

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH
Senior 5
STUDENT'S BOOK

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FOREWORD

Dear student,

The Rwanda Basic Education Board is honored to present the senior five Literature in English book which serves as the guide to competence-based teaching and learning to ensure consistency and coherence in the learning of the senior five Literature in English content. The Rwandan educational philosophy is to ensure that you achieve full potential at every level of education which will prepare you to be well integrated in society and exploit employment opportunities.

In line with efforts to improve the quality of education, the government of Rwanda emphasizes the importance of aligning teaching and learning materials with the syllabus to facilitate your learning process. Many factors influence what you learn, how well you learn and the competences you acquire. Those factors include the relevance of the specific content, the quality of teachers' pedagogical approaches, the assessment strategies and the instructional materials available. We paid special attention to the activities that facilitate the learning process in which you can develop your ideas and make new discoveries during concrete activities carried out individually or with peers. With the help of the teachers, whose role is central to the success of the learning, you will gain appropriate skills and be able to apply what you have learnt in real life situations. Hence, enabling you to develop certain values and attitudes allowing you to make a difference not only to your own life but also to the nation.

This is in contrast to traditional learning theories which view learning mainly as a process of acquiring knowledge from the more knowledgeable who is mostly the teacher. In the regard of competence-based curriculum, learning is considered as a process of active building and developing knowledge and meanings by the learner where concepts are mainly introduced by an activity, situation or scenario that helps the learner to construct knowledge, develop skills and acquire positive attitudes and values.

In addition, such active learning engages you in doing things and thinking about the things you are doing and you are encouraged to bring your own real experiences and knowledge into the learning processes. In view of this, for the efficiency use of this textbook, your role is to:

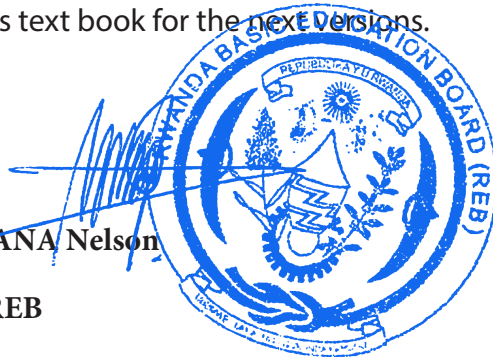
- Develop knowledge and skills by working on given activities which lead to the content;
- Communicate and share relevant information with other learners through presentations, discussions, group work and other active learning techniques such as role play, case studies, investigation and research in the library, on internet or outside;

- Participate to and take responsibility for your own learning;
- Carry out research/investigation by consulting printed/online documents and resourceful people, and presents their findings;
- Ensure the effective contribution of each group member in assigned tasks through clear explanation and arguments, critical thinking, responsibility and confidence in public speaking;
- Draws conclusions based on the findings from the learning activities.
- Etc

I wish to sincerely extend my appreciation to the people who contributed towards the development of this document, particularly REB staff who organized the whole process from its inception. Special appreciation goes to the teachers who supported the exercise throughout. Any comment or contribution would be welcome to the improvement of this text book for the next versions.

Dr. MBARUSHIMANA Nelson

Director General, REB



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I wish to express my appreciation to all the people who played a major role in development of this Literature in English textbook for senior five. It would not have been successful without active participation of different education stakeholders.

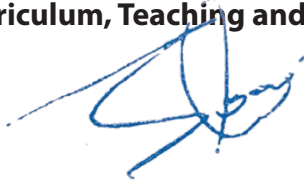
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Joan MURUNGI,

Head of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Resources Department (CTLR)



ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

CBC: Competence Based Curriculum

KCSE: Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education

ICT: Information Communication and Technology

WPA: Wifi Protected Access

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UNIT 1

EUROPEAN LITERARY TRADITIONS 1

UNIT 1: EUROPEAN LITERARY TRADITIONS 1

Key Unit Competence: To be able to analyse texts according to their social historical and political context in the European literary traditions.

Introductory activity

1. Observe the map below and locate the countries that make up the continent of Europe.
2. Discuss the contributions of each nation in terms of their literary traditions.



Figure 1: The world map

1.1 European literary traditions

Activity 1.1

1. What do you understand by European literary traditions?
2. Discuss the different European literary traditions.

Note: Literary traditions refer to some common features or characteristics that define

literature of a group of people at a certain period of time. These features relate to form and meaning of the literature of the given place or time period.

European literary traditions are the literature written in the context of Western culture in the languages of Europe, including the ones belonging to the family as well as several geographically or historically related languages such as Basque and Hungarian. Western literature is considered one of the defining elements of Western civilization.

A literary text from one literary tradition will differ in themes and features from a text of a different literary tradition. Literary traditions differ from one place to another and they keep on changing across time. For example: Rwandan literature is different in themes from Ugandan literature; African literature is different from European literature, Asian literary traditions are different from American literary traditions. African literature was primarily oral while European was mainly written.

Scholars of European literary traditions divided them in six different periods corresponding to specific types of literature: Classical ancient Greek and Latin literature, Medieval literature, Renaissance literature, Baroque literature, Classical literature, Enlightenment literature.

The European literary traditions have their origins in the East rather than in the West. They originated from 4500 B.C to 2000 B.C in Sumeria, Egypt, Babylonia and Assyria as well as in China and India, all of which have been considered by westerners as Eastern countries. The main stream of Western civilization is not as old as of that Eastern civilization. European literary tradition is said to have their sources in Palestine and in Greece.

Application Activity 1.1

Read the following extract from *Animal Farm* critically and discuss the questions.

The farm was more prosperous now, and better organised: it had even been enlarged by two fields which had been bought from Mr. Pilkington. The windmill had been successfully completed at last, and the farm possessed a threshing machine and a hay elevator of its own, and various new buildings had been added to it. Whymper had bought himself a dogcart. The windmill, however, had not after all been used for generating electrical power. It was used for milling corn, and brought in a handsome money profit. The animals were hard at work building yet another windmill; when that one was finished, so it was said, the dynamos would be installed.

But the luxuries of which Snowball had once taught the animals to dream, the stalls with electric light and hot and cold water, and the three-day week, were no longer talked about. Napoleon had denounced such ideas as contrary to the spirit of Animalism. The truest happiness, he said, lay in working hard and living frugally.

Somehow it seemed as though the farm had grown richer without making the animals themselves any richer—except, of course, for the pigs and the dogs. Perhaps this was partly because there were so many pigs and so many dogs. It was not that these creatures did not work, after their fashion. There was, as Squealer was never tired of explaining, endless work in the supervision and organisation of the farm. Much of this work was of a kind that the other animals were too ignorant to understand. For example, Squealer told them that the pigs had to expend enormous labours every day upon mysterious things called “files,” “reports,” “minutes,” and “memoranda”. These were large sheets of paper which had to be closely covered with writing, and as soon as they were so covered, they were burnt in the furnace. This was of the highest importance for the welfare of the farm, Squealer said. But still, neither pigs nor dogs produced any food by their own labour; and there were very many of them, and their appetites were always good.

As for the others, their life, so far as they knew, was as it had always been. They were generally hungry, they slept on straw, they drank from the pool, they laboured in the fields; in winter they were troubled by the cold, and in summer by the flies. Sometimes the older ones among them racked their dim memories and tried to determine whether in the early days of the Rebellion, when Jones’s expulsion was still recent, things had been better or worse than now. They could not remember. There was nothing with which they could compare their present lives: they had nothing to go upon except Squealer’s lists of figures, which invariably demonstrated that everything was getting better and better. The animals found the problem insoluble; in any case, they had little time for speculating on such things now. Only old Benjamin professed to remember every detail of his long life and to know that things never had been, nor ever could be much better or much worse — hunger, hardship, and disappointment being, so he said, the unalterable law of life.

And yet the animals never gave up hope. More, they never lost, even for an instant, their sense of honour and privilege in being members of Animal Farm. They were still the only farm in the whole county — in all England! — owned and operated by animals. Not one of them, not even the youngest, not even the newcomers who had been brought from farms ten or twenty miles away, ever ceased to marvel at that. And when they heard the gun booming and saw the green flag fluttering at the masthead, their hearts swelled with imperishable pride, and the talk turned always towards the old heroic days, the expulsion of Jones, the writing of the Seven Commandments, the great battles in which the human invaders had been defeated. None of the old dreams had been abandoned.

The Republic of the Animals Which Major had foretold, when the green fields of England should be untrodden by human feet, was still believed in. Someday it was coming: it might not be soon, it might not be within the lifetime of any animal now living, but still it was coming. Even the tune of 'Beasts of England' was perhaps hummed secretly here and there: at any rate, it was a fact that every animal on the farm knew it, though no one would have dared to sing it aloud. It might be that their lives were hard and that not all of their hopes had been fulfilled; but they were conscious that they were not as other animals. If they went hungry, it was not from feeding tyrannical human beings; if they worked hard, at least they worked for themselves. No creature among them went upon two legs. No creature called any other creature "Master." All animals were equal.

One day in early summer Squealer ordered the sheep to follow him, and led them out to a piece of waste ground at the other end of the farm, which had become overgrown with birch saplings. The sheep spent the whole day there browsing at the leaves under Squealer's supervision. In the evening he returned to the farmhouse himself, but, as it was warm weather, told the sheep to stay where they were. It ended by their remaining there for a whole week, during which time the other animals saw nothing of them. Squealer was with them for the greater part of every day. He was, he said, teaching them to sing a new song, for which privacy was needed.

It was just after the sheep had returned, on a pleasant evening when the animals had finished work and were making their way back to the farm buildings, that the terrified neighing of a horse sounded from the yard. Startled, the animals stopped in their tracks. It was Clover's voice. She neighed again, and all the animals broke into a gallop and rushed into the yard. Then they saw what Clover had seen.

It was a pig walking on his hind legs.

From "*Animal Farm*"; by **George Orwell**,

Questions

1. What happens before and after this excerpt?
2. Discuss the traits of the main character in the above excerpt.
3. Identify the specific political context in which the novel is written.
4. Discuss how it can fit into a specific period in the European literary traditions.

1.2 Classical ancient Greek and Latin literature

Activity 1.2

1. What do you understand by classical ancient Greek and Latin literature?
2. Using internet or other sources do a research and find out at least four famous classical ancient Greek and Latin literature and their works.



Figure 3 A Greek Scribe

playwright Menander was an early pioneer of New Comedy. The philosopher Plato wrote dialogues, usually centered around his teacher Socrates, dealing with various philosophical subjects, whereas his student Aristotle wrote numerous treatises, which later became highly influential.

Ancient Latin literature began as translation from the Greek. Latin authors used earlier writers as sources of stock themes and motifs, at their best using their relationship to tradition to produce a new species of originality. They were more distinguished as verbal artists than as thinkers; the finest of them have concrete detail and vivid illustration. Latin literature includes the essays, histories, poems, plays, and other writings written in the Latin language. Beginning around the 3rd century BC, it took two centuries to become a dominant literature of ancient Rome with many educated Romans still reading and writing in Ancient Greek.

Application activity 1.2

Read the excerpt from the poem "The Odyssey" by Homer and answer the questions that follow.

Tell me, O muse, of that ingenious hero who travelled far and wide after he had sacked the famous town of Troy. Many cities did he visit, and many were the nations with whose manners and customs he was acquainted; moreover he suffered much by sea while trying to save his own life and bring his men safely home; but do what he might he could not save his men, for they perished through their own sheer folly in eating the cattle of the Sun-god Hyperion; so the god prevented them from ever reaching home. Tell me, too, about all these things, O daughter of Jove, from whatsoever source you may know them.

So now all who escaped death in battle or by shipwreck had got safely home except Ulysses, and he, though he was longing to return to his wife and country, was detained by the goddess Calypso, who had got him into a large cave and wanted to marry him. But as years went by, there came a time when the gods settled that he should go back to Ithaca; even then, however, when he was among his own people, his troubles were not yet over; nevertheless all the gods had now begun to pity him except Neptune, who still persecuted him without ceasing and would not let him get home.

Now Neptune had gone off to the Ethiopians, who are at the world's end, and lie in two halves, the one looking West and the other East. He had gone there to accept a hecatomb of sheep and oxen, and was enjoying himself at his festival; but the other gods met in the house of Olympian Jove, and the sire of gods and men spoke first. At that moment he was thinking of Aegisthus, who had been killed by Agamemnon's son Orestes; so he said to the other gods: "See now, how men lay blame upon us gods for what is after all nothing but their own folly. Look at Aegisthus; he must needs make love to Agamemnon's wife unrighteously and then kill Agamemnon, though he knew it would be the death of him; for I sent Mercury to warn him not to do either of these things, inasmuch as Orestes would be sure to take his revenge when he grew up and wanted to return home. Mercury told him this in all good will but he would not listen, and now he has paid for everything in full."

Then Minerva said, "Father, son of Saturn, King of kings, it served Aegisthus right, and so it would anyone else who does as he did; but Aegisthus is neither here nor there; it is for Ulysses that my heart bleeds, when I think of his sufferings in that lonely sea-girt island, far away, poor man, from all his friends. It is an island covered with forest, in the very middle of the sea, and a goddess lives there, daughter of the magician Atlas, who looks after the bottom of the ocean,

and carries the great columns that keep heaven and earth asunder. This daughter of Atlas has got hold of poor unhappy Ulysses, and keeps trying by every kind of blandishment to make him forget his home, so that he is tired of life, and thinks of nothing but how he may once more see the smoke of his own chimneys. You, sir, take no heed of this, and yet when Ulysses was before Troy did he not propitiate you with many a burnt sacrifice? Why then should you keep on being so angry with him?"

And Jove said, "My child, what are you talking about? How can I forget Ulysses than whom there is no more capable man on earth, nor more liberal in his offerings to the immortal gods that live in heaven? Bear in mind, however, that Neptune is still furious with Ulysses for having blinded an eye of Polyphemus king of the Cyclopes. Polyphemus is son to Neptune by the nymph Thoosa, daughter to the sea-king Phorcys; therefore though he will not kill Ulysses outright, he torments him by preventing him from getting home. Still, let us lay our heads together and see how we can help him to return; Neptune will then be pacified, for if we are all of a mind he can hardly stand out against us"...

Questions

1. What is the excerpt about?
2. Identify the context in which the poem *The Odyssey* is written.
3. Discuss how it fits into a specific period in the classical European literary tradition.

1.3 Medieval (Middle Ages) literature

Activity 1.3

Read the following excerpt from Chaucer's description of a doctor and answer questions that follow.

*"A Doctor too emerged as we proceeded;
No one alive could talk as well as he did
On points of medicine and of surgery,
For, being grounded in astronomy,
He watched his patient closely for the hours
When, by his horoscope, he knew the powers
of favorable planets, then ascendent,
Work on the images for his dependant."*

Questions

1. Discuss some of the character traits of the Doctor in the above excerpt.
2. In your opinion, what are the themes in the above excerpt?
3. Identify the line that shows how the Doctor was a caring person.
4. Compare and contrast Medieval Literature and Classical literature.

Note: The Medieval Period, or the Middle Ages, extends roughly from the 5th to the 15th Century. The early part of this period is sometimes referred to as the Dark Ages because of the scarcity of achievements in culture and learning. The Western countries produced a large quantity of verse and prose during this period of time.

Many medieval works are anonymous. Medieval Europe became the cradle of new developing genres. It brought ballads, allegorical poetry, Latin hymns, sacred songs, lullabies, fabliaux, debates, court epics, popular epics, beast epics, tale cycles, chivalric romances, mystery plays, miracle plays, and morality plays. As many of these literary types suggest, a great deal of medieval literature is folk literature. Such literature is linkable to the oral tradition of bards, jongleurs and troubadours.

Application activity 1.3.1

Read the passage below and discuss the character of King Arthur.



Figure 4: the court of King Arthur

it is said that the court of Arthur maintained the highest ideals of chivalry and honourable behaviour. Furthermore, Arthur wished for his chosen knights to sit round a round table, so that nobody would be superior. He wished to be an equal to all. Knights of King Arthur included: Sir Kay, Sir Gawain, Sir Lancelot, Sir Percival, Sir Geraint, Sir Galahad, Sir Tristan, Sir Bors, Sir Gareth, Sir Lamorak, Sir Gaheris, Sir Bedivere, Sir Agravaine, Sir Sagramore.

Application activity 1.3.2

Read the passages below and answer the following question.

King Arthur and Lady Guinevere

Despite the high standards of chivalry, one legend tells how one of King Arthur's most trusted and successful knights, Sir Lancelot had an affair with Arthur's wife, Queen Guinevere. It is this betrayal of King Arthur that eventually leads to the downfall of his kingdom.



King Arthur and the Holy Grail

One of the most enduring legends of King Arthur is the mystical quest for the holy grail. Legend suggests that this is a cup used to capture the blood of Jesus Christ. Thus to find the cup, was entrusted as the most sacred of tasks to the knights of the Round Table. For many, the quest for the Holy grail is an allegory of the inner spiritual quest to discover the inner meaning of life. This myth has captivated the interest of people through the ages and has been the subject of many films including, the satirical Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

Figure 5: King Arthur and Holy Grail

Question

The chivalric behaviour was characterised by loyalty, modesty, faith, honour, brave and courtesy) and politeness towards women. Write an essay persuading contemporary audience that chivalry is or is not an old-fashion virtue in 21th century.

1.4 Renaissance literature

Activity 1.4

1. What is Renaissance period?
2. How did literature change during the Renaissance?
3. What is the main focus of Renaissance art and literature?
4. Do research and identify the influential writers of Renaissance literature. Share your findings with the class.



Figure 6: Shakespeare

“What a piece of work is a man, how noble in reason, how infinite in faculties, in form and moving how express and admirable, in action how like an angel, in apprehension how like a god!” — from William Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*.

Note: Renaissance is the revival of European art and literature under the influence of classical models in the 14th–16th centuries. The characteristics of Renaissance were humanism, nationalism, a new approach to life, and a new spirit in art, architecture, literature and learning, the growth of the vernaculars, and scientific investigation. Renaissance was a time of rediscovery. More Europeans had access to ancient Greek and Roman learning. Another thing that accelerated this learning was the fall of Constantinople in 1453. As more Greek and Roman scholars moved to West, more people were curious to learn about ancient’s times.

Shakespeare is the influential writer of Renaissance.

Application activity 1.4.1

Using internet or library, find out Shakespeare's main literary works.

Application Activity 1.4.2

Read the following extract from Queen Elizabeth's speech and answer questions.



Figure 7: Queen Elizabeth

"My loving people, we have been persuaded by some that are careful of our safety, to take heed how we commit ourselves to armed multitudes, for fear of treachery; but I assure you I do not desire to live to distrust my faithful and loving people. Let tyrants fear, I have always so behaved myself that, under God, I have placed my chiefs strength and safeguard in the loyal hearts and good-will of my subjects; and therefore I am come amongst you, as you see,

at this time, not for my recreation and disport, but being resolved, in the midst and heat of the battle, to live and die amongst you all; to lay down for my God, and for my kingdom, and my people, my honour and my blood, even in the dust. I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma or Spain, or any prince of Europe, should dare to invade the borders of my realm; to which rather

than any dishonour shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. I know already, for your forwardness you have deserved rewards and crowns; and We do assure you in the word of a prince, they shall be duly paid you. In the meantime, my lieutenant general shall be in my stead, than whom never prince commanded a more noble or worthy subject; not doubting but by your obedience to my general, by your concord in the camp, and your valour in the field, we shall shortly have a famous victory over those enemies of my God, of my kingdom, and of my people."

(Speech of **Queen Elizabeth** before the Spanish Armada Invasion at Tilbury)

Questions

5. According to the extract, discuss the feelings a ruler should inspire in his/her subjects in times of war.
6. Tone is an expression of a writer's attitudes towards a subject. Describe the tone in the above extract.
7. What does Queen Elizabeth suggest about the responsibilities of a leader?
8. Most women had little or no role outside the home in 16th century England, yet Elizabeth I successfully ruled the country.
 - a) How can the above statement fit in the Rwandan context?
 - b) Read the story of Ndabaga then compare the two characters regarding their heroic deeds. Share your findings with the class.

1.5 Baroque literature

Activity 1.5.1

1. Referring to European Literary traditions, what does baroque stand for?
2. What are the characteristics of Baroque in literary traditions?
3. Using internet and other resources compare Baroque and Renaissance style of writing.



Figure 8: Miguel de Cervantes

Note: The era of literature known as the Baroque period in Spain occurred during a particularly difficult time in the country's history. Most works during this period, the 17th Century, dealt with human struggle and the reality of the miserable conditions many were enduring. At the time, Spain was dealing with many issues surrounding their economy and political system, such as their loss of control over owned land and territories and poor leadership from the country's rulers.

Spanish baroque coincides with the Golden Age of Spanish literature, called that way because of the great number of excellent literary productions that appeared in the period. Miguel de Cervantes is without doubt, the ultimate Baroque author.

His masterpiece, the adventures of the mad knight Don Quixote, is considered the most important book of the Spanish literature.

Baroque literature is the 17th Century prose that is known for its dramatic elements and use of Allegory (a story in which people, things or happenings have the symbolic meaning. Aesop's fables are an example of Allegory).

Application activity 1.5

Read the extract from "Soledades" by Luis de Góngora and answer questions.

"And so they all passed by, and in good order
as at the equinox we see furrowing
through oceans of open air
not flights of galley ships

but flocks of swift-sailing cranes,
moons perhaps waxing, perhaps on the wane
their most distant extremes,
perhaps forming letters on the pellucid
paper of the heavens with
the quill feathers on their flight”.

- a) Outline the use of metaphors as one of the characteristics of the baroque period.
- b) How is humour revealed by the author in the above extract?

1.6 Classical literature

Activity 1.6

Read the following passage about Nicolas Boileau's biography and answer the questions.



Figure 9: Nicolas Boileau

Nicolas Boileau, in full Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, (born November 1, 1636, Paris, France—died March 13, 1711, Paris), poet and leading literary critic in his day, known for his influence in upholding Classical standards in both French and English literature.

He was the son of a government official who had started life as a clerk. Boileau made good progress at the Collège d'Harcourt and was encouraged to take up literary work by his brother Gilles Boileau, who was already established as a man of letters. He began by writing satires (c. 1658), attacking well-known public figures, which he read privately to his friends. After a printer who had managed to obtain the texts published them in 1666, Boileau

brought out an authenticated version (March 1666) that he toned down considerably from the original. The following year he wrote one of the most successful of mock-heroic epics, *Le Lutrin*, dealing with a quarrel of two ecclesiastical dignitaries over where to place a lectern in a chapel.

In 1674 he published *L'Art poétique*, a didactic treatise in verse, setting out rules for the composition of poetry in the Classical tradition. At the time, the work was considered of great importance, the definitive handbook of Classical principles. It strongly influenced the English Augustan poets Samuel Johnson, John Dryden, and Alexander Pope. It is now valued more for the insight it provides into the literary controversies of the period.

In 1677 Boileau was appointed historiographer royal and for 15 years avoided literary controversy; he was elected to the Académie Française in 1684. Boileau resumed his disputatious role in 1692, when the literary world found itself divided between the so-called Ancients and Moderns. Seeing women as supporters of the

Moderns, Boileau wrote his antifeminist satire *Contre les femmes (Against Women, published as Satire x, 1694)*, followed notably by *Surl'amour de Dieu (On the Love of God, published as Epitre xii, 1698)*.

Boileau did not create the rules of Classical drama and poetry, although it was long assumed that he had—a misunderstanding he did little to dispel. They had already been formulated by previous French writers, but Boileau expressed them in striking and vigorous terms. He also translated the Classical treatise *On the Sublime*, attributed to Longinus. Ironically, it became one of the key sources of the aesthetics of Romanticism.

Questions

1. Discuss how Boileau fits in the Classical period?
2. Do research on other major influential authors of literature. Share your findings with the class.

Note: Classicism is a specific genre of philosophy, expressing itself in literature, architecture, art, and music, which has Ancient Greek and Roman sources and an emphasis on society. It was particularly expressed in the Neoclassicism of the Age of Enlightenment with the classicism

The Age of Enlightenment identified itself with a vision of antiquity which, while continuous of the previous century, was shaken by the Physics of Sir Isaac Newton, the improvements in machinery and measurement, and a sense of liberation which they saw as being present in the Greek civilization.

Application activity 1.6

Read the extract below and answer the questions that follow.

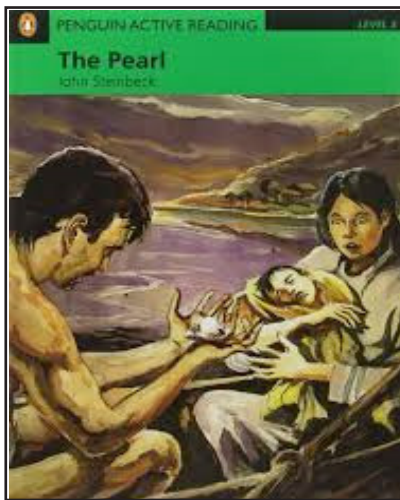


Figure 10 : Book cover

Kino has found the Pearl of the World. In the town, in little offices, sat the men who bought pearls from the fishers. They waited in their chairs until the pearls came in, and then they cackled and fought and shouted and threatened until they reached the lowest price the fisherman would stand. But there was a price below which they dared not go, for it had happened that a fisherman in despair had given his pearls to the church. And when the buying was over, these buyers sat alone and their fingers played restlessly with the pearls, and they wished they owned the pearls. For there were not many buyers really - there was only one, and he kept these agents in separate offices to give a semblance of competition. The news came to these men, and their eyes squinted and their finger-tips burned a little, and each one thought how the patron could not live forever and someone had to take his place. And each one thought how with some capital he could get a new start. All manner of people grew interested in Kino - people with things to sell and people with favours to ask. Kino had found the Pearl of the World. The essence of pearl mixed with essence of men and a curious dark residue was precipitated.

Every man suddenly became related to Kino's pearl, and Kino's pearl went into the dreams, the speculations, the schemes, the plans, the futures, the wishes, the needs, the lusts, the hungers, of everyone, and only one person stood in the way and that was Kino, so that he became curiously every man's enemy. The news stirred up something infinitely black and evil in the town; the black distillate was like the scorpion, or like hunger in the smell of food, or like loneliness when love is withheld. The poison sacs of the town began to manufacture venom, and the town swelled and puffed with the pressure of it.

But Kino and Juana did not know these things. Because they were happy and excited they thought everyone shared their joy. Juan Tomás and Apolonia did, and they were the world too. In the afternoon, when the sun had gone over the mountains of the Peninsula to sink in the outward sea, Kino squatted in his house with Juana beside him. And the brush house was crowded with neighbours. Kino held the great pearl in his hand, and it was warm and alive in his hand. And the music of the pearl had merged with the music of the family so that one beautified the other. The neighbours looked at the pearl in Kino's hand and they wondered how such luck could come to any man.

And Juan Tomás, who squatted on Kino's right hand because he was his brother, asked, "What will you do now that you have become a rich man?"

Kino looked into his pearl, and Juana cast her eyelashes down and arranged her shawl to cover her face so that her excitement could not be seen. And in the incandescence of the pearl the pictures formed of the things Kino's mind had considered in the past and had given up as impossible. In the pearl he saw Juana and Coyotito and himself standing and kneeling at the high altar, and they were being married now that they could pay. He spoke softly: "We will be married - in the church."

In the pearl he saw how they were dressed - Juana in a shawl stiff with newness and a new skirt, and from under the long skirt Kino could see that she wore shoes. It was in the pearl - the picture glowing there. He himself was dressed in new white clothes, and he carried a new hat - not of straw but of fine black felt - and he too wore shoes - not sandals but shoes that laced. But Coyotito - he was the one - he wore a blue sailor suit from the United States and a little yachting cap such as Kino had seen once when a pleasure boat put into the estuary. All of these things Kino saw in the lucent pearl and he said: "We will have new clothes."

And the music of the pearl rose like a chorus of trumpets in his ears.

Then to the lovely gray surface of the pearl came the little things Kino wanted: a harpoon to take the place of one lost a year ago, a new harpoon of iron with a ring in the end of the shaft; and - his mind could hardly make the leap - a rifle - but why not, since he was so rich? And Kino saw Kino in the pearl, Kino holding a Winchester carbine. It was the wildest day-dreaming and very pleasant. His lips moved hesitantly over this - "A rifle," he said. "Perhaps a rifle."

It was the rifle that broke down the barriers. This was an impossibility, and if he could think of having a rifle whole horizon were burst and he could rush on. For it is said that humans are never satisfied, that you give them one thing and they want something more.

And this is said in disparagement, whereas it is one of the greatest talents the species has and one that has made it superior to animals that are satisfied with what they have.

The neighbours, close pressed and silent in the house, nodded their heads at his wild imaginings. And a man in the rear murmured: "A rifle. He will have a rifle."

But the music of the pearl was shrilling with triumph in Kino. Juana looked up, and her eyes were wide at Kino's courage and at his imagination. And electric strength had come to him now the horizons were kicked out. In the pearl he saw Coyotito sitting at a little desk in a school, just as Kino had once seen it through an open door. And Coyotito was dressed in a jacket, and he had on a white collar, and a broad silken tie. Moreover, Coyotito was writing on a big piece of paper. Kino looked at his neighbours fiercely. "My son will go to school," he said, and the neighbours were

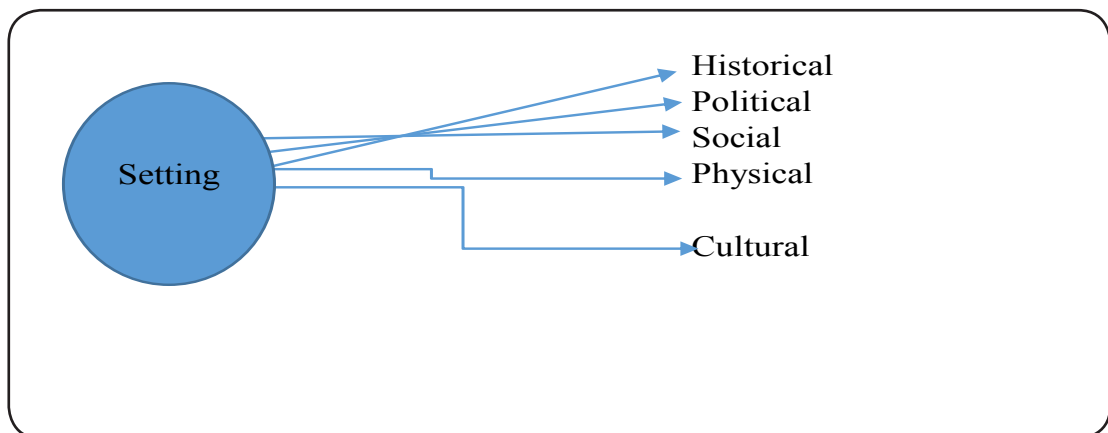
hushed. Juana caught her breath sharply. Her eyes were bright as she watched him, and she looked quickly down at Coyotito in her arms to see whether this might be possible.

But Kino's face shone with prophecy. "My son will read and open the books, and my son will write and will know writing. And my son will make numbers, and these things will make us free because he will know - he will know and through him we will know." And in the pearl Kino saw himself and Juana squatting by the little fire in the brush hut while Coyotito read from a great book. "This is what the pearl will do," said Kino. And he had never said so many words together in his life. And suddenly he was afraid of his talking. His hand closed down over the pearl and cut the light away from it. Kino was afraid as a man is afraid who says, "I will," without knowing.

From *The Pearl* by **John Steinbeck**,

Questions

1. What does the "Pearl" symbolize in the above extract?
2. The Pearl is a parable. Explain its relevance to the society.
3. Discuss the setting of the novel (refer to the figure below).



Activity 1.7

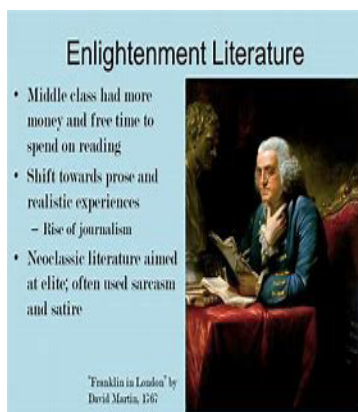
“A little learning is dangerous thing.” Alexander Pope

From the quote of Alexander Pope, discuss the following questions:

1. What was the impact of enlightenment to the society?
2. What were the main ideas of enlightenment?
3. How did the enlightenment period stimulate the world to learn?

1.7. Enlightenment literature

Note: Enlightenment is referred to as the Age of Reason. It was a confluence of ideas and activities that took place throughout the 18th Century. Scientific rationalism and use of scientific method was the hallmark of everything related to the Enlightenment. Enlightenment thinkers believed in advances of science, egalitarianism and the progress of humankind.



- Middle class had more money and free time to spend on reading.

- Shift towards prose and realistic experiences – Rise of Journalism

Neoclassic literature aimed at elite; often used sarcasm and satire. Example: Franklin in Loseleon by David Martin.

Figure 11: A middle class reader

Application activity 1.7.1

1. How is literature in the Enlightenment period relevant to modern period?
2. a) Do your own research and find out some of the influential authors of the Enlightenment period.
b) Explain why they are still relevant in modern literature.

Application activity 1.7.2

Read the following extract below and answer the questions.



Figure 12: John Ernest Steinbeck

“The Pearl” by John Steinbeck

John Ernst Steinbeck, Jr. was an American author. He won the 1962 Nobel Prize in Literature “for his realistic and imaginative writings, combining as they do sympathetic humour and keen social perception”.

The screams of the baby brought the neighbours. Out of their brush houses they poured - Kino’s brother Juan Tomás and his fat wife Apolonia and their four children crowded in the door and blocked the entrance, while behind them others tried to look in, and one small boy crawled among legs to have a look. And those in front passed the word back to those behind - “Scorpion. The baby has been stung.”

Juana stopped sucking the puncture for a moment. The little hole was slightly enlarged and its edges whitened from the sucking, but the red swelling extended farther around it in a hard lymphatic mound. And all of these people knew about the scorpion. An adult might be very ill from the sting, but a baby could easily die from the poison. First, they knew, would come

swelling and fever and tightened throat, and then cramps in the stomach, and then Coyotito might die if enough of the poison had gone in. But the stinging pain of the bite was going away. Coyotito's screams turned to moans.

Kino had wondered often at the iron in his patient, fragile wife. She, who was obedient and respectful and cheerful and patient, could bear physical pain with hardly a cry. She could stand fatigue and hunger almost better than Kino himself. In the canoe she was like a strong man. And now she did a most surprising thing.

"The doctor," she said. "Go to get the doctor."

The word was passed out among the neighbours where they stood close-packed in the little yard behind the brush fence. And they repeated among themselves, "Juana wants the doctor." A wonderful thing, a memorable thing, to want the doctor. To get him would be a remarkable thing. The doctor never came to the cluster of brush houses. Why should he, when he had more than he could do to take care of the rich people who lived in the stone and plaster houses of the town?

"He would not come," the people in the yard said.

"He would not come," the people in the door said, and the thought got into Kino.

"The doctor would not come," Kino said to Juana.

She looked up at him, her eyes as cold as the eyes of a lioness. This was Juana's first baby - this was nearly everything there was in Juana's world. And Kino saw her determination and the music of the family sounded in his head with a steely tone.

"Then we will go to him," Juana said, and with one hand she arranged her dark blue shawl over her head and made of one end of it a sling to hold the moaning baby and made of the other end of it a shade over his eyes to protect him from the light. The people in the door pushed against those behind to let her through. Kino followed her. They went out of the gate to the rutted path and the neighbours followed them.

The thing had become a neighbourhood affair. They made a quick soft-footed procession into the center of the town, first Juana and Kino, and behind them Juan Tomás and

Apolonia, her big stomach jiggling with the strenuous pace, then all the neighbours with the children trotting on the flanks. And the yellow sun threw their black shadows ahead of them so that they walked on their own shadows.

They came to the place where the brush houses stopped and the city of stone and plaster began, the city of harsh outer walls and inner cool gardens where a little water played and the bougainvillea crusted the walls with purple and brick-red and white. They heard from the secret gardens the singing of caged birds and heard the splash of cooling water on hot flagstones. The procession crossed the blinding

plaza and passed in front of the church. It had grown now, and on the outskirts the hurrying newcomers were being softly informed how the baby had been stung by a scorpion, how the father and mother were taking it to the doctor.

And the newcomers, particularly the beggars from the front of the church who were great experts in financial analysis, looked quickly at Juana's old blue skirt, saw the tears in her shawl, appraised the green ribbon on her braids, read the age of Kino's blanket and the thousand washings of his clothes, and set them down as poverty people and went along to see what kind of drama might develop. The four beggars in front of the church knew everything in the town. They were students of the expressions of young women as they went into confession, and they saw them as they came out and read the nature of the sin. They knew every little scandal and some very big crimes. They slept at their posts in the shadow of the church so that no one crept in for consolation without their knowledge. And they knew the doctor. They knew his ignorance, his cruelty, his avarice, his appetites, his sins. They knew his clumsy abortions and the little brown pennies he gave sparingly for alms. They had seen his corpses go into the church. And, since early Mass was over and business was slow, they followed the procession, these endless searchers after perfect knowledge of their fellow men, to see what the fat lazy doctor would do about an indigent baby with a scorpion bite.

The scurrying procession came at last to the big gate in the wall of the doctor's house. They could hear the splashing water and the singing of caged birds and the sweep of the long brooms on the flagstones. And they could smell the frying of good bacon from the doctor's house.

Kino hesitated a moment. This doctor was not of his people. This doctor was of a race which for nearly four hundred years had beaten and starved and robbed and despised Kino's race, and frightened it too, so that the indigene came humbly to the door. And as always when he came near to one of this race, Kino felt weak and afraid and angry at the same time. Rage and terror went together. He could kill the doctor more easily than he could talk to him, for all of the doctor's race spoke to all of Kino's race as though they were simple animals. And as Kino raised his right hand to the iron ring knocker in the gate, rage swelled in him, and the pounding music of the enemy beat in his ears, and his lips drew tight against his teeth - but with his left hand he reached to take off his hat. The iron ring pounded against the gate. Kino took off his hat and stood waiting. Coyotito moaned a little in Juana's arms, and she spoke softly to him. The procession crowded close the better to see and hear.

After a moment the big gate opened a few inches. Kino could see the green coolness of the garden and little splashing fountain through the opening. The man who looked out at him was one of his own race. Kino spoke to him in the old language. "The little one - the firstborn - has been poisoned by the scorpion," Kino said. "He requires the skill of the healer."

The gate closed a little, and the servant refused to speak in the old language. "A little moment," he said. "I go to inform myself," and he closed the gate and slid the bolt home. The glaring sun threw the bunched shadows of the people blackly on the white wall.

In his chamber the doctor sat up in his high bed. He had on his dressing-gown of red watered silk that had come from Paris, a little tight over the chest now if it was buttoned. On his lap was a silver tray with a silver chocolate pot and a tiny cup of egg-shell china, so delicate that it looked silly when he lifted it with his big hand, lifted it with the tips of thumb and forefinger and spread the other three fingers wide to get them out of the way. His eyes rested in puffy little hammocks of flesh and his mouth drooped with discontent. He was growing very stout, and his voice was hoarse with the fat that pressed on his throat. Beside him on a table was a small Oriental gong and a bowl of cigarettes. The furnishings of the room were heavy and dark and gloomy. The pictures were religious, even the large tinted photograph of his dead wife, who, if Masses willed and paid for out of her own estate could do it, was in Heaven. The doctor had once for a short time been a part of the great world and his whole subsequent life was memory and longing for France. "That," he said, "was civilized living" - by which he meant that on a small income he had been able to enjoy some luxury and eat in restaurants. He poured his second cup of chocolate and crumbled a sweet biscuit in his fingers. The servant from the gate came to the open door and stood waiting to be noticed.

"Yes?" the doctor asked.

"It is a little Indian with a baby. He says a scorpion stung it."

The doctor put his cup down gently before he let his anger rise.

"Have I nothing better to do than cure insect bites for 'little Indians'? I am a doctor, not a veterinary."

From "*The Pearl*" by **John Steinbeck**,

Questions

1. Why did the Doctor refuse to attend to Coyotito?
2. Explain the political context behind the Doctor's refusal.
3. Describe the doctor's character traits in the above extract?
4. Identify the themes highlighted in *The Pearl*.
5. What are the negative effects of European colonizers towards the African countries?
6. Considering the period of Enlightenment, discuss its impact on Europe and the rest of the world.

End unit assessment activities

1. Compare and contrast European literary traditions with African literary traditions covered in S 4.
2. How have the European literary traditions influenced the rest of the world?
 - a) Intellectually
 - b) Socially
 - c) Historically
 - d) Politically
3. Mention one influential writer and the characteristics of each literature to fill the table below.

Periods	Influential writer	Main characteristics
Classical ancient Greek and Latin literature		
Medieval literature		
Renaissance literature		
Classical literature		
Enlightenment literature		

4. Read the following extract below and answer the questions.



figure 13: animals in a meeting

In January there came bitterly hard weather. The earth was like iron, and nothing could be done in the fields. Many meetings were held in the big barn, and the pigs occupied themselves with planning out the work of the coming season. It had come to be accepted that the pigs, who were manifestly cleverer than the other animals, should decide all questions of farm policy, though their decisions had to be ratified by a majority vote.

This arrangement would have worked well enough if it had not been for the disputes between Snowball and Napoleon. These two disagreed at every point where disagreement was possible. If one of them suggested sowing a bigger acreage with barley, the other was certain to demand a bigger acreage of oats, and if one of them said that such and such a field was just right for cabbages, the other would declare that it was useless for anything except roots. Each had his own following, and there were some violent debates. At the Meetings Snowball often won over the majority by his brilliant speeches, but Napoleon was better at canvassing support for himself in between times. He was especially successful with the sheep. Of late the sheep had taken to bleating "Four legs good, two legs bad" both in and out of season, and they often interrupted the Meeting with this. It was noticed that they were especially liable to break into "Four legs good, two legs bad" at crucial moments in Snowball's speeches. Snowball had made a close study of some back numbers of the 'Farmer and Stockbreeder' which he had found in the farmhouse, and was full of plans for innovations and improvements. He talked learnedly about field drains, silage, and basic slag, and had worked out a complicated scheme for all the animals to drop their dung directly in the fields, at a different spot every day, to save the labour of cartage. Napoleon produced no schemes of his own, but said quietly that Snowball's would come to nothing, and seemed to be biding his time. But of all their controversies, none was so bitter as the one that took place over the windmill.

In the long pasture, not far from the farm buildings, there was a small knoll which was the highest point on the farm. After surveying the ground, Snowball declared that this was just the place for a windmill, which could be made to operate a dynamo and supply the farm with electrical power. This would light the stalls and warm them in winter, and would also run a circular saw, a chaff-cutter, a mangel-slicer, and an electric milking machine. The animals had never heard of anything of this kind before (for the farm was an old-fashioned one and had only the most primitive machinery), and they listened in astonishment while Snowball conjured up pictures of fantastic machines which would do their work for them while they grazed at their ease in the fields or improved their minds with reading and conversation.

Within a few weeks Snowball's plans for the windmill were fully worked out. The mechanical details came mostly from three books which had belonged to Mr. Jones — 'One Thousand Useful Things to Do About the House', 'Every Man His Own Bricklayer', and 'Electricity for Beginners'. Snowball used as his study a shed which had once been used for incubators and had a smooth wooden floor, suitable for drawing on. He was closeted there for hours at a time. With his books held open by a stone, and with a piece of chalk gripped between the knuckles of his trotter, he would move rapidly to and fro, drawing in line after line and uttering little whimpers of excitement. Gradually the plans grew into a complicated mass of cranks and cog-wheels, covering more than half the floor, which the other animals found completely unintelligible but very impressive. All of them came to look at Snowball's drawings at least once a day. Even the hens and ducks came, and were at pains not to tread

on the chalk marks. Only Napoleon held aloof. He had declared himself against the windmill from the start. One day, however, he arrived unexpectedly to examine the plans. He walked heavily round the shed, looked closely at every detail of the plans and snuffed at them once or twice, then stood for a little while contemplating them out of the corner of his eye; then suddenly he lifted his leg, urinated over the plans, and walked out without uttering a word.

*From Animal farm by **George Orwell**,*

Questions

1. Discuss the main reasons that caused the disagreements between Napoleon and Snowball in the above extract.
2. Find out the protagonist and antagonist in the extract. Present the findings to classmates.



UNIT 2

UNDERSTANDING PROSE

UNIT 2: UNDERSTANDING PROSE

Key unit competence: To be able to read and critically analyse novellas and short stories

Introductory activity

1. What do you understand by prose?
2. Discuss briefly the key aspects of prose.
3. Differentiate prose from poetry and drama.

Read the following extract and answer the questions

Okonkwo is received in exile.

Why is Okonkwo with us today? This is not his clan. We are only his mother's kinsmen. He does not belong here. He is in exile, condemned for seven years to live in a strange land. And so he is bowed with grief. But there is just one question I would like to ask him. Can you tell me, Okonkwo, why it is that one of the commonest names we give our children in Nneka, or "Mother is Supreme?" We all know that a man is the head of the family and his wives do his bidding. A child belongs to its father and his family and not to its mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland and not to his motherland and yet we say Nneka – "Mother is supreme". Why is that?

There was silence. 'I want Okonkwo to answer me,' said Uchendu. 'I do not know the answer,' Okonkwo replied.

'You do not know the answer? So you see that you are a child. You are a great man in your clan. But there is one question I shall ask. Why is it that when a woman dies she is taken home to be buried with her own kinsmen? She is not buried with her husband's kinsmen. Why is that? Your mother was brought home to me and buried with my people, why was that?

Okonkwo shook his head.

'He does not know that either,' said Uchendu, and yet he is full of sorrow because he has come to live in his motherland for a few years.' He laughed a mirthless laughter, and turned to his sons and daughters. What about you? Can you answer the questions? They all shook their heads.

From Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe

Application activities

1. Where and when did the story take place?
2. Discuss the major and minor characters in the above extract.
3. Who is telling the story?
4. What is the main theme in the above extract?

2.1. Review of the key aspects of prose

2.1.1 Setting

Activity 2.1.1

Read the story *Leaving* by Moyez G. Vassanji (Tanzania) from the anthology *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond* and answer the questions below.

1. Where does the story take place?
2. What effect does the setting have on the characters, events, or mood of the story?
3. Discuss the social, historical and cultural setting of the extract given above.

Note: In prose, setting means a number of things:

- The historical period in which events occurred. For example, a story of a novella, short story or novel can be set in the pre-colonial era, colonial era and post-independence era, before the post genocide period, during the Cold War or the computer age.
- The geographical place where the events in the story occur. For example, a story could be set in Rwanda (the story of Ndabaga), in Tanzania (*Leaving*), South America (*The Pearl*), etc.
- The social and cultural context in which the events of the story are set. For instance, a story can be set in urban or rural environment. It can also be set in a traditional society.

2.1.2. Characters and characterization

Activity 2.1.2

Re-read the following extract and answer the questions.

Okonkwo is received in exile.

Why is Okonkwo with us today? This is not his clan. We are only his mother's kinsmen. He does not belong here. He is in exile, condemned for seven years to live in a strange land. And so he is bowed with grief. But there is just one question I would like to ask him. Can you tell me, Okonkwo, why it is that one of the commonest names we give our children in Nneka, or "Mother is Supreme?" We all know that a man is the head of the family and his wives do his bidding. A child belongs to its father and his family and not to its mother and her family. A man belongs to his fatherland and not to his motherland and yet we say Nneka – "Mother is supreme". Why is that?

There was silence. 'I want Okonkwo to answer me,' said Uchendu. 'I do not know the answer,' Okonkwo replied.

'You do not know the answer? So you see that you are a child. You are a great man in your clan. But there is one question I shall ask. Why is it that when a woman dies she is taken home to be buried with her own kinsmen? She is not buried with her husband's kinsmen. Why is that? Your mother was brought home to me and buried with my people, why was that?

Okonkwo shook his head.

'He does not know that either,' said Uchendu, and yet he is full of sorrow because he has come to live in his motherland for a few years.' He laughed a mirthless laughter, and turned to his sons and daughters. What about you? Can you answer the questions? They all shook their heads.

From Things Fall Apart by Chinua Achebe,

Questions

9. Identify where the story takes place.
10. Compare the major and minor characters in the above extract.
11. Who is telling the story?
12. What is the main theme in the above extract?
13. What do you understand by characters in a short story?
14. Discuss the difference between protagonist and antagonist in a short story.

Note: All prose texts contain characters. A character is a fictional human being, animal or thing in a story. Authors use different types of characters to tell stories. Some of them are:

Major characters: these are main or central characters. Most of the actions happen around them. In most stories, you find protagonists and antagonists. A protagonist is a central character who faces with conflicts or problems to solve. An antagonist is the main character who challenges or hinders the actions of the protagonists.

Minor characters: these characters do not have to play a big role in the story. They are supporting characters.

Application activity 2.1.2

Read the short story *Leaving* by Moyez G. Vassanji (Tanzania) from the anthology *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond* and answer the questions that follow.

Kichwele Street was now Uhuru Street. My two sisters had completed school and got married and our mother missed them sometimes. Mehroon, after a succession of woos, had settled for a former opening batsman of our school team and was in town. Ruzia was a wealthy housewife in Tanga, the coastal town north of Dar. Firoz dropped out in his last year at school, and everyone said that it was a wonder he had reached that far. He was assistant bookkeeper at Oriental Emporium, and brought home stationary sometimes.

Mother had placed her hopes on the youngest two of us, Aloo and me, and she did not want us distracted by the chores that always needed doing around the store. One evening she secured for the last time the half a dozen assorted padlocks on the sturdy panelled doors and sold the store.

This was exactly one week after the wedding party had driven off with a tearful Razia, leaving behind a distraught a mother in the stirred-up dust of Uhuru Street.

We moved to the residential area of Upanda. After the bustle of Uhuru Street our new neighbourhood seemed quiet. Instead of the racket of buses, bicycles and cars on the road, we now heard the croaking of frogs and the chirping of insects. Nights were haunting, lonely and desolate and took some getting used to. Upanga Road emptied after seven in the evening and the sidestreets became pitch dark, with no illumination. Much of the area was as yet uninhabited and behind the housing developments there were overgrown bushes, large, scary baobab trees, and mango and coconut groves.

Sometimes in the evenings, when Mother felt sad, Aloo and I would play two-three-five with her, a variation of whist for three people. I had entered the university by then and came back at weekends. Aloo was in his last year at school. He had turned out to be exceptionally bright in his studies-more so than we realized. That year Mr Dattoo, a former teacher from our school who was also a former student, returned from America for a visit. Mr Dattoo had been a favourite with the boys. When he came he received a tumultuous welcome? From the next few days he toured the town like the Pied Piper followed by a horde of adulating students, one of whom was Aloo.

The exciting event inspired in Aloo the hope that not only might he be admitted to an American university, but he could also win a scholarship to go there. Throughout the rest of the year, therefore, he wrote to numerous universities, culling their names from books at the USIS, often simply at random or even only by the sounds of their names. Mother's response to all these efforts was to humour him. She would smile. "Your uncles in America will pay thousands of shillings just to send you to college," she would say. Evidently, she felt he was wasting his time, but he would never be able to say that he did not have all the support she could give him.

Responses to his enquiries started coming within weeks and a handful of them were the better places, and which among them the truly famous. Soon a few catalogues arrived, all looking impressive. It seemed that the more involved he became with the application process, the more tantalizing was the prospect of going to an American university. Even the famous placed did not discourage him. He learnt of subjects he had never heard of before: genetics, cosmology, artificial intelligence: a whole universe was out there waiting for him if only he could reach it. He was not sure if he could, if he was good enough. He suffered periods of intense hope and hopeless despair.

Of course, Aloo was entitled to a place at the local university. At the end of the year, when the selections were announced in the papers, his name was on the list. But some bureaucratic hand, probably also corrupt, dealt out a future prospect for him that came as a shock. He had applied to study medicine; he was given a place

in agriculture. An agriculture officer in a rural district somewhere was not what he wanted to become however national parks once on a school trip. When Aloo received a letter from the California Institute of Technology offering him a place with a scholarship, he was stupefied at first. He read and reread the letter, not believing what it seemed to be saying, afraid that he might be reading something into it. He asked me to read it for him. When he was convinced there was no possibility of a mistake he became elated.

"The hell I'll do agriculture!" he grinned.

But first he had to contend with Mother.

Mother was incredulous. "Go, go," she said, "don't you eat my head, don't tease me!"

"But it's true!" he protested. "They're giving me a scholarship!"

We were at the table – the three of us – and had just poured tea from the thermos. Mother sitting across me started at her saucer for a while then she looked up.

"Is it true?" she asked me.

"Yes, it's true," I said. "All he needs is to take 400 dollars' pocket money with him."

"How many shillings would that make?" she asked.

"About three thousand"

"And how are we going to raise these three thousand shillings?"

Have you bought a lottery? And what about the ticket? Are they going to send you a ticket too?"

As she said this Aloo's prospects seemed to get dimmer. She was right, it was not a little money that he needed.

"Can't we raise a loan?" he asked. "I'll work there. Yes, I'll work as a writer. A waiter! – I know you can do it; I'll send the money back!"

"You may have uncles in America who would help you," Mother told him, "but no one here will."

Aloo's shoulders sagged and he sat there toying with his cup, close to tears. Mother sat drinking from her saucer and frowning. The evening light came in from the window behind me and gave a glint to her spectacles. Finally, she set her saucer down. She was angry.

"And why do you want to go away, so far from us? Is this what I raised for you – so you could leave me to go away to a foreign place? Won't you miss us, where you want to go? Do we mean so little to you? If something happens..."

Aloo was crying. A tear fell into his cup; his nose was running. "So many kids go and return, and nothing happens to them... Why did you mislead me, then? Why did you let me apply if you didn't want to go... Why did you raise my hopes if only to dash them? He had raised his voice to her, the first time I saw him do it, and he was shaking.

He did not bring up the question again and he prepared himself for the agricultural college, waiting for them to begin. At home he would slump on the sofa putting away a novel a day.

If then unknown bureaucrat at the Ministry of Education had been less arbitrary, Aloo would not have been so broken and Mother would not have felt compelled to try and do something for him. A few days later, on a Sunday morning, she looked up from her sewing machine and said to the two of us: "Let's go and show this letter to Mr Velji. He is experienced in these matters. Let's take his advice."

Mr Velji was a former administrator of our school. He had a large egg-shaped head and a small compact with his large forehead and big black spectacles he looked the caricature of archetypal wise man. He also had the bearing of one. The three of us were settled in his sitting-room chairs staring about us and waiting expectantly when he walked in stiffly, like a toy soldier, to welcome us.

"How are you, sister?" he said. "What can I do for you?"

"Aloo and I stood up respectfully as he sat down.

"We have come to you for advice ...," Mother began.

"Speak, then," he said jovially and sat back, joining his hands behind his head.

She began by giving him her history. She told him which family she was born in, which she had married into, how she had raised her kids when our father died. Common relations were discovered between our families. "Now this one here," she pointed at me, "goes to university here, and that one wants to go to America. Show him the documents," she commanded Aloo. As if with an effort, Aloo pushed himself out of the sofa and slowly made his way to place the documents in Mr Velji's hands. Before he looked at them Mr Velji asked Aloo his result in the final exam.

At Aloo's answer, his eyes widened. "Henh?" he said. "All A's?"

"Yes," replied Aloo, a little too meekly.

Mr Velji flipped the papers one by one, cursorily at first. Then he went over them more carefully. He looked at the long visa form with the carbon copies neatly bound behind the original; he read over the friendly letter from the Foreign Student Adviser; he was charmed by the letters of invitation from the fraternities. Finally, he looked up, a little humbled.

"The boy is right," he said. "The university is good, and they are giving him a bursary. I congratulate you."

"But what should I do?" asked Mother anxiously. "What is your advice? Tell us what we should do."

"Well," said Mr Velji, "it would be good for his education." He raised his hand to clear his throat. Then he said, a little slowly, "But if you send him, you will lose your son. It's a far place, America," he concluded, wiping his hands briskly at the finished business. "Now what will you have – tea, orange squash?"

His wife appeared magically to take orders.

“And the rich kids go every year and they are not lost,” muttered Aloo bitterly as we walked back home. Mother was silent.

That night she was at the sewing machine and Aloo was on the couch, reading. The radio was turned low and through the open front door a gentle breeze blew in to cool the sitting room. I was standing at the door. The banana tree and its offspring rustled outside, a car zoomed on the road, throwing shadows on the neighbouring houses. A couple out for a stroll, murmuring, came into sight over the uneven hedge, groups of boys or girls chattered before dispersing for the night. The intermittent buzz of an electric motor escaped from Mother’s sewing machine. It was a little darker where she sat at the other end of the room from us.

Presently she looked up and said a little nonchalantly, “At least show me what this university looks like – bring that book, will you?”

Mother had never seen the catalogue. She had always dismissed it, had never shown the least bit of curiosity about the place Aloo wanted so badly to visit. Now the three of us crowded around the glossy pages, pausing at pictures of the neoclassic façades and domes, columns towering over humans, students rushing about in a dither of activity, classes held on lush lawns in ample shade. It all looked so awesome and yet inviting.

“It’s something, isn’t it?” whispered Aloo, hardly able to hold back his excitement. “They teach hundreds of courses there,” he said. “They send rockets into space... to other worlds... to the moon –”

“If you go away to the moon, my son, what will become of me?” she said humorously, her eyes gleaming as she looked up at us. Aloo went back to his book and Mother to her sewing.

A little later I looked up and saw Mother deep in thought, brooding, and as she often did at such times she was picking her chin absent- mindedly. It was, I think, the first time I saw her as a person and not only as our mother. I thought of what she must be going through in her mind, what she had gone through in bringing us up. She had been thirty- three when Father died, and she had refused several offers of marriage because they would all have entailed one thing: sending us all to the ‘boarding’ – the orphanage. Pictures of her before his death showed her smiling and in full bloom: plump but not excessively fat, hair puffed fashionably, wearing high heels and make-up. There was one picture, posed at a studio, which Father had had touched up and enhanced, which now hung beside his. In it she stood against a black background, holding a book stylishly, the nylon pachedi painted a light green, the folds falling gracefully down, the borders decorated with sequins. I had never seen her like that. All I had seen of her was the stern face getting sterner with time as the lines set permanently and the hair thinned, the body turned squat, the voice thickened.

I recalled how Aloo and I would take turns sleeping together on her big bed; how she would squeeze me in her chubby arms, drawing me up closer to her breast until I could hardly breathe – and I would control myself and hope she would soon release me and let me breathe. She looked at me looking at her and said, not to me, “Promise me... promise me that if I let you go, you will not marry a white woman.”

“Oh Mother, you know I won’t!” said Aloo.

“And promise me that you will not smoke or drink.”

“You know I promise!” He was close to ears.

Aloo’s first letter came a week after he left, from London where he had stopped over to see a former classmate. It flowed over with excitement. ‘How can I describe it,’ he wrote, ‘the sight from the plane... mile upon mile of carefully tilled fields, the earth divided into neat green squares... even the mountains are clean and civilized. And London ... Oh London! It seemed that it would never end... blocks and blocks of houses, squares, parks, monuments ... could any city be larger? ... How many of our Dar es Salaams would fit here, in this one gorgeous city...?’

A bird flapping its wings: Mr Velji nodding wisely in his chair, Mother staring into the distance.

From *the anthology “When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond”*. Edited by *Emelia Ilieva and Waveney Olembo*.

Questions

1. Who are the main and minor characters in the above story?
2. What do you learn from the traits of the main character?
3. In what ways does each character change over the course of the story?

2.1.3. Plot

Activity 2.1.3

Read the short story *The Bamboo Hut* by Grace Ogot from *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond* and answer the questions below.

1. What happens in the story?
2. What is the main conflict in the story?
3. a) Identify the different roles of men and women in the society as brought out in the story.
b) Compare these roles with what is happening in our society.
c) Do you think there is equality between men and women?

Note: Plot is how a novella, short story or novel progresses. It is also the succession of events in the novella, short story or novel. It starts with the beginning or exposition of the problem and goes on with the rising of the problem. It then reaches to the climax. Then, the climax is the part in the novella, short story or novel that everything leads up to. The story comes down to reach the resolution.

2.1.3.1. Types plots

Activity 2.1.3.1

15. What do you understand by plot in a prose fiction?
16. Discuss the types of plot in a prose fiction.

The plot development is the succession of events/actions in the story. It is a literary term used to describe the events that make up a story. These events relate to each other in a sequence. The structure of a story depends on the organisation of the events in the plot. The events of a story are not always arranged in a straight line.

a) Linear plot

A linear plot is when the story is in chronological order and does not skew from that order. It is constructed logically. A linear plot contains three main parts of events and it is often found in folktales:

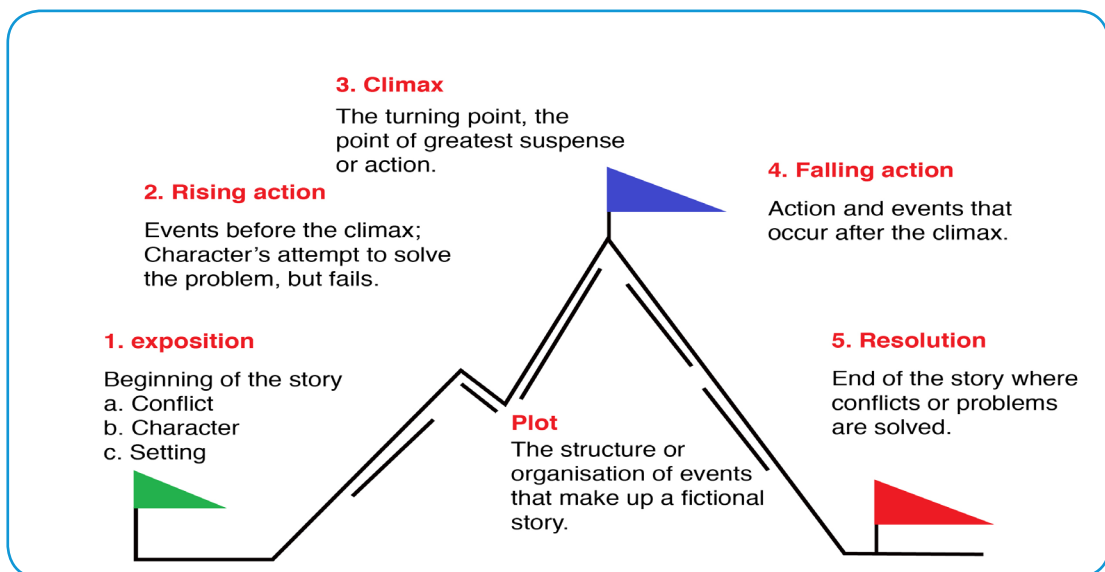
Beginning
Middle
End

b) Circular plot

A circular plot is a non-linear plot that progresses more or less chronological and ends with its protagonist returning to a situation similar to the one at the beginning of the story. The characters in a given story end up in the same place that they were at the beginning of the story.

2.1.3.2. Plot organisation

Every plot is made up of series of incidents that are related to one another. There are five essential parts of a plot shown below:



1. Exposition or introduction

In this section the author provides the background information, establish the setting and the primary characters' names, mood and time.

2. Rising action

This is the first important event of the story. Something happens that cause or leads to the central conflict. The rising action of the story is all of the events that lead to the climax, including character development. The rising moment may come before the exposition. Some writers like to open the story with the rising action to attract

the reader's attention.

3. Climax

This is the high point of interest in the story. It is the decisive moment at which the rising action turns around toward to the falling action

4. Falling action

The falling action is everything that happens as a result of the climax, including wrapping-up of plot points, questions being answered and character development.

5. Resolution

The resolution (denouement) is not always happy, but it does complete the story. It can leave a reader with questions, answers, frustration or satisfaction.

2.1.3.3. Recognising plot devices

Devices are very important in the story, some of them are written below:

1. Suspense



Figure 13: example of suspense

Suspense is a technique that authors use to keep their readers' interest alive throughout the work. It is a feeling of anticipation that something risky or dangerous is going to happen.

2. **Foreshadowing**

Foreshadowing is a technique in which a writer gives an advance hint or clue of what is to come later in the story. It often appears at the beginning of the story or chapter and helps the reader develop expectations about coming events in a story.

3. **Flashback**

The flashback occurs when the writer breaks away from the current action of a story to recount events that happened earlier.

4. **Surprise ending**

The surprise ending occurs when something unexpected happens at the end of a story. The story has a surprise ending.

Application activity 2.1.3.3

Read the following short story and answer the questions.

Steve was aware of the people's eyes on him as he passed. They stood on the verandas of the little shops with peeling paint and pretended to be engrossed in their chitchat but he could feel the piercing gaze of their eyes like so many fires on his body. But he did not care; by God he did not give a hoot. They could stare till Thy Kingdom Come, the hypocrites! He kept his eyes on the uneven path by the shoulder of the tarmac road on which he had plied for years as a matatu driver. Matatus flew past in both directions going to Murang'a or going to Kangema.

"Wakini, age—mate!"

The salute drew Steve's attention. "Oh, yes age-mate!" he said, knowing that must be Kanja, his friend since boyhood.

"How are you, Son of my Mother?" Kanja asked.

As he always did these days, Steve scanned his friend's eyes for any hint of mischief. Kanja's inquiry seemed genuine enough and Steve was glad he could count at least on one real friend. One real friend — he marvelled at the thought. From a struggling open air mechanic with hardly any friends to a successful entrepreneur running a chain of matatus trying to jostle between the demands of family, business and crowds of friends. He had come down to this: one genuine friend. How the world shrinks!

"I am OK — or so I tell myself," Steve said.
"And how is the One-We-Never-Call-By-Her-Name?
You remember the song, brother?"

Steve started to sing:
*My mother I will never call her by name
I will never insult her
I will call her the seer who saw for me My second God!*

"She is as fine as can be, given the years," Steve enthused. The two men fell in step. Above them the noon sun rode high, casting their stunted shadows at their feet. The last block of shops stood out. It was a one-storey building and newly painted. "You must have heard I bought this building," Steve said.

"Yes, I've heard many other things besides," Kanja replied. "I am sure of that," Steve said turning the key and throwing the door open. "In this village, nothing passes unspoken. People just can't mind their own business." There was a tinge of anger in his voice.

"Come in age-mate and tell me just what you've heard." They sat behind the counter. "So what have you heard?" he demanded almost immediately.

Kanja had actually expected to discuss the rumours that were going around the village about his friend. After many days of soul searching, he had decided to approach and coax Steve into telling him with his own mouth what he was up to. That is what age-mates were for but he had not expected his friend to be so forthcoming. He was caught off— guard. Still, he quickly composed himself and said: "I hear you plan on marrying Maureen.

"Marry?" Steve spats. After a while he went on: "Well, maybe someday.

In truth, Steve had asked Maureen to marry him. At first, she had refused saying she was too old for him and she had baggage from her first marriage. But after Steve had assured her he was ready to love her and her children as if they were his own blood, she had gradually begun to think it possible. Then she learnt she had the virus that causes AIDS and said this could never be. Steve had been deeply hurt. Still, he vowed he would never abandon her.

They would beat this thing together. But he could not explain all this to Kanja. What did it matter, anyway?

"Then what is going on between the two of you?," "Ask the ones who told you I am marrying."

"I want to hear from you," Kanja declared.

"Are you sure you want to hear?"

"I would not have asked."

"Well," Steve stared at the ceiling for a while, "you know me better than most. Ever since we came of age, life has just been one long struggle. Family; business, friends.

All drudgery and what do you get in return? It is Maureen who lit the sun in my life and made me realise that all this is vanity. Like chasing after the wind . . . She's my friend," Steve asserted almost defiantly.

"Just that? I also hear you are the father of her son," Kanja persisted.

"Tragedy is when children are made by people who are not friends," Steve asserted.

"So it is true?"

"What?"

"You are the father?"

"Ask me another."

For a while, an awkward silence hung between the two men, threatening to cloud the light of friendship.

"I don't blame you. Maureen is sure a smashing beauty," Kanja smiled to break the clouds.

"I don't know what you mean. I used to think so too but what is beauty? Just a good figure? But I ask again. What is beauty?" The silence fell again. Then Steve went on:

"I will tell you. Beauty is the promise of happiness. For so long, I was unhappy. Then one morning at sunrise, I remember the day all too well, I met Maureen. She was new in this village. I was driving to Murang'a and she sat in front with me. We did not talk much but something passed between us. That promise — the promise of happiness. It was there in her generous smile, her bellyful of open and cascading laughter. Later in Murang'a town as I waited for my matatu to fill, we had a cup of tea and talked a little. She had been married by a soldier who was always accusing her of unfaithfulness, though she knew for sure he kept a mistress. Sometimes when he came home, he would batter and leave her for dead for smiling and laughing with men, he said. Still not wanting to break her family, she held onto her marriage and prayed that God would stop her husband's wayward ways. One day, the man came home ill. The doctor said it was pneumonia. The drugs didn't seem to work and the man was reluctant to seek further treatment. Then he closed his eyes and willed himself dead. When they tried to wake him up, he was dead. Just like that — a very unsoldierly way to die if you ask me, It was a long and touching story of a woman's love and commitment that seemed to fill an emptiness that I had not even suspected existed in my soul. I could have traded my matatus for just that one cup of tea with that woman — I swear, age—mate!"

"I am afraid you've done so already," Kanja said cautiously.

"I said it is a long story. But it is also a simple story no matter what riveting turns and you — I mean people here, try to give it. But I maintain you do not yet live until you reserve the right to make your own story. It is not family, money, or even friends who will tell your story. Even if you died, your family and friends can only tell the story you made for yourself and, age-mate, you don't make a story worth telling unless you truly lived!" A wan smile played on Steve's lips as if daring his friend to contradict his assertions.

"I see," Kanja said meaninglessly.

"You've seen nothing yet. Cowards do not make stories and you, my friend, are a great one," Steve charged. "Want to know why I say that?"

Kanja shook his head affirmatively.

"Be-because here you are," Steve's voice was laden with emotion, "an old good friend going on about things you've heard, about me, mind you, and not having the guts to speak the one main thing that you've heard — because nobody knows you all suspect and then create stories and pass them around. But nobody knows for sure. Yet you do not have the courage to ask me: age-mate, is it true that your friend Maureen, has AIDS? Instead, you sit here and like all god —forsaken hypocrites go on about what a smashing beauty Maureen leave is and you, like all the other frauds in this village, have absolutely no idea what beauty is all about. Tragedy is friendship that wears the rayed cloak of hypocrisy! That's how they hanged Jesus, you know. I am no man Christ though, but you can crucify me if you want. I do not give a didn't hoot one way or the other."

"I'm sorry brother, I actually meant to ask," Kanja said to apologetically.

"Ok, brother. Ask. I'm afraid I lost my cool," Steve threw the gauntlet.

"So is it true?"

"Why are you afraid of speaking the word?" Steve smiled. "And is it not a four- letter word anyway? So why are you afraid?"

"Ok, age-mate. So is it true Maureen has AIDS?"

"That is good. You will be surprised that when we put names give to our fears, they are not as threatening as they appeared at first.

Besides, it is not like you've anything to fear yourself. The last time I who knew, you were a hallelujah, drum-beating Christian in the House of 1 only Miracle Tabernacle. AIDS is not for the heaven-bound, you know." make The sarcasm hit Kanja like a blow, making him grimace. . .but here d on we go: yes it is true. Maureen has AIDS," Steve affirmed.

Oh! Kanja thought almost audibly. He remembered the first day he met Maureen and how enamoured he had been of her you, easy-going manner. She had politely turned down his advances. Hurt, Kanja had avoided her and hoped she would keep her mouth shut. But now he saw the hand of God in what had happened. He visualised himself carrying the virus in his body and people talking behind his back and shuddered. Steve was right. He, Kanja, was a me, coward. He would rather hang himself than have the whole village that back-biting him. He looked at his friend. Did Steve also have the then big disease with a small name? All this time, Steve held Kanja's eyes in his gaze, a bemused expression on his face. He thinks that God loves him more because he is not ill. But how he even knows, the fool, Steve thought. He smiled wanly and said, "So now you know, from the horse's own mouth, as they say. Spread the gospel."

"Thank you for confiding in me. I appreciate," Kanja said.

"I'm not confiding. Please pass on the word. I am tired of all the rumours and ignorant innuendos. Can I count on you seeing that you are a good, old friend?"

Kanja hesitated, unsure of what to say. Suddenly, Steve rose up. "Come with me," he said leading the way through the back door. They went down a flight of stairs. Walking past rooms that opened on a long veranda, Steve pushed open a door at the far end of the compound. "After you, age-mate," he said ushering his friend into a suite of immaculately kept rooms. Kanja sat on the sofa and savoured the ambience while Steve went into one of the rooms. He came back accompanied by Maureen, her three-year-old son in tow, tugging at her skirt. The smile was still there but the woman looked somewhat weary. The little boy went and sat on his father's lap. "Maureen, I wanted you to meet one of my old, boyhood friends. Kanja and I ate the knife on the same day on the banks of River Mukungai," Steve said sitting beside his friend.

"Oh, Mr. Kanja. I know him but I didn't know that bit about the knife," Maureen beamed.

"You know him?" Steve asked.

"Of course. Kanja is among the first people I got to know when I came to this market. In fact, we could have been friends. Unfortunately, he wanted discretion. And I did not want to live in the shadows."

"I didn't know that bit either!" Steve exclaimed and started laughing. "In the shadows . . .," he said between bursts of mirth. "In the shadows," he repeated, savouring the words as if they held the key to the complexities of life. "So many of us are used to the shadows that when you dare to stand in the light of day, people behave as if you're the one in the wrong!" he said.

Maureen stole a glance at Kanja. The poor man was fidgeting and sweating. She rose and opened the window. She served several glasses of fruit juice and passed them round. Kanja held the glass cautiously, his fingers shaking like an alcoholic's. "Welcome Kanja. It is great to have you visit," she said.

"Kanja has no idea how good it was for him to come. When you are suffering from AIDS, one good friend is all you need to make life less suffocating. A person is only a person through other persons, Steve observed.

"You too? Suffering from AIDS?" Kanja breathed the one question he had been afraid to ask. He sounded perplexed.

Steve smiled vaguely. But before he could speak, Maureen weighed in. The story, she seemed to suggest, was hers to tell. "I remember I had gone for a routine prenatal check when the doctor broke the news. When I was diagnosed with AIDS, I had only one prayer. In that moment when the sun seemed to set on my life, I prayed that my unborn child be free of the virus. I prayed that somehow Steve would be free of the virus too. Oh, how intently I prayed. When my son was born and he turned out

negative, my night suddenly went ablaze with a thousand stars. But there was one problem. Steve would not take the test. When he finally acquiesced, he was positive. I was devastated. My stars waned . . .

Steve knew the signs all too well. The clouds were gathering and soon there would be a storm, a deluge, he knew. He did not like the way she spoke. Her earnestness sounded almost unnatural. And why must she try to sanitise him?

“I have forbidden you to blame yourself for anything!” Steve growled.

“Oh, you don’t know how it feels seeing you suffer and knowing that I brought this pestilence on you. But I swear I have been a faithful woman. I was faithful to my husband. I was faithful to you, Steve . . .,” her voice broke and she burst into tears.

“Listen Maureen,” Steve spoke with a tenderness that surprised Kanja. A strange light played in his eyes. “Never cry when the sun goes down for if you do, the tears will not let you see the stars,” he pleaded.

She heaved and gasped painfully, trying to get hold of her emotions. Finally, she wiped her tears and looked at her son, playing innocently on his father’s lap. She had two daughters from her first marriage but this boy, the fruit of the only true love she had ever known in her thirty and five years under the sun, was the crown of her life. Still, a fear tugged at her heart leaving her belly feeling an airy hollowness. Would she live to see him grow up into a man? And if she died, would Steve care for him or would he let the boy to wander unloved, unwanted on the harsh streets of life? Maureen had no doubt that Steve would live: he had the will. She wished she too could summon up that kind of spirit. She looked at Steve and their son again, the way a seer peers at the contents of his diviner-gourd to read the secrets of life and she smiled wearily. These were her men. She could die but these two, father and son, would always be together. Nothing could separate them. She could see that in the way the boy sat and played so snugly with his father, in the way Steve held him as if he would never let go. It was such a perfect picture. Just as if the whole world was just the two of them. Still, she wanted reassurance but when she tried to speak, the-words would not form. Steve held her eyes in his in that judicious manner of his and she knew he knew what she wanted to ask. And the answer was in his eyes — a more profound answer than any words could speak. In that moment, Maureen felt strangely relaxed and her heart sang: Ngûmbûkanyumethîi, Mageganiameekwothîi, matarîmekwo! Yes, she would fly out of this world and wonders hitherto unseen would be performed on earth ...

Maureen felt ready to fly.

Witnessing all this, Kanja felt like a fraud, like a sneak and an eavesdropper — desecrating something sacred, He had not touched his juice yet. The glass, nay the cup of suffering, was still there on the table where he had put it. He kept glancing at it as if the HIV virus was a genie he expected to any moment emerge from the glass and strangle him to death. He wished for a miracle that could remove the glass before him.

"I want more juice," the little boy said.

Steve took Kanja's glass, drank half the contents and then holding the glass to the boy's lips let him drink the rest of the juice. The boy smacked his lips contentedly.

"It is getting late," Kanja said, feeling very small. "I've got to get going.

"I will see you off," Steve said.

The boy would not agree to be left behind. Steve held his hand and together they walked Kanja out. Together as one, Maureen thought watching father and son walk out. A perfect picture: let the maddening crowds take it, frame it, and look at it from all dimensions. Yes, let them bring one better, cleaner, holier picture from the darkly shadows in which they lived! Long after Steve and the boy had left, Maureen stood in the middle of the room gazing at that picture in her mind. The beauty of it tugged painfully at her heart and in spite of herself something gave way. Warm tears flowed freely down her face. If only people were more compassionate.

The sun was already dipping behind the Kianderi hills. "How time flies!" Steve exclaimed when they came to the road. "Let's see you again when the sun rises." "Yes, let's," Kanja said.

When he returned, Steve found Maureen coiled up in bed; a picture of dejection. Her Bible, ever-present these days, open at Psalms Twenty-Three. "What is it, Ma?" the little boy asked. He tried to turn her over but Maureen buried her face in the pillows and wept.

The boy started to cry. Maureen sat up and took him in her arms. "You know why your friend did not drink the juice?" she asked between her heart-wrenching cries.

"Yes, of course I know," Steve replied.

"Why are people so cruel?"

"No, Maureen. Normally, people do not mean to be cruel. Most are just selfish and ignorant. It is normal, I think, to fear the unknown."

"It hurts . . . when your age-mate comes to my house and refuses to take what I serve him, it hurts," Maureen moaned.

"You must learn to ignore people like that. What they say, what they do. What does it matter? Are they not the same people who a while ago used to speak of how beautiful you are?"

"They didn't mean it!" Maureen scowled like an angry cat.

"Of course, they didn't. *Gûthekio tikwendwo*, to be smiled at is not to be loved. That's how the elders caution us. But do we listen? No! The result? I will tell you. Dysfunctional, loveless families that weigh like a millstone around our necks or we are condemned to living shadowy, demeaning lives that turn the best among us into mean and cruel monsters. I don't consider that living. And verily, verily I say unto you: do not be deceived. Despite all the pretences, not many people can say they have lived as happily as we have lived these past three or so years. That is something. That is everything. And we can still live if you always remember to forget the things

that make you sad, and remember to remember the things that make you glad. Like our son, here. Let's always count our blessings, dear.
"You should have been a preacher," Maureen smiled.

Steve felt a strong craving for a cigarette. His lips and fingers quivered. He looked longingly at the three cigarettes he had strung together and hung at the head of his bed the day the doctor asked him to stop smoking. For a while, he struggled with the temptation to reach out for one. "Actually, when I was young I toyed with the idea of becoming a Catholic priest. My mother discouraged me. I was her eldest child, you see, and when my father passed on, I knew I had a duty to my ancestors to keep the family name alive. That's why for me it is such a good thing that Kimotho is free of the virus. When we are gone, he shall bring us back you and me to earth through his own children. Do you realise that in the next generation, we two shall be brother and sister?"

Maureen now laughed. This man, the things he spoke. "But you don't know whether he shall have only sons or only daughters, or even no children at all," she said.

"I am positive..."

"Of course, you are. The doctor said so," she interjected.

Steve laughed. He felt good. If she could joke about their status, that was a good sign. There was hope. "It is not of that I speak. That I accept. What I meant to say is that I am sure our son shall have a son of his own, who as is customary, he shall name after his father; and a daughter whom he shall name after his mother. In our next life we shall be brother and sister! Don't you see Maureen, today we may have no names in the street. For those who know no better, the virus might be our first names but our names, our remembrance shall never be erased from the face of the earth!"

It was true, Maureen thought. The cycle of life of which Steve spoke was so true. So comforting. Wasn't she herself the reincarnation of her grandmother? Were these not the wonders to be performed when she was gone? How had she forgotten such a natural principle of life? The revelation was so uplifting. She hugged Steve. "I will always love you — in this and the next life," she smiled and for a moment it was just like in the days when they met. "Let me tell you something. One day, I will meet your mother just to tell her what a wonderful man she managed to bring into this world. You know, women don't bring forth boys like you anymore."

In the corner, Steve put a record on the gramophone. In a while, Kamarû's silky-smooth voice filled the house with wistful love lyrics "Till Death Do Us Part." It was one of Steve's favourite records. As he sang along, he marvelled at the power of love to overcome:

My love

I love you like a ring on the finger

Or like my bedtime clothes

I love you like a mirror directed towards the sun

Or like an orange in the month of dryness...

The song held Steve in its spell. And it dawned on him how true the words of the song were. The greatest is love. It was the only sanctuary for those who suffered. Yet, what a short supply it was in! He wished people would not hoard love, the way businessmen hoard flour so that the price could go up. Always thinking about their profits while across the country, hunger trailed the poor to their beds. What selfishness! what cruelty! God, forgive them for they know not what they do!

It was now dark. Steve stood at the window. A smattering of stars was barely visible in the sky. He switched on the lights and blinked against the sudden brightness that flooded the room.

Maureen was like the sun; the way the pendulum of her moods swung these days, shining bright one moment and hiding behind dark clouds in the next. Now she lay on the bed, the little boy asleep in her arms, looking forlorn, woebegone.

Steve went to the kitchen and started preparing supper. As he fell to work, he smiled to himself with a new remembrance. According to the people, Steve's woman had bewitched him. See how he goes shopping in the market, and I hear he even cooks for her . . . Now what's that if not medicine? A man cooking for a woman? That woman, she's ruined a fine man just so that she can reach his money! Such talk used to enrage Steve. Now he just savoured it indulgently, remembering many years ago when his mother traded clay pots at the Murang'a market. He would help her sometimes. But on many a day, he would be left at home to take care of his sisters — washing for them, cooking for them. So what was the big deal? Let those who must speak because they have mouths to speak. Yes, let them talk.

The food was ready. Mwea pishori served with kunde, lentils, spinach and fried liver. The little boy gobbled up the food happily but Maureen would not eat no matter how hard Steve tried to coax her. It was a waste of good food, seeing that she was dying anyway, she argued. "You can't hold your health if you don't eat," he pleaded.

"You just must eat and take your drugs every day."

"Oh Steve, you don't know how weary I am. I just wish to rest."

Steve tried to jostle with Maureen and managed to force some food into her mouth. She gave in but after she had eaten just a few spoonfuls, she started to gasp as if she would throw up. Nausea. "I just wish to rest," she repeated.

Steve knew very well what she meant by rest. "I have told you many times that you should banish thoughts of death from your mind," he admonished.

"Knowing that every sun that sets brings me closer to the grave?"

"But it does that for everybody."

"Well, yes. Life is a fatal disease. But with AIDS coursing through my veins, I am the living dead already," Maureen declared.

"That's the wrong way to look at it and you know it," Steve retorted with a tinge of impatience. "Why is it when we agree that we must fight this thing together, you keep on retracting? Why?"

"But I am just a woman you know. The mind agrees with you but the spirit is weak," Maureen said.

"You insult yourself. You insult all womanhood. What on earth do you mean, the mind is willing but the spirit is weak?" Steve demanded. But maybe she was right, he mused, Maureen had simply allowed the virus to kill her spirit to live. On second thought, he concluded that this was not even true. This had nothing to do with the fact that she was a woman. It had nothing to do with the virus either. It had to do with her deep-seated sense of guilt. The feeling that she was somehow responsible for his illness. It was an idea that loose speaking mouths had so rooted in her unconscious mind that it was always lying somewhere just below the surface, ready to bubble up any moment at the least excuse. Like a refrain in a dirge or a stuck gramophone record, those idle words repeated themselves so regularly in her heart that she too had come to believe them. That woman, she's ruined a fine man just so that she can reach his money! No matter how much you loved them, how did one uproot a thorny thicket that grew inside another person's heart? Without Maureen, Steve knew that there should be no sunshine in his world but for the first time ever, he allowed himself to contemplate the terrible possibility of her death.

"I was a faithful woman . . . faithful to my husband . . . faithful to this other man, the only man who ever truly loved me and treated me like a woman should be treated. With love. Respect. I was a faith-

"Maureen, are you alright?" Steve asked, roused from his sleep by her rumbling. He switched on the lights. Maureen coiled away to the far end of the bed, her back against the wall and a dazed expression on her face. She was trembling like somebody who had just woken up from a nightmare. A burst of panic sent spasms of fear cascading down Steve's spine. Gently; he touched her brow. It was scalding hot. Was this the moment he had dreaded?

Though I walk through the valley of death . . . thy rod and thy staff ... comfort me!" Though she sounded coherent, Maureen's eyes Steve had a glassy and empty look. Steve jumped out of bed and started to dress. His mind was in a turmoil.

"Thou prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies . . .," Maureen mumbled on.

Steve shook her, trying to snap her out of her reverie. . . . my cup overflows "Maureen!, "1- I sha-Ildwc-II in the hous-e of the Lo-r-d for ever!" She was losing coherence.

"No Maureen, please! Please don't leave me mama Kimotho," Steve cried. He held her in his arms and felt her go limp as she lost consciousness. They say a man's tears flow into his stomach — not to be seen. Steve felt his drip like rain drops. He stormed out

of the house to where he parked his pick-up truck in the corner. It had been a long while since he used it but when he turned the ignition, it started readily. He drove it up to his door. He saw a neighbour peeping through the window and gestured to him to come out. He was a young teacher at the local primary school. "Tom, Maureen is very ill. I want to rush her to the hospital. Please help me carry her into the truck." "The truck cannot be comfortable if she is so ill," Tom pointed out. "That's true but . . ."

"Mr Kabia's house is just behind the shops. I will see if he can lend me his car," Tom explained and dashed off before Steve could say anything. He came back almost immediately without the car. Steve did not ask what had transpired. They carried Maureen out and sat her in the front seat. She was limp and heavy but her pulse was okay. The hospital was only twenty minutes away and they arrived within no time. Steve explained what had happened. "She is HIV-positive and of late she has refused to take her drugs."

"That's dangerous," the doctor said. He examined her for a while and had her admitted right away. As the nurses wheeled her to the ward, with Steve and Tom trotting beside them, Maureen regained her consciousness.

"Steve dear . . . What's happening? Where are they taking me?" Then realising that she was in hospital, she screamed. "Hospital!" She spat out the word like a bitter pill. "I don't want to die in a hospital, Steve."

"You're not dying, Sister," one of the nurses said soothingly.

"I am dying . . . Why don't you just tell me I am dying!"

Even as she protested and pleaded with Steve not to leave her in the hospital, the two nurses eased Maureen into a bed. When it was obvious nobody was paying any heed to her protestations, Maureen coiled up in bed in her familiar manner. "Steve, bring your mother to see me. I've an important message for her. Please do not fail." After that, she did not speak any other word — not even to Steve.

The following morning, Steve was up early. After making breakfast and feeding the boy he left him in Tom's house and went to the hospital. He went to the ward. One of the nurses who had attended to them the previous night was at the report desk. Was she avoiding his eyes? With a sense of trepidation, Steve glanced towards the bed in which Maureen had lain. It was empty.

"I'm so sorry, Steve," the nurse said. "Please come with me." He followed her into a small office. "She passed on at around four this morning," she informed him.

Steve was in a daze. Did pass on mean die? "How? Why?" "Pneumonia," he heard the nurse speak from far, far away.

Opportunistic diseases, Steve thought. The doctor had warned that those were the main threats to a person living with HIV and AIDS. He felt as if his legs would

give in under him. He sat down. A bout of dizziness overwhelmed him. Around him everything went dark.

They buried her within the week. A great many people turned up that Saturday for the brief ceremony. Many stood in small groups conversing in whispers. What will he do with the child now? Maybe Maureen's daughters will take care of him. You know, a child once born is never thrown away.

Throughout the ceremony, Steve stood by the grave. He could feel the hundreds of eyes drilling into him, but he did not mind. They could stare till their eyes popped out. Soon the grave was a mound with freshly planted flowers. The people retreated to the perimeters of the farm, talking, whispering and staring.

Steve started looking around. Where was Kimotho? He saw the boy leaning against a banana tree. He walked towards him. "Boy!" he called when he was within ear shot. "Time to go home, Daddy." The boy came running.

Steve hoisted the boy up, like a flag, and sat him spread-eagled across his shoulders. He could feel the tears dripping into his stomach but he was determined that they should never flow down his face. And in his sadness, the words he had always spoken to Maureen in her moments of depression, now spoke to him with a meaning so profound. When the sun goes down, do not cry because the tears will not let you see the stars. Maureen might be dead but she had left him with this boy, their son, to always remind him of she who once lit up his life so brightly.

As Steve walked away, people cleared the way before him, and the boy waved at them. Bye!

From *When the Sun Goes Down* by Goro wa Kamau from the anthology *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond*. Edited by Emelia Ilieva and Waveney Olembo. Nairobi:

Questions

1. Identify the setting and characters of the story.
2. Write the summary of the plot.
3. Identify the types of plot used in the story and explain them.

2.2. Creative writing process

Activity 2.2.1

1. What do you understand by creative writing?
2. What are the main steps of creative writing?

Note: The process of writing involves four major stages. In prewriting stage, you plan the work to be done. In the drafting stage, you get your ideas down on paper. In revising stage, you rework your written draft. In the proofreading stage, you check your final draft for errors in spelling and grammar.

Stage 1: Planning for writing

Before planning, you have to analyse the writing situation. The analysis of the situation in the process of writing takes into accounts the following points:

- a) **Topic:** the subject you will be writing about.
- b) **Purpose:** what you want your writing to accomplish.
- c) **Audience:** the people for whom you are writing to.
- d) **Voice:** the way the writing will sound to the reader. What tone should your writing have?
- e) **Content:** what will you have to find out?
- f) **Form:** the shape the writing will take including its length and organization.

After analysing the above points, you plan to do some research in library or elsewhere to gather content information. After gathering the information, you organise it in a logical way. Then you may want to make a rough outline.

Stage 2: Writing

Once you have found a topic, taken notes, and organised them, you are ready to write a preliminary version of your paper. Keep the following points in mind as you are writing:

- Write in a way that feels comfortable to you.
- Do not aim for perfection in the draft.
- Keep your notes beside you as you write, and keep the purpose and audience in mind.
- As you write, feel free to change the original plan. Remember that writing is a form of thinking. If you think of the new ideas, add them. If some points seem not to work, eliminate them.

Stage 3: Revision

Once you have completed your first version, you can begin revising it. This is the time during which you work seriously on your version to make it as good as possible. Some draft may need little revision; others require major reworking. When you revise a work, check punctuation marks, spelling and grammar.

Questions in the table below will help you to revise your piece of writing.

Checklist for revision

Topic and Purpose

- Is my main idea clear?
- Does the writing achieve its purpose?
- Content and Development
- Have I developed the main idea completely?
- Have I provided examples or details that support the statements I have made?
- Are my sources of information unbiased, up-to-date?
- Have I avoided including unnecessary or unrelated ideas?
- If I have used quotations, are these quotations exact?

Form

- Have I followed a logical method of organization?
- Have I used transitions to make the connections between ideas clear?
- Does the writing have a clear introduction, body, and conclusion?

Audience

- Will my audience understand what I have said?
- Will my audience find the writing interesting?
- Will my audience respond in the way I have intended?

Voice and word choice

Does the writing convey the impression I have intended it to convey?

- Is my language appropriate?
- Have I avoided vague, undefined terms?
- Have I used vivid, specific nouns, verbs, and adjectives?
- Have I avoided jargon?
- Have I avoided clichés slang, euphemisms?

Characters

- Did I have the main characters and supporting characters?
- Did I pick them in real life?

Plot

- Are all events well arranged?
- Did I give the conclusion or a moral lesson?

Application activity 2.2.1

In not more than 500 words, write about the day you will never forget.

2.3. Themes

Activity 2.3

Read the short story “Leaving” from *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond* and answer questions.

1. Discuss what happens to the main character? What do you learn from his experiences?
2. What hints does the title give you about the author’s possible message?
3. Discuss the main themes of the given short story “Leaving” from *When the Sun Goes Down*.

Note: In a novella, short story or novel, themes are what the writer is trying to convey i.e. the central ideas of the story. Short stories have one theme while novella and novels have many. Themes are insights of life that the story exposes to the reader. To find the theme in the story, we must ask the question: What is the purpose of the story and what is it all about? You can also check how much an idea is repeated in the story.

Application Activity 2.3

Read the short story “The Retraction” by Stanley Onjezani Kenani from *When the Sun Goes Down* and answer the questions.

1. Describe the tone of the email message.
2. Was the airline fair in firing the Tatha? Explain your answer.
3. Discuss the main themes of the given short story “The Retraction” by Stanley Onjezani Kenani from *When the Sun Goes Down*.

2.4 Literary devices

2.4.1 Simile

Activity 2.4.1

1. What do you understand by literary devices?
2. Discuss the main literary devices used in prose narrative.

Note: A simile is a literary technique used in story telling. In a simile, a comparison is made between two objects of different kinds which have however at least one point in common. A simile is usually introduced by such words as like; *the righteous shall flourish as the palm tree, Words are like leaves and where they most abound much fruit of sense beneath is rarely found.*

Application Activity 2.4.1

Discuss the use of simile as one of the literary devices in the given short story.

Beeda stood on the school veranda and watched the last pupils disappeared down the road. He thought of this as the road swallowed the pupils. The day's climax, a question-and-answer, came back to him and he heard his voice rise to fill the classroom...

...Beeda finished his tea, thanked his mother and put the cups in the sink. A little later, Ma Beeda told him to lay the table, as the food was ready. She served his favourite dish: Irish potatoes with fish cooked in thick groundnut soup. Beeda bent over his steaming plate and the aroma went deep into his nose. After a day at school, with the voices of the pupils fresh in their heads, they ate in silent, with only the whistle of a bird intruding. At the end of the meal, Beeda thanked his mother for cooking and left the kitchen. She did the dishes and then went to her room she had school finances, teacher's motivation, the security situation to think about before going to bed.

Beeda made the next day's lesson plans and at nine o'clock he said goodnight to his mother, deep in the night, tucked under the sheets, he woke with a start. A sound like that of a rock thrown on to the roof had scared him awake.

From the anthology *When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond*.

2.4.2 Metaphor

A metaphor is an implied simile. It does not, like the simile, state that one thing is like another or acts as another, but takes that for granted and proceeds as if the two things were one. Thus, when we say, 'he fought like a lion' we use a simile, but when we say, 'He was a lion in the fight', we use a metaphor. Examples of metaphors include The camel is the ship of the desert. The news is a dream. Richard was a lion in the fight (metaphor).

Activity 2.4.2

Discuss the use of metaphors and simile in the extract below.

...You do not have the courage to ask me: age-mate, is it true that your friend Maureen, has AIDS? Instead, you sit here and like all god forsaken hypocrites go on about what a smashing beauty Maureen is and you, like all the other frauds in this village, have absolutely no idea what beauty is all about. Tragedy is friendship that wears the cloak of hypocrisy! That's how they hanged Jesus, you know. I am no Christ though, but you can crucify me if you want. I do not give a hoot one way or the other. "I'm sorry brother, I actually meant to ask," Kanja said apologetically.

"OK, brother. Ask. I'm afraid I lost my cool," Steve threw the gauntlet.

"So is it true?"

"Why are you afraid of speaking the world?" Steve smiled. "And is it not a four-letter word anyway? So why are you afraid?"

"OK, age-mate. So is it true Maureen has AIDS?"

"That is good. You will be surprised that when we put names to our fears, they are not as threatening as they appeared at first. Besides, it is not like you've anything to fear yourself. The last time I knew, you were a hallelujah, drum-beating Christian in the House of Miracle Tabernacle. AIDS is not for the heaven-bound, you know." The sarcasm hit Kanja like a blow, making grimace. "...but here we go: yes, it is true. Maureen has AIDS," Steve affirmed.

Oh! Kanja thought almost audibly. He remembered the first day he met Maureen and how enamoured he had been of her easy-going manner. She had politely turned down his advances. Hurt, Kanja had avoided her and hoped she would keep her mouth shut. But now he saw the hand of God in what had happened. He visualised himself carrying the virus in his body and people talking behind his back and shuddered. Steve was right. He, Kanja, was a coward. He would rather hang himself than have the whole village back-biting him. He looked at his friend. Did Steve also have the big disease with a small name? All this time, Steve held eyes in his gaze, a bemused expression on his face. He thinks that God loves him more because he is not ill. But how does he ever know, the fool, Steve thought. He smiled wanly and said, "So now you know, from the horse's own mouth, as they say. Spread the gospel.

From the anthology When the Sun Goes Down and Other Stories from Africa and Beyond.

2.4.3 Personification

Activity 2.4.3

Discuss the use of personification in the extract below.

It was an altogether odd night. The wind stronger as the night went, the air more humid. My skin started itching and I could not focus. I decided to go around the gymnasium, auditorium, and pool first. Everything checked out OK. The gate to the pool banged away in the wind like some crazy person who alternately shakes his head and nods. There was no order to it. First a couple of nods-yes, yes – then no, no, no... It is a weird thing to compare it to, I know, but that is what it felt like.

...When the sun came up, the typhoon had already passed. The wind had died down and it was a sunny day. I went over the entrance. The cigarette butt I had tossed away there, as was my wooden sword. But no mirror. There never had been any mirror there. What I saw was not a ghost. It was simply myself. I can never forget how terrified I was that night, and whenever I remember it, this thought always springs to mind: that the most frightening thing in the world is our own self.

From *When the Sun Goes down and other stories from Africa and beyond*.

Note: In personification inanimate objects and abstract notions are spoken of as having life and intelligence. Examples of personification include the following;

- Laughter holding both her sides
- Death lays his city hand on kings

2.4.4 Symbolism

Activity 2.4.4

Read the following extract and identify the use of symbols.

She let the tears flow freely as if tears alone could heal the ache in her heart, the desire for the man she had chosen. But there must be hope, she thought. No one, nothing could shut her away from Yalla for ever. She must go to him, she must.

Hatred burned within her breast. Was it her fault that she did not like Jama? Her father had accepted the cattle first and told her about it later. He turned out to be a weak-kneed, effeminate man. A man who could not weave mats or take the cattle out to graze. A coward who had wept and begged as they flogged him at the sharo. He had taken his flogging, it was true, but he had not taken it like a man and it would be humiliating to marry him. Her father might give her away to Jama, but he would not be present when the other maidens would taunt her with having married a coward: "And how's your husband? The one who stays in bed still sunrise, who must not be soaked by the rain? Ha, ha! A husband indeed!"

The mistake had been Yalla's, for he had not honoured the arrangement in full. It had been simple arrangement. She and Yalla were to escape from the camp before Jama brought the bulls that were the final instalment of the brideprice. Yalla was to have come to the hut at the hour when the hyenas begin to howl over the grazing fields. He was to scratch in the manner peculiar to the grey hawk that steals chickens and she would then know that he was waiting for her under the dorowa tree.

From When the Sun Goes down and other stories from Africa and beyond.

Note: Writers use symbols in their short stories to illuminate important aspects of the story. A symbol is a word that stands for a person, object, image or event that evokes a range of additional meanings. These meanings are usually central to the story. 'The mirror' in the story by that name may be said to represent the idea that people may not always see themselves clearly, 'like in a mirror', but may have a distorted picture of themselves.

End unit assessment activities

1. State the difference between a novella and short story.
2. Discuss the key aspects of a short story.
3. What are the main themes of the following short stories:
 - Leaving by Moyez G. Vassanji
 - The Bamboo Hut by Grace Ogot
 - When the Sun Goes Down by Goro wa Kamau
4. By referring to the short story Leaving by Moyez G. Vassanji, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of studying abroad.



UNIT 3

THEMES IN AFRICAN NOVELS

UNIT 3: THEMES IN AFRICAN NOVELS

Key Unit Competence: To be able to analyse major and minor themes in African novels and evaluate how they fit into specific historical, economic, social and cultural contexts.

Introductory activity

1. Observe the picture and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 14: learners in a reading session

Questions

- a) Why do we read novels?
- b) What message do novels give?
- c) List any five famous African novelists and their famous novels.

2. Read the following extract and answer the questions.

He carried on up the street and turned down Eloff Street. This was the heart of the city and the crowd was thick. It was difficult to move among all these white people; one had to keep on stepping aside, and to watch out for the motorcars that shot past.

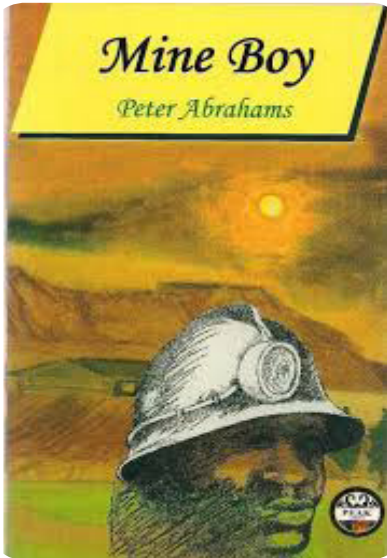


Figure 15: Book cover

Xuma smiled bitterly. The only place where he was completely free, was underground in the mines. There, he was a master and knew his way. There, he did not even fear his white man, for this white man depended on him. He was the boss boy. He gave the orders to the mine boys. They would do for him what they would not do for this white man or any other white man. He knew that, he had found it out. And underground, his white man respected him and asked him for his opinion before they did anything.

It was so and he was at home and ease underground. His white man had even tried to make friends with him because the other mine boys respected him so much. But a white man and a black man cannot be friends. They work together. That's all. He smiled. He did not want the things of the white man. He did not want to be friends with white man. Work for him, yes, but that's all. And didn't the others respect him more than they respected Johannes. It was because he did not say baas to the white man but knew how to deal with him.

From *Mine Boy* by **Peter Abrahams**

Questions

1. What happens to the main character?
2. What does the story tell you about people, values and society?
3. What is the main message or theme in the above extract?

Major themes in African novels

3.1 Historical themes

Activity 3.1.1

1. What do you understand by historical themes in prose fiction?
2. Discuss the elements of historical themes in prose fiction.

Note: A theme is the main or central idea in a novel. It is the view about life that is expressed in the novel. A theme may be expressed explicitly. This is when the writer states them openly and clearly. It could be also implied. This is when it is not stated directly. To find out a theme in a novel, a reader needs to deduce evidence from the novel. They must identify a cross section of examples from the extract to support their interpretation. They can interpret a book with political elements, historical elements, social elements, economical elements and cultural elements found in a book. There are themes that are common or universal like love, betrayal, suffering (calamities) and hope.

In historical fiction, setting is the most important literary element. Because the author is writing about a particular time in history, the information about the time period must be accurate, authentic, or both. To create accurate and authentic settings in their books, authors must research the time period thoroughly.

Application activity 3.1.1

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

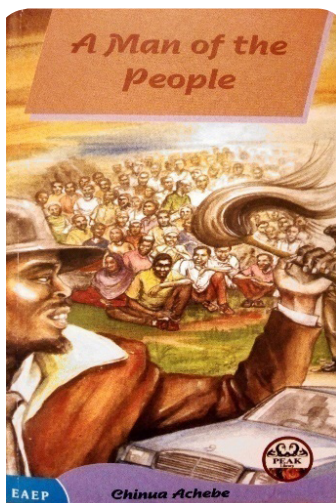


Figure 16: book cover

A common saying in the country after Independence was that it didn't matter what you knew but who you knew. And, believe me, it was no idle talk. For a person like me who simply couldn't stoop to lick any Big Man's boots it created a big problem. In fact, one reason why I took this teaching job in a bush, private school instead of a smart civil service job in the city with car, free housing, etc., was to give myself a certain amount of autonomy. So when I told the Minister that I had applied for a scholarship to do a post-graduate Certification of Education in London it did not even cross my mind to enlist his help. I think it is important to stress this point. I had had scholarships both to the secondary school and to the University without any godfather's help but purely on my own merit. And in any case it wasn't too important whether I did the post-graduate course or not. As far as I was concerned the important thing was going to be the opportunity of visiting Europe which in itself must be a big education. My friend Andrew Kadibe, who did the same course the previous year, seemed to have got a big kick out of it. I don't mean the white girls – you can have those out here nowadays – but quite small things. I remember him saying for instance that the greatest delight of his entire visit to Britain was when, for the first time in his twenty-seven years, a white man – a taxi-driver I think- carried his suit-case and said 'Sir' to him. He was so thrilled he tipped the man ten shillings. We laughed a lot about it but I could so easily see it happen.

But much as I wanted to go to Europe I wasn't going to sell my soul for it or beg anyone to help me. It was the Minister himself who came back to the post-graduate question at the end of the reception without any prompting whatever for me. (As a matter of fact I tried hard to avoid catching his attention again.)

And the proposals he made didn't seem to me to be offensive in any way. He invited me to come and spend my holidays with him in the capital and while I was there he would try and find out from his cabinet colleague, the Minister of Overseas Training whether there was anything doing.

From *A Man of the People* by **Chinua Achebe**,

Questions

1. Discuss historical themes depicted in the above extract.
2. Trace some relevant elements that show the book was written after independence.

Activity 3.1.2

Read the extract and compare its historical themes with the extract given above (Activity 3.1.1).

... Now you, Xuma, what are you going to do?

"I came for work. There is no work where I come from. And here, they say, there is much work."

"Where will you work?"

"In the mines. It is a man's work."

Leah shook her head and poured herself a drink.

"The mines are no good, Xuma, later on you cough and then you spit blood and you become weak and died. I have seen it many times. Today you are young and you are strong, and tomorrow you are thin and ready to die."

"All work is like that."

"No... Listen Xuma, I like you, I can make you powerful. I am powerful here. If you become my head-man you will be powerful too. When you came and found me outside, I was watching for the police. These others were burying beer in the ground. There is much money in it. Maybe you can work for me, eh?"

"No... Well, you are a man with the dumbness of a man..."

Come, I will show you where you can sleep.?

"I have no money," Xuma said.

"No. But you are strong and you will work and Pay me later, heh?"

"Yes"

"And maybe I will need a strong man sometimes and you will help."

"Maybe."

"Here," Leah said, going into a little room. "This is where the teacher lives but she will not come till the today after tomorrow so you can sleep here. When she comes we will think of something else." She struck a match and lit the candle. She went to the door. "And listen to the meXuma from the north, don't think because I do this I am soft or easy and you can cheat me, because if you do, I will cut you up so that your own mother will not want you..."

Xuma laughed. "You are a strange woman. I don't understand you. The only thing I can understand is your kindness."

"You're all right," she said softly. "But the city is a strange place. Good night."

She went out and shut the door.

Slowly, Xuma undressed. He felt better now that he had eaten, but he was very tired. Yet he found it hard to sleep when he got into bed.

From *Mine Boy* by **Peter Abrahams**.

3.2 Political themes

Activity 3.2

1. What do you understand by a political theme in prose fiction?
2. Discuss the features of a political theme in a novel.
3. Read the extract below and answer the questions.

When Xuma got to the mines, there was confusion everywhere. Myriads of light glowered everywhere and a confusion of voices greeted him. Whistles blew and little groups of men moved about. He pushed his way through the men and saw that some of them belonged to Johannes' gang. For ahead, he saw the Red One. There must have been an accident.

He grabbed a man near him and shook him.

"What is it?"

"There is an accident," the man said.

"Where is Johannes?"

"I don't know."

"He's down there," another man said.

Xuma pushed his way through till he stood beside Paddy.

Paddy grabbed his arm.

"It is dangerous," another white man said.

"Wait for the engineers to go," the manager said.

"There are two men down there," Paddy said and moved towards the little cage.

Xuma followed him.

They got in and the cage shot down.

An ambulance arrived. Men stood by with stretchers. Two doctors waited. A hush fell over the crowd of waiting men. The mine manager kept looking at his watch. The minutes crowded by.

Five... Ten... Twenty...

Then they heard the cage coming up. There was dead stillness as Xuma stepped out of the cage carrying the body of Johannes, and was followed by Paddy with the body of Chris.

The doctors looked at Chris and Johannes. They were both dead.

"They kept the place up with their bodies so that we could get out!" a mine boy cried and began to sob.

Nobody paid any attention to him.

The two bodies were put into the ambulance. It moved off.

The tension in the air eased. Two engineers went down to inspect the damage.

Silence hung over the crowds of waiting men.
A gain time crawled by. Paddy gave Xuma a cigarette.
The engineers came up.

"Well?" the manager asked.

"It was a minor collapse," one of the engineers said. "It's all right now. The beams were soaked through and rotten at one place. They gave in. Nothing serious. If those fellows had kept their heads and stayed where they were instead of panicking and trying to keep the place open with their bodies, everything, would have been alright. It is alright for working, anyhow, just a spot of clearing up and putting up new beams. The new shift can do that."

The manager looked at the second engineer who nodded.

"They lost their lives through panic," he said.

Paddy grabbed the man and felled him with one blow.

"They looked after their men," he said. "We warned you about that thing a long time ago."

Men stepped between Paddy and the fallen engineer.

"All right! All right! The manager cried. "The mine's all right. Get ready to go down, night shift!"

"No!" Xuma cried. "No!"

"Get ready!" the manager shouted.

"Let them fix up the place first!" Xuma cried. "We warned them about it. They said it was alright. Now two men are dead! Good men! Let them fix it up first then at the rest of the mine boys.

"Get ready!" he shouted again.

"No!" a voice cried. "Fix it up first!"

Xuma felt good suddenly. Strong and free. A man.

"We are men!" he shouted. "It does not matter if our skins are black! We are not cattle to throw away our lives! We are men!"

"This is a strike!" the manager cried. He pointed at Xuma and shouted: "You will go to jail! I have called the police! They will be here soon!"

"We will not go down if you say, so, Xuma!" a man shouted.

Xuma felt stronger than he had ever felt in all his life. Strong enough to be a man without colour. And how, suddenly, he knew that it could be so. Man could be without colour.

"Build up the place and we will go down!" he shouted. "Build it up properly. Johannes was my friend! He was our friend! Now he is dead! Build up the place!"

"Those who are not striking come on this side!" the manager shouted and stepped to the left. All the indunas and the white men moved over to the left.

Only Paddy remained where he was. Xuma and the mine boys were on the right, the manager and the indunas and the other white men on the left. Paddy was in the

centre.

“O’Shea!” the manager called.

It seemed that Paddy did not hear him.

“Come on, Paddy!” a white man called. “It’s all very well to play with them sometimes but we must show these kaffirs where they belong. Come on!

This was what I argued with Di about, Paddy thought. This is the test of all my verbal beliefs. Zuma has taken the leadership, I must follow. Di was wrong about him. He’s a man.

In the distance they could hear the siren of the police cars. Soon now, the police would be there.

Paddy walked over to Xuma and took his hand.

“I am a man first, Zuma,” he said. Then he turned to the other mine boys and shouted: “Zuma is right! They pay you a little! They don’t care if you risk your lives! Why is it so! Is not the blood of a black man red like that of a white man? Does not a black man feel too? Does not a black man love life too? I am with you! Let them fix up the place first!”

Xuma smiled. Now he understood. He understood many things. One can be a person first. A man first and then a black man or a white man...

Two pick-up vans swept into the mine yard and policemen swarmed out of them.

“There they are! Those two are the ring-leaders!” the manager shouted.

The indunas joined the policemen as they rushed on the crowd striking left and right with their batons.

Xuma saw a policeman strike Paddy across the back of the neck while another grabbed his arms and twisted them behind him. Then suddenly, a policeman was close to him and he could not watch Paddy any more. Something stung his left shoulder and made his left arm limp with pain. He dodged a blow to his head and grabbed the policeman’s arm. With a twist of twist of his wrist he wrenched the baton from the policeman. The policeman went down. He felt a blow at the back of his head and trickle of warm blood running down his shirt.

His brain cleared suddenly. He should get away from here. He struck at a helmeted figure in front of him and moved on. Now he was on the outskirts of the fighting crowd. He could make a dash for it and be away. Then Paddy’s voice drifted to him:

“Do not run away, Zuma!”

But feet were pounding behind him and the desire to be free was strong, so he ran. The pounding drew near so he ran faster. After a time, no one followed him. Still he ran. His lungs felt as though they were bursting and his brain throbbed painful. And he could still hear Paddy shouting:

“Do not run away, Zuma!”

Around him, the streets were empty. He was alone in the world. He ran through empty street. Through Malay Camp, past Park Station. It was a though a devil was

driving him. Tears of weariness burned in his eyes. Still he could not stop himself. Now he was near Maisy's place. He slackened his pace. When he got to Maisy's gate he walked, but very fast. He was in a hurry. He went through the little passage. There was very little time.

He knocked on her door. In a little while he saw light, then Maisy opened the door. When she saw his face, all sleep vanished from her eyes.

"Xuma!"

"Hello, Maisy."

She pulled him into the room and shut the door.

Ma Plank sat up in the corner of the room where she slept on the floor. Xuma noticed that she looked very much older.

Without a word, Maisy got water and bathed his head. Ma Plank made tea, on Maisy's little Primus stove. When he had drunk the tea, Xuma told them what happened.

"The Red One's in jail. I must go there too. It could be wrong if I do not go. I would not be a man then."

"You are mad, Xuma," Ma Plank said. "Go to another city till it is all over. They will not get you."

From *Mine Boy* by **Peter Abrahams**.

3.3 Economic themes

Activity 3.3.1

1. What do you understand by economic theme in a novel?
2. Assess the characteristics of an economic theme in a novel.

Activity 3.3.2

Read the following extract and answers the questions.

Nanga must have gone into politics soon afterwards and then won a seat in Parliament. It was easy in those days – before we knew its cash price.) I used to read about him in the papers some years later and even took something like pride in him. At that time, I had just entered the University and was very active in the Students' branch of the People's Organization Party(P.O.P). Then in 1960 something disgraceful

happened in the Party and I was completely disillusioned.

At that time Mr Nanga was an unknown back-bencher in the governing P.O.P. A general election was imminent. The P.O.P. was riding high in the country and there was no fear of its not being returned. Its opponent, the Progressive Alliance Party, was weak and disorganized.

Then came the slump in the international coffee market. Overnight (or so it seemed to us) the Government had a dangerous financial crisis on its hands. Coffee was the prop of our economy just as coffee farmers the bulwark of the P.O.P.

The Minister of Finance at the time was a first-rate economist with a Ph.D. in public finance. He presented to the Cabinet a complete plan for dealing with the situation.

The Prime Minister said 'No' to the plan. He was not going to risk losing the election by cutting down the price paid to coffee planters at that critical moment; the National Bank should be instructed to print fifteen million pounds. Two-thirds of the Cabinet support the Minister. The next morning the Prime Minister sacked them and in the evening, he broadcast to the nation. He said the dismissed ministers were conspirators and traitors who had teamed up with foreign saboteurs to destroy the new nation.

I remember this broadcast very well. Of course, no one knew the truth at that time. The newspapers and the radio carried the Prime Minister's version of the story. We were very indignant.

Our Students' Union met in an emergency session and passed a vote of confidence in the leader and called for a detention law to deal with the miscreants. The whole country was behind the leader. Protest marches and demonstrations were staged up and down the land.

It was at this point that I first noticed a new, dangerous and sinister note in the universal outcry.

The Daily Chronicle, an official organ of the P.O.P., had pointed out in an editorial that the Miscreant Gang, as the dismissed ministers were now called, were all university people and highly educated professional men. (I have preserved a cutting of that editorial.)

Let us now and for all time extract from our body-politic as a dentist extracts a stinking tooth all those decadent stooges versed in text-book economics and aping the white man's mannerisms and way of speaking. We are proud to be Africans. Our true leaders are not those intoxicated with their Oxford, Cambridge or Harvard degrees but those who speak the language of the people. Away with the damnable and expensive university education which only alienates an African from his rich

and ancient culture and puts him above his people...

This cry was taken up on all sides. Other newspapers pointed out that even in Britain where the Miscreant Gang got its 'so called education' a man need to be an economist to be Chancellor of the Exchequer or a doctor to be Minister of Health. What mattered was loyalty to the party.

I was in the public gallery the day the Prime Minister received his overwhelming vote of confidence. And that was the day the truth finally came out; only no one was listening. I remember the grief-stricken figure of the dismissed Minister of Finance as he held his team into the chamber and was loudly booed by the members and the public. That week his car had been destroyed by angry mobs and his house stoned. Another dismissed minister had been pulled out of his car, beaten insensible, and dragged along the road for fifty yards, then tied hand and foot, gagged and left by the roadside. He was still in the orthopaedic hospital when the house met.

That was my first – and last – visit to Parliament. It was also the only time I had set eyes on Mr Nanga again since he taught me in 1948.

From *A Man of the People* by **Chinua Achebe**.

Questions

1. Discuss the main economic activity depicted from the above extract.
2. Compare the economic activity from the above extract with the economic activity in Rwanda.
3. As a class, debate on the motion :
 - "Our true leaders should not be those intoxicated with their Oxford, Cambridge and Harvard degrees but those who speak the language of the people."

3.4 Cultural themes

Activity 3.4.1

1. What do you understand by cultural theme in a novel?
2. Highlight the features of cultural theme in a novel.

Before making the long journey to the capital, I thought I should first pay a short visit to my home village, Urua, about fifteen miles from Anata. I wanted to see my father about one or two matters but more especially I wanted to take my boy, Peter, to his

parents to holidays as I had promised to do before they let me have him.

Peter was naturally very excited about going home after nearly twelve months, during which time he had become a wage-earner. At first, I found it amusing when he went over to Josiah's shop across the road and bought a rayon head tie for his mother and a head of tobacco for his father. But as I thought more about it I realised how those touching gestures by a mere boy, whom I paid twenty shillings a month, showed up my own quite different circumstances. And I felt envious. I had no mother to buy head-ties for, and although I had a father, giving things to him was like pouring a little water into a dried-up well. My mother had been his second wife, but she had died in her first childbirth. This meant in the minds of my people that I was an unlucky child. If not a downright wicked and evil one. Not that my father ever said so openly. To begin with he had too many other wives and children to take any special notice of me. But I was always a very sensitive child and knew from quite early in my life that there was something wrong with my affairs. My father's first wife, whom we all call Mama, brought me up like one of her own children; still I sensed there was something missing. One day at play another child with whom I had fallen out called me 'Bad child that crunched his mother's skull'. That was it.

I am not saying that I had an unhappy or a lonely childhood. There were too many of us in the family for anyone to think of loneliness or unhappiness. And I must say this for my father that he never tolerated any of his wives drawing a line no matter how thin between her own children and those of others. We had only one Mama. The other two wives (at the time- there are more now) were called mother by their children, or so and so's mother by the rest.

Of course, as soon as I grew old enough to understand a few simple proverbs I realised that I should have died and let my mother live. Whenever my people go to console a woman whose baby has died at birth or soon after, they always tell her to dry her eyes because it is better the water is spilled than the pot broken. The idea being that a sound pot can always return to the stream.

My father was a District interpreter. In those days when no one understood as much as 'come' in the white man's language, the District officer was like the supreme Deity, and the interpreter the principle minor god who carried prayers and sacrifice to him. Every sensible supplicant knew that the lesser god must first be wooed and put in a sweet frame of mind before he could undertake to intercede with the owner of the sky.

So, Interpreter in those days were powerful, very rich, widely known and hated. Whenever the D. O's power was felt –and that meant everywhere –the interpreter's name was felt held in fear and trembling.

We grew up knowing that the world was full of enemies. Our father has protective medicine located at crucial points in our house and compound. One, I remember,

hung over the main entrance, but the biggest was in a gourd in a corner of his bedroom. No child went alone in that room which was virtually under lock and key anyway. We were told that such and such homes were never to be entered; and those people were pointed out to us from whom we must not accept food.

But we also had many friends. There were all those people who brought my father gifts of yams. Pots, of palm-wine or bottles of European drink, goats, sheep, chicken. Or those who brought their children to live with us as house –boys or their brides – to –be for training modern housekeeping. In spite of the enormous size of our family there was always meat in the house. At one time, I remember, my father used to slaughter a goat every Saturday, which was more than most families did in two years, and this sign of wealth naturally exposed us to their jealousy and malevolence.

From A Man of the People by Chinua Achebe.

Application activity 3.4.1

1. Identify the cultural elements depicted from the above extract.
2. Discuss how these cultural elements are relevant in the Rwandan context.

3.5 Social themes

Activity 3.5

1. What do you understand by social themes in a novel?
2. Assess the features of social themes depicted in a novel.

Application Activity 3.5

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

Around them, the street was alive. People moved up and down. Children played in the gutters, and picked up dirty orange peels and ate them. The pulsating motion of Malay Camp at night was everywhere. Warm and intense and throbbing.

People sang.
People cried.
People fought.

People loved.
People hated.
Others were sad.
Others gay.
Others with friends.
Others lonely.
Some died.
Some were born...

"You say you don't know. I know, Xuma, I know."

She looked at him and there was the shadow of a smile on her lips, but her eyes were serious. "I know," she whispered. Then she pulled herself together and her voice changed:

"Listen to me Xuma. I will try again to make you understand. In the city it is like this: all the time you are fighting. Fighting. Fighting! When you are asleep and when you are awake. And you look only after yourself. If you do not, you are finished. If you are soft, everyone will spit in your face. They will rob you and cheat you and betray you. So, to live here, you must be hard. Hard as a stone. And money is your best friend. With money, you can buy a policeman. With man, you buy somebody to go to jail for you. That is how it is, Xuma. It may be good, it may be bad, but there it is. And to live, one must see it. Where you come from, it isn't so. But here, it is so."

Again, there was a long silence between them. The stars came out and twinkled brightly in the sky. The moon came up, and chasing the Milky Way, travelled eastward. Rosita, who lived across the way, turned on her gramophone and came on her veranda swaying her broad hips.

"Hello!" she called across to Leah.

Leah looked up, startled. Xuma too, was startled.

"We must go in," Leah said. "Food will be ready."

"My white man gave me a pound," Xuma said. "Will you take some of it for my food and my sleeping here?"

Leah got up. She stared down at him then turned away.

"No. You can pay me when you get paid properly," she said gruffly. "Come."

They went in.

A fire, made in a paraffin tin with holes in the side, stood in the centre of the kitchen and around it, of the floor, sat Ma Plank, Daddy, a man who was a stranger to Xuma, the pale fat one called Drunk Liz, Lena the thin coloured woman, Johannes, and another woman who was also a stranger.

Questions

1. From the above extract, describe the life in Malay Camp.
2. Compare and contrast life in Malay Camp with the life in the city.
3. Discuss the social themes depicted from the above extract.

End unit assessment activities

In your spare time over the weekend, read the two set novels *A Man of the People* by Chinua Achebe and *Mine Boy* by Peter Abrahams and analyse its

1. Setting
2. Characters
3. Plot
4. Themes.

Share your findings with your classmates.

UNIT 4: EPIC POETRY



UNIT 4

EPIC POETRY

Key unit competence: To be able to make connections between epics from different parts of the world with regard to their themes to show different times and cultures.

Introductory activity

Read the following extract from Mwindo epic and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 17: A Rwandan reciting an epic poem (*Kwivuga Imyato*)

He who went to sleep wakes up.
Muisa, you are powerless against Mwindo,

Because Mwindo (is) the Little-one-just-born-he- walked.
Kahombo, whom Muisa brought forth,
He-who-is-accustomed-to-mocking-himself.
Muisa, you are helpless against Mwindo.
A bit of food, thanks, puts an end to a song.

By **Biebuyck D.**

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. Identify the hero in this poem.
3. What are his/her heroic deeds highlighted in the poem?

4.1 Epic poetry

Note: An epic poem is a long narrative poem told in dignified language, celebrating the actions of a hero. It gives a series of heroic deeds and events significant to a culture or a nation.

Activity 4.1

Read the following extract from Shaka, the Zulu King and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 18: Example of an african hero

Shaka, the Zulu King

Dlungwana son of Ndaba!
Ferocious one of the Mbelebele brigade,
Who raged among the large kraals,
So that until dawn the huts were being turned upside down.
He who is famous without effort, son of Menzi,
He who beats but is not beaten, unlike water,
Axe that surpasses other axes in sharpness;
Shaka, I fear to say he is Shaka, Shaka, he is the chief of the Mashobas.
He of the shrill whistles the lion;
He who armed in the forest, who is like a madman,
The madman who is in full view of the men.

From **Dr Alex Coutts**; *The Story of a Zulu King*

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Who is the hero in the poem above? How do you know it?
3. With examples, discuss the literary devices used in the poem.

Activity 4.2

Read the extract of the epic poem below and answer the questions.

The Birth of Shaka

His baby cry was of a cub
tearing the neck of the lioness
because he was fatherless.

The gods boiled his blood
in a clay pot of passion
to course in his veins.

His heart was shaped

into an ox shield
to foil every foe.

Ancestors forged
his muscles into thongs
as tough as water bark
and nerves
as sharp as syringa thorns.

His eyes were lanterns that shone
from the dark valleys of Zululand
to see white swallows
coming across the sea.

His cry to two assassin brothers:
"Lo! you can kill me
but you'll never rule this land!"

By **Oswald Mtshali**

Questions

1. What is the main idea in the poem?
2. Identify the hero in this poem and describe his heroic actions?
3. Analyse the poetic devices used in this poem.
4. Identify the setting of the poem above.

Note: The epic poems seem to be the written versions of stories that were told and sung. Most epic poems tell a tale/story of a particular tribe. The first audiences for the epic poems were listeners, the later ones readers. The epic poems carried important cultural truths but they were not history. Epic poems were detailed narratives describing cultural practices for examples fighting and hunting, and feasting and burials and sacrifices, all very real and vivid.

Application activity 4.1

Read the following extract from Song of Lawino and answer the questions that follow.

Song of Lawino

Ocol is no longer in love with old type
He is in love with a modern girl.
The name of the beautiful one
Is Clementine.
Brother, when you see Clementine!
The beautiful one aspires
To look like a white woman.

Her lips are red- hot
Like glowing charcoal,
She resembles the wild cat
That has dipped its mouth in blood
Her mouth is like raw jaws
It looks like an open ulcer,
Like the mouth of a field!
Tina dusts powder on her face
And it looks so pale;
She resembles the wizard
Getting ready for the midnight dance.

She dusts the ash-dirt all over her face
And when little sweat
Begins to appear on her body
She looks like guinea fowl!

By **Okot P' Bitek**

Source: A poetry Course for KCSE, Page 54.

Questions

1. Describe the subject matter of the poem
2. What images does Lawino use to build up a picture of Clementine?
3. Discuss Lawino's attitude towards Clementine.
4. Analyse the poetic devices used in this poem and comment on how they affect the meaning of the poem in question.
5. Identify the setting of the poem above.

4.2 Characteristics of an epic poem

Activity 4.2

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

An extract from *The Legend of Liyongo*

Oh my child, be silent, do not cry;
Listen to the tale of the King of Bauri,
Listen to the tale of the exiled King
Who was cheated of election as the Ruler.
He left his renown, he left
In all silence King Mringwari.
Cease your sobbing, child, don't cry,
Listen to my tale which is true:

The mercenaries were given money
To go and find the King of Bauri;
And Liyongo was dancing with the bush people
With his darling and industrious Mbwasho.
So they journeyed but never found the Lion;
He had taken hold of sword and dagger.
They returned home together with one accord
To tell the King Mringwari,
'Liyongo cannot be overcome, he is like fire!
He is not mortal, that one, he is fire!'

Servant girl Sada, I am sending you, you have not yet been properly employed:
Tell my mother she is slow, she is not yet showing cunning:
Let her bake me a loaf, and inside it she must conceal a file,
So I may file through the shackles on my feet and break them,
So I may slip out and escape like a falcon,
So I may spread my wings wide and fly upwards:
Let me enter the sky, in the clouds, before the sun rises,
Gliding over the fields of reeds, the sandy plains, the beaches:
The roofs of the city, as well as the thatch of the huts, will collapse:
Tell her to bake and put a file inside the bran.

My child, I am telling you
The tale of Liyongo, King of the Bush:
He is not chained, he lives in freedom,
And they make him King of the plains people.

He has no cooked rice to eat, no silk to wear;
He eats simple millet and game from the bush;
He cuts it with his ceremonial dagger
But he does not eat the left-overs of others.

It is shared after being cut:
At night, they dance with the drum;
He lives with the wild bush people,
He teaches them to read a book.

Praise be to my bow with its haft of the wild-vine,
Let it be dressed with fat so that it shines like mirror glass:
The first time I set out to hunt, I pierced a snake through its throat,
Then I hit also an elephant through the ear as it trumpeted;
I also shot a piebald crow and a dwarf antelope running away;
Yet they tell me, 'Hands off, son of Mbwasho, lay down your weapons!'

I bathe and wash my clothes here where I found water;
I scoop it up, drinking some but leaving plenty – I never quench my thirst;
Whoever begs a draught of me, I never refuse, my friends and brothers,
I have no restrictions, I say. Drink! I did not finish it.

When I eat the fruits of the forest,
I have no need of the dishes of the palace:
I am a poor man, how shall I pay?
I will shake the ripe fruit down from the topmost branch.
The men of the bush were ordered, 'Tie him up!'
He is no man, he is like a spirit!
And they do not tie up, they love guests!
You people, learn from the men of the bush:
Which food could make me healthier?
Pleasant words of gratitude,
Whoever is given them, how will he forget?
The people of the bush are friends in need;
Their kind nature I will never forget!

By **Jan Knappert**, *Four Centuries of Swahili Verse* (1974)

Questions

1. What does the poem talk about?
2. Choose a hero or heroine in your region and describe their heroic deeds you admire.
3. According to you, where do you think his power comes from? Why?

Note: An epic poem has the following characteristics

- The hero is a figure of great national or even cosmic importance, and represent a culture's heroic ideal (heroes with special powers)
-
- The setting of the poem is ample in scale, and maybe worldwide, or even larger.
-
- Divine intervention or Supernatural forces. For example, gods, angels, demons-intervene. Invocation (the act of calling the assistance or presence of superior being) is also manifested.
-
- They are written in verse style. There is also use of enumeration (an action of mentioning things, one by one). For example; they tend to provide long lists of objects, places and people with broader contexts.
- The action is made of heroic deeds, such as great courage, honour, sacrifice, patriotism and kindness. This is termed as Epithet.
- There is a heavy repetition
- Omniscient narrator: the hero has total knowledge of what happens or will happen to other characters in the epic.

Application activity 4.2

Read the poem below before answering the questions that follow.

The Death of My Father

His sunken cheeks, his inward- looking eyes
The sarcastic, scornful smile on his lips,
The unkempt, matted, grey hair,
The hard, coarse sand- paper hands,
Spoke eloquently of the life he had lived.
But I did not mourn for him.

The hammer, the saw and the plane,
These were his tools and his damnation,
His sweat was his ointment and his perfume.
He fashioned dining tables, chairs, wardrobes,
And all the wooden loves of colonial life.

No, I did not mourn for him
He built colonial mansions,
Huge, unwieldy, arrogant constructions;

But he squatted in a sickly mud-house,
With his children huddled stuntedly
Under the bed- bug bed he shared with mother.
I could not mourn for him.

I had already inherited
His premature old- age look,
I had imbibed his frustration;
But his dreams of freedom and happiness
Had become my song, my love
So, I could not mourn for him.
No, I did not shed any tears;
My father's dead life still lives in me,
He lives in my son, my father,
I am my father and my son,
I will awaken his sleepy hopes and yearnings,
But I will not mourn for him,
I will not mourn for him.

Dr Henry Indangasi

Source: *An Anthology of East African Poetry*, Page 74.

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Identify words or expressions in the poem that show the speaker's feelings.
3. In your opinion, why doesn't the speaker want to mourn for his father?
4. Do you think the speaker's father is a hero? Why?

4.3 Review of poetic devices

(Alliteration, repetition, personification, assonance, simile, metaphor)

Activity 4.3.1

Read carefully the extract of the epic poem and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 19: African warrior

A warrior sings his praises

I who Am Praised thus held out in battle among foreigners
Along with TheOverthrower;
I who ravish spear in each hand stood out resplendent in
My cotton cloth;
I who am quick was drawn from afar by lust for the fight
And with me was the Repulser of warriors;
I who encircle the foe, with Bitembe, brought back the
Beasts from Bihanga;
With Bwakwakwa, I fought at Kaanyabareega,
Where Bantura started a song that we might overcome
Them.

Thus with my spear, I and Rwamujonjo conquered
Oruhinda;
The Banyoro were afraid on the battlefield of Kahenda;
The cocks of Karembe had already crowed;
I who am Nimble with the one whom none can
Dislodge felled them at Nyamizi.

At Nkanga, I seized my spear by its shaft-end;
At Kanyegyero, I the binder of enemies took them by
Surprise;
Thereafter was I never excluded from the counsels of
Princes, nor was Rwangomani;

I who rescue with the spear had seized him so that we
Might fight together.

Ernesti Rwandekyezi

Source: *Growing Up With Poetry*. Edited by David Rubadiri, page 59.

Questions

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. Describe the setting/context of the poem.
3. How has the poet used alliteration and repetition to put across the message?
4. Describe other poetic devices used in this poem.
5. Using this poem, choose one of the heroes/heroines of Rwanda and write a similar poem about him/her.

Activity 4.3.2

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow.

Black Cry

I am coal!
You rip ruthlessly from the earth
You make me your mine, master

Yes I am coal!
You light me, master,
To serve you forever a moving force
But not forever, master.

I am coal
And I must burn, yes,
And consume all by the force of my combustion.

I am coal
I must burn in exploitation
Burn down to the very ashes of malediction
Burn like my brother coal-tar alive

Until I'm no longer your mine, master
Yes, I am coal!
I must burn
Consume all by the fire of my combustion.
Yes!
I shall be your coal, master

By Jose Craveirinha (Mozambique)

Source: *An Anthology of East African Poetry*. Edited by A.D Amateshe.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. Where has the poet used assonance, alliteration and personification?
3. What are other poetic devices used?

Note:

Alliteration: is the repetition of initial consonant sounds of words, as in the phrase "dark days"

Assonance: is the repetition of vowel sounds in nearby words, as in the phrase "child of silence"

Consonance: is the repetition of consonants within nearby words in which the separating vowels differ, as in the phrase "live and love"

Personification: is language that attributes human qualities to non-human things.

Simile: Poets use similes to make such comparisons using connecting words as in "She is beautiful like a flower"

Metaphors: consist of comparing to apparently unlike things without the words like, as, than or resembles, as in "She is a flower"

Repetition: is the use of any language element more than once.

Synecdoche: is a literary device that refers to a whole as one of its parts. For example, someone might refer her car as her "wheels" or a teacher might ask his class to put their eyes on him as he explains something.

Application Activity 4.3

Read the poem below and answer the question



Figure 20 : a slave being taken to mar

Prison song

That companion
Went out with tears in his throat
And I saw
That he was not weeping for sadness
He was weeping with unshakeable confidence
That from tears should rise laughter
As hands make bread
And I stayed
Pinned in my solitude

That comrade
On going out of the prison cell
Carried
And left
The crying of unshakeable confidence
That feet would journey on hard ground
That the hands raised
To make bread
Would be raised
So that there should be wheat instead of prison bars.

... from cactuses do flowers rise
Songs will sprout on this wall.

Henrique Guerra (Angola)

Source: An Anthology of East African Poetry. Edited by A.D Amateshe, Page 49,

Questions

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. Discuss the setting of the poem.
3. What do words hands (stanza 1) and wall (last stanza) stand for?
4. What is the poetic device used by the poet for using the words hands and wall?

End unit Assessment

Activity 1

Read the epic poem below and answer the questions.

Sundjata's Conception

After it had happened
That Sundjata's mother had become pregnant,
When she had been pregnant for one year,
Susu Sumanguru Baamangana's diviners by stones said to him,
'The child who will destroy your kingship
Has been conceived within Manding.'
Sumanguru gathered together all the women of the town of Manding
And for seven years
He kept them within a walled town.
A man and a woman did not lie on the same bed,
A man and a woman did not come near each other.
As for those women who did become pregnant,
If they gave birth to a child and that child was a male,
Its throat was cut – for seven years.
When it became known that Sundjata had been conceived,
The griots composed this song:

Ah, it is of Jata that I speak, great stock,
Simbong, it is of Jata that I speak,
Great stock destined for high office.

In those seven years,
Any woman who became pregnant in Manding
Was taken inside that walled town,
And this went on for fourteen years:
For fourteen years
Sundjata's mother was pregnant with him,
But the diviners by stones foretold it;
They told SusuSumanguruBaamangana,
'The child who will destroy your kingship
Has already been conceived.'
SusuSumanguruBaamangana went to the leader of the Siises,
And sent him into retreat for forty days.

The child who was to destroy the kingship – Had he been born yet?
Or had he not?
Was he in Manding?
These were the questions he must answer.
He must devise some strategy
So that he can work magic against the child and so be able to kill him.
The leader of the Siises went into retreat;
He came out
And he found Susu Sumanguru Baamangana

Cut and Sirimang, It is forging and the left hand,
Senegalese coucal and swallow,
Cut iron with iron,
What gives iron its excellence,
Big kuku tree and big silk-cotton tree,
Fari and Kaunji –
He was sitting.
He told Sumanguru, 'I went into retreat
For forty days;
I saw the seven layers of the sky,
Right to where they finish;
I saw the seven layers of the earth,
Right to where they finish;
I saw a black thing in a pond;
By the grave of God,
The creature which comes and gives me information in the night
Came and stood beside me and said,

“Allahuaharyajakufamangkaanakaafa,
Ming muusi, janafangkumjaikuna”.
God declares that by his grace,
Whomsoever he has created king,
He has made in his own likeness
And nothing will be able to injure that person.
Those things which you must enjoy,
Enjoy them now before this child is born,
For after he is born
You will be powerless against him.’

Questions

1. Discuss the theme of the poem.
2. Describe the epic features in the poem.
3. Mention any 3 famous persons that are considered as heroes in Rwanda. Describe their heroic acts
4. Identify your hero or heroine and describe their heroic qualities.

Activity 2

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

The Oba of Benin

He who knows not the Oba
Let me show him.
He has mounted the throne,
He has piled a throne upon a throne.
Plentiful as grains of sand on the earth
Are those in front of him
Plentiful as grains of sands on the earth
Are those behind him.
There are two thousand people
To fan him.
He who owns you
Is among you here.
He who owns you
Has piled a throne upon a throne.
He has lived to do it this year;
Even so he will live to do it again.

Bini (Nigeria)

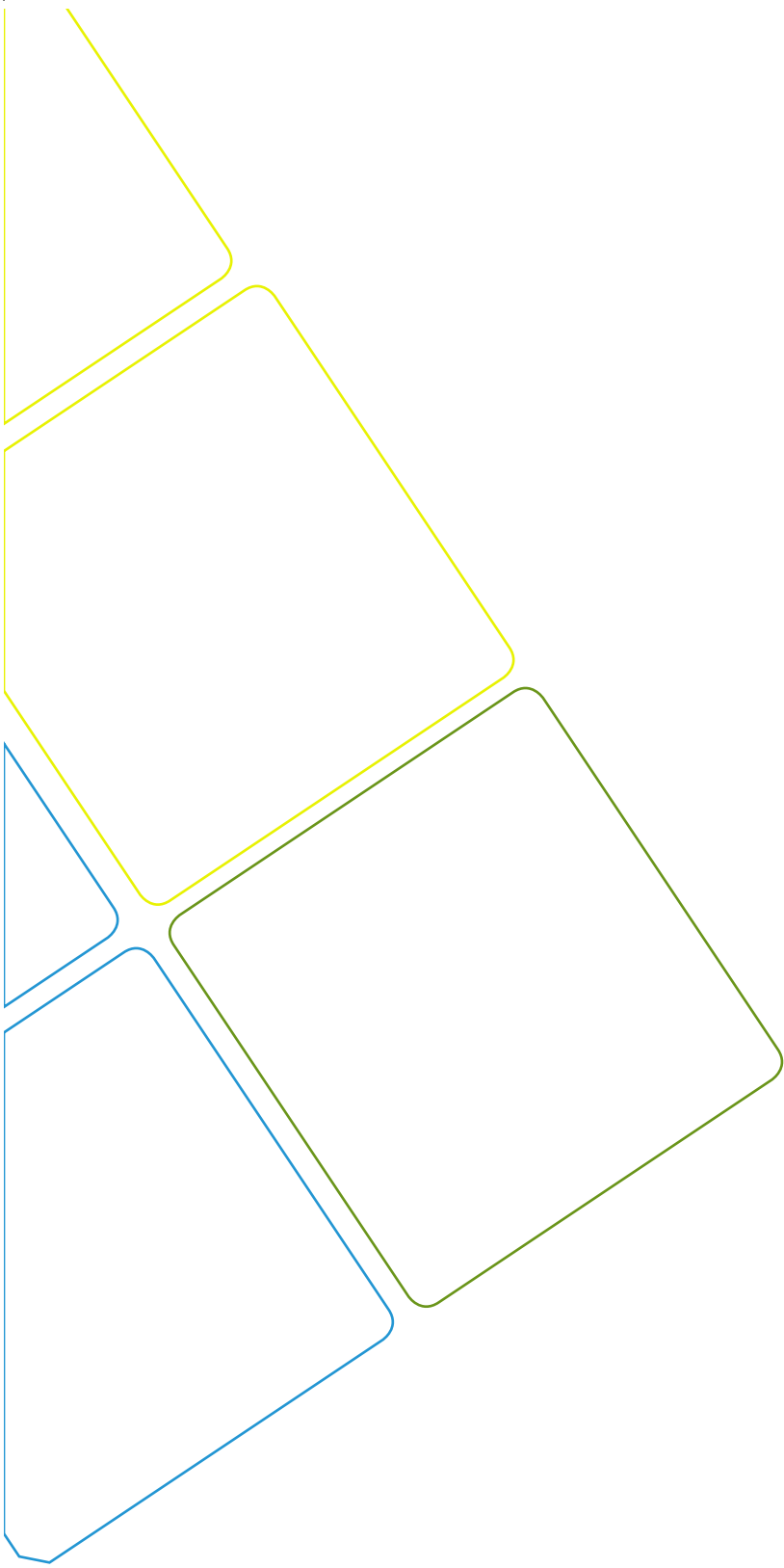
Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, page 58.

Questions:

1. Discuss the theme of the poem.
2. Analyze the poetic devices used in the poem.
3. Compose an epic of your own.

UNIT 5

ODES



UNIT 5: ODES

Key unit competence: To be able to identify and analyze odes and explore the atmosphere created in them.

Introductory activity

Read carefully the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

Ode to a Rainy Day

Pitter patter- what's the matter?
Can't go out and play?
Pitter patter – get your madder –
Hate this rainy day;
Thunder, lightning – it's so frightening!
Let's go run and hide,
Find a place that's warm and cozy –
Leave the storm outsider;
Splish splash – lightning flash!
Between the drops of rain,
Tumbling like a waterfall
Down the window pane;
Something sort of comforting
Listening to the rain-
Pitter patter, skitter skatter-
Like my thoughts today-
Washing out the cobwebs
Is refreshing- let's go play

By Linda Ori.

Questions

1. Identify the main idea in the poem.
2. Describe the mood/atmosphere in the poem.
3. With examples, analyze the poetic devices in this poem and the effect they create.

5.1 Ode

Activity 5.1

Read carefully the following poem before answering the questions that follow.

Ode to Ethiopia

O Mother Race! to thee I bring
This pledge of faith unwavering,
This tribute to thy glory.
I know the pangs which thou didst feel,
When Slavery crushed thee with its heel,
With thy dear blood all gory.

Sad days were those -- ah, sad indeed!
But through the land the fruitful seed
Of better times was growing.
The plant of freedom upward sprung,
And spread its leaves so fresh and young --
Its blossoms now are blowing.

On every hand in this fair land,
proud Ethiope's swarthy children stand
Beside their fairer neighbor;
The forests flee before their stroke,
Their hammers ring, their forges smoke,
They stir in honest labour.

They tread the fields where honour calls;
Their voices sound through senate halls
In majesty and power.
To right they cling; the hymns they sing
Up to the skies in beauty ring,
And bolder grow each hour.

Be proud, my Race, in mind and soul;
Thy name is writ on Glory's scroll

In characters of fire.
High 'mid the clouds of Fame's bright sky
Thy banner's blazoned folds now fly,
And truth shall lift them higher.

Thou hast the right to noble pride,
Whose spotless robes were purified
By blood's severe baptism.
Upon thy brow the cross was laid,
And labour's painful sweat-beads made
A consecrating chrism.

No other race, or white or black,
When bound as thou wert, to the rack,
So seldom stooped to grieving;
No other race, when free again,
Forgot the past and proved them men
So noble in forgiving.

Go on and up! Our souls and eyes
Shall follow thy continuous rise;
Our ears shall list thy story
From bards who from thy root shall spring,
And proudly tune their lyres to sing
Of Ethiopia's glory.

Paul Laurence Dunbar (1872-1906)

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. With examples, describe the mood and feeling in the poem.
3. According to the poem, what do you think the poet refers to as "Mother race..." Why?
4. Describe the attitude of the poet about Ethiopia.

Note: The word 'ode' is derived from a Greek word *aeidein*, which means to chant or sing. An ode (Ode poetry) is poetry that is written in praise of a particular person, thing, event, etc. Odes are often characterized by seriousness in tone and subject matter.

Odes always follow a certain rhythm and rhyme scheme through which the poets express their sentiments (feeling, attitude and opinion) about the idea. Sometimes odes may be humorous but they are always intended to explore important themes and observations to human relations, emotions and senses. Common odes are often in praise of people, nature and sometimes abstract ideas.

5.2. Elegy



Figure 21 : a family mourning their beloved one

Activity 5.2

Read the poem below and discuss the questions that follow.

Christine

She was fine till April
My child in my belly
First a little mouse-breath
Flutter in a body
That still resented her creation.
Then by Christmas, love
that slept with
both hands clasped over her
pushes and swirlings.

To the country, to the nuns.
You're going to keep the child,
My dear?
How brave, but perhaps
You'll change your mind.

I hate azaleas, for
As they bloomed, my child faded
Within my belly.
Till she was a dead steel ball
Inside a walking wild coffin.
And no help
Not even her mother
Who could not look.
Who listened to love clang
In a kidney- dish wish
Tight shut eyes.
And asked –what is it?

Providence, said the nuns,
Kind providence.
A little girl.

And I don't even know
Where she is buried.
Christine,
I hate azaleas.

By **Barbara Burford** (Jamaica)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann,

Questions:

1. What is the poem talking about?
2. Who is Christine?
3. Describe the tone of the poem.
4. a. Why doesn't a woman know where her daughter is buried?
b. Do you think it is important to know where someone you love is buried?
5. Describe the mood of the poem

Note: Elegy is a poem in serious reflection which typically mourns the loss of someone who has died or something that has been deteriorated. The word elegy comes from the Greek word *elegeia*, which means "lament." An elegy is therefore a mournful poem, usually written in remembrance of a lost one for a funeral or as a lament. An elegy generally combines three stages of loss: first there is grief, then praise of the dead one, and finally consolation. Elegies are identified by the following characteristics;

- They focus on expressing emotions or thoughts
- Elegies are not always based on a plot
- Elegies use a formal language and structure
- The poet explores questions about the nature of life and death, destiny, justice, and fate.
- It may mourn the passing of life and beauty or someone dear to the speaker
- It may express the speaker's anger about death.
- Towards the end the poet generally tries to provide comfort to ease the pain of the situation. Christian elegies usually proceed from sorrow and misery, to hope and happiness because they say that death is just a hindrance in the way of passing from the mortal state into the eternal state.

An elegy is not the same as "eulogy" which is a statement written in prose and read aloud at a funeral.

Application activity 5.2

Read the poem below and discuss the questions that follow.

Pardon me

Pardon me father if I am a disappointment to what you
Expect of me
Pardon me father
If I cannot slaughter other tribesmen
If I do not say my prayers in the morning
If I turn my back on some of your advice
because father
although your blood runs in my veins
although I too have been a nomad
although I've slept under roofless huts
eyeing the moon
and raising my hands to God
and envying His might
time has uprooted me
time has transplanted me to grounds
where prayer is of no use,
and mother pardon me for digging your bones out
(your bones that were buried here)
pardon me
If I had forgotten that you were buried here.

By **Ismael Hurreh**

Source: *A Poetry Course For KCSE*. Edited by Paul R. P.6.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. What is the tone of the poem?
3. How does the son's way of life differ from his father's?
4. "To ask for pardon does not always prove you wrong". Discuss.

5.3. Ballad

Activity 5.3

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 22: singing birds

The Cool Fountain

Cool fountain of love,
Where all the sweet birds come
For comforting – but one,
A widow turtledove,
Sadly sorrowing.
At once the nightingale,
That wicked bird, came by,
And spoke this honied words:
“ my lady if you will,
I shall be your slave.”
“ you are my enemy:
Be gone, you are not true!
Green boughs no longer rest me.
Nor any budding grove.
Clear springs, where they are such,
Turn muddy at my touch.
I want no spouse to love
Nor any children either.
I forego that pressure
And their comfort too.
No, leave me; you are false
And wicked – vile, untrue!
I’ll never be your mistress!
I’ll never marry you!”

Questions:

1. What is the main idea of the poem?
2. Find out the sweet words sung by the nightingale
3. What was the reply from the turtledove?
4. Describe the mood in the poem.
5. How is the title appropriate to the content of the poem?

Note: A ballad is a narrative poem that originally set to music. Ballads derive from medieval French (chanson balladee) which were ordinary danced songs. Ballads have the following unique features:

- Because ballads were originally meant to be lyrics set to dancing music, there is a noticeable musical quality to the **rhythm** of the lines.
- They have a narrative structure and **repetition** of certain lines or even whole stanzas.
- They mostly rely on simple and easy to understand language.
- Most ballads focus on one story with a central dramatic event
- Ballads are always stories about hardships, tragedies, love and romance
- Sometimes ballads can be in interrogative form with appropriate answers to every question asked.
- Ballads rarely give a direct message about a certain event, character or situation. It is left to the audience to deduce the moral of the story from the whole narration.

Ballads are used for entertainment.

Application activity 5.3

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow.

No colored God

I come from the twilight
Of dusk to dawn
Yet I can't stand
All around me downtown
All in up and around
Signs saying of "Whites Only"

Mustn't go into that café or restaurant
Funny, thing tho!
My soft money green, my hard money silver just like yours
With all this and all that
I am so glad so glad that
God ain't no respect of persons...

God no colored God

My blood bleeds red, we all have bone marrow tissue
Blood flowing through our veins
If I were hungry and stolen some bread would you prosecute me
Yeah I stole because I was hungry
You won't give me a job yet if I had yours I be making \$1.64 cents an hour
No need to feel sorry for me
I didn't make myself I am brown, blue, black, charcoal gray
You still react no more signs labeled "Whites Only"
Now they're posted permanently in your minds
Different land masses hills, valleys, blue grasses

God no colored God

The white supremacist, KKK, skinheads only the bad Muslims not the good
Anyone who believes in race/color separations
We're all brothers (God is no color GOD)
We're all brothers not about the skin its about the soul;
We're all brothers not about what's outside but what's within
We're all brothers
God a No Color God
He's spiritual not natural
We're all brothers all colors NO colored God
God is a no Color God
God not a colored God He breathe His spirit into modern clay now we're in
dependent voices with free wills
Choices all knees will bow "White only-Colored Here"
The good the bad ravished happy sad black brown blue purple orange hues Red
white you choose cause
God no colored God

James Edward Lee Sr.

Questions

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. Who do you think the poet is addressing?
3. Describe the mood in the poem
4. Analyze the poetic devices employed by the poet.

5.4 Acrostic

Activity 5.4

Read the poems below and answer questions that follow.

Participate actively

Ask questions

Respect each other's ideas

Take turns

Never give up

Explain your answers

Respect others' answers

Stay with your partner(s)

Questions

1. What do you notice when you observe the structure of the poem?
2. What is the meaning of Take turns?
3. According to this poem, discuss the qualities of a good learner.

Note: An acrostic is a type of poem where certain letters in each line spell out a word or a phrase. Typically, the letters of each line are used to spell the message, but they can appear anywhere. It is a type of writing poem where the first, last or other letters in a line spell out a particular word or a phrase. The words that make the acrostic poem are written and read horizontally. The new word that the acrostic poem creates is read vertically. There are several ways that a writer could choose to structure an acrostic poem. The three most common acrostic examples are with the word order taking place at the beginning, middle, and end of each stanza.

Application Activity 5.4

Maybe this day is not
One of your favorites but
Never forget that every
Day you wake up is an
Amarzing gift and it's up to
You to make it count

Questions:

1. What is the message of the above poem?
2. Write an acrostic poem about your favorite day.
3. "It's up to you to make your day count". Discuss.

5.5 Concrete

Activity 5.5

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow.

If this were a poem, I would be about
Wine. And it is shaped like a glass of
Wine. Perhaps it's about a glass of
Chardonnay or a cabernet or zin-
Fandel. Or maybe it just cele-
brates the joy of wine.

Anice

de

li

ci

ous

Wonderful glass of wine

Questions

1. What is the poem about ?
2. what is the shape of the poem ?

Note: Concrete poetry is a type of poetry where a poem's meaning is conveyed through its graphic shape or pattern on the printed page; also called shaped verse. In other words, a concrete poem is verse that emphasizes nonlinguistic elements in its meaning, such as a typeface that creates a visual image of the topic.

Application Activity 5.5

Read and observe the following poem and answer questions that follow.

This
Bottle
I drink
will over
throw me
One day. I care
less the quantity
I take with friends.
Today I cheered
with buddies,
shared lies just lies
as we cheer.
This bottle you see
is or seems to be a
pet but lacks a
friendly care and
sympathy. As I go
back, barking dogs
smell the haze!

By **Munyurangabo Faustin** (*Rwanda*)

Questions

1. What is the message of the poem?
2. Describe the poet's mood.
3. What do you think the poet wanted to mean by "This bottle will overthrow me one day"?

5.6. Haiku

Activity 5.6

Read the following poem and answer the following questions.

Matsuo Basho

An old silent pond...
A frog jumps into the pond,
splash! Silence again.

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Identify the unique features you notice in the poem
3. How many syllables are in each line?

Note: Haikus are a Japanese genre of poetry. A haiku poem consists of three lines, with the first and last lines having 5 syllables (also called moras) and the middle line having 7. A mora is a sound unit, much like a syllable, but is not identical to it. Since the moras do not translate well into English, it has been adapted to where syllables are used as moras. The structure is 5-7-5 Syllables or moras. The following are characteristics of a haiku.

- It contains three lines.
- It has five syllables (also called moras) in the first line, seven in the second, and five in the last line.
- It contains 17 syllables in total.
- A Haiku poem does not rhyme.
- Haiku poems are usually about nature or natural phenomena.

- The poem has two juxtaposed subjects that are divided into two contrasting parts.
- Haikus are written on topics and things that the readers can identify with easily. For example, seasons and animals are readily recognizable topics to readers. Generally, haiku is written for realistic and objective reasons; however, haikus are also written for children. Sometimes it presents two juxtaposed ideas to express meanings through internal comparison.

Application Activity 5.6

Peace In The Summer Time

Sea breeze blows ahead
The book flows and the sun glows
Perfect summer day

By **Suh Joon Kim**

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. What is the mood of the speaker?
3. Compose and write haiku on a topic of your own choice.

5.7. Tanka

Activity 5.7

Read the following poem and answer the following questions.

I love my kitten
She is also little and cute
She has a pink tongue,
And lots of long whiskers too.
She purrs when I stroke her back

Questions

1. What is the main idea in the poem?
2. Describe the unique features found in the poem.
3. Analyze the attitude of the poet towards the kitten.
4. Count the number of syllables in each line. How many are they?

Note: Tanka (also called **Waka** or **Uta**) means a short song. A tanka like haiku, is a form of Japanese poetry consisting of five lines and thirty one (31) syllables. The structure of a tanka is as follows;

Line 1: 5 syllables

Line 2: 7 syllables

Line 3: 5 syllables

Line 4: 7 syllables

Line 5: 7 syllables

Note: Tanka poems are most commonly written as expressions of gratitude, love, or self-reflection. In Japanese culture, suitors would send a tanka to a woman the day after a date, and she would reply in kind. These were short messages (like secret letters) expressing love, desire, meaning, or gratitude. However, nowadays, some poets tend to include other subjects. Tanka poems include some deep meaning or purpose, and leave the reader with a strong feeling. Tanka poems do not rhyme, and they are written in short lines, like haiku. Because tanka poems are meant to be given to someone, they are written from the viewpoint of the poet. That does not mean they must be written in the first person, but the poet is ever-present, always writing to express personal feelings about the subject.

Application Activity 5.7

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow.

Saying Goodbye

Carefully I walk
Trying so hard to be brave
They all see my fear
Dark glasses cover their eyes
As mine flow over with tears

Author Unknown

Questions

1. Discuss the subject matter of the poem
2. Describe the feeling/mood of the poet.
3. Analyze the appropriateness of the title to the poem.
4. Compose and write your own tanka for someone/something of your choice.

5.8 Sonnet

Activity 5.8.1

Read the poem below before you answer questions that follow.

The Negro's Tragedy

It is the Negro's tragedy I feel
Which binds me like a heavy iron chain
It is the Negro's wounds I want to heal
Because I know the keenness of his pain
Only a thorn-crowned Negro and no white
Can penetrate into the Negro's ken
Or feel the thickness of the shroud of night
Which hides and buries him from other men
So what I write is urged out of my blood
There is no white who could write my book
Though many think their story should be told
Of what the Negro people ought to brook.
Our statesmen roam the world to set things right.
This Negro laughs and praise to God for light!

By **Claude McKay**

Source: *Adopted from A Poetry Course For KCSE*

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. How many lines does it have?
3. Describe the rhyme scheme?
4. Describe the atmosphere of the poem?

Activity 5.8.2

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.

In Some Ways

In some ways the world we live in
is no different from the world in Christ's day.
Today just like in the time of Rome people dance and play
and chase after pleasure and sin,

try at almost any cost to win,
do each other mock and betray,
are set on monetary value come what may
and without thought with the next evil we do begin

while some people live by human laws,
believe that the word of God is an outmoded tale
and do make own specific rules
as if an omnipotent God is full of flaws
and yet in life they do not prevail
while they act like renegades and self-centred fools.

Gert Strydom

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. How many lines does it have?
3. How is the rhyme scheme?
4. Compare and contrast this poem with *The Negro's Tragedy* in terms of;
 - a. Rhyme scheme
 - b. Mood and atmosphere
 - c. Attitude of the poets

Note: Sonnet is a poem of fourteen lines with regular rhythm and rhyme. There are two types of sonnets: Shakespearean or English which is made of three stanzas, each has four lines (quatrain) and a final stanza made up of two lines (couplet). The rhyme scheme is ababcdcdefef gg. The second one is Petrarchan or Italian with an eight - line section (Octave) followed by a six- line section (sestet). Its rhyme scheme is either abbaabba (the first eight lines) and cdecde or cdcdcd (the last six lines). For example, the poem *The negro's tragedy* has the following rhyme scheme: ababcdcdefef gg which makes it Shakespearean sonnet. On the other hand the poem " *In Some Ways*" has the following rhyme scheme: abbaabbacdecde which makes it Petrarchan sonnet.

Application Activities

Activity 5.8.1

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow

Expatriate's Lament

How shall I leave this place, and make my way
To boat or plane, heart held, fool- dragging slow.
Exchange the scent-breezed night and molten day
For grey, rain-sodden Northlands: greasy snow

Slushed underfoot by folk who do not care.
Close faced, indifferent as their lonely skies.
True, I shall find efficiency out there;
What substitute for laughter-filled brown eyes,

Huge glinting smiles, loud markets, drums at night,
Yoruba charm. How shall I ever live,
Longing for warmth and palm- filled evening light?
Surface- polite and bland, will they forgive

The failure to adjust, heart- absence, tears...
"well, poor soul, in Nigeria all those years!"?

By **D.S**

Source: *a poetry course for KCSE*

Questions:

1. What is the theme of the poem?
2. Describe the mood/atmosphere in the poem
3. Describe the tone of the speaker
4. What type of sonnet is this?
5. Identify the rhyme scheme.

Activity 5.8.2

Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

Early Spring

While the light of day does cease,
still outside many trees are blossoming
in the serene beauty of this early spring
but nature at this twilight has some peace
before the time of danger does increase
when nightly predators take to their wing
there is activity in the smallest nocturnal thing,
that hunts and feed and breeds with ease
as life comes to greatness in large and small
as every living thing is in a way special
in this time of new birth and change
and it's as if the blessings of God fall on all
and even in things superficial
the entire world His hand does rearrange.

By **Gert Strydom**

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of this sonnet?
2. Describe the rhyme scheme.
3. What type of sonnet is it?

5.9 Epigram

Activity 5.9

Read the statement below and answer the questions on it.

There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about.

By **Oscar Wilde**

Questions

1. What is the meaning of the statement above?
2. Describe your feelings after reading the statement.

Note: Epigrams a short, often satirical poem/statement dealing concisely with a single subject and usually ending with a pity or ingenious turn of thoughts. Epigrams show that the truth can be transmitted concisely and wittily. Whereas many authors and speakers take time, effort, and space to make the truth known, epigrams take advantage of brevity.

Application activity 5.9

Read the text below and answer the questions.

A man said to the universe:

"Sir, I exist"

"However," replied the universe,

"the fact has not created in me

A sense of obligation"

By **Stephen Crane**

Questions

1. What is the speaker talking about in the epigram above?
2. What is the speaker's feeling?
3. Write your own epigram by creating specific atmosphere.

5.10 Enjambment

Begging AID

Whilst our children
become smaller than guns,
Elders become big
Circus lions
away from home.
Whilst the manes ages
in the Zoos
that now our homeland
have become,
Markets of leftovers
Guns are taller
than our children

In the beggarhood
of a Circus
that now is home,
the whip of the Ringmaster
cracks with a snap
that eats through
the backs of our being.

Hands stretching
in prayer
of submission
in a beggarhood
of Elders delicately
performing the tightrope
to amuse the gate
for Tips
that will bring home
Toys of death.

David Rubadiri

Source: Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, Page 65.

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Write down any three lines from the poem that are carried over to the next line without pause.
3. Rubadiri uses the images to show that elders have become like circus performers that do tricks for their food. Find out any three images he has used.

Note: Enjambment derived from the French word 'enjambement'. In poetry, it means moving over from one line to another without a terminating punctuation mark. It occurs when a clause or phrase begun in one line is completed in the next.

Application activity 5.10

Read the extract from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tailand* answer the questions that follow.

...I am not prone to weeping, as our sex
commonly are; the want of which
vain dew
perchance shall dry your pities; but I have
that honourable grief lodged here
which burns
worse than tears drown.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. Identify the line structure in the poem and the reason why lines are enjambed.
3. Write a two- stanza poem containing enjambment.

End of unit assessment

1. What are the characteristics of an Ode poem found in Ode to a Rainy Day by Linda Ori?
2. Give examples of poetic devices found in any poem from this unit.
3. Using consonance and enjambment, write a two-stanza poem containing these devices.
4. "Poetic devices affect the tone, mood and meaning of the poem" Justify.
5. Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.

Letter from a contract worker

I wanted to write you a letter
my love,
a letter that would tell
of this desire
to see you
of this fear
of losing you
of these more than benevolence that I feel
of these indefinable ill that pursues me
of these yearning to which I live in total surrender...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love
a letter of intimate secret,
a letter of memories of you,
of you
of your lips red as henna
of your hair black as mud

of your eyes sweet as honey
of you breast hard as wild orange
or lynx gait.
and of your caresses
such that I can find no better here...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love
that would recall the days in our haunts
our nights lost in the long grass
that would recall the shade falling on us from the plum
trees
the moon filtering through the endless palm trees
that would recall the madness
of our passion
and the bitterness
of our separation...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love
that you would not read without sighing
that you will hide from papa Bombo
that you would withhold from mama Kieza
that you would reread without the coldness
of forgetting
a letter to which in all Kilombo
no other would stand comparison...

I wanted to write you a letter
my love
a letter that would be brought to you by the passing wind
a letter that cashews and coffee trees,
the hyenas and buffaloes
the alligators and grayling
could understand
so that if the wind should lose it on the way
the beasts and plants
with pity for our sharp suffering
from song to song
lament to lament
gabble to gabble
would bring you pure and hot
the burning words

the sorrowful words of the letter
I wanted to write to you my love...
I wanted to write you a letter...

But oh my love, I cannot understand
why it is, why it is, why it is my dear,
that you cannot read
and I- oh the hopelessness!- cannot write

By **Antonio Jacinto** (*Angola*)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, Page 47.

Questions

1. When you read the last lines of Letter from a contract worker do they make you laugh or feel sad? Why?
2. With examples, find out at least five poetic devices used.



UNIT 6

RYTHM IN AFRICAN POETRY

UNIT 6: RHYTHM IN AFRICAN POETRY

Key unit competence: To be able to identify rhythm in selected poems from Africa and describe its relationship to the context of the poems.

Introductory activity

Read the poem below and answer the questions.



Figure 23: Some music instrument for rythm production

Lullaby

Someone would like to have you for her child
But you are mine.
Someone would like to rear you on a costly mat
But you are mine.
Someone would like to praise you on a camel blanket
But you are mine.
I have you to rear on a torn old mat.
Someone would like to have you as her child
But you are mine.

By **Akan from Ghana**

Source: *Growing up with Poetry*. Edited by David Rubadiri.

Questions:

1. Read the poem aloud. How does it sound in your ear?
2. What is the message of the poem?
3. Why do you think the poet repeats the same phrases?
4. What is the mood of the persona?
5. What would be your reaction if the persona was addressing you?

6.1. Rhythm in African Poetry

Activity 6.1

Read carefully the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

Grass will grow

If you should take my child Lord
Give my hands strength to dig his grave
Cover him with earth
Lord sends a little rain
For grass will grow

If my house should burn down
So that the ashes sting the nostrils
Making the eyes weep
Then Lord send a little rain

For grass will grow

But Lord do not send me
Madness
I ask for tears
Do not send me moon hard madness
To lodge snug in my skull

I would you sent me hordes of horses
Gallop
Crushing
But do not break
The yolk of the moon on me

By **Jonathan Kariara** (Kenya)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, 1989, p.39.

Questions:

1. Who is speaking in the poem?
2. Who is being addressed?
3. What does he/she pray to have and not have?
4. What do we learn about the speaker's expectations in life?
5. Why do you think it is important to use repetitions of words or lines in poems?
6. What do you think the title Grass Will Grow symbolizes?

Activity 6.2

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow

The beloved

Diko,
of light skin, of smooth hair and long;
her smell is sweet and gentle
she never stinks of fish
she never breathes sweat
like gatherers of dry wood.
She has no bald patch on her head
like those who carry heavy loads.
Her teeth are white
her eyes are like
those of a new born fawn
that delights in the milk
that flows for the first time
from the antelope's udder.
Neither her heel nor her palm
are rough; but sweet to touch
like liver; or better still
the fluffy down of kapok.

Fulani (Nigeria)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, 1989, p.5.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. What is the atmosphere in the poem?
3. Describe the poetic devices used.
4. Briefly describe the rhythm of this poem.

Note: Rhythm in poetry is the flow of sound produced when certain beats are stressed or accented and others unstressed. Not all poetry has regular rhythm. Poems that follow irregular rhythmical cadence are said to be written in free verse. When you read rhyming poetry, one of the things you might notice is how the words often have a nice rhythmical quality. That is, there is a pattern to the rhythm of the words that makes them fun to say and easy to remember. Sometimes the rhythm is a simple one, and sometimes it is more complex, but it is not there by accident. Poets arrange their words in such a way as to create those rhythmical patterns.

When rhyming poems also have a rhythm in the words, they are much more fun to read. By contrast, rhyming poems that do not have a rhythm are usually not as enjoyable to read. Over the next several lessons, you are going to be shown how to identify the rhythms in poems and how to write rhythmical poems of your own so that others will enjoy reading them.

Rhythm in words

You probably know that, in music, the rhythm of a song is the 'beat' often created by instruments such as drums, bass guitars, etc. In fact, in popular music, the drummer and bass guitarist in a band are often referred to as the 'rhythm section' because they establish the rhythm for the rest of the musicians to follow.

Unlike a song, poems do not have a rhythm section. There is no drummer or conductor establishing the rhythm. Instead, the rhythm is set by the 'stresses' or 'accents' in the words themselves.

In most words that have more than one syllable, one of the syllables is pronounced more strongly than the others. We say that this syllable is stressed or accented. For example, the word 'colour' has two syllables – co-lour /^ˈk -l /- and the first syllable is pronounced more strongly than the second.

Nouns and verbs (things and action words) are stressed even when they are just one syllable long. For example, words like 'cat' and 'jump' are stressed syllables. Articles (a, an, the), personal pronouns (he, she, you, we) and auxiliary verbs (can, may, do, does, must, shall, should, etc.) are either stressed or not stressed.

The easiest way to tell if a word is stressed or not is to put it in a sentence and then read it aloud. Listen carefully to how you pronounce it to see if you can tell which words or syllables are stressed and which ones are not.

Application activity 6.1

Read the extract from the poem *Rhythm of Africa* and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 24: Rwandans performing their traditional dance

Dance, dance!
With the muse of Africa;
Tap, tap!
With the rhythm of Africa
Moving your body and,
Moving your steps;
To the sounds and cultures of the various tribes in Africa.
Dance, dance!
To the rhythm of Africa;
Tap, tap!
With the movement of the muse of Africa;
To a continent of nature's muse,
To a continent of multi-languages,
To a continent full of colours!
From North, South, East and West,
Come to Africa and see things for yourselves.
Rhythm of Africa,
Rhythm of various customs and cultures,
Rhythm of the various countries in Africa,
Rhythm of the animals,

With the beauty of nature as seen around.
Dance, dance!
Dance with the steps and shake your body;
To the rhythm of Africa touching your heart and soul.
Tap, tap!
With the movements of the muse of Africa;
Rhythm of Africa.

By **Edward Kofi Louis**

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Describe the rhyme scheme and the rhythm in the poem.
3. Analyze how sound devices have been used in this poem.
4. What is the speaker's feeling? Do you agree with him/her? Justify your answer.

6.2. Combination of rhythm and rhyme

Activity 6.2

Read the poem below and answer questions that follow.



Figure 25: unacceptable child labor

A freedom song

Atieno washes dishes
Atieno plucks the chicken,
Atieno gets up early,
Beds her sacks down in the kitchen,
Atieno eight years old
Atienoyo.

Since she is my sister's child
Atieno needs no pay
While she works my wife can sit
Sewing every sunny day,
With her earnings I support
Atienoyo.

Atieno's and jealous
Bad example to the kids
Since she minds them, like a school girl
Wants their dresses, shoes and beads.
Atieno ten years old.
Atienoyo.

Now my wife has gone to study
Atieno is less free,
Don't i feed her, school my own ones,
Pay the party, union fee
All for progress? Aren't you grateful.
Atienoyo?

Visitors need much attention,
Specially when I work nights.
That girl stays too long at market
Who will teach her what is right?
Atieno rising fourteen,
Atienoyo.

Atieno's had a baby
So we know that she is bad
Fifty-fifty it may live
To repeat the life she had,
Ending in post partum bleeding
Atienoyo.

Atieno's is soon replaced
Meat and sugar more than all
She ate in such a narrow life
Were lavished on her funeral
Atieno's gone to glory
Atienoyo.

By **Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye** (Kenya)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, 1989,

Questions

1. What is this poem about?
2. How appropriate is the title?
3. Briefly describe the rhyme and rhythm of this poem.
4. If you were Atieno, what reply would you give to the question "aren't you grateful, Atienoyo?"
5. Explain the following expressions as used in the poem.
 - i) A narrow life
 - ii) Fifty-fifty
 - iii) Gone to glory
6. How does this poem make you feel? Why?
7. Child abuse is a common problem today. Describe any child abuse case you have witnessed in your community.
8. What lesson do you draw from this poem?

6.3 Review of poetic devices

6.3.1. Onomatopoeia

Activity 6.3.1

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 26: a worker

Song of the worker

We squat
We move
Left centre-right
Breaking stones

Kwa!kwa!kwa!
Our hands sore
Our head ache
Our knees numb
Our back break
Breaking stones
Kwa!kawa!kwa!

We squat

We move
Back centre forward
Tilling the land
Kwa!kwa!kwa!

Our song is sorrow
Our tears we eat
In rags we move
Tramping the land
Kwa!kwa!kwa!
To them:
It's dance
They roar in laughter
While we sweat and bleed

To them:
It's pleasure
They weep with laughter
While we stumble and tumble
Burdened and hungry
Kwa!kwa!kwa!kwa!kwa!

By **E. Songoyi**

Source: *An Anthology of East African Poetry*. Edited by A.D Amateshe.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. Describe the setting of the poem.
3. What is the mood of the persona? Find the words or lines which create the mood of the poem.
4. If you were to perform this poem, what would you do to dramatise its meaning?
5. Analyse the sound "Kwa! kwa! kwa!" what does it stand for in the poem?

Note: Onomatopoeias is the word that phonetically imitates, resembles or suggests the sound that it describes. Examples. Sheep -> baa, baa

Pigeon -> coo, coo

cat -> miaow, miaow

Other examples: rumble, tremble, crack, whirling, clinging, tattering, whistling etc.

Application activity 6.3.1

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 27: Money, money....

Money- changers

Dreamed my way to church
Church built of coloured paper
On silver-coated foundations

Normal unintelligible rumble
Of muttered prayers
Barely audible above
The rustle of notes
And the clink of coins
Strange prayer indeed!

Our father who art in- CLINK-
Hallowed be your thy –CLINK-
Thy- CLINK- come
Thy will be –CLINK-
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily- CLINK-
And forgive us our –CLINK-
As we –CLINK- them that trespass against us
And lead us –CLINK- into –CLINK-
But –CLINK CLINKCLINK- evil
A –CLINK-
It was really a magnificent sight
Enough to inspire the most hardened sinner
But I couldn't help trembling
And looking over my shoulder
Wondering
When
We would be driven out
With a whip.

By **Richard S. Mabala**

Source: *An Anthology of East Africa Poetry*. Edited by A.D. Amateshe.

Questions

1. What is the main message of this poem?
2. a) Identify the use of onomatopoeia in this poem.
b) What overall effect does it have on the poem?
3. How relevant is the title of the poem?
4. Using your own words, explain the meaning of the first three lines of the poem.
5. Compare and contrast this poem with what is said in The Lord's Prayer below.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy Name,
thy kingdom come,
thy will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those
who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.

Anonymous

6.3.2. Alliteration, assonance and consonance

Activity 6.3.2

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

Superstition

I know
That grumbling old woman
Is the first thing I meet in the morning
I must rush back to bed
And cover my head.
That wandering sheep on a sultry afternoon
Are really men come from their dark grave
To walk in right.
In mortal sight.
That when my left hand or eyelid twitches
Or when an owl hoots from a nearby tree

I should need pluck
It means bad luck
That drink spilled goes to ancestral spirit,
That which is dance in clumps of bananas,
That clumbs must be left in pots and plates
Until the morn
For babes unborn.
That it's wrong to stand in doorways at dusk
For the ghosts must pass- they have right of way!
That when a hidden root trips me over
Fault's not in my foot.
It's an evil root.
That if I sleep with feet towards the door
I will not long be fit
I know it- yes I know it!

By **Minji Karibo**

Source: *A poetry course for KCSE*. Edited by Paul Rubadiri, p.2.

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Describe the rhyme scheme in the poem
3. Identify and explain the use of alliteration, assonance and consonance in the poem.
4. Write your own poem using the poetic devices cited in question 3.

Note: Alliteration refers to the repetition of consonants in words of close proximity. It generally refers to the sounds at the beginning of adjacent words as in "black bat".

You could say that this sentence contains alliteration with the letter "b".

Assonance refers to the repetitions of vowel sounds within a series of words as in "the black bat sat on the back porch" in this sentence, notice that the vowel sound for the letter "a" is consistent in the words black, bat, sat and back.

Consonance refers to the repetition of consonant sounds at the end of and within words of close proximity. Example: The **black bat sat** on the **back** porch. Notice that in this sentence, we have two forms of consonance: the words 'black' and 'back' both end in 'ck' while 'bat' and 'sat' end in 't'.

Application activities

Activity 6.3.2.1

Read the poem below and answer the questions that follow.

To a small boy who died at Diepkloof Reformatory

Small offender, small innocent child
With no conception or comprehension
Of the vast machinery set in motion
By your trivial transgression,
Of the great forces of authority,
Of judges, magistrates and lawyers,
Psychologists, psychiatrists, and doctors,
Principals, police, and sociologists,
Kept moving and alive by your delinquency,
This day, and under the shining sun
Do I commit your body to the earth
Oh child, oh lost and lonely one,

Clerks are moved to action by your dying;
Your documents, all neatly put together,
Are transferred from the living to the dead,
Here is the document of birth
Saying that you were born and where and when,
But giving no hint of joy or sorrow,
Or if the sun shone, or if the rain was falling,
Or what bird flew singing over the roof
Where your mother travailed. And here your name
Meaning in white man's tongue, he is arrived
But to what end or purpose is not said.

Here is the last certificate of Death;
Forestalling authority he sets you free,
You that did once arrive have now departed
And are enfolded in the sole embrace
Of kindness that earth ever gave to you.
So negligent in life, in death belatedly
She pours hers generous abundance on you
And rains her bounty on the quivering wood

And swaddles you about, where neither hail nor tempest,
Neither wind nor snow nor any beat of sun
Shall now offend you, and the thin cold spears
Of the Highveld rain that once so pierced you
In falling on your grave shall press you closer
To the deep repentant heart

Here is the warrant of committal
For this offence in whose commission
Millions of men are in complicity
You are committed. So do I commit you,
Your frail body to the waiting ground,
Your dust to the dust of the veld,-
Fly home- bound soul to the great Judge- President
Who unencumbered by the pressing need
To give society protection, may pass on you
The sentence of the indeterminate compassion.

By **Alan Paton** (South Africa)

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, 1989, p.29.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the poem?
2. a. Having looked at the poem in greater depth, describe its tone.
b. Why do you think Paton wrote the poem?
c. Do you think writing poems is an effective way of changing society? Explain.
3. Identify and explain alliteration, assonance and consonance used in the poem.

Application activity 6.3.2.2

Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.

An African Thunderstorm

From the west
Clouds come hurrying with the wind
Turning
Sharply
Here and there
Like a plague of locusts
Whirling
Tossing up things on its tail
Like a madman chasing nothing.

Pregnant clouds
Ride stately on its back
Gathering to perch on hills
Like dark sinister wings;
The wind whistles by
And trees bend to let it pass

In the village cream of delighted children
Toss and turn
In the din of the whirling wind,
Women-
Babies clinging on their backs-
Dart about
In and out
Madly
The wind whistles by
Whilst trees bend to let it pass.
Clothes wave like tattered flags
Flying off
To expose dangling breasts
As jagged blinding flashes
Rumble, tremble, and crack
Amidst the smell of fired smoke
And the pelting march of the storm

By **David Rubadiri**

Source: *Growing up with Poetry: An Anthology for Secondary Schools*. Edited by David Rubadiri. London: Heinemann, 1989, p.38

Questions

1. What is the poem about?
2. Identify and explain onomatopoeia used in this poem.
3. Describe other types of poetic devices used in the poem.

End of unit assessment

Questions

1. What do the following concepts refer to?
 - i) Rhythm
 - ii) Assonance
 - iii) Consonance
 - iv) Alliteration
 - v) Rhyme
 - vi) Onomatopoeia
2. "Dignity still shall be dressed with decorum". Do the words still and shall alliterate? Justify your answer.
3. Read the following poem and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 27: A conversation between two old people

If It Is True

If it is true
That the world talks too much
Then let's all keep quiet
And hear the eloquence
Of silence

If it is true
That the world sees too much
Then let's all close our eyes
And see the inner vision
Beneath the closed eyes

If it is true
That the world hears too much
Then let's wax our ears
And listen to the chastity of inner music
That defies betrayal
By the wayward wind

If it is true
That the world moves too much
Then let's stand statue still
And imitate the stubborn will

Of trees
That move without being peripatetic

For the dumb don't lies
For the blind can't be peeping-toms
For the deaf cannot eavesdrop
For the crippled can't trespass.

By **Richard Ntiru**

Source: *A poetry course for KCSE*. Edited by Paul Rubadiri, p.80.

Questions

1. How appropriate is the title?
2. Describe the use of rhythm in the poem.
3. Do you like this poem? Give reasons for your answer.
4. What is meant by:
 - a. The eloquence of silence
 - b. The chastity of inner music
 - c. Stand the statue still
5. Compose a poem of your own with a rhythm and rhyme and recite it to the class.



UNIT 7

DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DRAMA

UNIT 7: DEVELOPMENT OF EUROPEAN DRAMA

Key unit competence: To be able to understand how drama developed throughout different periods of time and relates its development to different themes and messages.

Introductory activity

Read the play *An enemy of the people* by Henrik Ibsen and answer the questions below.

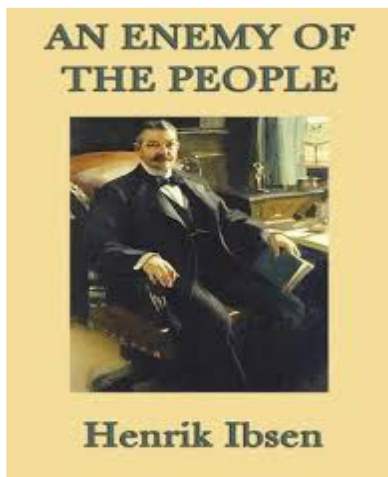


Figure 28: book cover

Questions

1. Examine the character and characterisation of the play.
2. Analyse the setting of the play.
3. Explain the dramatic techniques employed by Ibsen in his play *An enemy of the people*.
4. Discuss the theme of the play.
5. Discuss the context of the play in relation to the development of European drama.

Note: The play *An enemy of the people* is an example of European drama. European drama simply refers to the plays produced in the western world or in Europe. Western drama or European drama originated in Greece around 500 B.C. It is said

to have developed on primitive religious ceremonies that were performed to win favour from gods. In these ceremonies priests often impersonate supernatural beings or animals. Sometimes they imitated such actions as hunting or traversing the skies. These stories, which became myths and legends later, formed the basis of modern drama. This unit will focus on the development of European drama and how different periods and contexts influenced the themes and messages in different European plays.

Application activity 7.1

Answer the questions below.

1. Who is the real enemy of the people in the play *An enemy of the people*? Why?
2. What lessons do you learn from the play *An enemy of the people*?
3. With examples, relate the events in the play *An enemy of the people* to the modern society.
4. According to you, is Dr Stockmann a hero or a fool? Justify your answer.

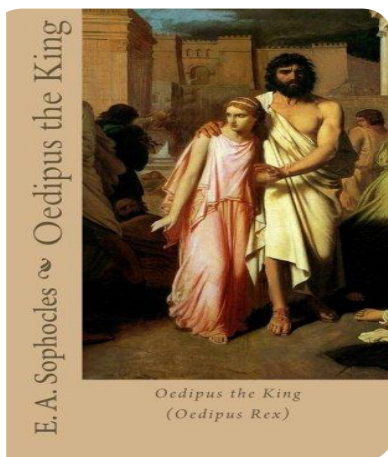


Figure 29: *Oedipus the King*

7.1. Periods in the development of European drama

7.1.1 Ancient Greek drama

Activity 7.1.1

Answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by ancient Greek drama?
2. Discuss the main features of ancient Greek drama.
3. Discuss the famous playwrights of ancient drama.

Note: Ancient Greek drama is the art of drama developed in the ancient Greek city-state of Athens in the late 6th century BC. Ancient Greek drama consists of three kinds of plays: tragedy, comedy and satyr plays. The early works for Greek drama focused on the good and evil that exist simultaneously in the world as well as the contradictory forces of human nature and the outside world. They were designed to worship gods and goddesses. Masks were used to represent characters; high-soled boots were worn to add height. The major themes and concerns of Greek drama were the impact of war, the state versus the individual, the state versus family, pride, the role of gods in human affairs, gender roles and human relationships. The famous plays written during this time were Antigone, Oedipus Rex and Medea.

Application activity 7.1.1

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

PART I: *Scene: In front of the palace of Oedipus at Thebes. To the right of the stage near the altar stands the PRIEST with a crowd of children. OEDIPUS emerges from the central door.*

PRIEST: Thanks for your gracious words. Your servants here signal that Creon is this moment coming.

OEDIPUS: His face is bright. O holy Lord Apollo, grant that his news too may be bright for us and bring us safety.

PRIEST: It is happy news, I think, for else his head would not be crowned with sprigs of fruitful laurel.

OEDIPUS: We will know soon, he's within hail. Lord Creon, my good brother, what is the word you bring us from the God?

[CREON enters.]

CREON: A good word, --for things hard to bear themselves if in the final issue all is well I count complete good fortune.

OEDIPUS: What do you mean? What have you said so far leaves me uncertain whether to trust or fear.

CREON: If you will hear my news before these others I am ready to speak, or else to go within.

OEDIPUS: Speak it to all; the grief I bear; I bear it more for these than for my own hear.

CREON: I will tell you, then, what I heard from the God. King Phoebus in plain words commanded us to drive out a pollution from our land, pollution grown ingrained within the land; drive it out, said the God, not cherish it, till it's past cure.

OEDIPUS: What is the rite of purification? How shall it be done?

CREON: By banishing a man, or expiation of blood by blood, since it is murder guilt which holds our city in this destroying storm.

OESIPUS: Who is this man whose fate the God pronounces?

CREON: My lord, before you piloted the state we had a king called Laius.

OEDIPUS: I know of him by hearsay. I have not seen him.

CREON: The God commanded clearly: let someone punish with force this dead man's murderers.

OEDIPUS: Where are they in the world? Where would a trace of this old crime be found? It would be hard to guess where.

CREON: The clue is in this land; that which is sought is found; the unheeded thing escapes: so said the God.

OEDIPUS: Was it at home, or in the country that death came upon him, or in another country travelling?

CREON: He went, he said himself, upon an embassy, but never returned when he set out from home file.

Questions

1. What was the problem in the above extract?
2. Discuss the dramatic techniques used in the above extract.
3. Which period of the development of European drama do you think this play falls in? Justify your answer.

7.2.2. Medieval/Mystery play

Activity 7.2.2

Observe the picture below and answer the questions.



Figure 30: Stage in mystery play

Questions

1. What do you think the people in the above picture are doing?
2. Identify the characteristics of medieval mystery play.
3. Why do you think it is called the mystery play?

Note: Medieval drama refers to all drama produced in the period between the fall of the Western Roman empire in the 5th century AD and the beginning of Renaissance in approximately the 15th century A.D. Medieval drama began as a

mimetic representation of religious history and subsequently into the events of Holy Scriptures. The Christian festival celebrations always included elements that were potentially dramatic. Bits of chanted dialogue called troops were added to Easter celebration. This was the beginning of drama in post-classical Western Europe. Many mystery plays were rich with comedy. The purpose of these plays was to teach religion.

They were divided into:

- Mystery plays (life of Christ);
- Miracle plays (lives of saints);
- Morality plays (being good/moral).

Medieval mystery plays began to be performed in the 1200's and were performed outdoors. The plays were written in verse and taught Christian doctrine by presenting biblical characters. Themes and characters were from the Bible.

Application activity 7.2.2

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.



Figure 31: European drama scene

ABEL (saddened, and also trying to get away): Dear brother

Cain, do not speak so.

Now let us both to worship go.

Good Cain, let us be on our way.



Figure 32: book cover

I wish we would no longer stay.

CAIN: Can't you shut up? My time I won't waste
Like you. (Mocks him) The devil will get you if you
don't make haste.

(Angry again) As long as I live,

My corn I won't give

Neither to God nor to anyone.

The way I live is to keep what I've won.

If all my possessions, I'd given or sold

I'd not have a coat left to keep out the cold.

If you're so foolish to squander your stuff

You'll be out on the road and sleeping rough.

ABEL: Dear brother, come on, in God's dear
name.

I am afraid we shall get blame.

Let us be quick - not hang around here.

CAIN: Just look at you, man. You're

shaking with fear.

My dear, young brother, I think
you're mad.

Don't you see how very sad

It is to give away all you've got?

No man can part me from my lot.

Why roughen your hands and split your shoes

If you can't work for whom you choose?

ABEL: People would see and wonder whether

We'd parted, if we don't go together.

Our beloved father would wonder why.

Are we not brothers, you and I?

CAIN: I sometimes wonder. But I'll let you snivel

Away, you baby. Keep on with your drivel.

No matter if I make God angry or glad,

To give him these sheaves of corn makes me mad.

I admit I'd go gladly up the hill
With you if I thought I'd win on the deal.
All right, I see I've got to go,
So get on your way, bad luck to you,
(Sarcastically) Since we've got to stick together, us two.

ABEL: Dear brother, why must you speak so. (Hurt)

Come on, now, Cain. We'll go together.

(He is happy again) Thanks be to God, we have fair weather.

CAIN - having picked up a large bundle of sheaves, most
of which look very thin and poor - and ABEL walk round the
stage to one corner where there is a small mound.

CAIN: Lay down your bundle on this hill.

ABEL: Gladly, brother; that I will;

May God, my father, take my gift.

CAIN: Get it over! Come on - shift.

ABEL (taking his bundle to the mound, putting it on top and
kneeling in front of it): God, the maker of everything,
I pray you'll take my offering.
I grew and gathered it in fear.
I dedicate it humbly here
And give it up with good intent
To you, my Lord, who all has sent.
I burn it now, in hope and love (He sets light to it)
For you, my mighty Lord above.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. How does Abel manage to win over Cain?
3. Compare and contrast the characters of Cain and Abel.

7.2.3 Farce

Activity 7.2.3

Answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by farce?
2. How is farce different from comedy?

Notes: A farce is a literary genre and the type of comedy that makes the use of exaggerated and funny situations. The farce is found in Ancient Greek and Roman theatre both in the comedies of Aristophanes and Plautus and in the popular native Italian Fabula Atellana. It was in the 15th Century France that the term farce was first used. French farce spread quickly throughout Europe. Shakespeare and Molière came to use elements of farce in their comedies. Its purpose is to make the audience laugh. It begins with some low comedy using jokes, physical humour, drunkenness, and silly visuals just for the sake of getting people laugh. Modern farces probably evolved out of satyr plays. In a farce, the characters are all believable. An example of the farce drama is *The three stooges*.

GUILLEMETTE: [ironically] Oh, very fine! Fie! You swore to pay, or you gave a note of hand. That is how you came by it! And when the note falls due they'll come and seize our things and carry off everything we own.

PATELIN: [reassuringly] Upon my word, I gave but a penny for it all.

GUILLEMETTE: Benedicite Maria! A penny? Impossible!

PATELIN: [leaning toward her] You may pluck out this eye, if he got more, or if he gets more, bawl though he may.

GUILLEMETTE: But who is he, anyhow?

PATELIN: A numbskull called Guillaume, whose surname is Joceaulme; since you must know.

GUILLEMETTE: But how came you to get it for a penny? What was your game?

PATELIN: It was for God's-penny; and yet, had I said, 'Let's bind the bargain with a drink,' I'd have kept my penny, Anyhow, 'twas well worked., God and he shall share that penny, if they care to; for it is all they shall get, no matter how they carry on.

GUILLEMETTE: How came he to trust you? he's such a surly customer.

PATELIN: Dash me if I didn't make him out such a noble lord that he almost gave it me. I told him what a jewel his late father was. 'Ah, brother,' says I, 'what good stock

you come of! No family hereabouts,' says I, 'compares with yours for virtues,' but drat me! what riff-raff! The most ill-tempered, rabble, I suppose, in all this kingdom. 'Guillaume, my friend,' says I, 'what a likeness you do bear your good father! and in every feature!' God wot how I heaped it on! And meanwhile I interlarded something about woollens. 'And then,' says I, 'heavens! how kind he was about trusting folks with his wares! and so meekly! You're he,' says I, 'his spitten image!' Yet you might have hauled the teeth out of that rascally old porpoise, his late father, or his monkey of a son, before they'd trust a fellow with as much as that! [snaps his fingers] or even be polite. Anyhow, I made such an ado and talked so much that he trusted me with six ells.

GUILLEMETTE: Yes, and he'll never get them back.

PATELIN: [*derisively*] Get them back? He'll get the devil back!

GUILLEMETTE: [*suggesting by mimicry the action in the fable of the Fox and the Crow*] I call to mind the fable of the Crow that had perched on a cross, some ten or twelve yards high. In his beak he was holding a cheese. A Fox strolled along that way and spied the cheese. Thought he to himself, 'Now, how am I going to cheese, and in a trice Master Renard had it tight between his teeth and off he went! That, I'll wager, is what happened to this cloth. You wheedled him out of it, just as Renard got the cheese.

PATELIN: He is coming to eat some goose, -- on a wild goose chase, I mean. Now here's our game. Of course

he will be braying to get money on the spot; so I've hatched out a nice arrangement. I'll simply lie on my bed, and play sick; then, when he comes, you will say, 'Oh, do speak low!' Then you must groan and pull a long face. 'Alas!' (you'll say) 'he he fell sick these two months past,' -- or say six weeks, -- and if he cries, 'That's all flim-flam, for he has just been at my shop,' you must say, 'Alas! this is no time to romp!' Then let me pipe him a little tune, for music is all he shall get.

GUILLEMETTE: Trust me to play the game, -- but if you slip up again, you may smart for it: I bet you'll catch it a good bit worse than the other time.

PATELIN: Hush now! I know what I'm about. We must both do as I say.

GUILLEMETTE: For goodness sake remember that Saturday they put you in the stocks! You know how everyone jeered at you for your trickery.

PATELIN: Do stop your chatter: he'll be here before we know it. That cloth must stay with us [*hiding it under the mattress*]. Now I'm going to bed.

GUILLEMETTE: [*laughing at his burlesque preparations*] Go ahead!

PATELIN: [*under the bedclothes*] No laughing, now!

GUILLEMETTE: [*as she draws the bed curtains together*] Well, rather not! I'll shed hot tears.

PATELIN: We must stand fast, now. No flinching, or he'll see what's up.

Questions

1. What is the above extract about?
2. What is funny in this extract?
3. What is the setting of this extract?
4. Identify the characteristics of farce in the above extract.
5. Discuss the dramatic techniques used in the extract above.

7.2.4 Commedia dell'arte

Activity 7.2.4

Answer the following questions.

1. What do you understand by commedia dell'arte?
2. How does commedia dell'arte differ from farce?



Figure 33: a man performing a theater

Note: The commedia dell'arte (comedy of art or comedy of the profession) means unwritten or improvised drama. This peculiar species had a long life in Italy. It flourished especially in the 16th Century. The play was divided into acts and scenes with a prologue. The situation was made clear, together with the turn of the action. Subject of the commedia dell'arte was concerned mostly with disgraceful love for intrigues, clever tricks to get money or outwit some simpleton. There was diversity of incident and cases where father and son fall in love of the same girl and risqué situation—the representation of fire, shipwreck and the like which served a pretext for allowing actresses to appear naked on the stage.

The commedia dell'arte theatre scripts and scenario descriptions were meant for use and performance.

They featured traditional characters and masks.

Application activity 7.2.4

Read the following extract and discuss the questions that follow.

TRUFFALDINO: My most humble greetings, ladies and gentlemen! What a fine, fine group, yes! Very fine, very fine, indeed.

PANTALONE: All right, who are you and what is your business?

TRUFFALDINO (to PANTALONE, pointing to CLARICE): Who's this lovely lady?

PANTALONE: That is my daughter.

TRUFFALDINO (gulps): My congratulations, sir.

SMERALDINA (to SILVIO): And this is her fiancée. Signora Clarice is engaged to be married.

TRUFFALDINO (To SMERALDINA): And who are you?

SMERALDINA: I am Smeraldina, the lady's maid.

TRUFFALDINO: Lucky lady.

PANTALONE: All right, enough small talk. Now who are you? What do you want? Where do you come from?

TRUFFALDINO: Who, what, where? Three questions at once? Give a poor guy a chance.

PANTALONE (Aside to DR. LOMBARDI): The man's a fool blockhead.

DR LOMBARDI (repeats to BRIGHELLA)

BRIGHELLA (repeats again)

TRUFFALDINO (To SMERALDINA): So are you the one getting married?

SMERALDINA (Sighs): No.

PANTALONE: Look, do you want to tell me who you are or you want to go about your business?

TRUFFALDINO: Well, if that's all you care about, fine. I'll tell you in two words: I AM A SERVANT OF MY MASTER. (Turns to SMERALDINA): As I was saying...

PANTALONE (to DR LOMBARDI): Ah...he is the servant of his master.

DR LOMBARDI (repeats to BRIGHELLA)

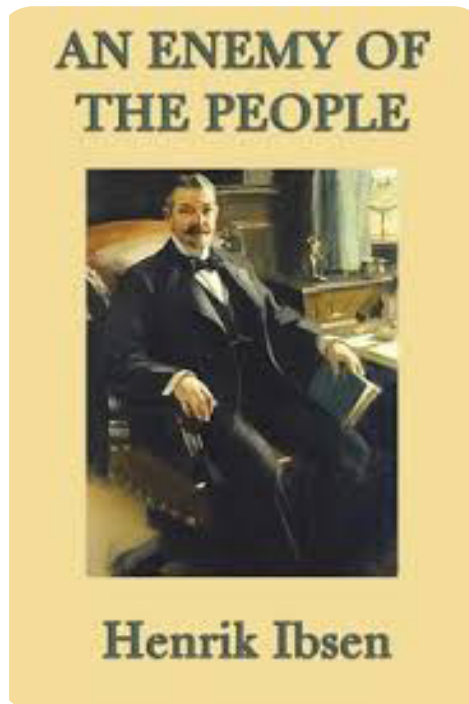


Figure 34: book cover

BRIGHELLA (repeats again)

PANTALONE: So who is your master!?

TRUFFALDINO (To PANTALONE): My master is a gentleman from abroad who

wants to have a word with you. (To SMERALDINA) So: marriage.

PANTALONE: What gentleman?!? What is his name?!!

TRUFFALDINO: My master is Signor Federigo Rasponi of Turin!

ALL Ahh, Federigo Rasponi!

TRUFFALDINO: Federigo Rasponi. He sends his regards. And he's come to see you. And he's downstairs. And he wants to come up. And he's...WAITING! (All look surprised. To SMERALDINA, as before:) One more time.

PANTALONE: Uh, sir? ir? Your master! I

didn't quite catch the name.

TRUFFALDINO (Aside): Poor guy...deaf

as cheddar.

Questions

1. What is funny in the above extract?
2. Identify the characteristics of the commedia dell' arte in the above excerpt.
3. Analyse the dramatic techniques used in the extract.

7.2.5 Modern drama

Activity 7.2.5

Read the following extract and discuss the characteristics of modern drama.

ACT II SCENE 1,

(---The same. The door into the dining room is shut. It is morning. MRS. STOCKMANN, with a sealed letter in her hand, comes in from the dining room, goes to the door of the DOCTOR'S study, and peeps in.)

Mrs. Stockmann: Are you in, Thomas?

Dr. Stockmann: *(from within his room)*. Yes, I have just come in.
(Comes into the room.) What is it?

Mrs. Stockmann: A letter from your brother.

Dr. Stockmann: Aha, let us see! *(Opens the letter and reads:)* "I return herewith the manuscript you sent me" *(reads on in a lowmurmur)* H'm!--

Mrs. Stockmann: What does he say?

Dr. Stockmann: *(putting the papers in his pocket)*. Oh, he only writes that he will come up here himself about midday.

Mrs. Stockmann: Well, try and remember to be at home this time.

Dr. Stockmann: That will be all right; I have got through all my morning visits.

Mrs. Stockmann: I am extremely curious to know how he takes it.

Dr. Stockmann: You will see he won't like it's having been I, and not he, that made the discovery.

Mrs: Stockmann. Aren't you a little nervous about that?

Dr. Stockmann: Oh, he really will be pleased enough, you know.
But, at the same time, Peter is so confoundedly afraid of anyone's doing any service to the town except himself.

Mrs. Stockmann: I will tell you what, Thomas--you should be good natured, and share the credit of this with him. Couldn't you make out that it was he who set you on the scent of this discovery?

Dr. Stockmann: I am quite willing. If only I can get the thingset right. I--

(MORTEN KIIL puts his head in through the door leading from the hall, looks around in an enquiring manner, and chuckles.)

Morten Kiil: (*slyly*). Is it--is it true?

Mrs. Stockmann: (*going to the door*). Father!--is it you?

Dr. Stockmann: Ah, Mr. Kiil--good morning, good morning!

Mrs. Stockmann: But come along in.

Morten Kiil: If it is true, I will; if not, I am off.

Dr. Stockmann: If what is true?

Morten Kiil: This tale about the water supply, is it true?

Dr. Stockmann: Certainly it is true, but how did you come to hear it?

Morten Kiil: (*coming in*). Petra ran in on her way to the school--

Dr. Stockmann: Did she?

Morten Kiil: Yes; and she declares that--I thought she was only making a fool of me--but it isn't like Petra to do that.

Dr. Stockmann: Of course not. How could you imagine such a thing!

Morten Kiil: Oh well, it is better never to trust anybody; you may find you have been made a fool of before you know where you are. But it is really true, all the same?

Dr. Stockmann: You can depend upon it that it is true. Won't you sit down?

(*Settles him on the couch.*) Isn't it a real bit of luck for the town--

Morten Kiil (*suppressing his laughter*): A bit of luck for the town?

Dr. Stockmann: Yes, that I made the discovery in good time.

Morten Kiil (*as before*): Yes, yes, Yes!--But I should never have thought you the sort of man to pull your own brother's leg like this!

Dr. Stockmann: Pull his leg!

Mrs. Stockmann: Really, father dear--

Morten Kiil (*resting his hands and his chin on the handle of his stick and winking slyly at the DOCTOR*): Let me see, what was the story? Some kind of beast that had got into the water-pipes, wasn't it?

Dr. Stockmann: Infusoria--yes.

Morten Kiil: And a lot of these beasts had got in, according to Petra--a tremendous lot.

Dr. Stockmann: Certainly; hundreds of thousands of them, probably.

Morten Kiil: But no one can see them--isn't that so?

Dr. Stockmann: Yes; you can't see them,

Morten Kiil (*with a quiet chuckle*): Damn--it's the finest story
I have ever heard!

Dr. Stockmann: What do you mean?

Morten Kiil: But you will never get the Mayor to believe a thing like that.

Dr. Stockmann: We shall see.

An Enemy of the People by **Henrik Ibsen**.

Questions

1. When and where does this scene take place?
2. From the extract above discuss the characteristics of modern drama.
3. How is it different from ancient Greek drama?
4. Identify the dramatic techniques used in the extract above.

Note: Modern drama

Drama is a form that goes back to the ancient Greeks and includes such writers as Shakespeare, Sophocles and Christopher Marlowe. After the period of being dormant for much of 19th century, drama made a comeback in the last decades of the century and the early decades of 20th century thanks to the writers like Henrik Ibsen, George Bernard Shaw, Eugene O'Neill. Those writers were very different; their works shared the characteristics that were representative of a new form of drama known as **modern drama**.

Unlike earlier drama of Shakespeare and Sophocles, modern drama tended to focus not on kings and heroes but instead, on ordinary people dealing with ordinary problems. Like much of literature of this period which expressed the reactions to rapid social change and catastrophic events like World War I, it often dealt with the sense of alienation and disconnectedness that average people felt during this period.

Henrik Ibsen is known as the father of modern drama. He rose to prominence because of his refusal to follow the traditional rules of drama. His determination to forge his own style of drama made him a father of modern drama.

Application activity 7.2.5

Read the following excerpt and answer the questions that follow.

Dr. Stockmann (*snapping his fingers and getting up from the table*): I have it! I have it, by Jove! You shall never set foot in the school again! The Boys. No more school!

Mrs. Stockmann. But, Thomas-

Dr. Stockmann. Never, I say. I will educate you myself; that is to say, you shan't learn a blessed thing-

Morten. Hooray!

Dr. Stockmann. --but I will make liberal-minded and high-minded men of you. You must help me with that, Petra.
Petra, Yes, father, you may be sure I will.

Dr. Stockmann. And my school shall be in the room where they insulted me and called me An enemy of the people. But we are too few as we are; I must have at least twelve boys to begin with.

Mrs. Stockmann. You will certainly never get them in this town.

Dr. Stockmann. We shall. (*To the boys.*) Don't you know any street urchins--regular ragamuffins--?

Morten. Yes, father, I know lots!

Dr. Stockmann. That's capital! Bring me some specimens of them. I am going to experiment with curs, just for once; there may be some exceptional heads among them.

Morten. And what are we going to do, when you have made liberal minded and high-minded men of us?

Dr. Stockmann. Then you shall drive all the wolves out of the country, my boys!

(EJLIF looks rather doubtful about it; MORTEN jumps about crying "Hurrah!")

Mrs. Stockmann. Let us hope it won't be the wolves that will drive you out of the country, Thomas.

Dr. Stockmann. Are you out of your mind, Katherine? Drive me out! Now--when I am the strongest man in the town!

Mrs. Stockmann. The strongest--now?

Dr. Stockmann. Yes, and I will go so far as to say that now I am the strongest man in the whole world.

Morten. I say!

Dr. Stockmann (*lowering his voice*). Hush! You mustn't say anything about it yet; but I have made a great discovery.

Mrs. Stockmann. Another one?

Dr. Stockmann. Yes. (*Gathers them round him, and says confidentially.*) It is this, let me tell you--that the strongest man in the world is he who stands most alone.

Mrs. Stockmann (*smiling and shaking her head*). Oh, Thomas, Thomas!

Petra (*encouragingly, as she grasps her father's hands*). Father

An Enemy of the People by **Henrik Ibsen**, Act 5, page 88.

Questions

1. What is the purpose of Dr Stockmann in the excerpt?
2. Why has he qualified himself as a strong man?
3. Discuss the main themes in the above excerpt.

End Unit Assessment

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

ACT I SCENE I.

MRS. STOCKMANN: You see, if you come an hour late, Mr. Billing, you have to put up with cold meat.

BILLING (as he eats): It is uncommonly good, thank you-- remarkably good.

MRS. STOCKMANN: My husband makes such a point of having his meals punctually, you know.

BILLING: That doesn't affect me a bit. Indeed, I almost think I enjoy a meal all the better when I can sit down and eat all by myself, and undisturbed.

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh well, as long as you are enjoying it--. (Turns to the hall door, listening.) I expect that is Mr. Hovstad coming too.

BILLING: Very likely.

PETER STOCKMANN: (comes in. He wears an overcoat and his official hat, and carries a stick.)

PETER STOCKMANN: Good evening, Katherine.

MRS. STOCKMANN: (coming forward into the sitting-room). Ah, good evening--is it you? How good of you to come up and see us!

PETER STOCKMANN: I happened to be passing, and so--(looks into the dining-room). But you have company with you, I see.

MRS. STOCKMANN (a little embarrassed): Oh, no--it was quite by chance he came in. (Hurriedly.) Won't you come in and have something, too?

PETER STOCKMANN: !! No, thank you. Good gracious--hot meat at night! Not with my digestion,

MRS. STOCKMANN: Oh, but just once in a way--

PETER STOCKMANN: No, no, my dear lady; I stick to my tea and bread and butter. It is much more wholesome in the long run--and a little more economical, too.

MRS. STOCKMANN (smiling): Now you mustn't think that Thomas and I are spendthrifts.

PETER STOCKMANN: Not you, my dear; I would never think that of you. (Points to the Doctor's study.) Is he not at home?

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, he went out for a little turn after supper-- he and the boys.

PETER STOCKMANN: I doubt if that is a wise thing to do.

(Listens.) I fancy I hear him coming now.

MRS. STOCKMANN: No, I don't think it is he. (A knock is heard at the door.) Come in! (HOVSTAD comes in from the hall.) Oh, it is you, Mr. Hovstad!

HOVSTAD: Yes, I hope you will forgive me, but I was delayed at the printers. Good evening, Mr. Mayor.

PETER STOCKMANN (bowing a little distantly): Good evening. You have come on business, no doubt.

HOVSTAD: Partly. It's about an article for the paper.

PETER STOCKMANN: So I imagined. I hear my brother has become a prolific contributor to the "People's Messenger."

HOVSTAD: Yes, he is good enough to write in the "People's Messenger" when he has any home truths to tell.

MRS. STOCKMANN (to HOVSTAD): But won't you--? (Points to the dining-room.)

PETER STOCKMANN: Quite so, quite so. I don't blame him in the least, as a writer, for addressing himself to the quarters where he will find the readiest sympathy. And, besides that, I personally have no reason to bear any ill will to your paper, Mr. Hovstad.

HOVSTAD: I quite agree with you.

PETER STOCKMANN: Taking one thing with another, there is an excellent spirit of toleration in the town--an admirable municipal spirit. And it all springs from the fact of our having a great common interest to unite us--an interest that is in an equally high degree the concern of every right-minded citizen

HOVSTAD: The Baths, yes.

PETER STOCKMANN: Exactly---our fine, new, handsome Baths. Mark my words, Mr. Hovstad--the Baths will become the focus of our municipal life! Not a doubt of it!

MRS. STOCKMANN: That is just what Thomas says.

PETER STOCKMANN: Think how extraordinarily the place has developed within the last year or two! Money has been flowing in, and there is some life and some business

doing in the town. Houses and landed property are rising
in value every day.

An Enemy of the People by **Henrik Ibsen**.

Questions

1. What are the main features of European drama in the above excerpt?
2. Discuss the characteristics of Peter Skockmann in the above extract.
3. Analyse the themes and messages in the above excerpt.
4. Demonstrate how the context of a play influences its theme and message.
5. Describe the different periods in the development of drama.



UNIT 8

LANGUAGE USE IN DRAMA

UNIT 8 : LANGUAGE USE IN DRAMA

Key unit competence: To be able to explore the use of language in drama to create tone and atmosphere.

Introductory activity

Read the play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and answer the questions below.

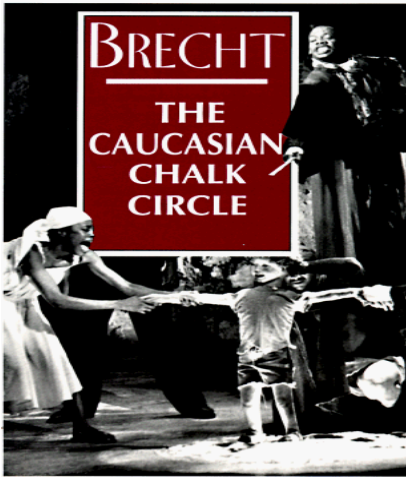


Figure 35: Illustration on the book cover

Questions

1. Analyse the setting of the play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*
2. Discuss the themes highlighted in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*
3. Examine critically the characterisation of the play.
4. What is the Chalk Circle in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*?
5. Identify the dramatic figures of speech used by Bertolt Brecht in his play.

Note: Language use in drama

Language has a key position in drama. Like in real life, language is the most important means of communication on stage. Language is one basic feature of drama that is related to both the dramatic characters and the action. Language use in drama is different from language use in poetry or prose. Drama differs because it is not just something to be heard or read but is performed before an audience. There must, therefore, be something 'dramatic' about the language of drama, that is, the

language of drama must suggest the action which surrounds it.

Dramatic language also deviates from everyday language in terms of its situational complexity and its employment of an aesthetically functionalised language. The goal of the playwright is to communicate a given message and express this in beautiful and interesting way. To achieve beauty and certain tones and atmosphere, playwrights use language in a unique manner to make their plays artistically rich. This unique use of language is referred to as language use in drama. It entails the use of various dramatic techniques like dialogues that entail irony, satire. It also includes figurative language, metaphor, similes, alliteration, repetition, assonance, rhyme and rhythm, songs, proverbs and sayings. This unit will review some of the literary devices and how they are used to create tone and atmosphere in various plays.

8.1. Tone in drama

Activity 8.1

Read the following extract from *The Crucible* and discuss the tone used.

PROCTOR: And Giles?

ELIZABETH: You have not heard of it?

PROCTOR: *I hear nothin', where I am kept.*

ELIZABETH: Giles is dead.

He looks at her incredulously.

ELIZABETH: Aye. It was a fearsome man, Giles Corey.

Pause.

PROCTOR, *with great force of will, but not quite looking at her: I have been thinking I would confess to them, Elizabeth. She shows nothing. What say you? I give them that?*

ELIZABETH: I cannot judge you, John.

Pause.

PROCTOR, *simply - a pure question: What would you have me do?*

ELIZABETH: As you will, I would have it. Slight pause: I want you living, John. That's sure.

PROCTOR, *pauses, then with a flailing of hope: Giles' wife? Have she confessed?*

ELIZABETH: She will not.

Pause.

PROCTOR: It is a pretense, Elizabeth.

ELIZABETH: What is?

PROCTOR: I cannot mount the gibbet like a saint. It is a fraud. I am not that man. She is silent. My honesty is broke, Elizabeth; I am no good man. Nothing's spoiled by giving them this lie that were not rotten long before.

ELIZABETH: And yet you've not confessed till now. That speak goodness in you.

PROCTOR: Spite only keeps me silent. It is hard to give a lie to dogs. Pause, *for the first time he turns directly to her.* I would have your forgiveness, Elizabeth,

ELIZABETH: It is not for me to give, John, I am –

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Note: Tone is an attitude of a playwright towards a subject or an audience. It is generally conveyed through the choice of words or the view point of a playwright on a particular subject. The manner in which a playwright approaches the theme and the subject is a tone. The tone can be formal, informal, serious, comic, sarcastic, sad, or cheerful, or it may be any other existing attitude. We adopt a variety of tones in our day-to-day speech. This intonation of our speech determines what message we wish to convey. Some of the figures of speech like simile, metaphor, irony, euphemism help create the tone and the atmosphere in drama.

More examples: Example 1.

Father: We are going in the vacation

Son: That's great!!!

The tone of son's response is cheerful.

Example 2.

Yeah, your grade in this exam will be as good as the previous exams

The tone is pessimistic in this example. Tone decides how the audience or readers read a literary piece, and how they should feel while they are reading it. Tone lends shape and life to a piece of literature because it creates a mood.

Application activity 8.1

Read the extract from *The Crucible* and answer the questions that follow.

Abigail: I have a sense for heat, John, and yours has drawn me to my window, and I have seen you looking up, burning in your loneliness. Do you tell me you've never looked up at my window?

Proctor: I may have looked up.

Abigail, now softening: And you must. You are no wintry man. I know you, John. I know you. She is weeping. I cannot sleep for dream in; I cannot dream but I wake and walk about the house as though I'd find you come in' through some door. She *clutches him desperately*.

Proctor, gently pressing her from him, with great sympathy but firmly: Child -

Abigail, with a pash of anger: How do you call me child!

Proctor: Abby, I may think of you softly from time to time. But I will cut off my hand before I'll ever reach for you again. Wipe it out of mind. We never touched, Abby.

Abigail: Aye, but we did.

Proctor: Aye, but we did not.

Abigail, with a bitter anger: Oh, I marvel how such a strong man may let such a sickly wife be -

Proctor, angered - at himself as well: You'll speak nothin' of Elizabeth!

Abigail: She is blackening my name in the village! She is telling lies about me! She is a cold, snivelling woman, and you bend to her! Let her turn you like a -

Proctor, shaking her: Do you look for whippin'?

A psalm is heard being sung below.

Abigail, in tears: I look for John Proctor that took me from my sleep and put knowledge in my heart! I never knew what pretence Salem was, I never knew the lying lessons I was taught by all these Christian women and their covenanted men! And now you bid me tear the light out of my eyes? I will not, I cannot! You loved me, John Proctor, and whatever sin it is, you love me yet! *He turns abruptly to go out. She rushes to him. John, pity me, pity me!*

The words “going up to Jesus” are heard in the psalm and Betty claps her ears suddenly and whines loudly.

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. Why was Abigail angry?
3. Discuss the tone used in the above extract.

8.2. Atmosphere in drama

Activity 8.2

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

Danforth: Marshal! Parris, *hysterically, as though the tearing paper were his life:* Proctor, Proctor!

Hale: Man, you will hang! You cannot!

Proctor, his eyes fully of tears: I can. And there’s your first marvel, that I can.

You have made your magic now, for now I do think I see some shred of goodness in John Proctor. Not enough to weave a banner with, but white enough to keep it from such dogs. *Elizabeth, in a burst of terror, rushes to him and weeps against his hand.* Give them no tear! Tears pleasure them! Show honour now, show a stony heart and sink them with it! *He has lifted her, and kisses her now with great passion.*

Rebecca: Let you fear nothing! Another judgment waits us all!

Danforth: Hang them high over the town! Who weeps for these, weeps for corruption! He sweeps out past them. Herrick starts to lead Rebecca, who almost collapses, but Proctor catches her, and she glances up at him apologetically.

Rebecca: I’ve had no breakfast.

Herrick: Come, man.

Herrick escorts them out, Hathorne and Cheever behind them. Elizabeth stands staring at the empty doorway.

Parris, in deadly fear, to Elizabeth: Go to him, Goody Proctor! There is yet time!

From outside a drumroll strikes the air. Parris is startled. Elizabeth jerks about toward the window.

Parris: Go to him! He rushes out the door, as though to hold back his fate.

Proctor! Proctor!

Again, a short burst of drums.

Hale: Woman, plead with him! He starts to rush out the door, and then goes back to her. Woman! It is pride, it is vanity. She avoids his eyes, and moves to the window. He drops to his knees. Be his helper! - What profit him to bleed? Shall the dust praise him? Shall the worms declare his truth? Go to him, take his shame away!

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the extract above?
2. Why is Proctor advised to fear nothing?
3. Discuss the atmosphere prevailing in the above extract.

Note: Atmosphere is a type of feeling that audience gets from a play based on details such as setting, background, mood, objects and foreshadowing. Atmosphere refers to emotions or feelings a playwright conveys to his/her audience through the description of object and setting. Atmosphere may vary throughout the play. The purpose of establishing atmosphere is to create emotional effect. It makes a literary work lively, fascinating and interesting by keeping the audience more engaged. It appeals to the audience's senses by making the story more real, allowing them to comprehend the idea easily.

Application activity 8.2

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

Proctor: You came to save my soul, did you not? Here! I have confessed myself; it is enough!

Danforth: You have not con -

Proctor: I have confessed myself! Is there no good penitence but it be public? God does not need my name nailed upon the church! God sees my name; God knows how black my sins are! It is enough!

Danforth: Mr. Proctor -

Proctor: You will not use me! I am no Sarah Good or Tituba, [...]

Rebecca: Let you fear nothing! Another judgment waits us all!

Danforth: Hang them high over the town! Who weeps for these, weeps for corruption! *He sweeps out past them. Herrick starts to lead Rebecca, who almost collapses, but Proctor catches her, and she glances up at him apologetically.*

Rebecca: I've had no breakfast.

Herrick: Come, man.

Herrick escorts them out, Hathorne and Cheever behind them. Elizabeth stands staring at the empty doorway.

Parris, in deadly fear, to Elizabeth: Go to him, Goody Proctor! There is yet time! From outside a drumroll strikes the air. Parris is startled. Elizabeth jerks about toward the window.

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. What is the setting of the extract above?
3. Describe the mood/atmosphere in the extract above.

8.3 Review of literary devices used in drama

8.3.1 Metaphor

Activity 8.3.1

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

ELIZABETH—it is hard to say: I know it, John.

He gets up, goes to her, kisses her. She receives it. With a certain disappointment, he returns to the table.

PROCTOR, as gently as he can: Cider?

ELIZABETH, with a sense of reprimanding herself for having forgot: Aye! She gets up and goes and pours a glass for him. He now arches his back.

PROCTOR: This farm's a continent when you go foot by foot droppin' seeds in it.

ELIZABETH, coming with the cider: It must be.

PROCTOR, he drinks a long draught, then, putting the glass down: You ought to bring some Flowers in the house.

ELIZABETH: Oh! I forgot! I will tomorrow.

PROCTOR: It's winter in here yet. On Sunday let you come with me, and we'll walk the farm together; I never see such a load of flowers on the earth. With good feeling he goes and looks up at the sky through the open doorway. Lilacs have a purple smell. Lilac is the smell of nightfall, I think.

Massachusetts is a beauty in the spring!

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. What happens before and after the extract?
3. Discuss the use of metaphor in the creation of tone and atmosphere in the above extract.
4. Identify any other dramatic devices used in the extract.

Note: Dramatic metaphor is a figure of speech that describes an object or an action in a way that is not literally true but helps explain an idea or make a comparison. The use of dramatic metaphor can be understood as an extension or more complex form of symbol. For example, in *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, Michael is referred to as “the apple of the Governor’s eye” which means that he loved him more than anything else. Grusha refers to Simon as “pig-headed” (p.22). This means that Simon is stubborn for wanting to put himself in danger by escorting Natella to the capital. The soldiers who pursue Grusha to the north are referred to as “bloodhounds.” Bloodhounds are dogs trained to look for people. The monk refers to the drunken peasant as “a little drum” This means that he makes a lot of noise.

Application activity 8.3.1

Read the extract from *Julius Caesar* and answer the questions that follow.

Casca: So can I: So every bondman in his own hand bears,
the power to cancel his captivity.

Cassius: And why should Caesar be a tyrant, then?
Poor man! I know, he would not be a wolf.
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep:
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those that with haste will make a mighty fire.
Begin it with weak straws. What trash is Rome;
What rubbish and what offal when it serves.
For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar! But O grief,
Where hast thou led me? I, perhaps, speak this
Before a willing bondman; then I know
My answer must be made; but I am arm’d
And dangers are to me indifferent.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. What happens after this extract?
3. Discuss the metaphors and their meanings as used in the above extract.
4. Identify any other literary devices used in the extract.

8.3.2 Alliteration

Activity 8.3.2

Read the following extract and discuss the use of alliteration.

SINGER:

And in her flight from the Ironshirts
After twenty-two days of journeying
At the foot of the Janga-Tu Glacier
GrushaVashnadze decided to adapt the child.

THE CHORUS:

The helpless girl adopted the helpless child.
GRUSHA squads over a half-frozen stream to get the CHILD water in the hollow of her hand.

GRUSHA:

Since no one else will take you, son.
I must take you.
Since no one else will take you, son,
You must take me.
O black day in a lean, lean year,
The trip was long, the milk was dear,
My legs are tired, my feet are sore:
But I wouldn't be without you any more.
I'll throw your silken shirt away
And dress you in rags and tatters.
I'll wash you, son, and christen you in glacier water.
We'll see it through together.

She has taken off the child's fine linen and wrapped it in a rag.

THE SINGER:

When Grusha VASHNADZE
Pursued by the Ironshirts
Came to the bridge on the glacier
Leading to the village of the Earstern Slope

She sang the Song of the Rotten Bridge
And risked two lives.
[...]

THE FIRST MAN: Take your time, young woman. You won't get across here anyway.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle by **Brecht** Act 1, Scene 2.

Note: Alliteration is a repetitive use of the same consonant sound at the beginning of two or more words on the same line. It places more emphasis on the sound rather than the letter itself.

In drama, alliteration is based on the similarity of sounds and as such, it is related to spoken rather than written language. In other words, alliteration will have a far greater effect on the listener than the reader because it is the sound of word, not its visual appearance or other characteristics that bring alliteration to life. Therefore, this figure of speech is particularly appropriate in drama texts because they are primarily intended for stage production and thus committed to the voice medium rather than reading. Some examples of alliteration include:

Bouncing baby boy.

Application activity 8.3.2

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

HERRICK: Come, man.

*Herrick escorts them out, Hathorne and Cheever behind them.
Elizabeth stands staring at the empty doorway.*

PARRIS, in deadly fear, to Elizabeth: Go to him, Goody Proctor! There is yet time!
From outside a drumroll strikes the air. Parris is startled. Elizabeth jerks about toward the window.

PARRIS: Go to him! He rushes out the door, as though to hold back his fate. Proctor! Proctor!
Again, a short burst of drums.

HALE: Woman, plead with him! He starts to rush out the door, and then goes back to her. Woman! It is pride, it is vanity. *She avoids his eyes, and moves to the window. He drops to his knees.*
Be his helper! What profit him to bleed? Shall the dust praise him? Shall

the worms declare his truth?
Go to him, take his shame away!

ELIZABETH, *supporting herself against collapse, grips the bars of the window, and with a cry: He have his goodness now. God forbid I take it from him! The final drumroll crashes, and then heightens violently. Hale weeps in frantic prayer, and the new sun is pouring in upon her face, and the drums rattle like bones in the morning air.*

Arthur Miller (1953). *The Crucible*.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. Identify the cases of alliteration in the above extract.

8.3.3 Repetition

Activity 8.3.3

Read the extract below from *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and answer the questions that follow.

THE SINGER:

As he was standing between courtyard and gate,
She heard or she thought she heard a low voice calling.
The child called to her,
Not whining, but calling quite sensibly,
Or so it seemed to her.
'Woman,' it said, 'help me.'
And it went on, not whining, but saying quite sensibly:
'Know, woman, he who hears not a cry for help
But passes by with troubled ears will never hear
The gentle call of a lover nor the blackbird at dawn
Nor the happy sigh of the tired grape-picker as the

Angelus rings!

She walks a few steps towards the CHILD and bends over it.

[...]

GRUSHA now settles down to watch over the CHILD through the night.

Once, she lights a small lamp to look at it. Once, she tucks it in which a coat.

From time to time she listens and looks to see whether someone is coming.

And she sat with the child a long time,

Till evening came, till night came, till dawn came.

She sat too long, too long she saw

The soft breathing, the small clenched fists,

Till toward morning the seduction was complete

And she rose, and bent down and, sighing, took the Child

And carried it away.

As if it was stolen goods she picked it up.

As if she was a thief she crept away.

She does what the SINGER says as he describes it.

*The Caucasian Chalk Circle by **Brecht** Act 1, Scene 1.*

Questions

1. What was Grusha fearing for?
2. Why was the baby compared to a stolen thing?
3. Identify the use of repetition in the above extract.

Note: Repetition is a literary device that repeats the same words or phrases a few times to make an idea clearer and more memorable. It is used in drama to lay emphasis and create rhythm.

It is a rhetorical device reiterating a word or phrase to secure emphasis. For example:

- Twinkle, twinkle little star
- Rain, rain, rain go away
- Out, out brief candle

Application activity: 8.3.3

Read the following extract from “*The Caucasian Chalk Circle*” and answer the questions that follow.

SIMON: Something goes on. Something can be seen.

GRUSHA: Could the soldier mean I dip my toes in the water
when it’s hot? There’s nothing else.

SIMON: There’s more. Your toes. And more.

GRUSHA: More what? At most my foot.

SIMON: Your foot. And a little more. [*He laughs heartily.*]

GRUSHA: [*angrily*]. Simon Shashava, you ought to be ashamed
of yourself! To sit in a bush on a hot day and wait till
a girl comes and dips her legs in the river! And I bet
you bring a friend along too! [*She runs off.*]

SIMON: [*shouting after her*]. I didn’t bring any friend along!
As the SINGER resumes his tale, the SOLDIER steps into the doorway
As though to listen to the service.

THE SINGER:

The city lies still
But why are there armed men?
The governor’s palace is at peace
But why is it a fortress?
And the Governor returned to his palace
And the fortress was a trap
And the goose was plucked and roasted
But the goose was not eaten this time
And noon was no longer the hour to eat:
Noon was the hour to die.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle by **Brecht**, Act 1, Scene 1.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. What has happened to the palace?
3. Identify the use of repetition in the extract.

8.3.4 Assonance

Activity 8.3.4

Read the following extract from Julius Caesar and discuss the use of assonance.

Cit: Are you going there as a friend or as an enemy?

Cin: Well, that is really a straight-forward answer.

Cit: Now, tell us where you live, and be brief.

Cin: To be brief, I live near the capitol.

Cit: Now, Sir, tell us you name truthfully

Cin: To tell you the truth, my name is Cinna.

Cit: Tear him to pieces He is a conspirator.

Cin: I am Cinna, the poet, I am not a conspirator.

Cit: Well, then, tear him to pieces for his bad poetry (or poem)

Cin: I am not that Cinna who is conspirator.

Cit: It does no matter who he is. His name is Cinna, after all. Just tear his name out of his heart and then let him go in his business.

Cit: Tear him, tear him to pieces. Come, bring burning sticks.

Julius Caesar by **Shakespeare**, Act IV, Scene I.

Note: Assonance is the repetition of a vowel sound or diphthong in non-rhyming words. It takes place when two or more words, close to one another repeat the same vowel sound but start with different consonant sounds. It is used in drama to create and enhance such factors as rhythm, focus and tone. Examples of assonance include the following:

- Men sell the wedding bell
- We light fire on the mountain
- Johnny went here and there and everywhere.

Application activity 8.3.4

Read the extract from *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* and answer the questions that follow.

The singer:

O blindness of the great!
They go their way like gods,
Great over bent backs,
Sure of hired fists,
Trusting in the power
Which has lasted so long.
But long is not forever.
O change from age to age!
Thou hope of the people!
*Enter the GOVERNOR, through the gateway, between two soldiers
armed to the teeth, he is in chains. His face is grey.*
Up, great sir, deign to walk upright!
From your palace the eyes of many foes follow you!
And now you don't need an architect, a carpenter will do.
You won't be moving into a new palace
But into a little hole in the ground.
Look about you once more, blind man!
The arrested man looks around.
Does all you had please you?
Between the Easter Mass and the Easter meal
You are walking to a place whence no one returns.

Questions

1. What has happened to the governor?
2. Who is referred to as a blind man in the extract?
3. Explain the meaning of the last line "You are walking to a place whence no one returns."
4. Identify the use of assonance in the above extract.

8.4 Rhyme in drama

Activity 8.4

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

THE IRONSHIRT: We have orders, in the name of the law, to take this child, found in our custody, back to the city. It is suspected that the child is Michael Abashwili, son and heir of the late Governor Georgi Abashwili, and his wife, Natella Abashwili. Here is the document and the seal.

They lead the CHILD away.

GRUSHA [*running after them, shouting*]. Leave him here. Please!
He's mine!

THE SINGER: The Ironshirts took the child, the beloved child.
The unhappy girl followed them to the city, the dreadful city.
She who had borne him demanded the child.
She who had raised him faced trial.
Who will decide the case?
To whom will the child be assigned?
Who will the judge be? A good judge? A bad?
The city was in flames
In the judge's seat sat Azdak.

THE SINGER: Hear the story of the judge
How he returned judge, how he passed judgement, what kind of
judge he was.
On that Easter Sunday of the great revolt, when the Grand Duke was
overthrown
And his Governor Abashwili, father of our child, lost his head
The village Scrivener Azdak found a fugitive in the woods and hid him
in his hut.

The Caucasian Chalk Circle by **Brecht Bertolt**, Act 1, Scene 4; Scene 5.

Questions

1. What is the subject matter of the extract above?
2. What has happened to his father?
3. Identify the use of rhyme in the above extract.

Note: A rhyme is a repetition of similar sounds (or the same sound) in two or more words, most often in the final syllables of lines. The word rhyme is also a part (taken) for the whole that means a short poem such as a rhyming couplet. Rhyme partly seems to be enjoyed simply as a repeating pattern that is pleasant to hear. It also serves as a powerful mnemonic device, facilitating memorization.

The regular use of tail rhyme helps to mark off the ends of lines, thus clarifying the metrical structure for the listener. As with other poetic techniques, poets use it to suit their own purposes. For example, William Shakespeare often used a rhyming couplet to mark off the end of a scene in a play. A rhyme helps make it musical. Rhyme aids the memory for recitation and gives predictable pleasure.

For example:

Thy lover. Artnidorus
Here will I stand till Caesar pass along;
And as suitor will give him this.
My heart laments that virtue cannot live
Out of the teeth of emulation,
If thou read this, O Caesar, may'st live;
If not, the fates with traitors do contrive.

Source: *Julius Caesar* by **William Shakespeare**, Act II, Scene III.

Application activity 8.4

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: They're getting near. But you can't take the child
on that bridge. It's sure to break. And look!

GRUSHA looks down into the abyss. The **IRONSHIRTS** are heard calling again
from below.

THE SECOND MAN: Two thousand feet!

GRUSHA: But those men are worse.

THE FIRST MAN: You can't do it. Think of the baby. Risk your life but not a child's.

THE SECOND MAN: With the child she's that much heavier!

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: Maybe she's really got to get across. Give me the baby. I'll hide it. Cross the bridge alone!

GRUSHA: I won't. we belong together. [*To the CHILD*] 'Live together, die together.'
She sings.

THE SONG OF THE ROTTEN BRIDGE

Deep is the abyss, son,
I see the weak bridge sway
But it's not for us, son,
To choose the way.
The way I know
Is the one you must tread.
And all you will eat
Is my bit of bread.

Of every four pieces
You shall have three.
Would that I knew
How big they will be!
Get out of my way. I'll try it without the rope.

THE MERCHANT WOMAN: You are tempting God!
There are shouts from below.

Source: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by **Brecht Bertolt**, Act 1, Scene 1

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. Why does the merchant want to stay with the baby?
3. Who wanted the baby? Why?
4. Identify the use of rhyme in the above extract.

8.5. Rhythmin drama

Activity 8.5

Read the following extract and answer the questions that follow.

SHAUWA [*refrain*]. Oh, oh, oh, oh.

AZDAK [*refrain*]. Where are you, General, where are you?

Please, please, please, restore order!
The nobleman's son can no longer be recognized;
The lady's child becomes the son of her slave.
The councillors meet in a shed.
Once, this man was barely allowed to sleep on the wall;
Now, he stretches his limbs in a bed.
Once, this man rowed a boat; now, he owns ships.
Their owner looks for them but they're his no longer.
Five men are sent on a journey by their masters.
'Go yourself.' They say, 'we have arrived.'

SHAUWA [*refrain*]. Oh, oh, oh, oh!

AZDAK [*refrain*]. Where are you, General, where are you?

Please, please, please, restore order!
Yes, so it might have been, had order been neglected much longer.
But now the Grand Duke has returned to the capital, and the Persians
have lent him an army to restore order with. The suburbs are already
afame.

Go and get me the big book I always sit on. [*SHAUWA brings the big book from the judge's chair. AZDAK opens it.*] This is the Statute Book and I've always used it, as you can testify. Now I'd better look in this book and see what they can do to me. I've let the down-and-outs get away with murder, and I'll have to pay for it. I helped poverty on to its skinny legs, so they'll hang me for drunkenness. I peeped into the rich man's pocket, which is bad state. And I can't hide anywhere—everybody knows me because I've helped everybody.

Source: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by **Brecht Bertolt**, Act 1, Scene 4.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. Identify and explain the theme in the above extract.
3. Discuss the use of rhythm in the above extract.

Note: Rhythm refers to the timing and pace of the drama. It also means the beat or tempo of the performance. As a rule, rhythm should never be the same throughout the drama, regardless of its length. Rhythm can follow the emotional state of one or more characters or the atmosphere of the performance at particular moments.

Application activity 8.5

Read the extract and answer the questions that follow.

SIMON: GrushaVashnadze must have had her reasons for that.

GRUSHA: Simon Shashava, I am no longer called what I used to be called.

SIMON [*after a pause*].I do not understand.

GRUSHA: When do women change their names, Simon?

Let me explain. Nothing stands between us. Everything is just as it was. You must believe that.

SIMON: Nothing stands between us and yet there's something?

GRUSHA: How can I explain it so fast and with the stream between us? Couldn't you cross the bridge there?

SIMON: Maybe it's no longer necessary.

GRUSHA: It is very necessary. Come over on this side, Simon.

Quick.

SIMON: Does the young lady wish to say someone has come too late?

GRUSHA looks up at him in despair, her face streaming with tears.

Simon states before him. He picks up a piece of wood and starts cutting it.

THE SINGER: So many words are said, so many left unsaid.

The soldier has come.

Where he comes from, he does not say.

Hear what he thought and did not say:

The battle began, grey at dawn, grew bloody at noon.

The first man fell in front of me, the second behind me,
the third at my side.

I trod on the first, left the second, the third was
run through by the captain.

One of my brothers died by steel, the other by smoke.

My neck caught fire, my hands froze in my gloves, my
toes in my socks.

I fed on aspen buds, I drank maple juice, I slept on stone,
in water.'

SIMON: I see a cap in the grass. Is there a little one already?

Source: *The Caucasian Chalk Circle* by **Brecht Bertolt**, Act 1, Scene 4.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. What is the main message of the extract?
3. Identify and explain the use of repetition, alliteration and assonance in the extract.
4. Discuss the use of rhythm in the above extract.

End of unit assessment

Questions

Write a short essay on each of the dramatic devices below including how they contribute to the creation of tone and atmosphere in a play.

- a) Metaphor
- b) Alliteration
- c) Repetition
- d) Assonance

Read the following extract and answer the questions.

The Singer: And in her flight from the Ironshirts

After twenty-two days of journeying

At the foot of the Janga-tu Glacier

Grushavashnadze decided to adopt the child

Grusha squats over a half-frozen stream to get the child water in
the hollow of her hand.

Grusha: Since no one else will take you, son,

I must take you

Since no one else will take you, son,

You must take me.

O black day in a lean, lean year,

The trip was long, the milk was dear,

My legs are tired; my feet are sore:

But I wouldn't be without you anymore.

I'll throw your silken shirt away

And dress you in rags and tatters.

I'll wash you, son, and christen you in glacier water.

We'll see it through together,

She has taken off the child's fine linen and wrapped it in a rag

The Singer: When Grushavashnadze

Pursued by the Ironshirts

Came to the bridge on the glacier

Leading to the villages of the Eastern slope

She sang the song of the rotten bridge

And risked two lives.

Questions

1. What is the extract about?
2. How does Grusha describe the life of the baby?
3. Discuss the use of alliteration, repetition, assonance, atmosphere, rhyme and rhythm in the above extract.
4. Choose a scene in the play *The Caucasian Chalk Circle*, prepare with the help of your teacher and perform it to your class or school, bringing out the overall tone and atmosphere in the play.

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