beetle. Also, an informal term for food.
15. Witch-doctor - (among tribal peoples) a magician credited with powers of healing, divination, and protection against the magic of others.

Unit V

Fiction

UNIT - V

CONTENT OF UNIT- V

- Harriet Beecher Stowe - Uncle Tom's Cabin
- Herman Melvile – Billy Budd
- Washington Irving- The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow

UNIT OBJECTIVES

1. Students will understand the journeys of the characters in the novel, particularly Uncle Tom and Eliza.
2. Students will understand, engage with, and discuss the novel's historical significance, both in its own time and in today's literary and cultural landscape.
3. Students will use multiple means and media—visual, written, oral—to interpret Stowe's work.

Section 5.1 Harriet Beecher Stowe - Uncle Tom's Cabin

5.1.1 Introduction to Harriet Beecher Stowe

Abolitionist author, Harriet Beecher Stowe rose to fame in 1851 with the publication of her best-selling book, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, which highlighted the evils of slavery, angered the slaveholding South, and inspired pro-slavery copy-cat works in defense of the institution of slavery.

Stowe was born on June 14, 1811 in Litchfield, Connecticut, the seventh child of famed Congregational minister Lyman Beecher and Roxana Foote Beecher. Her famous siblings include elder sister Catherine (11 years her senior), and Henry Ward Beecher, the famous preacher and reformer. Stowe's mother died when she was five years old and while her father remarried, her sister Catherine became the most pronounced influence on young Harriet's life. At age eight, she began her education at the Litchfield Female Academy. Later, in 1824, she attended Catherine Beecher's Hartford Female Seminary, which exposed young women to many of the same courses available in men's academies. Stowe's proclivity for writing was evident in

the essays she produced for school. Stowe became a teacher, working from 1829 to 1832 at the Hartford Female Seminary.

In 1832, when Stowe's father Lyman accepted the position of president of the esteemed Lane Seminary in Cincinnati, Ohio, she went with him. There, she met some of the great minds and reformers of the day, including noted abolitionists. Smitten with the landscape of the West, she published her first book, *Primary Geography*, in 1833, which celebrated the diverse cultures and vistas she encountered. In 1836, she met and married Calvin Stowe, a professor at the Lane Seminary. He encouraged her writing, they had seven children, and weathered financial and other problems during their decades-long union. Stowe would write countless articles, some were published in the renowned women's magazine of the times, *Godey's Lady's Book*. She also wrote 30 books, covering a wide range of topics from homemaking to religion in nonfiction, as well as several novels.

The turning point in Stowe's personal and literary life came in 1849, when her son died in a cholera epidemic that claimed nearly 3000 lives in her region. She later said that the loss of her child inspired great empathy for enslaved mothers who had their children sold away from them. The passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which legally compelled Northerners to return runaway slaves, infuriated Stowe and many in the North. This was when Stowe penned what would become her most famous work, the novel, *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Originally serialized in the *National Era*, Stowe saw her tale as a call to arms for Northerners to defy the Fugitive Slave Act. The vivid characters and great empathy inspired by the book was further aided by Stowe's strong Christianity.

Uncle Tom's Cabin was released as a book in March 1852, selling 300,000 copies in the US in the first year. It was later performed on stage and translated into dozens of languages. When some claimed her portrait of slavery was inaccurate, Stowe published *Key to Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a book of primary source historical documents that backed up her account, including the narratives of notable former slaves Frederick Douglass and Josiah Henderson. Southern pro-slavery advocates countered with books of their own, such as Mary Henderson Eastman's *Aunt Phillis's Cabin; Or, Southern Life as It Is*. This work and others like it attempted to portray slavery as a benevolent institution, but never received the acclaim or widespread readership of Stowe's.

Stowe used her fame to petition to end slavery. She toured nationally and internationally, speaking about her book and donating some of what she earned to help the antislavery cause. She also wrote extensively on behalf of abolition, most notably her "Appeal to Women of the Free States of America, on the Present Crisis on Our Country," which she hoped would help raise public outcry to defeat the 1854 Kansas-Nebraska Act.

During the Civil War, Stowe became one of the most visible professional writers. For years, popular folklore claimed that President Abraham Lincoln, upon meeting Stowe in 1862, said, "So you're the woman who wrote the book that started this great war." That quote, published in a 1911 biography of Stowe by her son Charles, has been called into question, as Stowe herself and two others present at the meeting make no reference to it in their accounts (and Charles was only a boy at the time of the meeting).

In 1873, Stowe and her family moved to Hartford, Connecticut, where she remained until her death in 1896, summering in Florida. She helped breathe new life into the Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, and was involved with efforts to launch the Hartford Art School, later part of the University of Hartford.

5.1.2 Background of Uncle Tom's Cabin

In 1851, after the enactment by the United States Congress of a Fugitive Slave Act (the effect of which was to return Africans and African Americans who had escaped from slavery in the Southern states and were living in the North, back into

captivity), the editor of an antislavery periodical asked Harriet Beecher Stowe if she could supply him with a timely story or article. Stowe agreed to write a fictional piece about the lives of several slaves on a Kentucky plantation. It was a subject she knew a little about, having visited such a plantation briefly and having talked and corresponded with people who had a more detailed knowledge; moreover, it was a subject that moved her deeply. She expected that her story, printed in serial form, would run for three or four installments. In fact, it would turn out to be much longer and would require some hurried research, as Stowe's characters took her into places and situations of which she had little or no knowledge.

The story, as it ran, was immensely popular, and when it was published in book form in 1852, it immediately became a runaway bestseller in both the U.S. and Great Britain. The effect of this emotionally powerful book was to galvanize public opinion against slavery in a way that no strictly moral or intellectual argument had as yet been able to accomplish. President Lincoln supposedly said, upon meeting Stowe in 1862, "So you're the little woman who wrote the book that caused this great war." In a very real sense, he was right.

Uncle Tom's Cabin was first of all a popular book, effective because people identified with its sympathetic characters and thrilled to its incidents. Readers of all ages and levels of education, male and female, American and British, black and white (although the book was certainly intended chiefly for a white audience), made *Uncle Tom's Cabin* one of the most successful bestsellers to be published in the United States. And whether or not the average nineteenth-century reader agreed with the book, he or she had no trouble recognizing and understanding its language, assumptions, and fictional conventions. However, that is not the case with the average reader today. Stowe's novel presents modern readers with several problems that bear examination.

5.1.3 Characters

Uncle Tom

A good and pious man, Uncle Tom is the protagonist of Uncle Tom’s Cabin. Even under the worst conditions, Uncle Tom always prays to God and finds a way to keep his faith. As the novel progresses, the cruel treatment that Tom suffers at the

hands of Simon Legree threatens his belief in God, but Tom withstands his doubts and dies the death of a Christian martyr.

Simon Legree

Tom's ruthlessly evil master on the Louisiana plantation. A vicious, barbaric, and loathsome man, Legree fosters violence and hatred among his slaves.

Aunt Chloe

Uncle Tom's wife and the Shelbys' cook. Chloe often acts like a jovial simpleton around the Shelbys to mask her more complex feelings.

Arthur Shelby

The owner of Uncle Tom in Kentucky, Shelby sells Tom to the cruel Mr. Haley to pay off his debts. An educated, kind, and basically good-hearted man, Shelby nonetheless tolerates and perpetuates slavery. Stowe uses him to illustrate that the immorality inherent in slavery makes villains of all its practitioners—not just the most cruel masters.

Emily Shelby

Mr. Shelby's wife, Emily Shelby is a loving, Christian woman who does not believe in slavery. She uses her influence with her husband to try to help the Shelbys' slaves and is one of the novel's many morally virtuous and insightful female characters.

George Shelby

Called "Mas'r George" by Uncle Tom, George is the Shelbys' good-hearted son. He loves Tom and promises to rescue him from the cruelty into which his father sold him. After Tom dies, he resolves to free all the slaves on the family farm in Kentucky. More morally committed than his father, George not only possesses a kind heart but acts on his principles.

George Harris

Eliza's husband and an intellectually curious and talented mulatto, George loves his family deeply and willingly fights for his freedom. He confronts the slave hunter Tom Loker and does not hesitate to shoot him when he imperils the family.

Eliza Harris

Mrs. Shelby's maid, George's wife, and Harry's mother, Eliza is an intelligent, beautiful, and brave young slave. After Mr. Shelby makes known his plans to sell Eliza's son to Mr. Haley, she proves the force of her motherly love as well as her strength of spirit by making a spectacular escape. Her crossing of the Ohio River on patches of ice is the novel's most famous scene.

Harry Harris

Eliza and George's son, a young boy.

Augustine St. Clare

Tom's master in New Orleans and Eva's father, St. Clare is a flighty and romantic man, dedicated to pleasure. St. Clare does not believe in God, and he carouses and drinks every night. Although he dotes on his daughter and treats his slaves with compassion, St. Clare shares the hypocrisy of Mr. Shelby in that he sees the evil of slavery but nonetheless tolerates and practices it.

Eva

St. Clare and Marie's angelic daughter. Eva, also referred to in the book as Little Eva (her given name is Evangeline) is presented as an absolutely perfect child—a completely moral being and an unimpeachable Christian. She laments the existence of slavery and sees no difference between Black and white people. After befriending Tom while still a young girl, Eva becomes one of the most important figures in his life. In death, Eva becomes one of the text's central Christ figures.

Miss Ophelia St. Clare

St. Clare's cousin from the North (Vermont) who comes to help him manage the household, Ophelia opposes slavery in the abstract. However, she finds actual slaves somewhat distasteful and harbors considerable prejudice against them. After

Eva's death, and through her relationship with Topsy, Ophelia realizes her failings and learns to see slaves as human beings. Stowe hoped that much of her Northern audience might recognize themselves in Ophelia and reconsider their views on slavery.

Marie

St. Clare's wife, a self-centered woman. Petty, whining, and foolish, she is the very opposite of the idealized woman figure that appears repeatedly throughout the novel.

The Quakers

The Quakers, a Christian group that arose in mid-seventeenth-century England, dedicated themselves to achieving an inner understanding of God, without the use of creeds, clergy, or outward rites. The Quakers have a long history of contributing to social reform and peace efforts. In Uncle Tom's Cabin, many Quaker characters appear who help George and Eliza, as well as many other slaves. Stowe uses them to portray a Christianity free of hypocrisy, self-righteous display, or bigoted conventions. This kind of Christianity, she implies, can play a crucial role in the abolition of slavery.

Senator and Mrs. Bird

Mrs. Bird is another example of the virtuous woman. She tries to exert influence through her husband. Senator Bird exemplifies the well-meaning man who is sympathetic to the abolitionist cause but who nonetheless remains complacent or resigned to the status quo.

Tom Loker

A slave hunter hired by Mr. Haley to bring back Eliza, Harry, and George, Tom Loker first appears as a gruff, violent man. George shoots him when he tries to capture them, and, after he is healed by the Quakers, Loker experiences a transformation and chooses to join the Quakers rather than return to his old life.

Mr. Haley

The slave trader who buys Uncle Tom and Harry from Mr. Shelby. A gruff, coarse man, Haley presents himself as a kind individual who treats his slaves well. Haley, however, mistreats his slaves, often violently.

Topsy

A wild and uncivilized slave girl whom Miss Ophelia tries to reform, Topsy gradually learns to love and respect others by following the example of Eva.

Cassy

Legree's (slave) mistress and Eliza's mother, Cassy proves a proud and intelligent woman and devises a clever way to escape Legree's plantation.

Emmeline

A young and beautiful slave girl whom Legree buys for himself, perhaps to replace Cassy as his mistress. She has been raised as a pious Christian.

5.1.4 Summary

Having run up large debts, a Kentucky farmer named Arthur Shelby faces the prospect of losing everything he owns. Though he and his wife, Emily Shelby, have a kindhearted and affectionate relationship with their slaves, Shelby decides to raise money by selling two of his slaves to Mr. Haley, a coarse slave trader. The slaves in question are Uncle Tom, a middle-aged man with a wife and children on the farm, and Harry, the young son of Mrs. Shelby's maid Eliza. When Shelby tells his wife about his agreement with Haley, she is appalled because she has promised Eliza that Shelby would not sell her son.

However, Eliza overhears the conversation between Shelby and his wife and, after warning Uncle Tom and his wife, Aunt Chloe, she takes Harry and flees to the North, hoping to find freedom with her husband George in Canada. Haley pursues her, but two other Shelby slaves alert Eliza to the danger. She miraculously evades capture by crossing the half-frozen Ohio River, the boundary separating Kentucky from the North. Haley hires a slave hunter named Loker and his gang to bring Eliza and Harry back to Kentucky. Eliza and Harry make their way to a Quaker settlement,

where the Quakers agree to help transport them to safety. They are joined at the settlement by George, who reunites joyously with his family for the trip to Canada.

Meanwhile, Uncle Tom sadly leaves his family and Mas'r George, Shelby's young son and Tom's friend, as Haley takes him to a boat on the Mississippi to be transported to a slave market. On the boat, Tom meets an angelic little white girl named Eva, who quickly befriends him. When Eva falls into the river, Tom dives in to save her, and her father, Augustine St. Clare, gratefully agrees to buy Tom from Haley. Tom travels with the St. Clares to their home in New Orleans, where he grows increasingly invaluable to the St. Clare household and increasingly close to Eva, with whom he shares a devout Christianity.

Up North, George and Eliza remain in flight from Loker and his men. When Loker attempts to capture them, George shoots him in the side, and the other slave hunters retreat. Eliza convinces George and the Quakers to bring Loker to the next settlement, where he can be healed. Meanwhile, in New Orleans, St. Clare discusses slavery with his cousin Ophelia, who opposes slavery as an institution but harbors deep prejudices against Black people. St. Clare, by contrast, feels no hostility against Black people but tolerates slavery because he feels powerless to change it. To help Ophelia overcome her bigotry, he buys Topsy, a young Black girl who was abused by her past master and arranges for Ophelia to begin educating her.

After Tom has lived with the St. Clares for two years, Eva grows very ill. She slowly weakens, then dies, with a vision of heaven before her. Her death has a profound effect on everyone who knew her: Ophelia resolves to love the slaves, Topsy learns to trust and feel attached to others, and St. Clare decides to set Tom free. However, before he can act on his decision, St. Clare is stabbed to death while trying to settle a brawl. As he dies, he at last finds God and goes to be reunited with his mother in heaven.

St. Clare's cruel wife, Marie, sells Tom to a vicious plantation owner named Simon Legree. Tom is taken to rural Louisiana with a group of new slaves, including Emmeline, whom the demonic Legree has purchased to use as a sex slave, replacing his previous sex slave Cassy. Legree takes a strong dislike to Tom when Tom refuses to whip a fellow slave as ordered. Tom receives a severe beating, and Legree resolves to crush his faith in God. Tom meets Cassy, and hears her story. Separated from her daughter by slavery, she became pregnant again but killed the child because she could not stand to have another child taken from her.

Around this time, with the help of Tom Loker—now a changed man after being healed by the Quakers—George, Eliza, and Harry at last cross over into Canada from Lake Erie and obtain their freedom. In Louisiana, Tom's faith is sorely tested by his hardships, and he nearly ceases to believe. He has two visions, however—one of Christ and one of Eva—which renew his spiritual strength and give him the courage to withstand Legree's torments. He encourages Cassy to escape. She does so, taking Emmeline with her, after she devises a ruse in which she and Emmeline pretend to be ghosts. When Tom refuses to tell Legree where Cassy and Emmeline have gone, Legree orders his overseers to beat him. When Tom is near death, he forgives Legree and the overseers. George Shelby arrives with money in hand to buy Tom's freedom, but he is too late. He can only watch as Tom dies a martyr's death.

Taking a boat toward freedom, Cassy and Emmeline meet George Harris's sister and travel with her to Canada, where Cassy realizes that Eliza is her long-lost

daughter. The newly reunited family travels to France and decides to move to Liberia, the African nation created for former American slaves. George Shelby returns to the Kentucky farm, where, after his father's death, he sets all the slaves free in honor of Tom's memory. He urges them to think on Tom's sacrifice every time they look at his cabin and to lead a pious Christian life, just as Tom did.

5.1.5 Analysis

Chapters 1 – 9

Mr. Shelby, a benevolent slave owner, has to settle a debt and haggles with Haley, a slave trader. He reluctantly considers selling Uncle Tom, and Harry, the son of Eliza. She worries about her son to Mrs. Shelby, who naively waves off the potential separation as impossible. Eliza's husband, George, has been discharged from his factory work by his master, jealous of his productivity and ingenuity. He visits Eliza, expressing his struggle with his Christian faith, while he is treated cruelly by his master. She encourages him to persevere but he decides to flee to Canada.

At Uncle Tom's Cabin, a community center and home for the slaves, Aunt Chloe prepares food for George Shelby Jr, and Uncle Tom. He is teaching Tom to read and write while Tom and Chloe's three children play. Chloe encourages George to read a passage as the rest of the slaves congregate and sing.

Mr. Shelby and Haley finalize the deal to sell Tom and Harry. Mrs. Shelby is distraught and offers to work to pay off the debt. Mr. Shelby refuses, insisting on his place as the man of the house. Eliza learns the news and resolves to escape with Harry to Canada, telling Aunt Chloe on her way out. Uncle Tom stays and cries, insisting on his Christian duty to honor his bondage with his master. When Haley tries to arrange a search party thanks to two slaves, they secretly sabotage and delay the search.

Eliza and Harry travel safely, light-skinned enough to pose as white people. Back at the Shelby estate, Uncle Tom dutifully prepares to be sold and scolds his children for calling slavery evil, insisting on God's Grace and compassion even towards evildoers. Eliza and Harry are almost caught, but escape across the Ohio River, dangerously hopping across floating pieces of ice. In a nearby tavern, Haley cuts a deal with slave

catchers Loker and Mark to find Eliza and Harry. Back at the Shelby estate, the slaves decided that it was God's grace that aided Eliza and Harry's escape.

Ohio Senator Bird and his wife discuss the recent passage of a law that criminalizes the helping of runaway slaves. Eliza and Harry arrive, and he willingly takes them in. They bring them to a safe haven run by former slave owner John Von Trompe, who has renounced slavery.

Chapters 11 – 29

Aunt Chloe weeps as she shares a last meal with Tom, who is resigned and quiet. Haley shackles Tom and takes him away. While getting his shackles tightened, the blacksmith warns of the crueler fates for slaves in the South. They come across George Shelby Jr, who insists he will find a way to get Tom back.

At a hotel, various guests discuss the value of treating slaves kindly. One guest, Mr. Wilson, recognizes another, George, who poses as a Spaniard. In private, they debate the morality of George's escape. Mr. Wilson gives George money after hearing about his traumatic childhood separation and wishes him luck.

Haley travels with Tom and finds an auction. They board a New Orleans-bound boat after buying more slaves, where various passengers debate the morality of slavery. Overnight, an enslaved mother drowns herself after her child is sold. George, Harry, and Eliza are reunited at a Quaker's home, a family that practices nonviolent protest of slavery by helping runaways to Canada. Back on the boat, Augustine St. Clare buys Tom after Tom saves his daughter Eva from drowning.

St. Clare shares his family history, his reluctant marriage to Marie, and his love of Eva, for whom he was traveling to fetch Miss Ophelia as her nanny. Marie insists that slaves are ungrateful but inferior. Ophelia believes they should be educated. St. Clare believes the institution is unfortunately tolerated because it serves an economic purpose. Eva shares her love for Tom, who prays for St. Clare's Christian conversion.

Back up north, Loker and Mark close in on George, Eliza, and Harry, their escape aided by Phineas. A violent confrontation ensues. They narrowly escape, while Mark abandons the injured Loker, who is helped by Phineas and the Quakers.

At the St. Clare estate, Tom takes over finances while Ophelia takes care of general management. They meet Prue, a depressed drunken enslaved woman who had all her children taken from her. This prompts St. Clare to share his complicated history with slavery. He disapproves of it, is empathetic and kind to slaves, but feels helpless in dismantling the system. He buys Topsy, a young black girl for Ophelia to mentor in the hope that she becomes more compassionate.

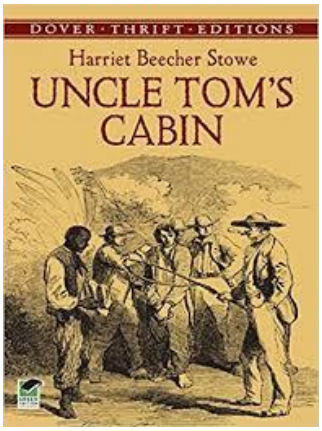
The Shelby estate receives a letter from Tom for Chloe, written with the help of Eva and St. Clare. Mr. Shelby still refuses to let Mrs. Shelby work to buy back Tom. Chloe looks into extra work as a cook in Louisville, as George Shelby Jr. eagerly writes back to Tom. Two years later, Tom learns Eva is ill. St. Clare's brother Alfred and son Henrique visit. While the son courts Eva on a horse ride, St. Clare and Alfred debate the politics of slavery and potential rebellion, and how freed slaves would live. Eva reprimands her cousin for his cruel treatment of slaves.

Eva's illness worsens, and she believes she is destined for heaven. She asks her father, St. Clare, to free their slaves when she dies, and he promises he will. Eva speaks with Topsy, who feels she cannot be loved because she is black. Eva tells her she loves her, and Miss Ophelia, secretly witnessing this exchange, vows to be a better Christian. On her deathbed, Eva gives away the locks of her hair, gracefully accepting her fate. Her unwavering faith confounds her father, St. Clare.

Chapters 30 – 45

St. Clare resolves to be a better Christian, signing over custody of Topsy to Ophelia, and promising to free his slaves in his will. However, he dies in an incident before he can. Marie sells Tom, who meets Susan and her daughter Emmeline in a slave warehouse that is financed by a New York firm. He and Emmeline are sold to Simon Legree, who swears to dominate and destroy Tom. While heading back to his plantation on a boat, a passenger condemns Legree's cruelty, while admitting that benevolent slaveholders perpetuate the institution.

Legree's plantation is barely kept together as he prioritizes profit. His two main overseers, Sambo and Quimbo, are rivals who cruelly compete for power. Tom tries in vain to preach to the slaves, exhausted from the backbreaking labor of cotton picking. Legree conspires to dishearten Tom, who refuses to whip another slave and is badly beaten by Legree for it. While Cassy, Legree's slave mistress, tends to Tom's wound, she shares her cruel, hopeless life story, but is inspired by Tom's stubborn faith.



Cassy visits Legree, who is frustrated with Tom's disobedience. She claims to be possessed by the devil, triggering Legree's superstitions. Sambo has found Eva's lock of hair in Tom's possession, and Legree orders them to burn it. Legree is haunted by the memory of his mom's lock of hair and believes it to be the result of witchcraft. Scared, he orders Sambo and Quimbo to drink with him. Cassy and the hair appear in his dreams, deepening his superstitious fears.

Up north, Loker has lived with the Quakers, showing a change in heart from their compassion. Eliza, George, and Harry make it across to Canada.

Back at Legree's plantation, Legree continues to torment the unwavering Tom. While he is whipped, Tom thinks of the other slaves which make explicit his Jesus-like martyrdom. He even refuses to escape with Cassy, who has temporarily subdued Legree with drugged brandy. Cassy and Emmeline hide in the attic that Legree believes is haunted while they search for them elsewhere. Tom is nearly beaten to death by Sambo and Quimbo. Afterwards, they repent to Tom, impressed by his saintliness.

George Shelby Jr. arrives looking for Tom, while his mother manages the estate in his late father's absence. He spends Tom's last moments alongside the repentant

Sambo and Quimbo. Cassy and Emmeline escape, while Legree lies on his alcohol-induced deathbed. Taking a steamship upriver, they meet George Shelby and Madame de Thoux. Hearing their stories, Eliza is revealed to be Cassy's long-lost daughter, and the Madame the sister of George.

Years later, Madame de Thoux, Cassy, Emmeline, George, Eliza, and Harry are reunited in Montreal. De Thoux moves everyone to France with money from an inheritance. George goes to university and writes back home about the possibility of an African-free state. After moving to Vermont with Ophelia, Topsy becomes a Christian missionary in Africa. Shelby Jr. returns home, mourns Tom's death with Mrs. Shelby and Chloe, and frees all their slaves. He instructs them to remember Tom when they pass by his cabin.

5.1.6 Themes

The Evil of Slavery

Uncle Tom's Cabin was written after the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850, which made it illegal for anyone in the United States to offer aid or assistance to a runaway slave. The novel seeks to attack this law and the institution it protected, ceaselessly advocating the immediate emancipation of the slaves and freedom for all people. Each of Stowe's scenes, while serving to further character and plot, also serves, without exception, to persuade the reader—especially the Northern reader of Stowe's time—that slavery is evil, un-Christian, and intolerable in a civil society.

For most of the novel, Stowe explores the question of slavery in a fairly mild setting, in which slaves and masters have seemingly positive relationships. At the Shelbys' house, and again at the St. Clares', the slaves have kindly masters who do not abuse or mistreat them. Stowe does not offer these settings in order to show slavery's evil as conditional. She seeks to expose the vices of slavery even in its best-case scenario. Though Shelby and St. Clare possess kindness and intelligence, their ability to tolerate slavery renders them hypocritical and morally weak. Even under kind masters, slaves suffer, as we see when a financially struggling Shelby guiltily destroys Tom's family by selling Tom, and when the fiercely selfish Marie, by demanding attention be given to herself, prevents the St. Clare slaves from mourning the death of her own angelic daughter, Eva. A common contemporary defense of

slavery claimed that the institution benefited the slaves because most masters acted in their slaves' best interest. Stowe refutes this argument with her biting portrayals, insisting that the slave's best interest can lie only in obtaining freedom.

In the final third of the book, Stowe leaves behind the pleasant veneer of life at the Shelby and St. Clare houses and takes her reader into the Legree plantation, where the evil of slavery appears in its most naked and hideous form. This harsh and barbaric setting, in which slaves suffer beatings, sexual abuse, and even murder, introduces the power of shock into Stowe's argument. If slavery is wrong in the best of cases, in the worst of cases it is nightmarish and inhuman. In the book's structural progression between "pleasant" and hellish plantations, we can detect Stowe's rhetorical methods. First she deflates the defense of the pro-slavery reader by showing the evil of the "best" kind of slavery. She then presents her own case against slavery by showing the shocking wickedness of slavery at its worst.

The Incompatibility of Slavery & Christian Values

Writing for a predominantly religious, predominantly Protestant audience, Stowe takes great pains to illustrate the fact that the system of slavery and the moral code of Christianity oppose each other. No Christian, she insists, should be able to tolerate slavery. Throughout the novel, the more religious a character is, the more he or she objects to slavery. Eva, the most morally perfect white character in the novel, fails to understand why anyone would see a difference between Black and white people. In contrast, the morally revolting, nonreligious Legree practices slavery almost as a policy of deliberate blasphemy and evil. Christianity, in Stowe's novel, rests on a principle of universal love. If all people were to put this principle into practice, Stowe insists, it would be impossible for one segment of humanity to oppress and enslave another. Thus, not only are Christianity and slavery incompatible, but Christianity can actually be used to fight slavery.

The slave hunter Tom Loker learns this lesson after his life is spared by the slaves he tried to capture, and after being healed by the generous-hearted and deeply religious Quakers. He becomes a changed man. Moreover, Uncle Tom ultimately triumphs over slavery in his adherence to Christ's command to "love thine enemy." He refuses to compromise his Christian faith in the face of the many trials

he undergoes at Legree's plantation. When he is beaten to death by Legree and his men, he dies forgiving them. In this way, Tom becomes a Christian martyr, a model for the behavior of both whites and Black people. The story of his life both exposes the evil of slavery—its incompatibility with Christian virtue—and points the way to its transformation through Christian love.

The Moral Power of Women

Although Stowe wrote Uncle Tom's Cabin before the widespread growth of the women's rights movement of the late 1800s, the reader can nevertheless regard the book as a specimen of early feminism. The text portrays women as morally conscientious, committed, and courageous—indeed, often as more morally conscientious, committed, and courageous than men. Stowe implies a parallel between the oppression of Black people and the oppression of women, yet she expresses hope for the oppressed in her presentation of women as effectively influencing their husbands. Moreover, she shows how this show of strength by one oppressed group can help to alleviate the oppression of the other. White women can use their influence to convince their husbands—the people with voting rights—of the evil of slavery.

Throughout the novel, the reader sees many examples of idealized womanhood, of perfect mothers and wives who attempt to find salvation for their morally inferior husbands or sons. Examples include Mrs. Bird, St. Clare's mother, Legree's mother, and, to a lesser extent, Mrs. Shelby. The text also portrays Black women in a very positive light. Black women generally prove strong, brave, and capable, as seen especially in the character of Eliza. In the cases where women do not act morally—such as Prue in her drunkenness or Cassy with her infanticide, the women's sins are presented as illustrating slavery's evil influence rather than the women's own immorality. Not all women appear as bolsters to the book's moral code: Marie acts petty and mean, and Ophelia begins the novel with many prejudices. Nonetheless, the book seems to argue the existence of a natural female sense of good and evil, pointing to an inherent moral wisdom in the gender as a whole and encouraging the use of this wisdom as a force for social change.

5.1.7 Sum-Up

Uncle Tom's Cabin, described by Stowe herself as a "series of sketches" depicting the human cruelty of slavery, opens with a description of Arthur Shelby's Kentucky plantation during the antebellum period. Although Shelby is not characterized as a cruel master, he has nevertheless incurred serious debts-prompting him sell some slaves to avoid financial ruin. Mr. Haley, the slave trader, purchases Uncle Tom, Shelby's loyal servant since childhood, and five-year-old Harry, a beautiful and talented child who sings, dances and mimes. Shelby regrets taking the child away from his mother, Eliza, as much as he regrets betraying Uncle Tom's faithfulness. Eliza overhears Mrs. Shelby, a very religious woman, protesting her husband's decision, and decides to flee the plantation with her son. George, her husband from a neighboring plantation, has already left for Canada via the "underground railroad," a secret network of people who usher runaway slaves to freedom in the North. Eliza plans to do the same, and tries to convince Uncle Tom to save himself and come with her. Uncle Tom, however, must remain loyal to his master, despite his betrayal and the risk of death at the cruel hands of a new master, and does not accompany Eliza on her journey to the Ohio River.

Haley searches for Eliza in vain, for she is spurred on by fear of losing her child and reaches the river quickly. Amazingly, Eliza crosses the river by jumping from one ice flow to the next. Upon reaching the shore in Ohio, Mr. Symmes, a man who has observed her brave feat, listens to her story. Fortunately, Symmes hates slave traders and thus takes Eliza and Harry to the house of Senator Bird, where they receive food and lodging. Ironically, Bird has just voted for a bill prohibiting aid to fugitive slaves, but the Senator is very moved by Eliza's story. He thus changes his convictions and takes the runaways to a Quaker settlement, where they stay with the Halliday family. Coincidentally, Eliza's husband George has sought refuge in this very community, and the young family is reunited. The Quakers help the family board a ship for Canada before Haley's hired slave hunters, Loker and Marks, can capture them.

After the hunt for Eliza and Harry fails, Haley returns to Shelby's to collect the other half of his purchase, Uncle Tom. The slaves at the plantation are very mournful, but Tom remains placid and tries to read his Bible for comfort. On the steamboat to New Orleans, where Tom is to be sold, Tom befriends an angelic little

girl, "Little Eva" St. Clare. Uncle Tom saves the five-year-old beauty from drowning, and she convinces her father to buy Tom for her own family. Tom finds life on the St. Clare plantation agreeable, for although he is head coachman he spends most of his time with Little Eva. The love and goodness of which she constantly speaks influences those around her, convincing people of their inner value and that of the people around them. Eva even manages to convince the impish slave girl Topsy that she deserves to be loved, and touches the heart of her stern aunt, Miss Ophelia, who has traveled from Vermont to manage the plantation because Mrs. St. Clare is a hypochondriac.

Tom's contentment does not last, however, because Eva soon falls ill. Dying, she asks that all the slaves surround her bedside, where she gives each of them a golden lock of hair and tells them they must Christian so that they can see each other in heaven. Eva implores Mr. St. Clare to free Tom after her death. Mr. St. Clare is so distraught by her death, however, that he never legally frees Tom before he himself is killed trying to mediate a barroom scuffle. Mrs. St. Clare sells the slaves to settle her husband's debts, and the deplorable Simon Legree purchases Tom. Legree is a drunkard who beats his slaves brutally. Only one of his slaves, Cassy, defies her master by threatening to do voodoo on him. Cassy tries to help Uncle Tom, but he is a pacifist and will not resist the terrible beatings Legree inflicts upon him.

Mr. Shelby, in the meantime, has been tracking Tom down, and arrives at the Legree plantation one day. By this time, however, Tom is very near death. Once Tom is dead and buried, Shelby takes a steamboat to Kentucky, where he meets Cassy and another slave from Legree's, Emmeline, who are fleeing the plantation. The three then meet Emily de Thoux, who is George Harris's sister, and discover that Cassy is the mother of Eliza. Once in Kentucky, Shelby frees his slaves. Cassy, Emmeline, and Emily travel to Canada where they are reunited with Eliza and George. The Harris family and Cassy eventually travel to Liberia to found a freedom colony for ex-slaves. The novel ends with a chapter summarizing the lesson learned from these "sketches" of experiences with slavery: that slavery is indeed a very cruel and evil institution that should be abolished.

5.1.8 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. The author of Uncle Tom's Cabin.
   A.John Brown
   B. Harriet Tubman
   C. Harriet Beecher Stowe
   D. Frederick Douglass

2. An informal network of abolitionists that helped fugitive slaves.
   A. Underground Railroad
   B. Free Soil Party
   C. Lecompton Constitution
   D. Prohibitionists

3. A New York abolitionist who massacred five pro-slavery settlers in Kansas.
   A. John Brown
   B. Frederick Douglass
   C. David Wilmot
   D. Stephen Douglas

4. The state statutes that nullified the Fugitive Slave Act.
   A. Personal Liberties Laws
   B. Wilmot Proviso
   C. Compromise of 1850
   D. Missouri Compromise

5. A Maryland born slave was known as "Black Moses".
   A. Harriet Tubman
   B. Frederick Douglass
   C. Abraham Lincoln
   D. Harriet Beecher Stowe

6. The characterization of violent outbreaks in 1856 that occurred in and around Lawrence, Kansas.

   A.Bleeding Kansas
   B.Civil War
   C.Battle of the Fugitive Slaves
   D.Pottawatomie Creek Massacre

Answer Key:

1. C. Harriet Beecher Stow
2. A. Underground Railroad
3. A. John Brown
4. A. Personal Liberties Laws

5. A. Harriet Tubman
6. A. Bleeding Kansas

Short Answer Questions

1. Why does the author include real life incidents in the final chapter?

2. With what anecdote did the author's brother provide her regarding the character for Simon Legree?

3. What does Stowe say is the only thing that would protect a slave from abuse?

4. What law prompted Stowe to write Uncle Tom's Cabin?

5. What effects does slavery have on its victims?

6. What is the most sought after goal that freed slaves desire?

7. Where did Stowe gain some of her personal knowledge of slavery?

8. How does the author view the role of the church?

9. What is the author's intent by listing several free blacks' occupations?

10. Where does the author think is a good refuge for freed and escaped slaves?

Essay Questions

1. In what ways does Stowe present the incompatibility of slavery with the Christian ethic of love and tolerance? How do the novel's Christ figures underscore its basic Christian messages?
2. Compare and contrast Tom's three owners in the novel—Shelby, St. Clare, and Legree. How are they alike? How are they different? Do they appear in the novel according to any particular sequence, and if so, how does this progression relate to the general themes of the book?
3. Discuss the role of Eva in the novel. In what ways does she contribute to the novel's larger messages?
4. How do Stowe's political objectives affect the style and formal aspects of the novel? In designing her characters to make a point, did she make them too simple? Do the noble politics of the novel justify its literary shortcomings?

Glossary

1. arabesque a complex and elaborate decorative design of intertwined lines suggesting flowers, foliage, animals, etc.
2. *au fait* acquainted with the facts; well-informed.
3. bagging cloth for making bags; George's factory apparently manufactured cloth made from hemp.
4. bark a small sailing boat; figuratively, Eva's life.
5. barrens places that do not produce useful crops or fruits; places with poor soil; here, "pine barrens" are woods whose plants are chiefly or overwhelmingly pine trees.
6. beaver a man's high silk hat, originally made of beaver fur.
7. bombazin bombazine; a heavy, twilled silk cloth, often dyed black.
8. brochetelle brocatelle; a heavy, figured cloth like brocade, usually of silk and linen, often used for upholstery.
9. Bryant i.e., William Cullen Bryant (1794–1878), U.S. poet and journalist.
10. buffalo a robe or throw made of buffalo skin.
11. "But as for me . . . I have put my trust in the Lord God" *Psalms* 73: 2–28.
12. calaboose [Old Slang] a prison; jail; here, a whipping-establishment or specific place for punishment of slaves.
13. camphire i.e., camphor, a chemical compound with a strong characteristic odor; as spirits of camphor, often used as a stimulant.
14. canaille (French) the mob, rabble; a term of contempt for the common people.
15. cestus in ancient times, a woman's belt or waist-band.
16. Chateaubriand (Vicomte) Francois Rene de Chateaubriand (1768–1848), French statesman and man of letters; he traveled in North America and wrote about his experiences.
17. Cicero (Marcus Tullius) (106–43 B.C.) Roman statesman, orator, and philosopher, writer of a classic text on rhetoric.
18. ciphers things of no importance; nonentities.
19. class people grouped together because of certain likenesses or common traits; in referring to "men of [Loker's] class," the narrator does not mean social or economic class but "men of Loker's type or temperament."

Section 5.2 Herman Melvile – Billy Budd

5.2.1 Introduction to Herman Melvile

Herman Melville was born in New York City on August 1, 1819, and raised in upstate New York. After his merchant father, Allan, died, leaving the family in penury, Melville attempted to support his family by working various jobs, from banking to teaching school. It was his adventures as a seaman in 1845 that inspired Melville to write. On one voyage, he was captured and held for several months. When he returned, friends encouraged Melville to write about his experience. Typee: A Peep at Polynesian Life (Wiley and Putnam, 1846) became his first literary success; the continuation of his adventures appeared in his second book, Omoo (Harper & Brothers, 1847).

After ending his seafaring career, Melville read voraciously. In 1847, he married Elizabeth Shaw and moved first to New York and then the Berkshires. He lived near writer Nathaniel Hawthorne, who became a close friend and confidant. Melville penned Mardi and a Voyage Thither, a philosophical allegory, and Redburn: His First Voyage (Harper & Brothers, 1849), a comedy. Although the latter proved a financial success, Melville immediately returned to the symbolic in his next novel, White-Jacket; or, the World in a Man-of-War (Harper & Brothers, 1850). In 1851, he completed his masterpiece, Moby-Dick, or the Whale (Harper & Brothers). Considered by modern scholars to be one of the great American novels, the book was dismissed by Melville's contemporaries and he made little from the effort. The other two novels that today form the core of the Melville canon—Pierre; or the Ambiguities (Harper & Brothers, 1852) and The Confidence Man (Dix, Edwards & Co., 1857)—met a similar fate.

During the 1850s, Melville supported his family by farming and writing stories for magazines. He traveled to Europe in 1856, where he saw his friend Hawthorne for the last time. During that visit, it was clear to Melville that his novel-writing career was finished. In 1857, after returning to New York still unnoticed by the literary public, he stopped writing fiction. He became a customs inspector, a job he held for twenty years, and began to write poetry.

The Civil War made a deep impression on Melville and became the principal subject of his verse. With so many family members participating in various aspects of the war, Melville found himself intimately connected to it. He observed the Senate's debating secession during a visit to Washington, D.C. in 1861, and made a trip to the front with his brother in 1864. Melville's first published book of poems was Battle-Pieces and Aspects of the War: Civil War Poems (Harper & Brothers, 1866). The volume is regarded by many critics as a work as ambitious and rich as any of his novels. He went on to write and publish three more volumes of poetry, including Clarel: A Poem and a Pilgrimage (G. P. Putnam & Co., 1876), to little acclaim.

Melville died of a heart attack on September 28, 1891 at the age of seventy-two. During the week of his death, the New York Times wrote: "There has died and been buried in this city […] a man who is so little known, even by name, to the generation now in the vigor of life that only one newspaper contained an obituary account of him, and this was but of three or four lines." It wasn't until the 1920s that the literary public began to recognize Melville as one of America's greatest writers.

5.2.2 Characters

William "Billy" Budd Of obscure origin and limited education, Billy is a good-hearted and simple peacemaker who is nicknamed "Baby," as well as "the Handsome Sailor." He serves dutifully as foretopman on the *Bellipotent* and rejects an offer to join a mutiny. Claggart hates Billy because of his innocence and beauty.

John Claggart, Master-at-Arms The dark, demon-haunted weapons officer and ship's policeman in his mid-thirties who, out of jealousy and malice, causes Billy's execution. Claggart comes from a shady background and is possibly foreign by birth. He is not well known to the captain because he joined the crew when it last left home port to replace the former master-of-arms, who was disabled. Because of his inner corruption, Claggart brings about his own death and is buried at sea.

Captain "Starry" Vere A dedicated career naval officer in his fifties who allows obedience to duty to force the condemnation and execution of an innocent man, even though Vere sympathizes with Billy and recognizes his innate innocence. The

captain distinguishes himself in battle off Gibraltar and dies of a musketball wound. In his last moments, he twice speaks Billy's name.

The Dansker An old sailor, nicknamed "Board-Her-in-the-Smoke," with a pale, jagged scar across his face, weasel eyes, and a blue-peppered complexion. A favorite among the men, he demonstrates unsentimental wisdom. He gives Billy his nickname, "Baby," and warns him that Claggart is "down on him."

Squeak A small-statured corporal aboard ship who sneaks about in order to give Claggart false reports of petty offenses allegedly committed by Billy Budd.

Captain Graveling The fifty-year-old captain of the *Rights-of-Man* is plump, responsible, and peaceloving. He prizes Billy Budd's qualities and regrets losing him to the *Bellipotent.*

Lieutenant Ratcliffe A dutiful man with a taste for liquor, Ratcliffe is burly and cynical about his role as impressment officer.

An Afterguardsman An obvious tool of Claggart, he summons Billy out of sleep, takes him aside, and offers an unspecified bribe for Billy's part in a purported mutiny. Later, the afterguardsman feigns innocence through casual jocularity.

The Surgeon The ship's surgeon — gloomy, dutiful, and efficient — examines Claggart and determines that he is dead. The surgeon doubts that Captain Vere should handle the legal proceedings, but refrains from stating his beliefs rather than give the impression of insolence or rebellion. Later, the surgeon discredits notions that Billy's death was in any way abnormal.

Mr. Mordant Mordant, the captain of the marines, is a soldier among sailors. He is asked to serve on the drumhead court. His questioning points toward a better understanding of Claggart's enmity, but the lieutenant, at Captain Vere's urging, overrules Mordant before he can get to the bottom of the confrontation.

The Sailing Master Of the three-man tribunal, he is the only one who proposes a lesser sentence for Billy.

The Senior Lieutenant The most reluctant of the jury to condemn Billy, the senior lieutenant later assumes command of the *Bellipotent* and leads the crew in victory over the French *Athée.* He hears of Captain Vere's dying words and correctly interprets their significance.

The Chaplain A worthy, discreet man of God who tries to indoctrinate Billy with Christian principle, but accepts his innocence as reason to hope for salvation. The chaplain accompanies Billy to the place of execution.

The Purser A crew member who wonders why Billy's body did not convulse when he died.

5.2.3 Summary

Billy Budd begins with an unnamed narrator describing the story's historical context. England was engaged in a bloody war with Napoleonic France at the end of the eighteenth century. The English Navy, stretched to the breaking point, often "impressed" or forced civilians into service. In combination with harsh conditions and cruel leadership, this practice led many disgruntled crews to rise and revolt against their commanders. Throughout the period, the threat of mutiny was prevalent on many ships and resulted in harsh punishments for those suspected of arranging any protest.

The novel is set during a period of increasing tension and conflict between the naval powers of England and France. In 1797, a handsome young sailor named Billy Budd is forced to leave his crew on the *Rights-of-Man* ship to go into service on the HMS *Bellipotent*. Billy is assigned a watchman on the mast and soon establishes himself as a popular and charismatic crew member. The ship's captain, "Starry" Vere, is a peaceful and intelligent man who immediately likes Billy. The ship's master-of-arms, Claggart, is a brooding and violent presence who often veils his true intentions.

Claggart grows jealous of Billy's natural good looks and popularity, admonishing him for minor errors. Billy accepts his punishment and shows no sign of spite in return but is confused when Claggart contradicts his brutal behavior with playful advances. Claggart tells his assistant to monitor Billy's movements. During the night, another sailor invites Billy to a secluded part of the ship, where he is offered a bribe to join a mutiny against the ship's command. Disgusted by the idea, Billy stutters his refusal and

threatens to throw the man overboard. The mutineer leaves, but two other sailors confront Billy about his movements.

After the *Bellipotent* engages with a French vessel, Claggart informs Captain Vere he suspects Billy is about to lead a mutiny to take over the ship. The pair confront Billy, who begins to stutter so badly he cannot defend himself against the charge. He begins to panic and is so distraught at Claggart's groundless accusation that he lashes out and punches the master-of-arms.

Claggart falls to the ground and begins bleeding from his ears. Soon after, the ship's surgeon declares him dead. Vere gathers the ship's highest-ranking officers to form a court. After Vere lays out the sequence of events to the jury, Billy cannot answer most of the accusations levied at him. He can only stutter that he had no intention to kill Claggart and is not involved in any mutiny.

With the jury deadlocked, many among the crew sympathize with Billy's position. Vere is torn between his feelings for Billy and his duty to maintain order on board. He finally steps in and argues that as England is at war and its naval supremacy is threatened by mutiny, their personal feelings must come second to securing victory. The jury is forced to find Billy guilty of murder and rebellion and sentence him to be executed the following day.

That night, the ship's chaplain attempts to offer the condemned man spiritual guidance but finds Billy already at peace. The entire crew gathers around to witness the hanging, and as the rope is placed around Billy's neck, he utters his last words: "God bless Captain Vere!"

As the *Bellipotent* returns to join the Royal fleet, the ship engages with a French vessel. During the encounter, Captain Vere is fatally wounded and eventually dies in a Gilbatar hospital; his last words are "Billy Budd, Billy Budd."

After Billy's death, his legend begins to grow. Although newspapers depict him as a mutinous traitor, ordinary sailors remember him as a noble figure who was unfairly killed by his commander. The spar used to hang Billy becomes a venerated and holy

object to the crew. The man who fills Billy's post at the mast writes a simple ballad in memory of the mythical sailor.

5.2.4 Analysis

The novel, a sea tale set in the age before steamships, opens with the overtones of a legend. Associating the term "Handsome Sailor" first with the African and then with the hero, Melville gives his work a universality which is essential to its meaning. From the beginning, Billy Budd manifests superhuman qualities, many of which suggest a mythic, or Christ-like, figure. Captain Graveling, who values Billy's good traits, refers to him as his jewel and his peacemaker.

Billy Budd lives during a time when order and human rights are threatened. Acquainted with the procedure of impressment, he does not hesitate when Lieutenant Ratcliffe selects him for service to the king, George III. There is irony and pathos in Billy's impulsive, sincere gesture in jumping up in the cutter and bidding farewell to "old *Rights-of-Man."* The lieutenant gruffly orders him to sit down, demonstrating that Billy is indeed departing from a world of peace and rights and into a world of guns and arbitrary military discipline.

This episode also foreshadows the confrontation in which Billy, a fighting peacemaker," will strike Claggart. Earlier, aboard the *Rights-of-Man,* Billy had been bullied by Red Whiskers. One day Billy struck a single stunning blow and astonished the bully with his quickness. Since that day, Red Whiskers, as well as the rest of the crew, has been a friend of Billy, who appealed to others because of his pure virtue and cheerful countenance.

Billy's story is told from the third-person point of view. The unnamed narrator attempts to remain objective and impartial while telling the story but admits that there are many details he does not know. He is happy to fill in these gaps with theories and rumors. The narrator is open about his subjectivity and often reminds the reader that he was not present during the events. In the last three chapters, the narrator attempts to find a moral in the story of Billy Budd to present to the reader. He contrasts the differing versions of events and finds himself siding with the crew's side of the story. By relaying

the story of *Billy Budd*, the narrator contributes to the growing legend of the handsome sailor.

Billy Budd contains many standard characteristics of Herman Melville's writing style. The prose has long, windy sentences rich in imagery and Biblical references. The narrator often wrestles with significant philosophical problems. Like Melville's most famous work, *Moby-Dick* (1851), *Billy Budd* belongs in the sea story or nautical fiction genre. The narrator employs nautical jargon and often strays from the action to discuss history, politics, and morality.

5.2.5 Themes

Approximately forty years separate *Typee,* Melville's autobiographical tale of his first encounter with the ambiguities of life and the conflict of good and evil in the universe, from *Billy Budd.* The themes of the later novel, however, are not greatly changed from those of *Typee.* In both, the main character faces the threat of destruction by an evil force he does not comprehend. The theme of the noble savage is as strong in *Billy Budd* as it is in *Typee.* That Billy is untutored in the ways of the world remains unchanged throughout the story.

One suggested theme of *Billy Budd* is the corruption of innocence by society. Melville seems to prefer the primitive state over civilized society. If this posthumous work is indeed the author's last will and testament, the theme may indicate his personal resignation and acceptance of the imperfection of life. It also reflects his dissociation from religion, which had always been full of contradictions and uncertain-ties for him. Finally, in this terminal work he seems to adjust to the incongruities of life as a necessary tragic factor. Through acceptance and endurance, his characters — and the author as well — discover a peace and understanding gained through suffering and reflection.

Critics shore up their interpretation of Melville's final words with an explanation of innocence and perfection in this short novel. They see the two concepts as unequal. Billy, though innocent, is not perfect. Rather, he embraces death as a means of atoning for evil and goes willingly to his death, blessing Captain Vere as

Christ blessed his enemies. If this analysis is true, Billy may represent Melville's late-in-life subordination of will to God's infinite judgment.

Another view of Billy is the consummate peacemaker who brings about brotherhood of man through martyrdom. Even though evil is the ultimate victor and takes its place alongside good, natural goodness remains unconquered in the human heart. In the real world, evil exists-unmitigated, unexplained, unmotivated, and impossible to grasp. Billy, hopelessly unsuited to exist in such a world, is its obvious victim.

Melville's comparison of the two irreconcilable facets of Claggart's nature to Chang and Eng, the famous Siamese twins who were joined together in life and in death, suggests still another theme in this mysterious and complex tale. The two, like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, represent two sides of human nature. On the one hand, Claggart's strength resides in his job as shipboard peacekeeper; then, when evil takes control, his evil bent rears up like a coiled snake to strike out at goodness.

Like Aristotle's golden mean, the conjunction of these two extremes is the only viable solution. Such a blend is found in the nature of Claggart's foil, Captain Vere. Perfectly proportioned, he opposes innovation and change, but remains at peace with the world. He is truly the balanced man.

Some critics view the story as a commentary on the impersonality and essential brutality of the modern state, exacting the death penalty of the innocent. Billy succumbs to a hostile universe because he lacks the sophistication and experience to roll with the punches. Unlike the shifting keel of the ship, Billy is unable to lean either way and so must break apart and sink to the bottom.

In such a state, the peace-loving *Rights-of-Man* cannot operate without the protection of the *Bellipotent,* a symbol of warfare and usurper of those rights. In turn, the *Bellipotent* can protect the merchant ship only by impressing men from the ship it protects. This arbitrary snatching of men to staff the warship equates with the arbitrary justice of wartime, which snatches Billy from a safe berth and makes an example of him.

Melville obviously concerns himself with the historical development of humankind and particularly with isolated episodes in which history devours a single expendable individual. Furthermore, the author sees Christianity as the center of an order which seems to be slipping away. Because these dismal thoughts invaded the peace of his declining years, Melville deserves greatness for tackling so great an inquiry.

5.2.6 Sum-Up

Recalling the tradition of the Handsome Sailor, the unnamed narrator recalls seeing an example in Liverpool many years before — the striking figure of a native African above average in height. Around his neck he wore a brightly colored scarf which fluttered against his dark, naked chest.

Such a figure is the Handsome Sailor of this story, bright-eyed Billy Budd, aged twenty-one, a foretopman of the British fleet whom Lieutenant Ratcliffe of the H.M.S. *Bellipotent* forcibly transfers from the English merchantman, the *Rights-of-Man.* Captain Graveling, of the latter ship, tells the impressment officer that before Billy came, the "forecastle was a rat-pit of quarrels." Listening with amusement, Lieutenant Ratcliffe cynically replies, "Blessed are the peacemakers, especially the fighting peacemakers!" As the cutter pushes off, Billy jumps up from the bow, waves his hat to his shipmates, and bids them and the ship a genial goodbye.

Billy is just as well received on the H.M.S. *Bellipotent* as he was on the *Rights-of-Man.* He scarcely notes the change of circumstances. As he is being formally mustered into service, an officer inquires about his background and birthplace. Billy, whom the narrator describes as "little more than a sort of upright barbarian," replies that he doesn't know. To the question of who his father was, Billy replies, "God knows, sir." He explains that he was found in a basket hung on "the knocker of a good man's door in Bristol."

Perfect as this Handsome Sailor might appear, he is handy with his fists when provoked and does have one innate weakness: he is inclined to stutter or become frustratingly speechless when provoked.

5.2.7 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. Billy can be best described as.
   A. Innocent
   B. Daredevil
   C. Loud
   D. Crude
2. What is the name of the ship which billy was transfered from?
   A. Lovelylady
   B. Bigboy
   C. HMS Bellipotent
   D. The Rights of Man
3. What is Billy accused for when he kills John Claggart?
   A. Running away
   B. Killing another sailor
   C. Mutiny
   D. He wasn't accused for anything
4. What was the name of the french vessel, by which Captain Vere was killed?
   A. Athee
   B. The Vessel
   C.Casa Blanca
   D. Monchere
5. Melville distinguishes Billy from conventional heroes by:
   A. Not being popular
   B. Making him a stutterer
   C. Not being confident
   D. Being very quite

Answer Key:

1. A. Innocent
2. D. The Rights of Man
3. C. Mutiny

4. A. Athee
5. B. Making him a stutterer

Short Answer Questions

1. What is Billy's first reaction to Claggart's accusation?
2. Why does Vere want to observe the confrontation between Claggart and Billy?
3. Why doesn't Billy Budd answer his accuser?
4. Since he cannot speak, what action does Billy take?
5. Why does Captain Vere send for the surgeon?
6. What does Captain Vere decide to do about the crime?
7. What is the surgeon's concern about Captain Vere?
8. What does the surgeon do?
9. What were the reactions of the lieutenants and the captain of the marines?
10. What is a "drumhead court"?

Essay Questions

1. What is the major conflict in Billy Budd?
2. Comment on Billy's innocence in Billy Budd.
3. What does Vere mean by "With mankind . . . forms, measured forms, are everything . . ." after the hanging?
4. Did Billy receive justice in Herman Melville's Billy Budd?
5. How does the quote "Then, making a salutation as to the ship herself, 'And good-bye to you too, old Rights-of-Man'" fit into Melville's Billy Budd, Sailor and its era of literature?
6. In Billy Budd, how do characters' inner qualities relate to their physical appearance?
7. How does Billy Budd reflect its time of writing?
8. Why does Melville include a newspaper account of events in chapter 29 of Billy Budd?
9. How does Melville suggest in Moby-Dick and Billy Budd that beauty and innocence must be destroyed to maintain order?
10. In Billy Budd, Sailor, does Claggart represent post-revolutionary Romanticism's individualism?

Glossary

1. man-of-war an armed navy vessel.
2. Aldebaran bright red star in the eye of the constellation Taurus and the brightest of the Hyades.
3. Ham In Genesis 9:22–25, Ham is Noah's son and father of many nations. Tradition claims that Noah cursed Ham's offspring with black skin because Ham dishonored his father.
4. Anacharsis Cloots The Baron de Cloots, according to Thomas Carlyle in his *French Revolution,* amassed a group of men from a variety of countries at the French National Assembly.
5. pagod an archaic spelling of "pagoda," meaning pagan idol.
6. Assyrian priests . . . grand sculptured Bull Priests in Babylonia, a great kingdom on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, worshipped Baal, the god of fertility and rain, in the form of a great bull.
7. Murat Joachim Murat (1767–1815), Napoleon's marshal and King of Naples, gave himself airs in both dress and mannerisms.
8. close-reefing topsails in a gale climbing out on a yardarm during bad weather to tie up the sails so that they will not be ripped by strong winds.
9. Flemish horse a rope used as a foothold.
10. Bucephalus the favorite horse of Alexander the Great.
11. welkin-eyed having eyes as blue as the sky.
12. impressed on the Narrow Seas forced to leave private employ and enter the Royal Navy while sailing the Irish Sea or the English Channel.
13. *Bellipotent* The ship takes its name from an archaic adjective meaning "mighty in war."
14. forecastle the area on the bow (forward end) of the ship where the sailors live.
15. Irish shindy a noisy brawl.
16. buffer of the gang a malcontented or incompetent crew member.
17. capstan an upright, revolving post around which rope is wound.
18. waxing merry with his tipple becoming happily intoxicated.
19. hardtack a ship's biscuits.
20. Apollo the ancient Greek sun god revered for his physical beauty.

Section 5.3. Washington Irving- The Legend of the Sleepy Hollow

5.3.1. Introduction to Washington Irving

Washington Irving was one of the most famous American authors of the nineteenth century. While he is primarily remembered for short stories such as “Rip van Winkle” and “The Legend of Sleepy Hollow,” he also penned an extensive biography of George Washington.

Born in New York City, Irving was the eighth child in his family. Both of his parents emigrated from England to New York twenty years earlier, and his father became a merchant to support the family.1 As Irving grew up, he found that the things that gave him the most joy in life were reading, drawing, and writing.2 At the age of nineteen, he began to pursue his passions by writing essays in his brother’s newspaper The Morning Chronicle. By 1819, he made the bold decision to try to make a living through writing alone. Irving felt that he was unsuited for any other form of occupation, and that he was determined to succeed in making a name for himself through writing literature. If he did not succeed, however, he would be willing to take on other forms of employment in order to survive.3

By the 1850s, Irving decided to write a biography of George Washington. In the early nineteenth century, biography was an increasingly popular literary genre and the much-admired Washington was an ideal subject. Previous biographies of Washington had been written by Mason Locke Weems (who invented the cherry tree myth) and Chief Justice John Marshall, but given Irving’s recent literary reputation, a biography of George Washington by him would be very likely to sell.6

In 1853, Irving began his research about Washington. He utilized two important sources to craft the biography—The Writings of George Washington, and a series of George Washington’s letters acquired through the State Department.7

After two years of research, Irving began writing his Washington biography at his home in Sunnyside, New York. In his preface, Irving explained that he had long wanted to write a biography of Washington, though ill health as well as his many

travels to Europe delayed the project.8 According to Irving,he sought to write in a narrative style that also rigorously grounded itself in historical facts.9

Irving published the biography in multiple volumes between 1855 and 1859. The work dealt with subjects including George Washington's military exploits, presidency, his personal life. Irving's creative style rendered a highly readable account of Washington's life centered on exploring the great man as a human being.

Some reviewers argued that by exploring Washington's military and personal life in a realistic manner, Irving was able to transform Washington from a demigod figure into a subject far more approachable and understandable to the average reader. The historian George Bancroft lauded Irving for writing both with the qualities of good historian and with narrative tone that made the events portrayed seem natural.10 Another historian, William H. Prescott, after reading the fourth volume, congratulated Irving for making Washington into someone that people could relate to.11 Irving had managed to establish himself not just as a successful fiction writer, but also a successful historian.

Irving died the same year that he released the final installment of the biography. Many were shocked and saddened by his passing. Washington Irving today is primarily remembered for his short stories that took a humorous look at American history and culture. His biography of George Washington, by contrast, also demonstrated his keen ability for presenting history in a professional and engaging. It became one of the most important biographies of the nineteenth century, and it still serves as one of most famous depictions of Washington's life.

5.3.2. Characters

Ichabod Crane

The protagonist and poor town schoolteacher. Gangly and awkward, Ichabod has a voracious appetite, a distaste for manual labor, and a deeply held belief in the supernatural. Ichabod aspires to a higher station in life and hopes to marry Katrina Van Tassel as a way to get there.

Abraham Van Brunt (Brom Bones)

Ichabod's rival for Katrina Van Tassel's hand and his foil throughout the story. Physically strong and gifted at horsemanship, "Brom Bones" is the town prankster. He may also be the Headless Horseman in disguise and possibly the original storyteller of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow."

Katrina Van Tassel

The daughter of a wealthy farmer and Ichabod's love interest. Beautiful and flirtatious, Katrina is set to inherit her father's prosperous farm.

Diedrich Knickerbocker

The narrator of "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Recently deceased, Knickerbocker has left behind a transcription of the story that he claims to have heard from an unidentified man.

The Headless Horseman

The headless ghost of a Hessian soldier that is purported to haunt the town of Sleepy Hollow.

The Storyteller

An older, gentlemanly, but poor man who relays "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" to the narrator. Possibly an older version of Brom Bones, he only appears in the story's postscript.

Hans Van Ripper

An elderly farmer and Ichabod's neighbor.

Baltus Van Tassel

A wealthy Sleepy Hollow farmer and the father of Ichabod's love interest, Katrina

5.3.3. Summary

"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" tells the story of Ichabod Crane and his hapless attempt to win the heart and hand of Katrina Van Tassel in the context of a comical ghost story. Ichabod comes to Sleepy Hollow, New York, from his home

state of Connecticut, to be the schoolmaster of the village. Sleepy Hollow is a small, very quiet town said to be under some kind of enchantment. Its residents all seem to move a little slower, daydream a little more, and be more prone to believe in the supernatural. Sleepy Hollow, maybe for that reason or maybe because its residents are almost all descended from its original Dutch settlers, has more than its fair share of supernatural occurrences, or at least stories of them.

Sleepy Hollow's most famous supernatural phenomenon is the ghost of the Headless Horseman, said to be a Hessian soldier who lost his head to a cannon ball during the Revolutionary War. The Horseman is seen most often riding by the church, where local historians say he was buried. He is believed to be always in search of his head. Ichabod is fascinated by this story, being especially interested (and prone to believe) in tales of the supernatural.

Ichabod is a strict teacher but not a cruel one, doling out his punishment of the rod only to those who can handle it. Ichabod makes almost no money, and it is customary in the village for the farmers whose sons he teaches to feed and board him in rotation. Along with this, Ichabod makes some extra money teaching singing lessons—he prides himself greatly on his magnificent voice. This arrangement keeps him employed and gives him many opportunities to hear ghost stories from the farmers' wives and eat meals with the farmers' daughters. He also has an insatiable hunger and a taste for the finer things.

Katrina Van Tassel, a beautiful young woman of eighteen, is one of Ichabod's students. She is also the only child of Baltus Van Tassel, one of the more successful farmers in the area. Ichabod is quickly taken in by her flirtatious charms, but it is when he first visits her father's abundant farm that he considers himself truly in love with her, or at least her likely inheritance.

He quickly sets out to win her hand in marriage, coming by the Van Tassel farm frequently to woo her. Ichabod is not alone in his attentions to Katrina, however. Her beauty, charm, and wealth have entranced many other men in the village, especially the formidable Brom Van Brunt, also known as Brom Bones. Brom is notorious for his boisterous personality, love of pranks, and great skill at horseback riding—all of which make him something of a village hero.

Brom has already scared off many of Katrina's other suitors, but Ichabod is harder to shake, avoiding physical confrontation with Brom, which is Brom's main method of intimidation. Without that option, Brom turns to his next best skill—pranks. He fills the school house with smoke, trains a dog to follow Ichabod around howling, and sets many other pranks to frustrate and humiliate Ichabod.

One day, a messenger comes to the schoolhouse to invite Ichabod to a party at the Van Tassels'. At this party, he apparently finds himself the best man in the house, and when the party is over he stays behind. For some reason, however, Katrina disappoints him. Ichabod leaves crestfallen.

He finds the path home dark and eerily quiet. He tries to keep himself from getting too scared, but soon after he has passed the possibly haunted Major Andre's tree, he sees a large, dark figure looming nearby. It does not respond to his call, but as he passes by, it starts to move and joins him on the path riding a large, dark horse. Ichabod is greatly disturbed and tries to shake off his pursuer, but he fails. Finally, he notices that the rider has no head on his shoulders; the head seems to be sitting on the saddle in front of the man. Ichabod tries to get his decrepit horse to run home as fast as it can, but he is not a skilled rider and the horse resists.

They end up by the church, the scene of most of the stories of the Headless Horseman, and Ichabod races to the bridge where the ghost is said to disappear and not follow. Ichabod crosses the bridge and looks back, but he sees the Horseman, instead of disappearing, hurl his detached head at him. It knocks Ichabod off of his horse.

The next day, Ichabod's horse returns to its owner's farm, but there is no sign of Ichabod. A search party finds hoof prints and Ichabod's hat, with a smashed pumpkin left next to it. Ichabod is never heard from again in Sleepy Hollow, although later on it seems that he is alive elsewhere and has told his story. Some of the townspeople believe that Brom Bones pulled off a great prank—which put Brom in the final position to marry Katrina—but the old women and local folklore maintain that he was taken by the Headless Horseman.

5.3.4. Analysis

The story opens with a note that the tale was found written among the papers of a deceased man named Diedrich Knickerbocker. The transcript tells the story of a young man named Ichabod Crane, who was the schoolteacher in a place called Sleepy Hollow thirty years earlier, around the year 1790. Sleepy Hollow is part of the larger farming community of Tarry Town. It is one of the oldest Dutch settlements in New York and is situated along the picturesque banks of the Hudson River. Residents are fond of repeating stories of supernatural sightings and unusual occurrences experienced in Sleepy Hollow, and the area is considered both enchantingly peaceful and terrifyingly haunted. The most frightening of these is the tale of the Headless Horseman of Sleepy Hollow, who is believed to be the ghost of a Hessian soldier decapitated by a cannon ball during the American Revolution. The Headless Horseman is reported to ride swiftly through Sleepy Hollow at night as if reenacting the battle that took his head, before returning at daybreak to the churchyard where he is buried.

While Sleepy Hollow's inhabitants are mostly descendants of the early Dutch settlers, Ichabod Crane is notably an outsider, from the state of Connecticut. He is extremely tall, thin, and lanky, with a flat head and a long beak-like nose, giving him the appearance of a scarecrow. Despite his thin appearance, he has a voracious, seemingly bottomless appetite. He is a strict but mostly fair teacher, although he more often punishes the stronger boys while sparing the weaker ones. Since his salary as a schoolteacher is very small, his students' families board him for a week at a time. Ichabod prefers the homes of students whose mothers are known to be good cooks as well as those who have pretty older sisters. To further earn his keep, Ichabod performs light farm work and assists with taking care of babies and small children. Ichabod is also the choir master and earns additional money giving singing lessons. He considers himself a talented singer and is known to sing loudly each Sunday during church services.

Ichabod is a firm believer in witchcraft and the supernatural, a belief which deepens as he spends more time in Sleepy Hollow. His favorite book is "History of New England Witchcraft" by Cotton Mather, and he knows it nearly by heart as he

rereads it in his free time. He enjoys spending evenings sharing and listening to ghost stories and other supernatural tales with the older women of the town. He is particularly enthralled by the story of the Headless Horseman. However, Ichabod is also afraid of the dark and frightens easily on his evening walks home after these conversations.

Ichabod enjoys being surrounded by the young women of the town and impressing them with his education and refined taste. In particular, he hopes to court Katrina Van Tassel, the beautiful and flirtatious daughter of a wealthy farmer. Ichabod is drawn to Katrina not only for her good looks and charm, but also because she is an only child and is set to inherit her father's wealth. He dreams about all the delicious ways the Van Tassel family's farm animals could be cooked, and he fantasizes about selling the estate and moving to the frontier with Katrina if they marry. Katrina, however, is already being courted by Abraham Van Brunt, known by his nickname, "Brom Bones." She is rumored to be encouraging him, and his horse is often seen at the Van Tassel farm on Sunday evenings. Popular and good-humored, Brom is locally recognized for his physical strength, his prowess as a horseman, and his penchant for playing pranks. His reputation has successfully intimidated the rest of the young men in town away from Katrina, except for Ichabod. Ichabod does not openly challenge Brom for Katrina's heart, knowing that Brom would beat him in a physical fight. Instead, Ichabod gives Katrina private singing lessons twice a week. In this way, he can spend time with her alone, without her parents present. This enrages Brom, who retaliates by playing various pranks on Ichabod. He and his friends break into the schoolhouse and turn all the furniture upside down. They stop up the schoolhouse chimney so it fills with smoke. Brom also trains a dog to howl whenever Ichabod sings and then gifts it to Katrina.

One autumn afternoon, Ichabod, along with the rest of the town, receives an invitation to a party at the Van Tassel farm. In his excitement, Ichabod dismisses his students an hour early so he can get ready. He spends extra time on his appearance before leaving, fixing his hair and putting on his only suit. To impress Katrina, he borrows a horse named Gunpowder from his neighbor, Hans Van Ripper. Gunpowder is an old plow horse, scruffy and grumpy, and blind in one eye. The stirrups of Gunpowder's saddle are too high up for Ichabod's gangly frame, and

Ichabod's knees are bent as he rides, giving him the comical appearance of a grasshopper. On his commute to the Van Tassel home, he fantasizes about the food he will eat alongside Katrina if he successfully courts her.

The party is in full swing when Ichabod arrives in the early evening. Brom is already there on his own horse, Daredevil, a strong, fast horse that no one else is able to ride. The young men and women are all dressed up, but Ichabod skips socializing and goes directly to the food. Ichabod spends a long while enjoying the many delicious savory and sweet dishes that have been put out for the guests. As he eats, Ichabod becomes increasingly happy, and he fantasizes about the day he will own the farm as Katrina's husband. Ichabod is in an extremely good mood when the music starts, and he joins the dance floor enthusiastically, as he believes he is an excellent dancer. His mood continues to improve as he dances with Katrina while Brom angrily watches.

When the dancing concludes, Ichabod joins the residents of Sleepy Hollow as they tell stories. Some of the older men tell exaggerated tales about their days as soldiers during the American Revolution. Eventually, the topic turns to stories of ghost sightings, especially the Headless Horseman. Brom jokes that he once raced the Headless Horseman, and he claims he would have won had the Horseman not disappeared in a flash of fire as he usually does once he crosses the church bridge. Ichabod shares his own, more sincere ghost stories from his hometown in Connecticut, of his nightly walks in Sleepy Hollow, and excerpts from his favorite book, "History of New England Witchcraft." As the party winds down, Ichabod stays behind to speak to Katrina, sure that he has successfully courted her. The narrator claims not to know what is said between them but implies that Katrina rejects him. The narrator also speculates as to whether Katrina used Ichabod's attention to make Brom jealous. Ichabod leaves the party looking dejected and crestfallen.

As Ichabod rides home in the dark, pondering all the ghost stories of the evening, he becomes increasingly spooked by the surrounding noises of the night. He prods Gunpowder to move more quickly, causing the old horse to stumble off the road. Soon after, Ichabod notices a large figure astride a horse. He slows to let the rider pass, but the rider keeps pace with him. When Ichabod finally gets a good look at

him, he is horrified to see he is headless and carries his head in his lap. Terrified, Ichabod kicks Gunpowder again and the old horse begins to run. A chase ensues. Ichabod can barely hold on but feels relief when he sees the church bridge up ahead. He believes the Headless Horseman will disappear when he crosses it, just like in the stories. Ichabod looks over his shoulder as he reaches the bridge, but the horseman does not disappear. Instead, he throws his head at Ichabod, who is knocked to the ground by the blow.

The next day, Ichabod is nowhere to be found. He does not show up at the schoolhouse and Gunpowder has returned alone without his saddle to Hans Van Ripper's farm. The townspeople conduct a search that leads them to the church bridge. They find Ichabod's hat and a smashed pumpkin, but no Ichabod. Ichabod's disappearance soon becomes legend among the Sleepy Hollow residents. Some believe he was taken by the Headless Horseman. Others suspect Brom played a trick on Ichabod. Brom, who eventually marries Katrina, always laughs whenever the part about the smashed pumpkin is told. Years later a visitor to the area swears that Ichabod is alive, living in Manhattan, and has made a successful career as a lawyer, politician, writer, and judge.

The story concludes with a postscript from Diedrich Knickerbocker, who claims to have transcribed the story as he heard it told. Knickerbocker describes the storyteller as an older country gentleman with a good sense of humor. The story is received with some laughter, except by one other older gentleman, who is tall and very serious. He questions what the moral of the story is supposed to be. The storyteller gives three lessons. First, to take a joke as we find it. Second, competing with someone who is sure to beat you is foolish. And thirdly, that some losses in life lead to better opportunities in the future. The postscript suggests that the storyteller may be Brom, and the other man Ichabod, but leaves this open to interpretation.

5.3.5. Themes

The Corrupting Nature of Gluttony and Greed

The ways in which Ichabod's gluttony and greed corrupt his character is a central theme of the story. The narrator devotes lengthy portions of the story to Ichabod's preoccupation with food. Ichabod chooses to lodge with students whose

mothers are known to be excellent cooks. When he sees farm animals and crops, he falls into daydreams about how they could be cooked into a dish. Even his love interest, Katrina, is described as plump, ripe, and melting, and is compared to peaches and a tempting morsel. Ichabod's preoccupation with food represents his desire for a life of abundance. But Ironically, when given the chance to indulge, Ichabod's loses himself in his gluttony, and this keeps him further from is goal of a wealthy life. At the Van Tassels' party, he skips socializing to eat and becomes drunk on food. As a result, he makes a fool of himself and fails to develop a better relationship with the very neighbors that might help him climb the social ladder.

Similarly, Ichabod's greed for material comfort makes him crave success, but it also hinders his achievement by distorting his reality. Even though he has very little to offer the wealthy Katrina, his desire for the Van Tassels' wealth blinds him to how unlikely a prospect this is. His greed causes him to shoot for the moon instead of working his way up through more sincere means. Notably, Ichabod is very thin despite being a voracious eater. This suggests Ichabod has been corrupted by his greed and that no matter how much he eats it will never be enough. In other words, Ichabod's gluttony will never satiate his greed.

The Blending of the Natural and the Supernatural

Irving fortifies Sleepy Hollow's reputation for supernatural activity with rich descriptions of the natural landscape. The narrator describes the setting in great detail as a place of peaceful green valleys and glens, magnificent bodies of water, chittering wildlife, and frequent comet sightings. This creates an idyllic atmosphere which often becomes mystical and sometimes spooky, making Sleepy Hollow the perfect backdrop for its ostensible hauntings. Ichabod's belief in the supernatural is often influenced by his natural surroundings. He fears his evening walks home in the dark, where he perceives ghosts with every snow-covered shrub and gust of wind he encounters. The older residents of Sleepy Hollow reinforce this symbiotic relationship between the supernatural and natural with stories of haunted trees, fields, and brooks.

The supernatural and natural also harmonize for dramatic effect. On Ichabod's ride home from the Van Tassels' party, he is forced to pass both a supposedly haunted stream and the grove of chestnuts trees where General André

was captured. These natural places are linked to the hauntings in Ichabod's mind to such an extent that he is unable to think rationally. When he encounters the Headless Horseman, he bolts to cross the stream, assuming its natural properties offer some sort of magical protection from his supernatural pursuer. The smashed pumpkin left behind the morning after is a natural symbol for the supernatural horseman's missing head. The effect of the melding of the supernatural and the natural is to elevate a simple folktale about the residents of Sleepy Hollow to a *legend*, as the title suggests.

Competing Versions of Masculinity

Ichabod and Brom both represent different versions of masculinity, one based on gentlemanliness and another on physical strength and ruggedness. Ichabod values education and refinement over hard labor, and he looks down on the men of the farming community. He views himself as a gentleman and compares his struggle to win Katrina's hand to the battles of knights long ago. For Ichabod, manliness is power, and power is measured by education, wealth, and acculturation. Ichabod demonstrates this belief in his classroom. He chooses to overlook the misdeeds of the boys he perceives as weaker, but freely uses corporal punishment against the boys he perceives as strong and robust. This shows Ichabod's bias against the value of physicality and manual labor in favor of the value of the strength of one's mind. Ironically, Ichabod's use of force against his physically strong students is a perverted version of the masculinity he despises. While he actively avoids getting into a physical altercation with Brom over Katrina, he uses brute strength against the defenseless children in his charge. Ichabod's use of corporal punishment highlights his resentment towards a version of masculinity that is not in line with his own.

By contrast, Brom is well known for his physical prowess, and he celebrates his own version of masculinity by being loud and boisterous. Brom also uses his masculinity to assert his power and physically intimidates other men away from courting Katrina. Ichabod and Brom's feud over Katrina exemplifies a battle between competing versions of masculinity. While Brom wins the girl in the end, Ichabod goes on to achieve professional success, which aligns with his value system and implies that both versions of masculinity are valid. In both men's versions of masculinity, a man uses his power to get what he w

5.3.6 Sum Up

"The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" tells the story of Ichabod Crane and his hapless attempt to win the heart and hand of Katrina Van Tassel in the context of a comical ghost story. Ichabod comes to Sleepy Hollow, New York, from his home state of Connecticut, to be the schoolmaster of the village. Sleepy Hollow is a small, very quiet town said to be under some kind of enchantment. Its residents all seem to move a little slower, daydream a little more, and be more prone to believe in the supernatural. Sleepy Hollow, maybe for that reason or maybe because its residents are almost all descended from its original Dutch settlers, has more than its fair share of supernatural occurrences, or at least stories of them.

Sleepy Hollow's most famous supernatural phenomenon is the ghost of the Headless Horseman, said to be a Hessian soldier who lost his head to a cannon ball during the Revolutionary War. The Horseman is seen most often riding by the church, where local historians say he was buried. He is believed to be always in search of his head. Ichabod is fascinated by this story, being especially interested (and prone to believe) in tales of the supernatural.

Ichabod is a strict teacher but not a cruel one, doling out his punishment of the rod only to those who can handle it. Ichabod makes almost no money, and it is customary in the village for the farmers whose sons he teaches to feed and board him in rotation. Along with this, Ichabod makes some extra money teaching singing lessons—he prides himself greatly on his magnificent voice. This arrangement keeps him employed and gives him many opportunities to hear ghost stories from the farmers' wives and eat meals with the farmers' daughters. He also has an insatiable hunger and a taste for the finer things.

Katrina Van Tassel, a beautiful young woman of eighteen, is one of Ichabod's students. She is also the only child of Baltus Van Tassel, one of the more successful farmers in the area. Ichabod is quickly taken in by her flirtatious charms, but it is when he first visits her father's abundant farm that he considers himself truly in love with her, or at least her likely inheritance.

He quickly sets out to win her hand in marriage, coming by the Van Tassel farm frequently to woo her. Ichabod is not alone in his attentions to Katrina, however. Her beauty, charm, and wealth have entranced many other men in the village,

especially the formidable Brom Van Brunt, also known as Brom Bones. Brom is notorious for his boisterous personality, love of pranks, and great skill at horseback riding—all of which make him something of a village hero.

Brom has already scared off many of Katrina's other suitors, but Ichabod is harder to shake, avoiding physical confrontation with Brom, which is Brom's main method of intimidation. Without that option, Brom turns to his next best skill—pranks. He fills the school house with smoke, trains a dog to follow Ichabod around howling, and sets many other pranks to frustrate and humiliate Ichabod.

One day, a messenger comes to the schoolhouse to invite Ichabod to a party at the Van Tassels'. At this party, he apparently finds himself the best man in the house, and when the party is over he stays behind. For some reason, however, Katrina disappoints him. Ichabod leaves crestfallen.

He finds the path home dark and eerily quiet. He tries to keep himself from getting too scared, but soon after he has passed the possibly haunted Major Andre's tree, he sees a large, dark figure looming nearby. It does not respond to his call, but as he passes by, it starts to move and joins him on the path riding a large, dark horse. Ichabod is greatly disturbed and tries to shake off his pursuer, but he fails. Finally, he notices that the rider has no head on his shoulders; the head seems to be sitting on the saddle in front of the man. Ichabod tries to get his decrepit horse to run home as fast as it can, but he is not a skilled rider and the horse resists.

They end up by the church, the scene of most of the stories of the Headless Horseman, and Ichabod races to the bridge where the ghost is said to disappear and not follow. Ichabod crosses the bridge and looks back, but he sees the Horseman, instead of disappearing, hurl his detached head at him. It knocks Ichabod off of his horse.

The next day, Ichabod's horse returns to its owner's farm, but there is no sign of Ichabod. A search party finds hoof prints and Ichabod's hat, with a smashed pumpkin left next to it. Ichabod is never heard from again in Sleepy Hollow, although later on it seems that he is alive elsewhere and has told his story. Some of the townspeople believe that Brom Bones pulled off a great prank—which put Brom in

the final position to marry Katrina—but the old women and local folklore maintain that he was taken by the Headless Horseman.

5.3.7 Self Assessment

Objective Questions

1. The protagonist of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow is:

A.Katrina Von Tassel

B. Brom Bones

C. Ichabod Crane

D.The Headless Horseman

2. The antagonist of The Legend of Sleepy Hollow is:

A.Ichabod Crane

B.Katrina Von Tassel

C.Baron Von Tassel

D. Brom Bones

3. Washington Irving wrote this story to:

A.Persuade

B.Inform

C.Describe

D.Entertain

4. What was found the next morning after the chase between Ichabod and the Horseman?

A.Ichabod's coat

B.Brom's address

C.A smashed pumpkin

D.A schoolbook

5. Which would you say is an important theme in The Legend of Sleepy Hollow?

A.The importance of education

B.That ghost stories are scary

C.The power of human imagination

D.The importance of storytelling

Answer Key:

1. C. Ichabod Crane
2. D. Brom Bones
3. D. Entertain
4. C. A smashed pumpkin
5. C. The power of human imagination

Short Answer Questions

1. Where is Sleepy Hollow located?
2. What is the other name of the Headless Horseman?
3. Where is Ichabod Crane from?
4. Where is Brom Bones from?
5. Why is Ichabod interested in Katrina?

Essay Questions

1. What is Irving's purpose for using a metaphor in this quote?
2. Is Ichabod dead in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"?
3. What is the resolution of conflicts in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"?
4. How is Ichabod Crane characterized in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"?
5. What are some examples of Romanticism in "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow"?

Glossary

1. Adamant – unyielding
2. Behoove - benefit
3. Bevy- group of people
4. Burthen – burden
5. Capacious- big enough to contain a large quantity
6. Chanticleer – rooster
7. Cognomen- nickname or name that describes somebody
8. Con- to study or examine something with great care and attention
9. Descried -caught sight of
10. Despotic- tyrannical

11. Dexterous- skillful; deft
12. Domiciliated - provided with a place of residence
13. errant - wayward
14. erudition - knowledge acquired through study and reading
15. ferule- an instrument of punishment used to strike children, such as a cane or rod
16. furbished - polished; restored to good repair
17. gambols - playful leaping around
18. harbinger- something that foreshadows a future event
19. Hessian - someone from Hesse, in Germany
20. Imbibed - taken in and assimilated