

Popular Literature PYQ 2019

Q1. Write a short note on Humpty Dumpty in Carroll's Through the Looking Glass.

Ans. Humpty Dumpty is a well-known character in Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There," which is the sequel to his famous work, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Humpty Dumpty appears in Chapter 6 of the book, and he is a central figure in the story.

Appearance and Description:

Humpty Dumpty is described as an egg-shaped character who is portrayed as both fragile and haughty. He is seated on a wall when Alice encounters him, and his round, egg-like appearance is a visual representation of his character.

Language and Wordplay:

One of the most distinctive features of Humpty Dumpty is his habit of using unusual and nonsensical language. He takes words and phrases and assigns them his own meanings, which often leads to humorous and absurd conversations with Alice. For example, he famously tells Alice, "When I use a word, it means just what I choose it to mean—neither more nor less."

The Fall of Humpty Dumpty:

In the poem "Humpty Dumpty" from the original nursery rhyme, Humpty Dumpty falls off a wall and shatters. In Carroll's version, Humpty Dumpty also suffers a great fall from the wall. The fall is a significant event in the story and symbolizes the fragility of the characters and the world of Wonderland.

Symbolism:

Humpty Dumpty's character and his fall can be seen as symbolic elements in Carroll's whimsical and nonsensical world. His egg-shaped form represents vulnerability, and his misuse of language reflects the surreal and absurd nature of Wonderland. The fall of Humpty Dumpty serves as a reminder that in Wonderland, things are not always what they seem, and reality is fluid and unpredictable.

Overall, Humpty Dumpty is a memorable and iconic character in "Through the Looking-Glass" who adds to the whimsical and nonsensical nature of Lewis Carroll's fantastical world. His unique language and the symbolism surrounding his character contribute to the overall charm and complexity of the story.

OR

Write a short note on The Looking-Glass world.

Ans. The "Looking-Glass world" is the fantastical and mirror-reversed alternate reality that Alice enters in Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There." In this sequel to

"Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," Alice steps through a looking-glass (a large mirror) and finds herself in a world where everything is backward and nonsensical compared to the world she knows.

Key characteristics and elements of the Looking-Glass world include:

1. **Mirror Reversal:** In the Looking-Glass world, everything is reversed horizontally, just like a reflection in a mirror. This means that left and right are swapped, and words and text appear backward. This mirror reversal is a central theme and source of humor in the story.
2. **Nonsensical Logic:** Much like Wonderland, the Looking-Glass world is characterized by absurd and illogical events and conversations. The characters Alice encounters often speak in riddles, puns, and wordplay. The world defies the laws of physics and reason, creating a sense of whimsy and fantasy.
3. **Chessboard Landscape:** The Looking-Glass world is structured like a giant chessboard, with squares and pieces representing characters and elements of the story. Alice embarks on a journey to become a queen by navigating the chessboard landscape and following the rules of the game.
4. **Reflective Themes:** The Looking-Glass world reflects themes of identity, duality, and transformation. Alice undergoes changes in size, interacts with mirror versions of herself, and grapples with questions about who she is and how she fits into this peculiar world.
5. **Characters and Encounters:** Alice encounters a variety of eccentric characters in the Looking-Glass world, including Humpty Dumpty, Tweedledum and Tweedledee, the White Queen, and the Red Queen. Each character embodies different aspects of nonsense and wordplay.
6. **Symbolism and Parody:** The Looking-Glass world is often seen as a commentary on Victorian society and the rigidity of social norms. Carroll uses satire and parody to critique various aspects of Victorian life and culture.
7. **The Journey:** Alice's journey through the Looking-Glass world is both physical and metaphorical. It represents her growth, curiosity, and ability to adapt to the absurd challenges she encounters. The story is ultimately a coming-of-age narrative.

In "Through the Looking-Glass," Lewis Carroll continues to explore the theme of childhood imagination and the arbitrary nature of language and reality. The Looking-Glass world serves as a playground for these explorations, creating a whimsical and thought-provoking landscape that continues to captivate readers of all ages.

Q2. Explain how Bhimayana breaks the popular conventions of graphic novels?

Ans. "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability" is a unique graphic novel created by Srividya Natarajan, S. Anand, and Durgabai Vyam. It tells the story of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's life and his fight against untouchability and caste-based discrimination in India. Bhimayana breaks popular conventions of graphic novels in several ways:

Subject Matter and Social Commentary:

Bhimayana tackles deeply sensitive and socially relevant subject matter. It delves into the complex and often painful issues of untouchability, caste discrimination, and social injustice. Unlike many graphic novels that may focus on lighter or more fantastical themes, Bhimayana is unapologetically rooted in reality and serves as a powerful social commentary.

Non-Fiction and Biography:

Graphic novels typically encompass a wide range of genres, including fiction, fantasy, and superhero narratives. *Bhimayana*, however, is a non-fiction graphic novel that presents a biography of a historical figure, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar. It combines elements of biography, history, and social critique within the medium of a graphic novel.

Minimalistic Art Style:

While graphic novels often showcase elaborate and detailed artwork, *Bhimayana* employs a minimalistic and stylized art style. The use of intricate tribal art by Durgabai Vyam adds a unique visual element to the novel. This artistic choice aligns with the book's message of simplicity and serves as a contrast to the often complex and intricate social issues it addresses.

Limited Color Palette:

Graphic novels often feature a wide range of colors to create vibrant and visually striking images. *Bhimayana* uses a limited color palette, primarily black, white, and shades of blue. This deliberate choice contributes to the book's somber and reflective tone, emphasizing the gravity of the subject matter.

Sparse Dialogue and Narration:

In contrast to many graphic novels that rely heavily on dialogue and narration, *Bhimayana* employs sparse text. The use of concise and thought-provoking text allows the visuals and illustrations to carry much of the narrative weight. This approach encourages readers to reflect on the visuals and interpret the story in their own way.

Educational and Informative:

While graphic novels often entertain and engage readers through storytelling, *Bhimayana* serves as an educational tool. It informs readers about the life of Dr. Ambedkar, his struggles, and the broader issues of caste discrimination and untouchability in India. It aims to raise awareness and promote social change.

Collaborative Effort and Authentic Voice:

Bhimayana is a collaborative effort between authors and artists, including Dalit artists and writers who have a personal connection to the subject matter. This allows the novel to present an authentic and insider's perspective on the issues it addresses, breaking away from conventional graphic novels that may lack such a lived experience.

In summary, *Bhimayana* breaks popular conventions of graphic novels by addressing weighty social issues, employing a minimalistic art style, utilizing a limited color palette, relying on sparse text, serving as an educational tool, and offering an authentic voice from marginalized communities. It challenges the norms of the graphic novel medium to convey a powerful and socially impactful narrative.

OR

Justify the title of *Bhimayana*.

Ans. The title of "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability" is a meaningful and justified choice that encapsulates the essence and purpose of the graphic novel. Here are several reasons to justify the title:

Honoring Dr. B.R. Ambedkar:

The title "Bhimayana" is a reference to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the central figure of the graphic novel. Dr. Ambedkar was a prominent social reformer, jurist, and the chief architect of the Indian Constitution. He dedicated his life to fighting against untouchability and caste-based discrimination. The title pays homage to his pivotal role in the struggle for social justice and equality.

Representation of Experiences:

The word "Experiences" in the title highlights the core theme of the graphic novel. "Bhimayana" aims to depict the lived experiences of individuals who suffered from untouchability and caste discrimination. It offers a glimpse into the personal narratives, challenges, and triumphs of those affected by these issues.

Focus on Untouchability:

The term "Untouchability" in the subtitle underscores the specific focus of the graphic novel. "Bhimayana" does not shy away from addressing the deeply ingrained practice of untouchability in India, which relegated certain communities to the lowest rungs of society. The title signals that the novel is dedicated to shedding light on this grave social injustice.

Empowerment and Advocacy:

The choice of "Bhimayana" as the title also serves as an act of empowerment and advocacy. It aligns with Dr. Ambedkar's mission to empower marginalized communities and challenge the status quo. By naming the graphic novel after him, it continues the legacy of advocating for social change and equality.

Legacy and Inspiration:

Dr. Ambedkar's life and work continue to inspire social activists and advocates for marginalized communities. The title "Bhimayana" reinforces his legacy and the ongoing struggle for social justice. It serves as a reminder of the importance of his contributions and encourages readers to engage with his ideas.

Visibility and Awareness:

The title "Bhimayana" draws attention to a critical social issue that often remains hidden or ignored. It creates visibility for the experiences of those affected by untouchability and caste discrimination, fostering awareness and empathy among readers.

In conclusion, the title "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability" is not only justified but also highly appropriate for the graphic novel. It pays tribute to Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, highlights the experiences of those affected by untouchability, advocates for social justice, and serves as a powerful tool for raising awareness about these pressing social issues.

(For visually challenged students in lieu of Bhimayana):

Discuss the challenges faced by the children while undertaking the journey in Ambedkar's Waiting for a Visa.

Ans. "Waiting for a Visa" is a collection of autobiographical writings by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the chief architect of the Indian Constitution and a prominent social reformer. In this work, Ambedkar reflects on his childhood and early experiences of discrimination and challenges faced by children in the caste-based society of his time. **These challenges are vividly portrayed in his writings and include:**

Educational Barriers:

Ambedkar describes the difficulties he and other children from marginalized castes faced in accessing education. Discrimination prevented them from attending regular schools, and they were often excluded from educational opportunities. This lack of access to quality education hindered their intellectual development and future prospects.

Segregation and Untouchability:

Caste-based segregation and untouchability were rampant during Ambedkar's childhood. He writes about how children from lower castes were subjected to humiliation and discrimination by the dominant castes. They were not allowed to share the same water source, sit in the same classroom, or participate in social activities on an equal footing.

Economic Hardships:

Many children from marginalized castes, including Ambedkar, came from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Poverty and lack of resources made it challenging for them to access basic necessities, let alone pursue higher education. Discrimination in employment opportunities further exacerbated economic hardships.

Social Isolation:

Social isolation and ostracism were common experiences for children from lower castes. They were often excluded from social gatherings, religious ceremonies, and community events. This isolation had a profound psychological impact on their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Limited Aspirations:

Due to the prevailing social norms and discrimination, children from marginalized castes often had limited aspirations. They were discouraged from aspiring to higher positions in society, and their dreams were often curtailed by the rigid caste hierarchy.

Lack of Role Models:

Ambedkar highlights the absence of role models for children from lower castes. They had few, if any, individuals from their own communities who had achieved social and educational success to look up to. This lack of representation made it even more challenging to break free from the cycle of discrimination and poverty.

Legal and Social Injustice:

Ambedkar's writings also shed light on the lack of legal and social justice for children from marginalized castes. They were often denied their basic rights and subjected to unfair treatment, both within the legal system and in society at large.

"Waiting for a Visa" serves as a powerful narrative that exposes the harsh realities faced by children like Ambedkar in a caste-based society. It highlights the immense challenges they encountered in pursuing education, dignity, and equality. Ambedkar's own journey from these early challenges to becoming a leading advocate for social justice and a key figure in drafting India's Constitution is a testament to his resilience and determination.

OR

Comment on any one instance describing the discrimination faced by Ambedkar as discussed in Waiting for a Visa.

Ans. One significant instance of discrimination faced by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, as discussed in "Waiting for a Visa," is his experience at the Government High School in Satara. This incident serves as a poignant example of the pervasive caste-based discrimination prevalent during his childhood.

In "Waiting for a Visa," Ambedkar recalls how he and other children from the Mahar caste were subjected to severe discrimination and humiliation at the Government High School in Satara. When it was time for the students to drink water from the school's water tank, the teacher, who belonged to a higher caste, designated a specific student from the upper caste to pour water into the cups of the Mahar students. This was done to prevent any physical contact between the students of different castes.

This practice of forcing a designated upper-caste student to pour water for the lower-caste students was a manifestation of the deeply ingrained caste hierarchy and the practice of untouchability. It demonstrated the social and physical segregation that was prevalent at the time. The discrimination was not limited to school; it extended to various aspects of daily life, from access to public spaces to participation in social and religious activities.

Ambedkar's narrative of this incident highlights the degrading treatment and humiliation that he and other children from marginalized castes endured. Such experiences were not isolated incidents but were part of a broader pattern of discrimination and prejudice that they faced in society.

This particular incident is significant because it illustrates the dehumanizing effects of caste-based discrimination and the extent to which it permeated various aspects of life, including education. It also serves as a driving force behind Ambedkar's lifelong commitment to fighting against untouchability and advocating for social justice and equality for all.

Q3. Write a note on the use of the first person narrative in The Murder of Roger Ackroyd.

Ans. The use of the first-person narrative in Agatha Christie's novel "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is a notable and pivotal storytelling device. The novel is one of Christie's most famous works and is known for its ingenious plot twist. Dr. James Sheppard, the narrator and a close friend of the victim, Roger Ackroyd, serves as the first-person narrator. **Here's a note on the significance of this narrative technique:**

Unreliable Narrator:

Dr. James Sheppard, as the first-person narrator, presents the events and characters in the story from his perspective. This makes him a potentially unreliable narrator, as readers experience the story through his limited point of view. His personal biases, opinions, and emotions can influence the reader's interpretation of events.

Reader Engagement:

The first-person narrative creates a strong connection between the reader and the narrator. Readers see the events unfold through Dr. Sheppard's eyes, which immerses them in the story and allows them to closely follow his thoughts and reactions. This engagement enhances the suspense and intrigue of the novel.

Layered Mystery:

The use of first-person narration adds complexity to the mystery. Dr. Sheppard is not just a narrator but also a character within the story who interacts with the other characters. This makes the unfolding of the mystery more dynamic, as readers observe both his internal thoughts and the external actions of the characters.

Narrator's Insight:

Dr. Sheppard, as a close friend of Roger Ackroyd, provides insight into the victim's personality and relationships. He is privy to information that other characters may not share readily. This insight becomes crucial as the story progresses and the murder investigation unfolds.

Plot Twist and Deception:

The first-person narrative in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" plays a pivotal role in the novel's famous plot twist. The revelation at the end of the novel hinges on Dr. Sheppard's narration and his perspective on the events. This twist is a hallmark of Christie's storytelling and is often cited as one of the most surprising in the history of detective fiction.

Exploration of Psychology:

The first-person narrative allows Christie to delve into the psychology of her characters, including Dr. Sheppard himself. Readers gain insight into the inner workings of characters' minds, their motives, and their secrets, which adds depth to the story's exploration of human nature and deception.

In summary, the first-person narrative in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is a masterful storytelling choice by Agatha Christie. Dr. James Sheppard's perspective serves as a lens through which readers experience the unfolding mystery, providing engagement, suspense, and a shocking plot twist. It is a prime example of how a skilled author can use narrative technique to craft a compelling and unforgettable detective novel.

OR

Write a note on The game of "Bride-Bride"

Ans. The game of "Bride-Bride" is a traditional children's game that is often played at weddings and other festive occasions in some cultures, especially in India. It is a fun and light-hearted game that

involves the participation of young girls and sometimes boys as well. **Here's how the game is typically played:**

Setup:

The game requires a group of young girls, usually friends or relatives of the bride, to participate.

Objective:

2. The primary objective of the game is to entertain and engage the young girls during the wedding festivities.

Gameplay:

3. The participants form a circle or stand in a line.

One girl is designated as the "bride," and another girl is designated as the "groom."

The "bride" is blindfolded, and her eyes are covered with a cloth or veil to simulate her inability to see.

The "groom" is similarly blindfolded.

The game begins with the "bride" and "groom" trying to find each other within the circle of participants. They are guided only by the voices and laughter of the other participants.

As the "bride" and "groom" move around the circle, the other participants playfully sing songs, tease, or provide humorous commentary to add to the enjoyment of the game.

The "bride" and "groom" may move closer to each other or farther away based on the instructions they receive from the other participants.

The game continues until the "bride" and "groom" eventually find each other and come face to face.

Conclusion:

11. Once the "bride" and "groom" find each other, the game often ends with cheers, applause, and laughter from the participants and onlookers.

"Bride-Bride" is a delightful and entertaining game that adds a playful element to wedding celebrations. It is a way to involve young girls in the festivities and create joyful memories during the special occasion. The blindfolding of the "bride" and "groom" adds an element of surprise and unpredictability, making the game both amusing and memorable for everyone involved.

Q4. Discuss Funny Boy as a counter-Bildungsroman.

Ans. "Funny Boy" by Shyam Selvadurai is indeed a counter-Bildungsroman, a term used to describe a novel that subverts or deviates from the traditional Bildungsroman, a genre that typically focuses on the coming-of-age and personal development of the protagonist. **"Funny Boy" diverges from the conventional Bildungsroman in several significant ways:**

Multiple Protagonists:

In a traditional Bildungsroman, the story typically revolves around the growth and development of a single protagonist. In "Funny Boy," the narrative is divided into six interconnected stories, each featuring a different protagonist. These protagonists are not necessarily on a linear journey of self-discovery and growth. Instead, they navigate complex social and political landscapes, and their experiences collectively shed light on the broader context of Sri Lankan society and its evolving attitudes toward identity, sexuality, and ethnicity.

Exploration of Identity and Sexuality:

While traditional Bildungsromans often focus on the protagonist's search for identity, "Funny Boy" explores the challenges of accepting one's identity, particularly in the context of homosexuality. The novel's characters grapple with their sexual orientation in a society that is often intolerant and repressive, offering a unique perspective on the complexities of self-discovery and self-acceptance.

Socio-Political Context:

Unlike typical Bildungsromans, "Funny Boy" places a strong emphasis on the socio-political context in which its characters come of age. The novel is set against the backdrop of Sri Lanka's ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese majority and the Tamil minority. The characters' personal growth and development are deeply intertwined with the tensions, violence, and discrimination that define their society. This socio-political backdrop elevates the novel to a level of social commentary, making it a powerful exploration of identity within a troubled society.

Lack of Linear Progression:

Traditional Bildungsromans often follow a linear progression in which the protagonist matures and gains wisdom over time. In "Funny Boy," the characters' growth is not always linear or neatly resolved. Their experiences are marked by moments of joy and despair, success and failure, acceptance and rejection, reflecting the complex and messy nature of life.

Interconnected Stories:

The novel's structure, consisting of interconnected stories, deviates from the traditional Bildungsroman format. Each story provides a distinct perspective on the characters and their experiences. This narrative structure allows the novel to encompass a range of viewpoints and themes, contributing to its counter-Bildungsroman quality.

In summary, "Funny Boy" by Shyam Selvadurai is a counter-Bildungsroman that challenges the conventions of the traditional coming-of-age narrative. It does so by offering multiple protagonists, exploring identity and sexuality, emphasizing the socio-political context, presenting non-linear character growth, and adopting an interconnected storytelling approach. The novel's unique narrative style and thematic depth make it a compelling and thought-provoking work that transcends the boundaries of the conventional Bildungsroman.

OR

'The microcosm of the family mirrors the discourse of the nation'. Examine this statement in the context of Selvadurai's Funny Boy.

Ans. The statement "The microcosm of the family mirrors the discourse of the nation" holds significant relevance in the context of Shyam Selvadurai's novel "Funny Boy." In the novel, the dynamics within the family serve as a reflection of the broader socio-political landscape of Sri Lanka, particularly during a period of ethnic conflict. **Here's an examination of this statement in the context of the novel:**

Family as a Microcosm:

"Funny Boy" is primarily centered around the life of Arjie, a young Tamil boy, and his experiences within his family. The family setting becomes a microcosm of the larger society, particularly the Tamil minority community. Through Arjie's perspective, readers witness the challenges, conflicts, and complexities that exist within his family. These familial dynamics often mirror the tensions and divisions present in the nation.

Ethnic and Cultural Identity:

Arjie's family, like many Tamil families in Sri Lanka, grapples with questions of ethnic and cultural identity. The pressure to conform to traditional expectations and maintain cultural practices is palpable within the family. This mirrors the broader discourse of the nation, where ethnic and cultural identities are a central theme in the midst of the ethnic conflict.

Interplay of Personal and Political:

As Arjie navigates his own identity and sexuality, the reactions and attitudes of his family members reflect the societal norms and expectations prevalent in Sri Lanka. The tension between personal desires and societal conformity highlights the broader struggle for individual and collective rights within the nation.

Familial Relationships and Social Hierarchies:

Within the family, readers observe the intricate dynamics and hierarchies that exist. These dynamics are often influenced by age, gender, and traditional roles. The power struggles and expectations within the family echo the power dynamics and inequalities that exist in the larger society.

Impact of Conflict:

The ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka has a profound impact on Arjie's family. The fear, uncertainty, and violence that affect the nation are also felt within the family unit. The decisions made by family members, including Arjie's parents, are influenced by the larger political context, underscoring the interplay between the microcosm of the family and the nation.

Consequences of Nonconformity:

Arjie's nonconformity and exploration of his sexuality lead to tension and conflict within his family. These conflicts mirror the societal consequences faced by individuals who challenge traditional norms and expectations. The repercussions at the familial level reflect the challenges faced by those who dare to challenge the status quo in the nation.

In "Funny Boy," Shyam Selvadurai skillfully uses the family as a microcosm to explore the complex interplay between personal identity and societal expectations within the broader context of ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka. The family's experiences mirror and comment on the larger discourse of the nation, making the novel a powerful commentary on the intersecting forces of identity, tradition, and conflict.

Q5. Critically examine the view that Christie betrays the reader's trust in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*.

Ans. Agatha Christie's "*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*" is renowned for its clever and controversial twist ending, which some readers argue betrays their trust as the audience. The novel challenges the conventions of detective fiction and has sparked debate regarding the relationship between authors and readers. **Here's a critical examination of the view that Christie betrays the reader's trust in this novel:**

1. The Unreliable Narrator:

At the heart of the controversy is the revelation that the novel's first-person narrator, Dr. James Sheppard, is also the murderer. Some readers argue that the use of an unreliable narrator who conceals crucial information goes against the implicit trust between the author and the reader. They feel that the author manipulates their trust to create a shocking twist.

2. Deceptive Narrative Techniques:

Christie employs narrative techniques that deliberately mislead the reader. Dr. Sheppard, as the narrator, does not reveal his true role until the end. Some readers may argue that this manipulation of information disrupts the traditional contract between author and reader, where the author provides clues for the reader to solve the mystery.

3. Subversion of Expectations:

Christie's novel subverts the traditional detective fiction formula, where the detective, often an outsider, solves the mystery. In "*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*," the murderer is an insider, closely related to the victim. This subversion can be seen as a betrayal of the reader's expectations, as it challenges the established norms of the genre.

4. Postmodernist Influence:

Some literary critics argue that Christie's novel reflects postmodernist themes, including a distrust of traditional narratives and an exploration of the unreliable nature of storytelling. In this view, Christie's twist is not a betrayal but rather a reflection of the shifting literary landscape of the time.

5. A Fresh Approach:

Supporters of Christie's approach argue that her twist adds innovation and complexity to the detective genre. They believe that a predictable story is less engaging, and that Christie's ability to surprise and challenge her readers makes her a master of her craft.

6. A Clever Use of Perspective:

Proponents of Christie's narrative choice argue that her use of Dr. Sheppard as the narrator allows for a unique and compelling storytelling perspective. The gradual revelation of his role as the murderer can be seen as a clever narrative device rather than a betrayal.

In conclusion, whether Agatha Christie betrays the reader's trust in "*The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*" is a matter of interpretation and perspective. Some readers view her narrative techniques as a departure from the traditional contract between author and reader, while others see her work as an

innovative and daring contribution to the genre of detective fiction. Christie's ability to challenge and surprise her readers remains a hallmark of her storytelling, and it continues to generate discussion and debate among fans and scholars alike.

OR

"You must have indeed been sent from the good God to replace my friend Hastings." Examine Poirot's assessment of Doctor Sheppard in The Murder of Roger Ackroyd.

Ans. In Agatha Christie's novel "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd," the assessment made by Hercule Poirot about Dr. James Sheppard plays a significant role in shaping the narrative and reader perceptions. Poirot's statement, "You must have indeed been sent from the good God to replace my friend Hastings," reflects his initial impression of Dr. Sheppard and his role as the novel's narrator and Watson-like companion to Poirot.

Here is an examination of Poirot's assessment of Dr. Sheppard:

Complement to Poirot:

Poirot's assessment of Dr. Sheppard as a replacement for his friend Hastings is a clear indication that he sees qualities in Dr. Sheppard that make him a suitable companion for his investigative work. Hastings often served as Poirot's assistant, providing narration and observations. Dr. Sheppard, in this context, is expected to fulfill a similar role.

Narrator's Role:

Dr. Sheppard assumes the role of the novel's first-person narrator, providing readers with a window into the events of the story. This role is akin to that of Dr. John Watson, who narrates many of Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories. Poirot recognizes that Dr. Sheppard's narration will be instrumental in conveying the details of the case to the reader.

Trustworthiness:

Poirot's assessment also implies a level of trust in Dr. Sheppard's character. Poirot is discerning and values accuracy in narration. His statement suggests that he believes Dr. Sheppard to be a reliable and observant individual who can provide an unbiased account of the events.

Collaboration and Relationship:

Poirot and Dr. Sheppard's working relationship is central to the novel. Dr. Sheppard assists Poirot in gathering information, conducting interviews, and solving the mystery. Their collaboration, while initially founded on mutual respect, becomes more complex as the investigation progresses.

Narrative Device:

Christie uses the character of Dr. Sheppard not only as a narrator but also as a character deeply entwined in the story's events. Dr. Sheppard's unique position allows him to withhold information from the reader and control the narrative flow, contributing to the novel's suspense and eventual twist.

Irony and Misdirection:

Poirot's statement adds an element of irony to the narrative. Readers are led to believe that Dr. Sheppard is a reliable and trustworthy narrator, which makes the novel's ultimate twist—the revelation of Dr. Sheppard's role in the murder—all the more surprising. Poirot's assessment, in this sense, becomes a part of the misdirection employed by Christie.

In summary, Poirot's assessment of Dr. James Sheppard in "The Murder of Roger Ackroyd" is layered with significance. It establishes Dr. Sheppard as a character who is expected to play a pivotal role in the story's narration and investigation. The twist in the novel hinges on the reader's trust in Dr. Sheppard's narration, making it a clever narrative device that adds depth to the plot and the character dynamics in the story.

Q6. Carroll's Through the Looking Glass marks a departure in the history of Victorian children's literature. Discuss.

Ans. Lewis Carroll's "Through the Looking-Glass" indeed marks a departure in the history of Victorian children's literature, just as its predecessor, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," did. **Here are several ways in which "Through the Looking-Glass" represents a departure from traditional Victorian children's literature:**

Nonsensical and Surreal Narrative:

Carroll's works, including "Through the Looking-Glass," are characterized by their nonsensical and surreal narratives. Unlike traditional children's literature of the Victorian era, which often aimed to teach moral lessons or impart knowledge, Carroll's stories embrace the fantastical and absurd. They prioritize imaginative play and creativity over didacticism.

Lack of Didacticism:

Victorian children's literature often had a didactic purpose, intending to educate and instill moral values in young readers. Carroll's works, on the other hand, reject didacticism. "Through the Looking-Glass" is a whimsical adventure with no clear moral or lesson to impart. It encourages readers to embrace the joy of the absurd and the illogical.

Challenge to Conventions:

"Through the Looking-Glass" challenges traditional literary and logical conventions. It plays with language, logic, and the structure of the narrative. Carroll introduces wordplay, puzzles, and paradoxes that defy the typical expectations of children's literature. This challenges readers to think creatively and critically.

Empowerment of the Child Protagonist:

Victorian children's literature often featured child protagonists who learned important lessons from adults. In "Through the Looking-Glass," Alice is a strong and independent protagonist who navigates a surreal world on her own terms. She challenges authority figures like the Red Queen and asserts her agency.

Exploration of Identity and Reality:

Carroll's work explores themes of identity and reality in a way that transcends the boundaries of traditional children's literature. Through the looking-glass, Alice encounters reflections and mirror images that prompt reflections on self-identity and perception. This philosophical depth goes beyond the moral simplicity of many Victorian children's stories.

The Absence of a Clear Moral:

Unlike much of Victorian children's literature, which often concluded with a clear moral message, "Through the Looking-Glass" does not offer a straightforward moral lesson. Instead, it leaves readers with a sense of wonder and curiosity, encouraging them to question and explore the world around them.

Emphasis on Imagination:

Carroll's work places a strong emphasis on the power of imagination and the importance of play. The fantastical world of the looking-glass is a playground of creativity, encouraging readers to engage their imaginations in a way that challenges the conventional norms of Victorian literature.

In conclusion, "Through the Looking-Glass" represents a significant departure from the traditional Victorian children's literature of its time. Lewis Carroll's embrace of nonsense, surrealism, and creative play, along with the absence of didacticism, sets his work apart and contributes to its enduring appeal as a classic of children's literature. It challenges conventions and invites readers to embrace the absurdity and wonder of the imaginative world.

OR

Gender and caste form a nexus to doubly marginalise and oppress Dalit women. Elucidate using Bhimayana.

Ans. In "Bhimayana: Experiences of Untouchability," the graphic novel by Srividya Natarajan and S. Anand, the intersection of gender and caste is depicted as a complex and oppressive nexus that doubly marginalizes and oppresses Dalit women. The novel vividly illustrates how these intersecting identities lead to systemic discrimination and violence against Dalit women. Here's an elucidation of this theme using "Bhimayana" as a reference:

Caste-Based Discrimination:

"Bhimayana" portrays the deeply ingrained caste-based discrimination prevalent in Indian society. Dalit women are often relegated to the lowest rungs of the caste hierarchy, making them vulnerable to discrimination and exclusion. They face segregation, restrictions on social interactions, and denial of basic rights solely due to their caste identity.

Economic Exploitation:

The graphic novel also highlights the economic exploitation faced by Dalit women. They are often subjected to low-paying and exploitative labor, including manual scavenging and agricultural work. This economic vulnerability further exacerbates their marginalization.

Violence and Oppression:

Dalit women in "Bhimayana" experience various forms of violence, both physical and psychological. They are depicted as victims of caste-based violence, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. Their marginalized status often leaves them without recourse to justice or protection from such violence.

Denial of Education and Opportunities:

Discrimination based on caste denies Dalit women access to education and opportunities for personal and economic growth. This perpetuates a cycle of poverty and marginalization, limiting their prospects for advancement and self-empowerment.

Intersecting with Gender Inequality:

The oppression faced by Dalit women is compounded by gender inequality. They not only confront caste-based discrimination but also the patriarchal norms that persist in society. This intersectionality leaves them vulnerable to both caste-based and gender-based violence and exploitation.

Invisibility and Silencing:

Dalit women's voices and experiences are often rendered invisible and silenced within the larger discourse on gender and caste. They are excluded from mainstream narratives and discussions, further marginalizing them and hindering efforts to address their specific challenges.

Resistance and Resilience:

Despite these challenges, "Bhimayana" also highlights the resilience and resistance of Dalit women. It portrays their strength in the face of adversity, as they continue to assert their rights and demand justice for the injustices they endure.

In "Bhimayana," the intersection of gender and caste serves as a powerful lens through which the graphic novel explores the systemic oppression faced by Dalit women in India. It underscores the need for comprehensive social and political change to dismantle the deeply entrenched hierarchies and prejudices that perpetuate their marginalization. The graphic novel sheds light on the urgency of addressing the intersecting forms of discrimination and violence that affect the lives of Dalit women and calls for collective efforts to create a more inclusive and just society.

(For visually challenged students in lieu of Bhimayana). What, according to you, makes Ambedkar's narrative an instance of Popular Literature.

Ans. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's writings and speeches, which include works such as "Annihilation of Caste" and "The Buddha and His Dhamma," **can be considered instances of popular literature for several reasons:**

Accessibility: Ambedkar's writings are accessible to a wide audience, including those who may not have extensive academic backgrounds. He wrote in a clear and straightforward style, making his ideas and arguments easily comprehensible to the masses.

Advocacy for Social Justice: Ambedkar's writings are rooted in his advocacy for social justice, particularly for the rights and upliftment of marginalized and oppressed communities in India, particularly the Dalits (formerly known as "Untouchables"). His works address the concerns and struggles of these communities, resonating with a broad readership that seeks social change.

Clarity of Thought: Ambedkar was known for his clarity of thought and the systematic presentation of his ideas. He used language effectively to convey his points, making it easier for readers from diverse backgrounds to engage with his work.

Empowerment: Ambedkar's writings empower individuals by challenging social norms and oppressive systems. He encouraged critical thinking and self-empowerment, making his literature a source of inspiration for those seeking to break free from discrimination and inequality.

Relevance: Ambedkar's ideas remain relevant and continue to be widely read and discussed in contemporary India. His writings address enduring issues of caste-based discrimination, social inequality, and human rights violations, making them timeless and appealing to a broad readership.

Political Impact: Ambedkar's literature has had a significant political impact in India. His advocacy for the rights of Dalits and other marginalized communities influenced policy decisions and contributed to the framing of the Indian Constitution. This political relevance makes his work popular and influential.

Educational Value: Ambedkar's writings serve as educational tools to raise awareness about the history of social injustice and the struggle for equality in India. They are often included in school curricula and are widely taught and studied.

Inclusivity: Ambedkar's literature is inclusive and addresses a broad spectrum of readers, transcending barriers of caste, class, and education. It speaks to the shared humanity and collective responsibility in addressing social issues.

In summary, Dr. B.R. Ambedkar's writings are instances of popular literature because they are accessible, advocate for social justice, offer clarity of thought, empower individuals, remain relevant, have had political impact, hold educational value, and are inclusive in their appeal. His work continues to inspire generations and plays a vital role in the ongoing struggle for social equality and justice in India.