

Popular Literature PYQ 2022

PART-A

Attempt any Three of the following five questions as short notes:

Q1. The White Knight

Ans. In popular literature, the term "White Knight" refers to a character archetype often portrayed as a heroic and chivalrous figure who comes to the rescue of a damsel in distress or intervenes to save the day in a dire situation. The concept of the White Knight has its origins in medieval tales of knights in shining armor who fought for justice and protected the vulnerable. Over time, this archetype has become a common trope in various forms of literature, including fairy tales, fantasy novels, and contemporary fiction.

Key Characteristics of the White Knight:

- 1. Heroic Nature:** The White Knight is characterized by their courageous and selfless nature. They are willing to put themselves in harm's way to help others and fight against injustice.
- 2. Chivalry:** The White Knight embodies the ideals of chivalry, often displaying traits such as honor, integrity, and loyalty. They adhere to a strict code of ethics and often prioritize the well-being of others over their own.
- 3. Noble Intentions:** The White Knight's actions are driven by noble intentions. They may seek to rescue the oppressed, right wrongs, or bring about positive change in their world.
- 4. Altruism:** Altruism is a defining trait of the White Knight. They are motivated by a genuine desire to make the world a better place and to protect those who are vulnerable or in need of help.
- 5. Idealism:** White Knights are often depicted as idealists who believe in the possibility of creating a just and fair society. They are willing to challenge the status quo and confront powerful adversaries to achieve their goals.

Examples of the White Knight Archetype:

- 1. Prince Charming in "Cinderella":** Prince Charming is a classic example of the White Knight archetype. He rescues Cinderella from her oppressive circumstances and provides her with a chance at a better life.
- 2. Aragorn in "The Lord of the Rings":** Aragorn embodies the qualities of a White Knight. He leads the Fellowship on a quest to save Middle-earth, fighting against the forces of darkness and sacrificing his own desires for the greater good.
- 3. Superman:** The iconic superhero Superman is often considered a modern White Knight. He uses his superpowers to protect the innocent and uphold justice, often putting himself in danger to save others.
- 4. Atticus Finch in "To Kill a Mockingbird":** Atticus Finch is a lawyer who fights for justice and equality in a racially divided society. He serves as a moral compass and strives to make a positive impact on his community.

5. Wonder Woman: Wonder Woman is a powerful superheroine who champions truth, justice, and equality. She uses her strength and compassion to fight against evil and protect those in need.

While the White Knight archetype can inspire hope and ideals in literature, it has also been criticized for perpetuating gender stereotypes and oversimplifying complex issues. In some cases, characters fitting the White Knight archetype may lack depth or struggle with their own flaws and complexities. As literature continues to evolve, writers often seek to subvert or reinvent traditional archetypes to create more nuanced and realistic characters.

Q2. Role of Caroline in The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

Ans. Caroline Sheppard plays a significant role in Agatha Christie's mystery novel "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd." She is a central character who serves as the narrator's sister and is actively involved in the investigation of the murder that takes place in the story. Caroline's character provides a unique perspective and contributes to the unfolding of the plot.

Key Aspects of Caroline's Role:

Narrative Voice: The novel is narrated by Dr. James Sheppard, Caroline's brother. Caroline is present throughout the story and offers her insights and observations, which help to provide a well-rounded view of the events.

Amateur Detective: Caroline takes a keen interest in the case and conducts her own investigation. While not a professional detective like Hercule Poirot, she possesses a sharp and curious mind. Her unconventional methods and intuitive thinking contribute to uncovering crucial information.

Observant and Detail-Oriented: Caroline's observations often reveal subtle details that others might overlook. Her attention to details and her ability to connect seemingly unrelated information play a crucial role in solving the mystery.

Supportive and Protective: Caroline is fiercely protective of her brother, Dr. Sheppard, who is the novel's narrator. She often offers him advice and guidance, and her interactions with other characters provide valuable insights into their motives and actions.

Voice of Reason: Caroline's rationality and practicality often balance out the more emotional responses of other characters. She questions assumptions and challenges traditional notions, providing a fresh perspective on the case.

Comic Relief: Caroline injects humor into the story with her witty and sometimes sarcastic comments. Her humorous observations offer relief from the tension of the murder investigation.

Unpredictable Character: Caroline's true intentions and knowledge are not always clear, adding an element of mystery to her character. Readers are kept guessing about her involvement and motivations until the story's resolution.

In "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd," Caroline's role is complex and multi-faceted. She contributes to the narrative by offering her own interpretations and opinions, often challenging the assumptions of the other characters. Her presence and insights contribute to the overall depth and complexity of the novel's plot and themes.

Q3. Ecological Science Fiction

Ans. Ecological science fiction, often referred to as eco-fiction or eco-science fiction, is a genre of speculative fiction that explores ecological and environmental themes, focusing on the impact of human activities on the natural world and the potential consequences of environmental degradation. This genre uses fictional narratives to raise awareness about ecological issues and provoke thought about the relationship between humans and their environment. Here are some key features and examples of ecological science fiction:

Key Features of Ecological Science Fiction:

Environmental Themes: Ecological science fiction delves into various ecological themes, such as climate change, pollution, deforestation, biodiversity loss, overconsumption, and the consequences of technological advancements on the environment.

Speculative Future: This genre envisions future scenarios in which environmental challenges have escalated, leading to dystopian, utopian, or alternative worlds. These speculative futures prompt readers to reflect on the choices made in the present and their potential impact on the environment.

Intersection of Science and Fiction: Ecological science fiction often incorporates scientific concepts, research, and advancements to create realistic and plausible scenarios. It explores the ethical and moral dilemmas that arise when scientific progress clashes with environmental sustainability.

Character-Driven Narratives: While exploring ecological themes, this genre also focuses on the personal and emotional experiences of characters dealing with the environmental changes. These characters grapple with their roles in either exacerbating or mitigating the environmental crisis.

Environmental Activism: Many works of ecological science fiction emphasize the importance of environmental awareness, conservation, and activism. Characters often take on the roles of activists or individuals seeking to change the course of environmental destruction.

Examples of Ecological Science Fiction:

"The Windup Girl" by Paolo Bacigalupi: Set in a future where biotechnology and corporations control food production, this novel explores genetic engineering, biodiversity loss, and the consequences of unchecked corporate power.

"The Water Knife" by Paolo Bacigalupi: This novel presents a dystopian future in which water scarcity has led to violent conflicts between states over water resources, highlighting the potential consequences of climate change on water availability.

"Parable of the Sower" by Octavia Butler: This novel is set in a world plagued by environmental degradation, social inequality, and scarcity. The protagonist's vision of a new religion centered on Earthseed reflects themes of adaptation and survival in a changing environment.

"The Road" by Cormac McCarthy: While not traditionally categorized as science fiction, this post-apocalyptic novel follows a father and son as they navigate a desolate world destroyed by an unspecified catastrophe, portraying the devastating impact of environmental collapse.

"Flight Behavior" by Barbara Kingsolver: This novel examines the consequences of climate change through the lens of a small Appalachian community that witnesses a mysterious event involving a massive influx of monarch butterflies.

Ecological science fiction serves as a means to explore complex environmental issues and their potential ramifications, encouraging readers to think critically about their roles in shaping the future of the planet.

Q4. Motif of 'Water and Shelter' in Bhimayana

Ans. "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability" is a graphic novel that explores the life and experiences of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, a prominent leader of the Dalit movement in India. The graphic novel employs various motifs and symbols to convey the themes and struggles faced by marginalized communities, including the motif of 'Water and Shelter.'

The motif of 'Water and Shelter' in Bhimayana represents essential human rights that were denied to the Dalit community due to the deeply entrenched caste-based discrimination in Indian society. Water and shelter are basic necessities for survival and human dignity, yet they were often denied to Dalits as a result of social discrimination.

Water: In Bhimayana, the motif of water symbolizes both the physical need for clean water and the metaphorical thirst for justice and equality. The lack of access to clean drinking water and the humiliation faced by Dalits when trying to fetch water from public sources highlight the systemic discrimination and social hierarchies prevalent in Indian society.

Shelter: The motif of shelter represents the need for a safe and dignified living space. Dalits often faced segregation and were forced to live on the outskirts of villages, away from the main settlements. The lack of proper housing and the discrimination in accessing public spaces reflect the harsh realities of caste-based oppression.

The motif of 'Water and Shelter' in Bhimayana underscores the broader themes of social injustice, inequality, and the denial of basic human rights. Through visual storytelling, the graphic novel brings to light the struggles faced by Dalits in their quest for equality and justice. It serves as a powerful reminder of the importance of addressing systemic discrimination and advocating for the rights of marginalized communities.

Q5. Whodunit' in Detective Fiction

Ans. "Whodunit" is a term often used to describe a subgenre of detective fiction where the central focus of the story revolves around solving a mystery related to a crime, usually a murder. The primary question in a "whodunit" is identifying the perpetrator of the crime, which is often revealed in a climactic moment toward the end of the story. The term itself is a contraction of the phrase "Who done it?" and highlights the central puzzle of the narrative.

In a "whodunit," readers are presented with a series of clues, evidence, and red herrings that they must interpret alongside the detective protagonist. The narrative engages readers in the process of

solving the mystery, inviting them to form their own theories and make deductions based on the information provided.

The identity of the culprit is typically concealed throughout the story, and the author employs misdirection, suspense, and surprise to maintain the intrigue. As readers progress through the narrative, they gather information, observe character interactions, and evaluate potential motives and alibis in order to solve the puzzle themselves.

Famous detective fiction authors like Agatha Christie, Arthur Conan Doyle, and Raymond Chandler are known for their "whodunit" stories, which have become a staple of the genre. Classic works such as Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories and Agatha Christie's novels, including "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" and "Murder on the Orient Express," exemplify the intricate plotting and suspenseful storytelling that define the "whodunit" subgenre.

Overall, the "whodunit" in detective fiction is characterized by its emphasis on mystery, deduction, and the unraveling of clues to reveal the identity of the perpetrator. It engages readers in a challenging intellectual exercise and rewards them with the satisfaction of solving the puzzle alongside the detective.

PART-B

Q6. "Through the Looking Glass is both radical and conservative: radical in rejecting the present and conservative in holding on to the past." Do you agree?

Ans. "Through the Looking-Glass" is a novel written by Lewis Carroll, and it serves as a sequel to his famous work "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." The novel presents a fantastical and nonsensical world that Alice, the protagonist, enters by stepping through a looking-glass. The quote you provided suggests that the novel holds both radical and conservative elements in its themes and narrative approach. Let's explore these aspects further:

Radical Rejection of the Present:

"Through the Looking-Glass" can be seen as radical in its rejection of the conventions and logic of the real world. The novel takes place in a topsy-turvy world where the rules of reality are constantly bent and broken. This rejection of the present reality can be interpreted as a departure from traditional narratives that adhere to logical and linear structures. The novel challenges the reader's expectations and invites them to embrace the absurd and the surreal, which can be considered a radical departure from traditional storytelling.

Conservative Holding onto the Past:

On the other hand, the novel also exhibits conservative elements by drawing on traditional elements of children's literature and fables. The whimsical characters, playful language, and nonsensical situations echo the conventions of storytelling that have been passed down through generations. The nostalgic tone and the use of nursery rhymes and songs contribute to a sense of familiarity and continuity with the past. This can be seen as a conservative aspect, as the novel retains elements that have been cherished in literature for a long time.

Overall, "Through the Looking-Glass" is a complex work that incorporates both radical and conservative elements. The rejection of the present reality and the embrace of the fantastical can be viewed as a radical departure from traditional narratives. At the same time, the novel's use of familiar literary conventions and its nostalgic undertones align with a conservative approach that values the continuity of storytelling traditions. The blending of these elements contributes to the unique and enduring appeal of the novel.

Q7. Agatha Christie's The Murder of Roger Ackroyd is a social critique along with being a murder mystery. Comment

Ans. Agatha Christie's "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is indeed more than just a murder mystery; it can be interpreted as a social critique that delves into various societal norms, behaviors, and assumptions of its time. The novel was published in 1926 and is known for its clever plot twist and innovative narrative style. Here are some ways in which the novel can be seen as a social critique:

Class Divide and Social Hierarchy:

The novel is set in a small English village, where social hierarchies and class divisions are clearly evident. The characters' interactions, attitudes, and behaviors reflect the societal norms of the time. Agatha Christie uses these characters to critique the rigidity of class boundaries and the way people from different backgrounds are treated based on their social status.

Gender Roles and Expectations:

The novel also touches on the gender roles and expectations prevalent in the early 20th century. Characters like Caroline Sheppard challenge traditional notions of femininity, while others conform to gender norms. The dynamics between characters and their interactions reveal the limitations and frustrations imposed by societal expectations.

Secrecy and Deception:

"The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" explores the theme of secrecy and deception not only in the context of the murder investigation but also in relation to personal lives. The secrets characters hide and the lies they tell mirror the veneer of respectability that society often upholds. This critique highlights the façade that people maintain to conform to societal norms.

Gossip and Public Perception:

The role of gossip and public perception is emphasized in the novel. The characters' reputations and standing in the community are influenced by what others say and believe about them. This can be seen as a commentary on the power of public opinion and how it shapes individuals' lives.

Uncovering Hypocrisy:

The plot twist in the novel reveals hidden motives and actions that challenge the audience's assumptions. This can be interpreted as a critique of the façade of respectability that people maintain. By exposing the hypocrisy of some characters, Agatha Christie prompts readers to question the authenticity of appearances.

In conclusion, "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" goes beyond being a mere murder mystery by delving into the complexities of society and human behavior. Agatha Christie uses the genre to engage with social issues, challenge norms, and critique the hypocrisies of the time. The novel offers readers not only an intriguing mystery but also a nuanced exploration of the world in which the characters live.

Q8. "Philip K. Dick's Minority Report is not just a story about an individual, but a critique of social and justice systems as well". Do you agree? Give your views

Ans. Yes, I agree that Philip K. Dick's "Minority Report" goes beyond being a story about an individual and serves as a critique of social and justice systems. The novella, published in 1956, explores themes of free will, determinism, ethics, and the potential consequences of advanced technology on society. Here are some ways in which "Minority Report" can be seen as a critique:

Predictive Justice System:

In the world of "Minority Report," a predictive justice system has been established that uses precognition to prevent crimes before they happen. While this system aims to eliminate crime, it raises ethical questions about the violation of individual rights, the presumption of innocence, and the potential for abuse of power. The story questions whether it is just to punish individuals for crimes they have not yet committed.

Loss of Free Will:

The concept of precognition challenges the notion of free will. If the future is already determined and individuals are arrested for crimes they will commit, then the idea of personal agency is undermined. This critique raises philosophical questions about the nature of choice and responsibility.

Ethical Dilemmas:

The story explores the ethical dilemmas surrounding the use of technology for crime prevention. The precogs, who are essentially enslaved for their abilities, highlight the moral complexities of sacrificing individual rights for the perceived greater good. This prompts readers to question the ethics of using people as tools for law enforcement.

Fallibility of Technology:

The narrative also underscores the limitations and fallibility of advanced technology. Despite the supposedly infallible precog system, it is shown to be imperfect and open to manipulation. This reflects the skepticism towards blind reliance on technology and the potential for unintended consequences.

Critique of Justice Systems:

The story critiques the flaws in traditional justice systems as well. It portrays a justice system driven by punishment rather than rehabilitation, resulting in a society that seemingly values order over individual rights. The protagonist's journey challenges the notion of absolute justice and the potential for reform within such a system.

In conclusion, "Minority Report" is indeed a multifaceted narrative that uses its speculative premise to explore complex social and ethical issues. It prompts readers to reflect on the role of technology, individual agency, justice, and the potential consequences of implementing systems that prioritize safety at the expense of fundamental rights. Through its characters and plot, the novella engages with broader societal concerns and encourages readers to consider the implications of our decisions on both the individual and societal levels.

Q9. Bhimayana uses the world view of the Pradhan Gond art to make visible India's hidden apartheid'. Elaborate with examples.

Ans. "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability" is a graphic novel that uses the art and storytelling traditions of the Gond tribe to shed light on the experiences of untouchability and caste-based discrimination in India. The novel, written by Srividya Natarajan and S. Anand, aims to bring to the forefront the marginalized narratives and voices that often remain hidden or ignored in mainstream discourse. **Here's how "Bhimayana" utilizes the Pradhan Gond art to make visible India's hidden apartheid:**

Art as a Vehicle for Expression:

The Pradhan Gond art style, characterized by intricate patterns, vibrant colors, and symbolic representation, serves as a powerful means of expression in "Bhimayana." This art form, rooted in the culture of the Gond tribe, becomes a vehicle for conveying the complex emotions and experiences of untouchability and caste oppression.

Visualizing Social Hierarchies:

The novel employs visual symbolism to depict the social hierarchies and discrimination embedded in Indian society. Through illustrations, it portrays the stark differences in living conditions, access to resources, and treatment between different castes. For instance, the representation of untouchability through the imagery of water taps and segregating walls effectively communicates the deep-rooted discrimination.

Narratives of Resistance:

"Bhimayana" also highlights narratives of resistance and resilience against oppression. The characters in the graphic novel, inspired by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's life and teachings, challenge the status quo and fight against the injustices they face. The art style captures these moments of defiance, underscoring the importance of resistance in the face of adversity.

Cultural Identity and Empowerment:

The use of Pradhan Gond art is significant as it represents a form of cultural identity and empowerment. By integrating this traditional art form into the narrative, "Bhimayana" not only offers a unique visual experience but also honors the cultural heritage of the Gond tribe. This approach also contributes to reclaiming marginalized narratives and asserting the right to self-representation.

Amplifying Voices of the Marginalized:

Through its art and storytelling, "Bhimayana" amplifies the voices of those who have long been silenced. The graphic novel provides a platform for individuals from marginalized communities to

share their experiences, perspectives, and challenges. This process of visibility challenges the prevailing apathy and ignorance surrounding caste-based discrimination.

In essence, "Bhimayana" effectively utilizes the Pradhan Gond art style to create a visual narrative that goes beyond words, making the hidden apartheid in India visible and accessible to a wider audience. The novel's artistic choices evoke empathy, challenge stereotypes, and prompt readers to confront uncomfortable truths about caste-based discrimination. Through the power of art, "Bhimayana" serves as a vital tool for raising awareness, fostering dialogue, and advocating for social justice and equality.

Q10. Discuss Felicity Hughes' views on the role of fantasy in children's literature

Ans. Felicity Hughes, a scholar in the field of children's literature, has provided insightful perspectives on the role of fantasy in children's literature. Her views highlight how fantasy serves as a crucial and transformative element in shaping children's imagination, cognitive development, and understanding of the world. Hughes' ideas emphasize that fantasy literature plays a significant role in enriching children's lives by allowing them to explore the realms of imagination, escape into alternate realities, and grapple with complex themes in a safe and engaging manner.

Here are some key aspects of Felicity Hughes' views on the role of fantasy in children's literature:

Development of Imagination:

According to Hughes, fantasy literature nurtures children's imagination by exposing them to worlds and situations that are beyond the scope of their everyday experiences. Through magical creatures, fantastical settings, and extraordinary events, children are encouraged to imagine the unimaginable, fostering creativity and a sense of wonder.

Cognitive Growth:

Fantasy literature challenges children's cognitive abilities as they navigate complex plots, unfamiliar worlds, and non-realistic scenarios. This engagement sharpens their critical thinking skills, problem-solving abilities, and capacity to process abstract concepts.

Emotional Exploration:

Fantasy allows children to explore and process their emotions in a safe and symbolic space. Characters and situations in fantasy stories often parallel real-life experiences, enabling children to address their fears, anxieties, and aspirations indirectly. This emotional resonance helps them develop empathy and emotional intelligence.

Ethical and Moral Lessons:

Hughes suggests that fantasy stories often incorporate moral dilemmas and ethical choices, allowing young readers to contemplate right and wrong in a non-prescriptive manner. These narratives encourage children to ponder the consequences of actions, thereby fostering ethical awareness.

Empowerment and Identity:

Fantasy literature frequently features protagonists who overcome challenges and embark on quests, which can resonate with children's own struggles and aspirations. This portrayal of resilience and empowerment can inspire readers to confront their own obstacles with courage and determination.

Cultural Understanding:

Fantasy literature often draws from various cultural myths, legends, and traditions. Exposure to diverse cultural elements enhances children's understanding of global perspectives, encouraging them to appreciate differences and similarities across cultures.

Socio-Political Commentary:

Hughes suggests that fantasy literature can subtly address socio-political issues by allegorically representing real-world conflicts and challenges. This can help children develop a critical awareness of societal dynamics.

In essence, Felicity Hughes' views underscore the pivotal role of fantasy in children's literature. Fantasy stories not only captivate young readers but also stimulate their cognitive growth, nurture their emotional development, and provide a platform for exploring complex themes. By offering a blend of imagination and reality, fantasy literature enriches children's lives, shapes their worldview, and lays the foundation for a lifelong love of reading and creative thinking.