

I B.A

Drama

Write a note on dramatic structure

What are Mystery and Miracle plays?

Define 'Drama':

Write a brief account of the origin and growth of Drama in England.

Definition - Drama is a work written to be performed by actors on the stage. It imitates life through action and speech. Action and dialogue play a very important role in the drama.

The structure of the has the following : Exposition, Complication, Denouement, and Catastrophe.

Exposition / Introduction creates tone, gives the setting, introduces some of the characters and some information for an understanding of the play.

Complication /Rising - It sets the action of the play in motion.

Falling action – It stresses the activity of the forces opposing the hero. Suspense must be maintained here. It must lead to the close with the disaster. Relief scenes are introduced in the falling action.

Catasrophe / Denouement - It marks the tragic failure. It is usually the death of the hero.

The origin and development of drama

The first drama in England performed was the Latin drama in honour of St.Katherine in 1110. It aimed at moral and religious teaching. The Church had complete control over the drama. The priests were the actors and the drama was acted inside the Church building. The plays were known as Mystery and Miracle plays.

The religious plays were of two types: The Mysteries and Miracles. The Mystery plays' subjects were from the Bible. The Miracle plays dealt with the lives of the Saints.

Pageants – Pageants were platforms and which plays were staged. Sometimes the plays would be mounted on moving platform. The performances continued for several days.

The Morality plays - It was developed in the late Middle Ages. These plays were didactic and religious in nature. The characters were personified abstractions. All sorts of virtue and vices were personified. The Devil had a place in it. At a later stage Vice, the humorous incarnation of Evil was introduced.

Interlude - It flourished about the middle of the 16th Century. It was an attempt at introducing the realistic element into drama.

Tragedy – A tragedy is a serious play in which the hero engaged in a conflict, experiences great suffering and finally defeated and dies. Aristotle defined tragedy as “the imitation of an action, serious, and complete.” Aristotle says that tragedy purifies the soul. According to Aristotle, the end of tragedy is to give pleasure. According to Aristotle, the tragic hero must be a man of high station and many noble qualities. A flaw in his character causes his fall.

Shakespearean Tragedy – Shakespearean tragic hero is a man of high status and many noble qualities. But he has a mistake in his character and that destroys him. Hamlet is a prince, warrior and brave, but his delay in action destroys him. Othello is a great warrior but his weakness for suspicion kills him.

What is Aristotle’s definition of tragedy?

What is the function of a tragedy?

Describe the tragic hero.

Comedy

Its aim is to amuse the audience. It ends happily. Comedy includes mirth, gaiety, and sparkling wit. It treats familiar and domestic occurrences. It deals with the middle section of society.

Shakespearean comedies are known as Romantic comedies. Love, comedy, music and love at the first sight play a very important role in it. Shakespearean romantic comedies are ‘As You like It’, ‘Twelfth Night’ etc.

Romantic comedies are set in natural surroundings away from the everyday world to a place like forest etc. the scenes and the settings of the romantic comedies are romantic. It features the young lovers who face troubles to their unions. The fairies and the human beings the kings and the common people are mixed together, the fools and the wise are mixed together. Romantic comedies deal with the personalities and individuals. Characters belong to certain classes. The heroine is beautiful, witty and resourceful. Rosalind, Viola, Portia and Hermia are well known Shakespearean heroines.

What are the features of the Shakespearean romantic comedies?

Comedy of Humours – it is a type of realistic comedy developed in the 16th century by Ben Jonson and Chapman. Comedy is derived from the conduct of the humorous characters. Jonson’s “Every Man in His Humour” is an example.

Comedy of Manners - These plays are realistic and satirical comedy of Restoration Period. Congreve’s plays are best examples. It is concerned with the manners and conventions of an artificial, highly sophisticated society.

Define comedy.

Explain the purpose of comedy.

Tragicomedy

Tragicomedy has a plot suitable to tragedy but it ends happily. It became popular during Renaissance. Tragicomedy is both tragedy and comedy. Shakespear's 'The Merchant of Venice' is tragicomedy. Tragicomedy includes love. Villainy, rescue of hero and heroines, disguises, jealousy, treachery and intrigue.

What are the features of the tragicomedy?

Chronicle plays

The materials for these plays were taken from the chronicle histories of England such as Holinshed and Hall. Marlow's Edward II and Shakespeare's Henry IV are popular historical plays. These plays include both historical and invented characters. It had a relationship to tragedy.

Masque

Masque was a lavish and elaborate form of entertainment. It was performed in royal courts. It emphasizes song, dance and costume. It was introduced from Italy and flourished in England in the later part of Elizabeth Reign. It became popular with Beaumont, Middleton and Jonson. Professional musicians, dancers and actors were used in Masques. Milton's Comus is one of the best masques.

Antimasque

It was Ben Jonson who created the 'antimasque'. It introduces elements of humour and grotesque into the traditional masque and achieved greater dramatic quality. An antimasque was an allegory in song and dance and involved fantastic and comic characters.

Comedy of Humours

Comedy of Humours is a type of comedy developed by Ben Jonson based on the ancient psychological theory of the 'four humours' – the humours were held to be the four primary fluids – blood, phlegm, choler (yellow bile) and Melancholy (black bile). Humanity is reduced to particular types. The purpose of the writer is to satirize the follies and foibles, the weaknesses and vices of contemporary society. Jonson's 'Every Man In His Humour' is a best example.

Comedy of Manners

These plays are realistic and satirical comedy of Restoration Period. Congreves plays are best examples. It is concerned with the manners and conventions of an artificial, highly sophisticated society. The prose dialogue is witty and polished. One of the distinguishing features of this comedy is a coarseness and immorality because of the satirical purpose.

Define comedy.

Explain the purpose of comedy.

Comedy of Manners avoids low and mean characters and their "mechanic humours". The Comedy of Manners was revived in the eighteenth century by Goldsmith, Sheridan, and William Congreve. William Congreve's "The Way of the World" in the late twentieth century. Oliver Goldsmith's 'She Stoops to Conquer' and Sheridan's 'The School for Scandal' in the eighteenth century.

Sentimental Comedy

In the early eighteenth century in England, a type of play which emphasized the distress of middle-class characters in order to evoke the audience's sympathies also called the drama of sensibility, it not only ends happily but depicts good and bad characters with extraordinary simplicity. The hero may, consequently, be absolutely magnanimous, always acting from a sense of honour, and acutely attuned to the sensibilities of others, including those on lower social levels. These specific elements of sentimental comedy developed from both theatrical and social changes at the end of the seventeenth century. The sentimental comedy catered to the needs and tastes of the middleclass audience. It marked the reaction against the licentiousness and immoral tone of the restoration comedy of manners.

FARCE

The word "Farce" developed from the latin *farcire*, meaning "to stuff". In the late seventeenth century, the term was used in England to mean any short humorous play. It was distinguished from regular five act comedy. The word now refers to any play which evokes laughter by such devices of low comedy as physical buffoonery, rough wit, the creation of ridiculous situations. It is little concerned with subtlety of characterization or probability of plot. Farce is a lowbrow comedy. The characters are exaggerated physical action. The characters are exaggerated types, rather than true to life. It is full of absurd situations and improbable actions. The plot is complex and intricate. Shakespeare's comedy of errors is almost entirely farcical. Oscar Wilde's 'The Importance of Being Earnest' is a best example of Farce.

MELODRAMA

It is a play based on a romantic plot and developed sensationally with little regard for convincing motivation and with a constant appeal to the emotions of the audience. A melodrama has a happy ending. A melodrama has sensational themes and plots full of intrigue. The characters are flat – perfect heroes, virtuous maidens, dangerous villains, helpless aged parents, faithful servants, and other sub characters. Good and evil characters are easily distinguishable. The action may be violent and bloody. Very often novels were adapted for the stage in the form of melodrama.

EXPRESSIONIST DRAMA

Drama was a prominent and widely influential form of expressionist writing. Expressionist dramatists often represented anonymous human types instead of individualized characters. The mode of presentation is non-realistic. Characters in these plays are one-sided, often representing a single idea or attitude. The characters are placed in situations in which the objects of the outer world are distorted in order to reflect the tortured minds of the characters or the dramatists. Expressionists' drama thus made use of distorted sets, lighting, and costumes to portray disturbed psyches. The speeches are short and jerky, and the movements machine-like. 'The Hairy Ape' by Eugene O'Neill is a famous expressionistic play.

ABSURD DRAMA

Samuel Beckett, the most eminent and influential writer in absurd drama was an Irishman living in Paris who often wrote in French and then translated his works into English. His plays such as 'Waiting for Godot' and 'Endgame', project the irrationalism, helplessness, and absurdity to life in dramatic form that reject realistic settings, logical reasoning, or a coherently evolving plot. Absurd drama represents the disorientation of living in an unfriendly and hostile universe. It is a theatre of sequential events. The action in an absurd drama does not tell a story, but presents a pattern of images designed to reflect the perplexity of man's existence in an incomprehensible

world. There is no plot or story in the traditional sense of such plays. They lack formal logic and conventional structure. The plays often depict the emptiness and nothingness of life. The characters are depicted as being aimless and lost in a world that is beyond their comprehension. They are usually flat characters.

Define 'Masque'

What were the features present in the masque?

Define melodrama

What were the features present in melodrama?

Define absurd drama

What were the features present in absurd drama?

Define expressionist drama

What were the features present in expressionist drama?

Literary Forms

Section – A

I. Answer All questions:

(10x2=20)

1. Trace the origin of the term "Ballad"?
2. How is the epic divided?
3. What is a lyric?
4. Write an account of the features of 'Ode'?
5. What is pastoral elegy?
6. Define 'Sonnet'?
7. What is Rhyme?
8. What is 'Stanza'?
9. What were the early religious plays?
10. Write a brief note on 'Farce'?

Section –B

II. Answer All questions:

(5x5=25)

11. a) What are the distinguishing features of 'The ode'?

(or)

b) What is sonnet? Trace its development?

12. a) Write an account on Blank Verse?

(or)

b) Give a brief account of 'Similie'?

13. a) What are the important qualities of drama?

(or)

b) Explain the purpose of comedy?

14. a) Show the difference between earlier and modern biographies?

(or)

b) Trace the development of English essay?

15. a) What are the main characteristics of a detective novel?

(or)

b) Write a paragraph on the social and proletarian novel?

Section – C

III. Answer any Three of the following questions:

(3x10=30)

16. Describe the major characteristics of Elegy?

17. Write an essay on 'figures of speech'?

18. Give a detailed account of 'Comedy of Humours'?

19. Trace the origin and development of the critical essay?

20. Discuss the characteristics of the stream of consciousness novel?