

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

FOR

Senior Secondary School

2

EDUBASE

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SS 2

**FIRST TERM NOTES ON
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

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Week 1

Topic: Introduction To Literature

Contents

1. Introduction to literature
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Introduction to Literature

Literature can be defined as a printed and unprinted material that informs, instruct entertain and educate people. Literature is given from the word literate- which means the ability to read and write

Types of literature

- Fiction: Fiction is a story invented by someone by someone, it is not real, it is a story that center on imaginary people and events. E.g The beautiful ones are not yet born
- Non- fiction: It is a different type of literature of fictions,plays,poem and articles they centre on real fact of event which are not created or imaginary. E.g Julius Caesar by William Shaleopeo

Sources of Literature

1. Folklore: This are traditional stories that takes roots from culture of a particular group of people
2. Folklore dance: It is a kind of traditional dance peculiar to a particular area, the folk dance is usually done by a folk dance. Folk music is a traditional music that has been played by ordinary people in a particular area for a long time.
3. Ritual: It is a ceremony that is performed in order to mark an important religious or social occasion. It is performed to appease traditional gods or deities

4. Myths: This is a story that many people believe, which may or may not be true. It is an ancient story especially those ones invented in order to explain natural or historical event.
5. Legend: It is an old, well known story often centres on adventure of brave people, or magical events. A legend is one who is famous and admired for being extremely good
6. Customs and tradition: Habit or behavioural of the people in a particular society. Tradition is a way of life of people in a particular society that has existed for a very long time.

Purpose of Literature

1. It helps in the development of language through reading of books written in such a language
2. It teaches moral lessons, correct wrong doings and recognizes achievement
3. It entertains, educate and instruct students
4. It creates awareness of ones society and that of others

Test and Exercise

1. Define Literature
2. Give three purpose of literature
3. Differentiate between fiction and non fiction literature
4. List 5 sources of literature

Week 2

Topic: Arms and the man

Themes

The scenario of a soldier escaping from a dreadful battle after three days of being under intense exhausted, starving and being pursued is heart-rendering. It is also the lot of a real soldier, but Bernard Shaw douses this tension with comic dialogue of sativage the romantic notions about war which exact the the horrific business. Late in the play, Shaw throws a gruesome report on the death of the man who told Blundschilis secrets about staying in Raina's bedroom there is nothing comic or heroic about being shot in the hip and then burn to death. Shaw further ridicules the heroic concept of war by overrating a soldier who prefers food to cartridges in his belt.

1. Unrealistic notions of war lead to distress
2. Romantic notions of love and marriage could lead to unhappy marriages
3. Class relationship and discrimination
4. Idealism verses Realism

Characters

1. Raina and Sergius

The themes of Arms and the men embodied in the characters a variety of ways. Extreme romantic attitudes are at once apparent in the engaged lovers, Raina and Sergius. Both strike magnificent postures. Raina's noble attitudes are thrilling voice cry out for respect, as those Sergius' role of noble warrior won the decisive battle of the war by successfully leading an attack against apparently in possible odds. Both display an apparent assurance which derives from their commitment to an ideal of spiritual on the plane of the higher love.

Yet, both are plagued by doubts within Raina there resides a spirit of common sense which whispers to her that perhaps we only had our heroic ideas because we are fond of reading Byron and Pushkin

This disclosure to her mother in Act make credible her admission, under unquestioning allegiance from those around her.

2. Catherine

The third character in the play with a strong learning towards romance is Catherine. She is who silences Raina's doubt in act 1 and who holds forth about the glory of the charge led by Sergius

The language she use in this speech testifies to both the strength of her feeling and the extent of her illusions about military glory.

ASSESSMENT

1. Comment on the relationship between Rania and Sergius
2. What ideas of war did Raina and Sergius learned from books?
3. Write a brief note on Catherine and her relationship with Raina

Week 3

Topic: Indepth Analysis of Arms and the man

Act 1

A lady's bed chamber in Bulgaria, in a small town near the dragoman passage in 8, November in the year 1885. Through an open window with a little balcony, a peak of the Balkans, wonderfully white and beautiful in the starlit snow, seems quite close and hand, though, it is really miles away. It tells us about Raina sent Catherine away because she wanted to be alone, Raina explained to Catherine that there has been a battle at Slonitz, and it was won by Sergyev, She informed her that Sergyev is the hero of the day, she informed her that the Bulgarians are destroying the Serbs and their Austrian officer like chaff

Bulgaria, in a small town near the Dragoman pass; Shaw sets the action of the play in the North West corner of Bulgaria and near the pass through which the Serbian army had moved towards the capital. However, before they reached Sofia, they were defeated at Shvinitza, the action of the play begins with the news of this battle and flight of Serbian soldiers back through the "small town" towards their own country. 8th of November in the year 1885, although Shaw set the action of Arms and the Man in a distant country, the actual war occurred less than ten years before the date of the first production. He said that he had to choose a war of recent date because of the reference that had to be made to own a china gun.

Arms and the man Act II

March 1886, Shaw is quite precise about dates and times. Compare Petkoff's statement and Catherine about the peace treaty and demoralization. Two other aspects of the date have dramatic importance.

1. The working out of the consequences of the war time action of Act I place three months later, when the war frenzy which might be supposed to have possessed the Petkoff's little town in the previous November has subsided and
2. The opening Act II in a garden in spring sun shine from a striking dramatic contrast to the setting of Act I, a locked up room in the dark of

winter night and heralds the arrival of a peaceful atmosphere in which events and relation can develop further.

Setting

Arms and the man is set in Russia revolution when Bulgaria and Serbia were fighting. Prince Alexander I, the regent of Bulgaria, led the Bulgaria army against the serbs who had declared war in November 1885. The Bulgarian army was helped by russians where as the serbs were led by Austrian . The Swiss supplied a large number of mercenaries and captain blutschal is one such a soldier fighting on the serbian side. Such mercenaries has no feelings at a crucial point russian called back hr offers and Bulgaria was left to fend for herself . In spite of such mishaps the Bulgarian were victorious in the battle of slivnitsa in November 1885. The actions in the play take place entirely in the house of a Bulgarian major.

ASSESSMENT

1. Comment on the opening of the play
2. How is love and war explained in the arms and the man?
3. Throw light on the main theme of the drama Arms and the Man. How can it be associated with both the themes of war and love?

Week 4

Topic: Boys on a swing (Oswald Mtshali)

Background of the poet

Oswald Mtshadi was born in south Africa. He studied at Columbia University. He has written poems and has consistently spoken against oppression and marginalization especially the kind witnessed in south Africa.

BOY ON A SWING

Slowly he moves
to and fro, to and fro,
then faster and faster
he swishes up and down.

His blue shirt
billows in the breeze
like a tattered kite.

The world whirls by:
east becomes west,
north turns to south;
the four cardinal points
meet in his head.

Mother!

Where did I come from?
When will I wear long trousers?
Why was my father jailed?

CONTENT ANALYSIS

Oswald Mtshali's 'Boy on a swing' is a poem that places infernal racial discrimination on a moral slab. In this poem, the poet attempts to open the eyes of the reader to the mental agony that the apartheid system was suffused with, at least from the point of view of black South Africans.

Of course, not that this can be easily inferred from the opening stanza, where we are presented with a boy, oscillating in all innocence, on a swing. We are permitted a sneak at the poverty of the boy's station in the second stanza. His blue shirt, possibly rent in places, is likened to a tattered kite.

This stanza subtly speaks volume of the unenviable economic status of the blacks, serving as a foreshadowing of the next stanza in which we are deftly informed of the confusion and directionlessness experienced by the blacks in the apartheid system. As 'the world whirls by', the 'four cardinal points' meet in the boy's head – a symbolic representation of the disorientation faced by the blacks in a world in which they knew not where exactly they were or what direction to take.

The boy's sudden awakening, expressed by a litany of rhetorical questions fired at the mother, marks the point where all pretences are dropped in the poem. The blacks had lost their identity and all sense of belonging ('where did I come from?'); they were allowed only restricted cultural and social values ('when will I wear long trousers?'); and, they were thrown in jail for inexplicable reasons ('why was my father jailed?').

This poem by Mtshali operates as a mouthpiece of the blacks against the oppression of the apartheid regime in a South Africa of the not-too-distant past.

ASSESSMENT

1. How many stanzas are in *Boys on a swing*
 - (a) 3
 - (b) 4
 - (c) 5
 - (d) 6
2. The figure of speech used in the line "*...like a tattered kite*" is
 - (a) personification
 - (b) simile
 - (c) hyperbole
 - (d) metaphor
3. In the poem, the poet is vexed by the ____ meted out to the ordinary people (peasants) by their own leaders
 - (a) maltreatment
 - (b) compliments
 - (c) good behaviour
 - (d) redemption

4. The poem is about the evils of
 - (a) democracy
 - (b) theocracy
 - (c) apartheid
 - (d) militocracy
5. The writer of the poem is
 - (a) Lenrie Peters
 - (b) Oswald Mtshadi
 - (c) Chinua Achebe
 - (d) J.P Clerk

ANSWERS

1. b
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. b

Week 5

The Fence by Lenrie Peters

Background of the poet

Lenrie Peters is a 76 years old Gambian medical doctor. He was born in Gambia in 1932. His poem is a reflection of the condition in his country. He was once the chairman of the West African Examination Council (WAEC)

Background of the poem

“the fence” is a reflective poem that uses a proverbial “fence sitting” as a yard stick to say that the poet is unable to cross the fence or take initial decision, the poet is in a state of dilemma and confusion because he sits on the fence

Structure of the poem

There are seven stanzas in the poem. In all, there are 25 lines , the lines are arranged in a way that shows the broken and confused thoughts of person. The title of the poem is suggestive to sit on the fence means not to take side in an issue or conflict.

This is the person’s dilemma reflected in the constant use of opposites ageing body and active mind, truth and trust, forward as backward, good and bad, past and future, several image is used to illustrate the person’s indecision an the effects of his inaction.

Students should read the book” the fence” by Lenrie Peters; for proper understanding

THE FENCE

**There where the dim past and future mingle
their nebulous hopes and aspirations
there I lie.**

**There where truth and untruth struggle
in endless and bloody combat,
there I lie.**

**There where time moves forwards and backwards
with not one moment's pause for sighing,
there I lie.**

**There where the body ages relentlessly
and only the feeble mind can wander back
there I lie in open-souled amazement**

**There where all the opposites arrive
to plague the inner senses, but do not fuse,
I hold my head; and then contrive
to stop the constant motion.**

**my head goes round and round,
but I have not been drinking;
I feel the buoyant waves; I stagger
It seems the world has changed her garment.
but it is I who have not crossed the fence,
So there I lie.**

**There where the need for good
and "the doing good" conflict,
there I lie.**

POEM ANALYSIS

The poem is an artistic chronicle of the poet-persona's irresoluteness on real, temporal and abstruse issues affecting human lives. He presents different hypothetical junctions at which contrasts meet; he then goes on to express his fence-sitting at each.

Stanza 1 – Explanation

In the first verse, he talks about 'the dim past and future' and makes it apparent that he lies at the mingling point of their 'hopes and aspirations'. He uses two words that make emphasises on a general sense of uncertainty – 'dim' and 'nebulous'. He ends the stanza with a crisp 'there I lie'. He has plunged himself in the middle of the confusion. We can infer from this first stanza of the poem that the poet-persona does not accept people's common view of the supposed certainty of the past, and, being

in the present (where the past and the future meet), he does not see the hopes or aspirations which the future is imbued with with any particular clarity.

Stanza 2 – Explanation

In the next stanza, he lies at the place where ‘truth and untruth struggle’. There is an endless battle between ‘truth and untruth’. He uses the word ‘untruth’ because it would create an unintended pun if he says ‘truth and lie’. But for us the readers, we can extrapolate this idea to affect the last line of the stanza where he says ‘there I lie’. The pun is created without intention. He lies. What exactly does that mean? He is telling a lie or he is lying down at a point? The antagonism between truth and untruth here is referred to as a ‘combat’, both ‘bloody’ and ‘endless’. He may have made the right choice to abstain. Human beings are naturally inclined to tell lies. The poet-persona makes us understand that he contends with these moral forces too.

Stanza 3 and 4 – Explanation

This stanza draws a parallel between time moving forward and backwards with no stop. The third and fourth stanzas take us on forward-backward journeys of time. Time moves forward , time moves forward and the ‘body ages relentlessly’. What can he do than stay aloof? The poet-persona is amazed by it all, soul and all. Of course, he does not know what to make of it.

Stanza 5 – Explanation

In the fifth stanza, Peters tells us that he stands in a point where all the opposites meet. In that meeting, they confuse him and plague his inner senses. He cannot make a decision and his irresolution eats him up. He tries to control his spinning head, to find some sort of reason in the midst of all the confusion. In this stanza we can see the effects of the constant mixing of ‘opposites’ on the inner senses of the poet-persona. He is confused and completely disoriented, feeling and acting like a drunk. He has not been drinking, but, he could ‘feel the buoyant waves’, and he

staggers. The writing style mirrors the state of his mind as the sentences come and go.

Stanza 6 – Explanation

This stanza unlocks the meaning behind this poem. In this stanza, we see what could have fed the disorientation of the poet-persona. The world ‘has changed her garment’ but he has not changed with the world. He has ‘not crossed the fence’, remaining undecided. The indecision comes from a conflict between his past and his present. The world as he knew it and the world as it is now. Most vivid is the difference in a family where parents were born and raised in a far-away village and now are raising their children in a cyber-world. The conflict may be pronounced for a man who knows not how to use these gadgets and stares blankly as he is confronted with them. This may not be the best picture but it is a mirror enough of the kind of conflict that Peters draws our attention to. ‘So there I lie’, he concludes.

Last Stanza

After explaining his conflict to us, Peters goes back in the last stanza to his complaining ways. This final stanza brings out more intensely what the poet is saying – the denouement. So in the middle of this stanza, Peters enlightens us. His whole misunderstanding with the world comes from the world’s noble intents for all things ‘good’ and the actual ‘doing good’. Many people know what is right, talk about what is right and advocate for what is right but never actually do what is right themselves. The need for good and the actual doing good! There he lies.

ASSESSMENT

1. How many stanzas are in the poem, *the Fence*
 - (a) 4
 - (b) 5
 - (c) 6
 - (d) 7

2. The title of the poem is suggestive to sit on the fence
(a) means not to take side in an issue or conflict
(b) to take side in an issue or conflict
(c) to sit on the top of a wall
(d) none of the above
3. The use of the words 'dim' and 'nebulous' in the first part of the poem signifies
(a) seriousness
(b) uncertainty
(c) clarity
(d) doggedness
4. *There where truth and untruth struggle
in endless and bloody combat,
there I lie.*
What figure of speech was unintentionally created with the line "*there I lie*"?
(a) personification
(b) simile
(c) pun
(d) onomatopoeia
5. The name of the poet is
(a) Lenrie Peters
(b) Chinua Achebe
(c) Wole Soyinka
(d) J.P Clerk

ANSWERS

1. d
2. a
3. b
4. d

5. a

week 6

Topic: Poetic device and themes used in "The Fence"

THE FENCE (BY LENRIE PETERS)

There where the dim past and future mingle
their nebulous hopes and aspirations
there I lie.

There where truth and untruth struggle
in endless and bloody combat,
there I lie.

There where time moves forwards and backwards
with not one moment's pause for sighing,
there I lie.

There where the body ages relentlessly
and only the feeble mind can wander back
there I lie in open-souled amazement

There where all the opposites arrive
to plague the inner senses, but do not fuse,
I hold my head; and then contrive
to stop the constant motion.

my head goes round and round,
but I have not been drinking;
I feel the buoyant waves; I stagger
It seems the world has changed her garment.
but it is I who have not crossed the fence,
So there I lie.

There where the need for good
and "the doing good" conflict,
there I lie.

The poetic device and themes used in "the fence" are:

1. Personification: It is the figure of speech where objects, qualities or anything are qualified as human being in literature. This is evident in lines 4, 7 and 20.

- There were truth and untruth struggle
- There were time moves forward and back ward

- It seems the world has changed her garment

These helps to communicate the intention of the poet

2. Imagery: It is an expression or language that creates a mental picture. Such a language processes image or pictures in the mind of the readers

- I feel the buoyant ———
- I stagger———

3. Refrain: The poet uses the phrase “there i lie” at the end of the every stanza and it creates a kind of rhythm that a responsible song produces

4. Symbolism “fence”: It symbolizes the poets inability to make decision under the situation he found himself or simply put , fence symbolizes indecision

5. Contrasts: This is used to bring out conflicting ideas in the poem

6. Diction: The language of the poet is simple, all the words reinforced, the theme of dilemma and struggle of the poet with opposing forces.

7. Mood: The poet’s mood is that of bewilderment as a tone of despair

Themes

The poem is about a person who finds himself in multiple dilemmas in the society. He finds himself hedge in between no aspiration, no progress, ideas and opportunities to fertilize ideas. But what caused this? moral decadence in the society and the result is debilitating indecision, hopelessness and discouragement of citizens. The themes in the poem therefore include

- Moral indecision and decadence in the society
- the poets dilemma
- The struggle between good and evil
- The need for decisiveness in the face of conflicting ideas
- Difficulty in the attainment of moral victory.
- Indecision breeds regression
- Time and tide waits for no one

Note:

The poem contains twenty-five lines in seven unequal stanzas. The dominant literary device in the poem is refrain with the repetition of the expression, “there I lie”. The emphasis on this particular expression is significant in the poem. It buttresses the persona’s total indecisiveness. As he battles with the forces of good and evil in “bloody combat”, he tries to make a decisive resolution on which side to switch but all his efforts are futile. He remains on the fence.

ASSESSMENT

1. The line *“It seems the world has changed her garment”* as used in the poem is an example of
 - (a) simile
 - (b) personification
 - (c) hyperbole
 - (d) pun
2. The line *“I feel the buoyant”* as used in the poem is an example of
 - (a) imagery
 - (b) pun
 - (c) personification
 - (d) simile
3. The poet used the phrase *“there i lie”* at the end of the every stanza. This is known as
 - (a) imagery
 - (b) refrain
 - (c) simile
 - (d) pun
4. The dominant theme of the poem is
 - (a) seriousness
 - (b) hopelessness

- (c) dilemma and struggle
- (d) playful youthfulness

5. The dominant literary device in the poem is
- (a) refrain
 - (b) pun
 - (c) personification
 - (d) simile

ANSWERS

- 1. b
- 2. a
- 3. b
- 4. c
- 5. a

Week 7

Topic: Myopia (Sly Chency Cokar)

Biography of the poet

Sly is a sierra leone and born in Freetown in 1945. He had his early education there and later studied at the university of Oregon California. He lived in excite under the regime of president Siaka Steven. He is the author of the following poems; the road to Jamaica, concert for an exile (1973), the graveyard also has teeth (1980), Blood in the desert

Background of the poem

The poem is particular about the disappointment the leaders bring into the life of the people while the suffering of the masses are dying gradually because of malnutrition and lack of accommodation, African leaders are only caring for the comfort and welfare of themselves “Myopia” is preoccupied with the need for violent change to overthrow the oppressive and indifferent political system operating in African

Structure of the poem

The poem has three stanzas which deliberately run into one another to sustain the thought process, there are 21 lines each of which continue the sense in the preceding line. It is a simple prose poem written in common but symbolic word.

The words are deliberately chosen to describe the sufferings of the political leadership and the needed violent remedy

Analysis of the poem

Myopia is about plight, deprivation and poverty of the peasants in the country who live with misery

Stanza one describes their pitiable plight, they are in the rain drenched because there are cloths towards off cold. Above all they are emaciated and are sick, this misfortunes befall the peasants in the mist of plenty

Note: Students should read the book “Myopia” for more understanding.

ASSESSMENT

1. The poem “*Myopia*” is particular about the ____ leaders bring into the life of the people

- (a) happiness
 - (b) sorrow
 - (c) disappointment
 - (d) pleasure
2. *Myopia* is a simple prose poem written in common but ____ word
- (a) symbolic
 - (b) barbaric
 - (c) complex
 - (d) hyperbolic
3. *Myopia* is about all of these except
- (a) hapinness
 - (b) plight
 - (c) deprivation
 - (d) poverty
4. The writer of *Myopia* is
- (a) Lenrie Peters
 - (b) Chinua Achebe
 - (c) Wole Soyinka
 - (d) Sly Chency Cokar
5. The writer of *Myopia* is from
- (a) Nigeria
 - (b) South Africa
 - (c) Sierra Leone
 - (d) Ghana

ANSWERS

- 1. c
- 2. a
- 3. a
- 4. d

5. c

Week 8

Topic: Introduction to non-African Poem (Daffodils)

Background of the poet

William Wordsworth was born in Cumberland England in 1770. He was educated both in Cumberland and Cambridge, most of his poem varies around nature and its beauty. He is one of the founders of English Romanticism. He died peacefully in his shop in Isso at Rydal at the age of 80

Background of the poem

The poem is a romantic and metaphysical one because it is beyond the physical and talks about the beauty of nature, such poets find comfort amidst dead leaves, flowers, stars, moon, waters and ghost than in the regular world where men and women lived

Analysis of the poem

It is the poet's admiration of nature in line with the dictates of Romantic poetry. The poem describes the beauty which the poet once beheld but which he now recalls while he is in a lovely mood.

Notes: Student should read the book for proper understanding

ASSESSMENT

1. What type of language is "I wondered lonely as a cloud"
 - (a) Simile
 - (b) Metaphor
 - (c) Personification
 - (d) Emotive language

2. What view of nature is presented?
 - (a) Nature can bring hatred, it can do things to the mind
 - (b) Nature is powerful
 - (c) Nature is relied on to make people feel better
 - (d) Nature is unsettling

3. Which two words rhyme in the last two of the lines of the first verse?
- (a) Hills and daffodils
 - (b) Trees and breeze
 - (c) Fluttering and dancing
 - (d) Beneath and dancing
4. What was the poem inspired by?
- (a) Animals
 - (b) Humans
 - (c) Nature
 - (d) Happiness
5. What does the phrase “Sprightly dance” mean?
- (a) Depressing
 - (b) Lively and full of energy
 - (c) Jumping up and down
 - (d) Slow and cautious

ANSWERS

- 1. a
- 2. c
- 3. b
- 4. c
- 5. b

SS 2

**SECOND TERM NOTES ON
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

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SECOND TERM

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Week 1

Topic: Drama

Content

- Meaning of drama
- Types of dram
- Literary terms in drama

Meaning of drama

Drama is a general name for that genre of literature which concerns itself with the dramatization of experience. It is an exciting, emotional, or unexpected series of events or set of circumstances. It is a representative of human action

A person who writes drama is play wright

Types of drama

1. **Comedy:** This refers to a drama as opposed to tragedy, usually provoking a light atmosphere and which after ends on a happy note
2. **Tragedy:** This is often regarded as the opposite of comedy. It is a drama from whose atmosphere is usually serious and tense and ends with an unhappy ending. In most cases it involves death.
3. **Tragi-comedy:** It is a play which harbors both elements of tragedy and comedy and often ends on happy note.
4. **Farce:** It is a comic drama with no seriousness; it is extremely humorous and often with a very ridiculous characters
5. **Melodrama:** It is often refers to as a tragic farce, especially when a tragedy lacks a sense of cunningness. It is a drama that has a simple conflict typically between an all-good hero and all evil villain
6. **Monodrama/Monologue:** It refers to a dramatic action or speech rendered by only one character who enacts the presence of other character even as they are not there

Literary terms in drama

1. Theatre: The word theatre have several meaning. In one of its meaning;it refers to the work of writing, producing and acting in place

2. Plot: plot refers to the scene of event and the interrelationship between the main event which form the structure of the play.
3. Setting: It refers to a place, time, scene of a cinema
4. Characters: These are list of people that act in a play and which are the actor and actress
5. Flashback: It is a requisite use to remember a play
6. Mime: It is a type of play use to communicate with the audience. the theatrical technique of suggesting action, character, or emotion without words, using only gesture, expression, and movement
7. Audience: They are people who watch the actors and actresses as they act
8. Tragic hero: A tragic hero is a character whose flaws combined with external forces lead to his suffering or downfall, such flaws are called tragic flaws.

ASSESSMENT

1. The genre of literature which concerns itself with the dramatization of experience is
 - (a) prose
 - (b) poem
 - (c) drama
2. A person who writes drama is a
 - (a) playwright
 - (b) playright
 - (c) playedright
 - (d) plainwrite
3. A that provoks a light atmosphere and which after ends on a happy note is
 - (a) comedy
 - (b) tragedy
 - (c) farce
 - (d) melodrama

4. One of these does not refer to setting in a play
- (a) time
 - (b) scene
 - (c) place
 - (d) writer
5. The theatrical technique of suggesting action, character, or emotion without words, using only gesture, expression, and movement
- (a) farce
 - (b) mime
 - (c) melodrama
 - (d) comedy

ANSWER

- 1. c
- 2. a
- 3. a
- 4. d
- 5. b

Week 2

Topic: Poetry

Content

1. Meaning of poetry
2. Characteristics of poetry

Meaning of poetry

Poetry is a form of writing stimulated by emotion and expressing idea, feelings that may be very difficult to explain in literary form. It is also the spontaneous ever flow of powerful emotions and feelings, However, poetry is an act of writing and the writers of poem are called poet

A poet is literally permitted to use language the way it pleases him , this liberty is called poetic licence, this licence enables a poet to create new words , disobey rules of grammar or use archaic diction.

Characteristics of poetry

- It makes use of stanza, rhymes, scheme and line to express feelings and emotions
- It tends to have a regular rhythmic pattern
- It usually makes use of carefully chosen words and figures of speech (diction and imagery)
- It is often divided into stanzas
- It makes use of dialogue known as dramatic monologue

ASSESSMENT

1. The form of writing stimulated by spontaneous ever flow of powerful emotions and feelings is
 - (a) play
 - (b) prose
 - (c) poetry
2. Writers of poem are called
 - (a) wright

- (b) poemmer
 - (c) poet
3. The liberty a writer of a poem has to use language the way it pleases him is known as
- (a) poetic licence
 - (b) poetic justice
 - (c) poetic permission
4. The liberty a writer of a poem has to use language the way it pleases him allows him to do the following except
- (a) use archaic diction
 - (b) plagiarise another person's work
 - (c) disobey the rules of grammar
5. Pick out the odd item
- (a) stanza
 - (b) setting
 - (c) rhyme

ANSWERS

- 1. c
- 2. c
- 3. a
- 4. b
- 5. b

Week 3

Topic: Poetry

Contents

1. **Types of poetry**
2. **Features of poetry**

The types of poetry are:

1. **Lyric:** This is the short poem in which a poet expresses some intense personal feeling. In medieval times, a lyric poem was sung to the accompaniment of the Greek musical instrument called “lyre” Today a lyric is a short, musical or rhythmic poem which expresses a poet’s thoughts and emotion or any matter that interest him or her
2. **Epic:** It is a long narrative poem that celebrates real historical events events, heroic achievements. Epic poem has a very serious philosophical perspective.
3. **Ode:** This is a poem of meditation addressed to animate or inanimate object. It is a poem that speaks to a person or things or celebrates a special event. An **ode** is a long lyric poem with a serious subject written in an elevated style
4. **Pastoral poem:** It is a poem which describes the simple life of rural people especially a shepherd around whom are beauty , love, music and value which remain forever green in the mind.
5. **Lullaby:** This is a soft sonorous song meant to keep children quite, peaceful and happy. It can also be rendered to make them sleep
6. **ballad:** It is a song, originally transmitted orally, which tells a story. It is an important form of folk poetry which was adapted for literary uses from the sixteenth century onward. It is a form of narrative poem passed on from generation to generation by words of mouth and meant to be sung and danced to before a crowd.
7. **Elegy:** When a poem is written with the sole aim of remembering a sad situation. It is called an elegy most of the time, an elegy can be a meditative poem that expresses grief and sorrow.

Features of Poetry

Atmosphere: This refers to the persuading psychological background of a literary work. It influences readers' expectations as to the course of events in the work, either pleasant or not. It may be tensed or relaxed.

Mood: This is the underlying attitude which runs through a poem. The mood may be reflective,

Theme: It refers to the meaning or interpretation given to the subject written by the writer.

Verse: It is a line of poetry or a composition written in meter.

Subject matter: This refers to the surface or direct meaning of a poem. It is what can be likened to the topic or summary of a prose work.

ASSESSMENT

1. A short poem in which a poet expresses some intense personal feeling is
 - (a) lyric
 - (b) epic
 - (c) ode
 - (d) ballad

2. ____ is a poem which describes the simple life of rural people especially a shepherd
 - (a) lullaby
 - (b) ballad
 - (c) pastoral
 - (d) ode

3. When a poem is written with the sole aim of remembering a sad situation it is known as
 - (a) ballad
 - (b) pastoral

(c) elegy

(d) epic

4. _____ refers to the persuading psychological background of a literary work

(a) atmosphere

(b) mood

(c) theme

(d) verse

5. _____ refers to the meaning or interpretation given to the subject written by the writer

(a) atmosphere

(b) mood

(c) theme

(d) verse

ANSWERS

1. a

2. c

3. c

4. a

5. c

Week 4

Topic: Figures of Speech

Content

- **Meaning of figures of speech**
- **Category of figures of speech**

Meaning of figures of speech

A figure of speech or figurative language is a literary device used to gain a particular effect. It is the use of a word or an expression beyond its ordinary or literal meaning.

There are over two hundred kind of figure of speech but the one mostly used will be discuss. They are simile, metaphor, personification, hyperbole, paradox, irony.

A figure of speech is used in prose and drama. Whenever an expression or word used to give a special effect and it is known as poetic devices in poetry. Collectively, most of the figures of speech are categorized into six groups

Category of figure of speech

- Comparison or association
- Contrast
- Exaggeration
- Under statement
- Word manipulation
- Sounds

Figures of comparison or association

Under this category, the following are simile, metaphor, personification, allusion, allegory

- **Simile:** This is a short comparison that directly or explicitly compares one thing and another by using the word “as” or “like”. Simile involves figure of speech involving the comparison of one thing with another thing of a different kind, used to make a description more.

Examples: He is as short as a dwarf

Curses are like chicken

- **Metaphor:** A metaphor is a compressed comparison actually substituting one thing for another. It lets the reader make the necessary translation from the figurative to the literal. Where a simile draws a comparison between two ideas, a metaphor goes a step further and substitutes the second idea for the first, that is why it is called compressed. Example: He is a lion on the field, she is a sheep
- **Personification:** Personification can be defined as the transfer of human traits to an animate object. Personification is a figure of speech where human qualities are given to animals, objects or ideas. In the arts, personification means representing a non-human thing as if it were human.

Examples: Let the floor clap their hand,

Confusion heard his voice

- **Allegory:** This is a narrative which has a secondary and deeper meaning which may be religious, political or normal. It is used to draw a parallel between one story that is told on the surface and the deeper meaning intended. Allegory is generally designed to teach some abstract truth.

Examples: John Bunyan's pilgrim progress is a religious allegory.

- **Synecdoche:** a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa, It is the use of a part to represent a whole or a whole can be used to represent a part

Example: I want all heads on dock

She controls all the heads in the village

Thousands of eyes gaze on him at the occasion

ASSESSMENT

1. The use of a word or an expression beyond its ordinary or literal meaning is

- (a) figures of speech
 - (b) figure of word
 - (c) figure of sentence
 - (d) figure of phrase
2. A short comparison that directly or explicitly compares one thing and another by using the word “as” or “like” is
- (a) personification
 - (b) simile
 - (c) metaphor
 - (d) allegory
3. ____ is a compressed comparison actually substituting one thing for another
- (a) personification
 - (b) simile
 - (c) metaphor
 - (d) allegory
4. The transfer of human traits to animate object is
- (a) personification
 - (b) simile
 - (c) metaphor
 - (d) allegory
5. _____ is a narrative which has a secondary and deeper meaning which may be religious, political or normal
- (a) personification
 - (b) simile
 - (c) metaphor
 - (d) allegory

ANSWERS

- 1. a
- 2. b
- 3. c
- 4. a

5. d

Week 5

Topic: Figures of speech

Figures of Contrast

This refers to those collection of figures that place two or more things side by side with the purpose of emphasizing their differences but not similarities as in a comparison. Example: Antithesis, oxymoron, irony, paradox etc

- **Antithesis** : Antithesis is the figure of speech in which a striking opposition or contracted words or statement are made in the same sentence.

Example:

1. Speech is silver, silence is gold
 2. Man proposes and God disposes
 3. God made the country; man made the town
- **Oxymoron**: An oxymoron is a figure of speech that combines opposites or contradictory ideas or terms

Examples

1. A wise fool
 2. A honest thief
 3. A living death
 4. what a sick health
- **Paradox**: It is a statement or proposition that, despite sound (or apparently sound) reasoning from acceptable premises, leads to a conclusion that seems senseless, logically unacceptable, or self-contradictory

Examples:

1. The child is the father of the man
 2. For whosoever will save his life must lose it
 3. Cowards die many times before their death
- **Irony**: This is a contrast between what is stated and what is stated and what is meant. It is the reversal of meaning.

Examples:

1. It is such a good keeper that he conceded goal's in the first half of the matter
2. Charles is so brilliant that he passed one subject out of his nine papers

ASSESSMENT

1. *Man proposes and God disposes* is an example of
 - (a) oxymoron
 - (b) antithesis
 - (c) paradox
 - (d) oxymoron
2. ____ is a figure of speech that combines opposites or contradictory ideas or terms
 - (a) oxymoron
 - (b) antithesis
 - (c) paradox
 - (d) oxymoron
3. *For whosoever will save his life must lose it* is an example of
 - (a) oxymoron
 - (b) antithesis
 - (c) paradox
 - (d) oxymoron
4. *Life is such a sweet sorrow* makes use of
 - (a) oxymoron
 - (b) antithesis
 - (c) paradox
 - (d) irony
5. ____ a contrast between what is stated and what is stated and what is meant
 - (a) oxymoron
 - (b) antithesis

(c) paradox

(d) irony

ANSWERS

1. b

2. d

3. c

4. a

5. d

Week 6

Topic: Figures of Exaggeration

- **Hyperbole:** This is an overstatement, exaggeration used for emphasis or humor. It is not meant to be taken seriously or literally.

Example:

1. I am so hungry I could eat a horse.
2. I have a million things to do.
3. I had to walk 15 miles to school in the snow, uphill.
4. I had a ton of homework.
5. If I can't buy that new game, I will die.
6. He is as skinny as a toothpick.
7. This car goes faster than the speed of light.
8. That new car costs a bazillion dollars.

- **Apostrophe:** A figure of speech in which an absent or dead person, an abstract quality or dead person, an abstract quality or something inanimate or non-human is addressed directly.
- **Climax:** this is the highest point in which. dramatic and nondramatic fiction, the point at which the highest level of interest and emotional response is achieved. Climax is achieved by the arrangement of units of meaning (words, phrases, clauses, or sentences) in an ascending order of importance. The following passage *from Moby dick* (1851) is an example:

All that most maddens and torments; all that stirs up the lees of things; all truth with malice in it; all that cracks the sinews and cakes the brain; all the subtle demonisms of life and thought; all evil, to crazy Ahab, were visibly personified and made practically assailable in Moby Dick.

ASSESSMENT

1. ____ is an overstatement, exaggeration used for emphasis or humor
 - (a) hyperbole
 - (b) climax
 - (c) apostrophe
2. A figure of speech in which an absent or dead person is addressed as if they are present is called
 - (a) hyperbole
 - (b) climax
 - (c) apostrophe
3. The point at which the highest level of interest and emotional response is achieved in a dramatic fiction or non fiction is known as
 - (a) hyperbole
 - (b) climax
 - (c) apostrophe
4. *If I can't buy that new game, I will die* is an example of
 - (a) hyperbole
 - (b) climax
 - (c) apostrophe
5. *Will all great Neptune's ocean wash this blood. Clean from my hand?* is an example of
 - (a) hyperbole
 - (b) climax
 - (c) apostrophe

ANSWERS

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. c

SS 2

**THIRD TERM NOTES ON
LITERATURE IN ENGLISH**

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THIRD TERM

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WEEK 1

Summary of “Arms and the man” by George Bernard Shaw

The play begins in the bedroom of Raina Petkoff in a Bulgarian town in 1885, during the Serbo-Bulgarian War. As the play opens, Catherine Petkoff and her daughter, Raina, have just heard that the Bulgarians have scored a tremendous victory in a cavalry charge led by Raina’s fiancé, Major Sergius Saranoff, who is in the same regiment as Raina’s father, Major Paul Petkoff. Raina is so impressed with the noble deeds of her fiancé that she fears that she might never be able to live up to his nobility. At this very moment, the maid, Louka, rushes in with the news that the Serbs are being chased through the streets and that it is necessary to lock up the house and all of the windows. Raina promises to do so later, and Louka leaves. But as Raina is reading in bed, shots are heard, there is a noise at the balcony window, and a bedraggled enemy soldier with a gun appears and threatens to kill her if she makes a sound. After the soldier and Raina exchange some words, Louka calls from outside the door; she says that several soldiers want to search the house and investigate a report that an enemy Serbian soldier was seen climbing her balcony. When Raina hears the news, she turns to the soldier. He says that he is prepared to die, but he certainly plans to kill a few Bulgarian soldiers in her bedroom before he dies. Thus, Raina impetuously decides to hide him. The soldiers investigate, find no one, and leave. Raina then calls the man out from hiding; she nervously and absentmindedly sits on his gun, but she learns that it is not loaded; the soldier carries no cartridges. He explains that instead of carrying bullets, he always carries chocolates into battle. Furthermore, he is not an enemy; he is a Swiss, a professional soldier hired by Serbia. Raina gives him the last of her chocolate creams, which he devours, maintaining that she has indeed saved his life. Now that the Bulgarian soldiers are gone, Raina wants the “chocolate cream soldier” (as she calls him) to climb back down the drainpipe, but he refuses to; whereas he could climb up, he hasn’t the strength to climb down. When Raina goes after her mother to help, the “chocolate cream soldier” crawls into Raina’s

bed and falls instantly asleep. In fact, when they re-enter, he is sleeping so soundly that they cannot awaken him.

Characters in 'Arms and the Man'



Raina waiting elegantly on her couch

Raina Petkoff is the play's comedic heroine. She has a tendency to think too highly of herself; for instance, proudly pointing out the family's 'library,' which consists of a single shelf of battered books. Her world comes crashing down when Bluntschli makes her see that she's been living a lie.

Bluntschli is the play's hero and a Swiss mercenary who fought for the Serbs. He's neither disillusioned with war nor does he romanticize it, but he is definitely a realist and considers himself a 'professional' soldier. Bluntschli tells Raina, You can always tell an old soldier by the inside of his holsters and cartridge boxes. The young ones carry pistols and cartridges; the old ones, grub.

Sergius Saranoff is a Bulgarian soldier engaged to Raina. Everyone in Bulgaria (including himself) holds Sergius up as a national hero for his 'brave' cavalry charge that sent the Serbs running. Bluntschli later reveals,

though, that the Serbian regiment Sergius was charging had the wrong ammo – otherwise, his whole squad would've died.

Louka and Nicola are the foils to Raina and Sergius. A **foil** is a character that contrasts with others in order to illustrate certain characteristics. For example, despite being a servant, Louka takes charge of herself and doesn't rely on ideas of chivalry or servitude to dictate how she thinks she should be treated. Likewise, Nicola doesn't allow feelings of entitlement to mandate what he thinks his love deserves; therefore, he's given up the claim of engagement he had to Louka to ensure her happiness and advancement in the world over his own, asserting that they were only ever 'together' to keep Louka in a favorable light with the family.

Themes in 'Arms and the Man'

Let's take a look at some of the themes of *Arms and the Man*.

EVALUATION

Students should read the book for proper understanding and summarize

WEEK 2

Literature In English, SS 2,

Themes of Arms and the man

Romanticism of War

In line after line, Shaw satirizes the romantic notions about war that glorify a grisly business. If not for the comic dialogue, the audience would more easily recognize that they are being presented with a soldier who has escaped from a horrific battle after three days of being under fire. He is exhausted, starving, and being pursued. Such is the experience of a real soldier. Late in the play, Shaw throws in a gruesome report on the death of the man who told Bluntschli's secret about staying in Raina's bedroom; there is nothing comic or heroic about being shot in the hip and then burned to death. When Raina expresses horror at such a death, Sergius adds, "And how ridiculous! Oh, war! War! The dream of patriots and heroes! A fraud, Bluntschli, a hollow sham." This kind of description caused Shaw's critics to accuse him of baseness, of trying to destroy the heroic concept. That a soldier would prefer food to cartridges in his belt was considered ludicrous by critics, but in the introduction to *Plays: Pleasant and Unpleasant*, Shaw was reported to have said that all he had to do was introduce any doubters to the first six real soldiers they came across, and his stage soldier would prove authentic.

It is also noteworthy that Catherine is dissatisfied with a peace treaty because, in her unrealistic vision of glorious war, there is supposed to be a crushing rout of the enemy followed by celebrations of a heroic victory. Shaw's message here is that there can be peaceful alternatives to perpetual fighting. He was dedicated throughout his life to curbing violence, especially that of wars, and *Arms and the Man* was one of the vehicles he used to plead his case.

Romanticism of Love

Shaw was a master flirt and he enjoyed the playful farce of romantic intrigues. But he recognized that playing a game differed from serious love,

and he tried to convey as much in *Arms and the Man*, which is subtitled “An Anti-Romantic Comedy.” In the play, Raina and Sergius have paired themselves for all the wrong reasons: because their social status requires a mate from the same social level; and because Sergius plays the role of the type of hero that Raina has been taught to admire, and Raina plays the role that Sergius expects from a woman of her station. The problem is that..

EVALUATION

- Students should get the book for better understanding

WEEK 3

Literature In English, SS 2,

Character list of “the arms and the man”

Captain Bluntschli A professional soldier from Switzerland who is serving in the Serbian army. He is thirty-four years old, and he is totally realistic about the stupidity of war.

Raina Petkoff The romantic idealist of twenty-three who views war in terms of noble and heroic deeds.

Sergius Saranoff The extremely handsome young Bulgarian officer who leads an attack against the Serbs which was an overwhelming success.

Major Petkoff The inept, fifty-year-old father of Raina; he is wealthy by Bulgarian standards, but he is also unread, uncouth, and incompetent.

Catherine Petkoff Raina’s mother; she looks like and acts like a peasant, but she wears fashionable dressing gowns and tea gowns all the time in an effort to appear to be a Viennese lady.

Louka The Petkoffs’ female servant; she is young and physically attractive, and she uses her appearance for ambitious preferment.

Nicola A realistic, middle-aged servant who is very practical.

EVALUATION

- Make sure you know the role each character plays

WEEK 4

Literature In English, SS 2

Topic: The Lord of the Flies by William Golding's

In *Lord of the Flies*, which was published in 1954, Golding combined that perception of humanity with his years of experience with schoolboys. Although not the first novel he wrote, *Lord of the Flies* was the first to be published after having been rejected by 21 publishers. An examination of the duality of savagery and civilization in humanity, Golding uses a pristine tropical island as a protected environment in which a group of marooned British schoolboys act out their worst impulses. The boys loyal to the ways of civilization face persecution by the boys indulging in their innate aggression. As such, the novel illustrates the failure of the rationalism espoused by Golding's father.

Lord of the Flies explores the dark side of humanity, the savagery that underlies even the most civilized human beings. William Golding intended this novel as a tragic parody of children's adventure tales, illustrating humankind's intrinsic evil nature. He presents the reader with a chronology of events leading a group of young boys from hope to disaster as they attempt to survive their uncivilized, unsupervised, isolated environment until rescued.

In the midst of a nuclear war, a group of British boys find themselves stranded without adult supervision on a tropical island. The group is roughly divided into the "littluns," boys around the age of six, and the "biguns," who are between the ages of ten and twelve. Initially, the boys attempt to form a culture similar to the one they left behind. They elect a leader, Ralph, who, with the advice and support of Piggy (the intellectual of the group), strives to establish rules for housing and sanitation. Ralph also makes a signal fire the group's first priority, hoping that a passing ship will see the smoke signal and rescue them. A major challenge to Ralph's leadership is Jack, who also wants to lead. Jack commands a group of choirboys-turned-hunters who sacrifice the duty of tending the fire so that they can participate in the hunts. Jack draws the other boys slowly away from Ralph's influence because of their natural attraction to and

inclination toward the adventurous hunting activities symbolizing violence and evil.

EVALUATION

Students should get the book for proper understanding.

WEEK 5

Literature In English SS 2

Character Analysis of “Lord of the flies”

Ralph

Ralph represents leadership, the properly socialized and civilized young man. He is attractive, charismatic, and decently intelligent. He demonstrates obvious common sense. Ralph is the one who conceives the meeting place, the fire, and the huts. He synthesizes and applies Piggy’s intellectualism, and he recognizes the false fears and superstitions as barriers to their survival. He is a diplomat and a natural leader.

Ralph’s capacity for leadership is evident from the very beginning (he is the only elected leader of the boys). During the crisis caused by the sight of the dead paratrooper on the mountain, Ralph is able to proceed with both sense and caution. He works vigilantly to keep the group’s focus on the hope for rescue. When the time comes to investigate the castle rock, Ralph takes the lead alone, despite his fear of the so-called beast. Even in this tense moment, politeness is his default. When Simon mumbles that he doesn’t believe in the beast, Ralph “answered him politely, as if agreeing about the weather.” British culture is famed for civilized reserve in emotional times. By the standards of the society he’s left behind, Ralph is a gentleman.

Jack

Jack represents evil and violence, the dark side of human nature. A former choirmaster and “head boy” at his school, he arrived on the island having experienced some success in exerting control over others by dominating the choir with his militaristic attitude. He is eager to make rules and punish those who break them, although he consistently breaks them himself when he needs to further his own interests. His main interest is hunting, an endeavor that begins with the desire for meat and builds to the overwhelming urge to master and kill other living creatures. Hunting develops the savagery that already ran close to his surface, making him

“ape-like” as he prowls through the jungle. His domain is the emotions, which rule and fuel his animal nature.

Piggy

Piggy is the intellectual with poor eyesight, a weight problem, and asthma. He is the most physically vulnerable of all the boys, despite his greater intelligence. Piggy represents the rational world. By frequently quoting his aunt, he also provides the only female voice.

Piggy’s intellect benefits the group only through Ralph; he acts as Ralph’s advisor. He cannot be the leader himself because he lacks leadership qualities and has no rapport with the other boys. Piggy also relies too heavily on the power of social convention. He believes that holding the conch gives him the right to be heard. He believes that upholding social conventions get results.

Simon

Simon’s role as an artistic, religious visionary is established not only by his hidden place of meditation but also by the description of his eyes: “so bright they had deceived Ralph into thinking him delightfully gay and wicked.” While Piggy has the glasses — one symbol of vision and truth — Simon has bright eyes, a symbol of another kind of vision and truth.

Simon is different from the other boys not only due to his physical frailty, manifested in his fainting spells, but also in his consistently expressed concern for the more vulnerable boys. Littluns follow him, and he picks choice fruit for them from spots they can’t reach, a saintly or Christ-like image. He stands up for Piggy and helps him get his glasses back when Jack knocks them off his head, another allusion to Simon’s visionary bent. In addition, he has a secret place in the jungle, where he spends time alone.

EVALUATION

- Students should get the book for full details about the characters

Woman in her prime by Samuel Asare Konadu

Samuel Asare Konadu (1932–1994), a Ghanaian publisher and novelist who wrote many novels. *A Woman in her Prime* was probably first published in 1967. It was the 40th novel in the African Writers Series, and his other novel *Ordained by the Oracle* was the 55th.

The opening chapter skillfully draws drama from a simple situation. It is the appointed day for sacrifice to the god Tano, but Pokuwaa is running late. She washes herself, rubs her skin with shea cream, and purifies herself with white clay powder, then looks for the black hen she means to sacrifice. She finds only a post in the ground and a broken string. The hen has escaped! She asks some children if they have seen it, and when one child admits to having thrown a stick at a stray black hen she sees that he is a fetish child — the product of prayers and sacrifice like the child she wants for herself. Rather than being harsh with him, she enlists him and the other children to search for her hen. They find the hen in the bushes, about to be swallowed by a snake, but Pokuwaa is just in time to pin down the snake, rescue the hen, and make her sacrifice.

Pokuwaa is the leading character and her role has really given a vivid picture and beauty of the story. We were informed that Pokuwaa could not sustain marriage in view of her childlessness. Konadu describes Pokuwaa as one of the industrious female farmers in Brenhoma. This really portrays African culture where women endure deadly farming work. Pokuwaa demonstrates a habit of hard work and she is known as an industrious house wife who always goes to the nearest stream to fetch water to feed the family.

She experiences two different marriages with the unproductive problem. Pokuwaa has divorced two husbands, apparently with little fuss, when they prove unable to give her children. (Oddly, there is little suggestion than the villagers think the fault is with her.) She becomes the second wife of a kind man named Kwadwo, and in less than a month she shows signs of being pregnant. She loses the child and a medicine man chides her for not making the proper sacrifice.

She is optimistic that God is the only initiator of a child and not the great god Tano. She rejected all the encouragement received from the mother and the husband with connection to spiritual sacrifices. We sense from this performance that Pokuwaa is not naturally inspired by traditional practices. She may demonstrate an outmost interest in praising the supreme Almighty God than these lesser gods in Brenhoma. No one dare blame the supreme God. Pokuwaa shows sign of pregnancy within a few months after she boycotts the sacrifices of the great god Tago. She has even forgotten about her barrenness. Her husband Kwadwo doesn't bother much about the sudden change of her mind and they live happier than before. He is a great hunter so as he brings bush meat home to impress his wife. Her mother, the old lady becomes happy with the sign that her daughter has finally become pregnant. Her best friend Koramoa was full of joy while the husband, Kwadwo keeps his ears to the ground with shock. Good wishers contribute their mature compliments and advices. We were inspired by Maame Fosua's information; we are informed that when a woman is pregnant she needs to eat more of palm nut soup and chew sugarcane which in turn provide breast milk in abundant. When you read "*A woman in her prime*" then you will understand the real culture of the people of Ghana.

EVALUATION

- Students should get the book for proper understanding

WEEK 6

Literature in English, SS 2

Topic: Plot, Characters, Themes and Critique of a Woman in her Prime Plot

Brenhoma is the setting of the story. A farming community where traditional religion is mostly prevalent. We recognize lack of formal education among the people of this community. They guess their time by associating it to the rotation of the globe in connection with the position of the sun.

Characters

- Adwoa Pokuwaa
- Kofi Badu
- Kofi Deede
- Akosua Mansas
- Akosuwa Serwua
- Kwadwo Fordwuo
- Yaw Boakye
- Afua Koramoa

Themes

Superstition

Tradition

Marriage

Love

Hardworking

Sources of pregnancy

Braveness.

Critique

Woman is a critical novel of village life with a progressive message that is modern but not reactionary. It deals with the problems of an African woman, Pokuwaa, who is in her 30s and has not had any children, considered a tragic condition by her society, not least by her mother. She has fired two husbands for this reason and her third, Kwadwo, is fearful of losing her. He loves her for her own sake: she has grown up to be a strong person and a good farmer. It is Kwadwo who provides the unconditional acceptance that helps her to resist the psychological pressure of her life (although the author understates this nicely).

Abetted by her obsessed mother Pokuwaa has been visiting various shamans and healers. But the omens are never good. When lightning strikes and burns an old tree near the village there is ominous talk of looking about for a witch. Pokuwaa's mother sees things the old way and is much alarmed. The last straw for Pokuwaa is when she comes across the body of a man near her farm. Out of fear, she doesn't say anything, letting the men go out and find the missing man themselves. A dire episode indeed.

But the last straw is a good thing for Pokuwaa. She gives up on the magic, on the theories of fate. She decides that she must just let life run its course. She gives up her burden. Ah, but this is a West African 60s novel, all 107 pages. So in no time at all she is pregnant and lives happily ever after. I think that Konadu wanted to make the point that a woman needn't have a child to be fulfilled (at least, no more than a man does): she comes to peace with herself first, gets pregnant after. But his view is that the traditional folkloric account that defined the emotional regime under which Pokuwaa lived was oppressing her, and perhaps contributing to her problems. That is, his target was not so much sexism as superstition, although he understood the negative social consequences for women of magical explanation.

EVALUATION

- Summarize the topic of discuss