CHAPTER 5
MODERN ENGLISH

The English from 15th Century till now is called Modern English. It is now practical to divide this period into Modern English I and II, for the simple reason that social ,technological and political developments in and outside England in the last 500 years have affected the structure and the use of English. But its basic nature has not altered much. It is interesting to chart the course of this language over the years and understand how it has established itself in the world as an international link language and a power house of literary activity. Today English occupies an enviable position as the official language in all world forums, such as the UNO and all its subsidiary units' .WHO, IMF, SAARC, ILO etc. are all using English. In India too, we are greatly dependent on English for official, social and commercial purposes. Globalization has further strengthened the requirement of learning and using English for everyday activities. The Indians are quick learners of the language because, as discussed earlier, we belong to the same Indo-European family. English is being taught and learnt with all seriousness in countries such as China, Japan, Korea and Indonesia. The Indian advantage of knowing ,speaking and writing correct English will gradually disappear if the future generations of young Indians do not seriously take up the challenging task of mastering a world language.

The development of Modern English (I) was largely helped by the introduction of the printing technology in 1476.This established standard forms of English spelling and pronunciation. It also allowed opportunities to more people to write and gave wider circulation to their writings. This was facilitated by the rise of literacy in England and by the end of the 17th and 18th centuries the reading public had grown considerably. Other major factors contributing to the growth of the language were the development of England as a maritime power, the expansion of the British Empire and the growth of commerce, industry and communication. Two major well known events in Europe, namely the Renaissance and the Reformation had far reaching effects on the English language.

VOCABULARY

It can well be understood that the rapid rate of change, growth and development made the English realize that their vocabulary lacked the words to express these new ideas and

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techniques. Thus began another phase of rapid borrowing from Latin, French, Greek, Italian Spanish and other languages .English absorbed words from almost fifty different languages including words from the languages of Asia and Africa. Some of these borrowings are given below. However, it is important to remember that there was a group which objected to this process and they came to be known as the Purists, but they were unable to stop the inflow of foreign words into the English vocabulary.

SOME OF THE BORROWINGS IN THE 16th &17th CENTURY

LANGUAGE	WORDS
LATIN/GREEK	adapt, appropriate, capsule, lunar, virus
FRENCH	alloy, battery, chocolate, passport, ticket
HINDI	guru, pundit, sepoy, sari, thug
ARABIC	sultan, sheikh, algebra hashish
ITALIAN	balcony, ballot, sonnet, lottery, fuse, macaroni
PORTUGESE	buffalo, verandah, marmalade, pagoda
PERSIAN	bazaar, caravan, sofa, shah, divan, kismet
SPANISH	banana, cockroach, guitar, potato, barricade
DUTCH	knapsack, landscape, frolic, slim, easle
TURKISH	coffee, kiosk, yoghurt, caftan
AFRIKAANS	trek, apartheid

GRAMMAR

A significant fact to remember is that while the vocabulary of early Modern English underwent rapid changes, the grammar remained fairly conservative. The grammar of this phase is marked more by survival of certain usages and features than by the introduction of new forms. The development of grammar was taking place in ways which did not affect the basic structure of the language. Therefore, readers can read and interpret texts of this period without much difficulty.

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WELL-KNOWN LITERARY WORKS OF THIS PERIOD

AUTHOR	WORK
EDMOND SPENSER	Farie Queen
CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE	Dr. Faustus
FRANCIS BACON	Essays
BEN JONSON	Volpone
SHAKESPEARE	King Lear, Othello, Macbeth, The Merchant of Venice, etc.

The Authorized Version of the Bible and Shakespeare's writings also helped in simplifying English. The above writers of the famous Elizabethan age with their literary genius transformed the language and brought about unprecedented creativity and inventiveness in its use.

During the 18th Century also known as the Augustan Age, there is a strong sense of order and regulation, in sharp contrast to the spirit of experiment and adventure of the previous two centuries. The needs of a Dictionary and Grammar was felt greatly during this period, so that spellings could be standardized and correct use of grammar would become possible. The often heard idiom –"Necessity is the mother of Invention" proved to be correct .In 1755 Dr.Samuel Johnson published A DICTIONARY OF THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE, which contained over 40,000 words and their meanings. The work took seven years to complete.

The second need was fulfilled by the 18th Century grammarians. Some of these Grammar books were:-

1.William Loughton (1734) —Practical Grammar of the English Tongue
2.Joseph Priestly (1761)———The Rudiments of English Grammar
3.Robert Lowth (1762)———— Short Introduction to English Grammar
4.James Buchanan (1762)———The British Grammar
5.Lindley Murray (1792)————English Grammar

These grammars had three main objectives: first, to codify the rules of English sentence structure; second, to discuss points and decide cases of divided usage and finally, to prescribe rules for correct usage. The foundations of English were strengthened by these

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methods. Many of the conventions now accepted in present day grammar were originally stated in these books.

CONCLUSION

The 18th Century grammarians shared the spirit of the Age to establish order in language, after what they saw a chaotic period of expansion and experiment. They felt that grammar could be a means of preserving the language and considered their roles as authoritative but there existed differences of opinion among writers and grammarians.

This story about the changes, growth and development of English largely took place within the area called the British Isles. After the 18th Century, the English language started leaving the shores of England .It travelled to almost all parts of the world and was soon to become a world Language. Many socio-political events were responsible for this. This the beginning of Modern English II. The expansion and diversification of English in the 19th &20th Centuries is discussed in the next chapter.

EXERCISES

1. Complete the statements given below:

a) English absorbed words from almost ..... different languages.
b) ..... objected to the inflow of the foreign words in English.
c) The two works that helped in simplifying English are.....
d) ..... published ..... in 1755.

2. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. Why are the Indians quick learners of English?
2. What realisation led to the borrowings from different languages?
3. What were the three objectives of the 18th century grammarians?
4. What did the 18th century grammarians share with the Age?
5. What did the 18th century grammarians think about their role?

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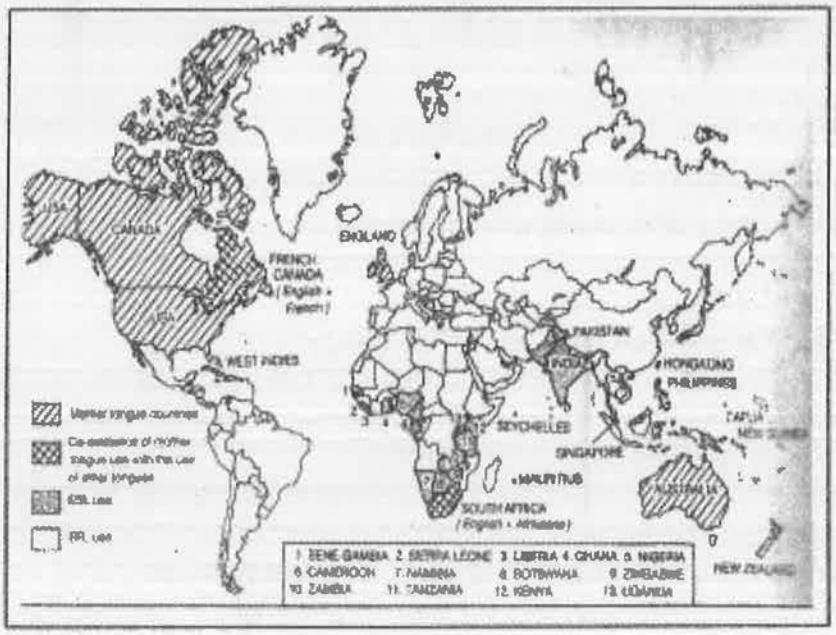
Chapter 6
English as a World Language

The most widely used language in the world today is English. This does not mean that it has the largest number of native speakers; Chinese enjoys this privilege. But English is spoken over a much larger area of the world than Chinese. Indeed, there is hardly any country in the world which does not use English as one of these forms:

- mother tongue or first language (L_1)
- second language (L_2)
- foreign language (FL)

English is used as a mother tongue or first language in the UK, USA, Ireland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa. These countries are generally called the mother tongue countries. English is also used as an L_1 by the Anglo-Indian community of India.



The Spread of English in the world

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English is used as a second language in many Asian and African countries such as India, Singapore, Malaysia, Nigeria, Namibia, Botswana, etc. In these countries, English is recognised as the second official language.

Again, English is widely used and studied as a foreign language in many non-English countries such as China, Japan, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Iraq, Eritrea, France, Germany, Switzerland, Mexico, Brazil etc. The extent of the geographical spread of English is shown in the map.

English is a language that belongs to the whole world. It has a great literature. It is the language of science and technology, and it is used all over the world as a language of learning and communication. Many other languages are as effective as English in one or more of these fields. However, as a means of expression and communication, English is used in many more fields than most other ancient ad modern languages. Today English is recognised the world over as the language of

- International trade and commerce;
- Academic and scientific writing;
- Airports; ad traffic control;
- Diplomacy;
- International Sports Meets.

Indeed, as has often been suggested, English is 'a window to the world'.

Exercises

1. Complete the statements given below:

a) ..... is spoken over a much larger area of the world than .....
b) ..... is a 'window to the world'.
c) English is used in China as .....
d) The language of international trade and commerce is .....

2. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. Name four countries where English is used as mother tongue.
2. Name four countries where English is used as a second language.
3. Name four areas where English is used extensively.



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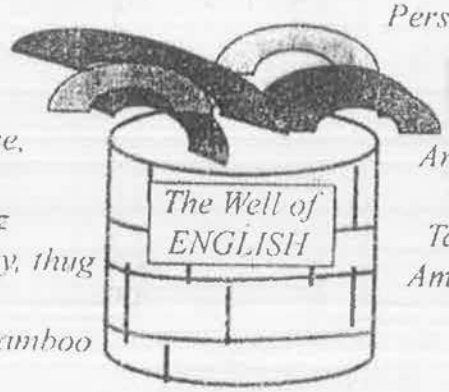
CHAPTER 7
GLOBAL ENGLISH

English developed from the speech of the Anglo-Saxon into a single, standard, 'Queen's English'. Standard British English speech came to be known as RP or 'Received pronunciation'. Along its way to becoming a standard language for England, English borrowed freely from languages that its speakers came in contact with through trade, spread of learning, new foreign invasions and so on. At first, the new words came mainly from European languages:

- **Latin**- adapt, crisis, exist, fact, skeleton, temperature, vacuum, virus…
- **Spanish** – apricot, banana, guitar, mosquito, Negro, potato, tobacco …
- **Italian** – balcony, ballet, design, giraffe. Lottery, opera, rocket, violin…
- **French** – anatomy, chocolate, detail, invite, muscle, passport, tomato …..

This borrowing habit of English has made it 'the most gloriously impure language'.

By the 18th century, England had become a very powerful nation. It was said that *the sun never sets in the British Empire* because more than half the world, from Australia through Asia and Africa to parts of America (both north and south) were all under British rule. As the British empire grew, so did the language , English. It absorbed words and phrases from the languages of all the countries that were colonized by the British. Thus



Afrikaans : trek

Duten : cruise, ease,

Turkish : coffee, fez
Hindi : guru blighty, thug
Swahili : safari
Malay : ketchup, bamboo

Persian : bazaar, caravan, Kimet, sofa,

Arabic : harem, Sultan, hashish, algebra,
Tamil: caurry, pariah,
American Indian: moose moccasin, squaw

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words began pouring into the English language from all directions, giving it a more and more global shape.

There were two main effects of this worldwide spread of English

- New *national varieties* of English, like *American English*, *Australian English*, *Canadian English*, etc., came into being.
- '*New Englishes*' (i.e., new varieties of English) developed in countries where English was no a mother tongue, e.g. Indian English, Nigerian English, etc.

NEW NATIONAL VARIETIES OF ENGLISH

As soon as English began to spread across the world, it began to change. The first changes were seen in the different ways in which English began to be used in America. After America became free of British rule, the Americans were eager to show their distinct identity as a free country and began to call their variety of English American *English*. Today, *American English*, like British English, is recognised as a 'world language', though there are many differences between them. Some of these differences are shown below:

BRITISH ENGLISH	AMERICAN ENGLISH
WORDS	*WORDS*
Ground floor	First floor
Rubbish	Garbage
Petrol	Gas
Trousers	Pants
GRAMMAR	GRAMMAR
Have you got....?	Have you gotten...?
Really good	Real good
It's quarter to seven	It's quarter of seven
SPELLING	*SPELLING*
Cheque	Check
Defence	Defense
colour	Color

THE EMERGENCE OF NEW ENGLISHES

The second effect of the spread of English was the development of 'new Englishes' like Indian English, Nigerian English, etc.

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Like American English, these varieties differ in some respects from standard British English. However, they are closer to British English than to American English. Indian English, for example, has developed a distinct set of words and sentence patterns that do not exist in British English. Some examples are given in the table below:

INDIAN ENGLISH

WORDS

Family member: a member of the family
Match box: a box of matches
Chalk piece: a piece of chalk
Moneybag: purse
Key bunch: a bunch of keys
Bandh: labour strike
Godown: warehouse
Lakh: a hundred thousand
Stir: agitation
Backward class: deprived group
Himalayan blunder: grave mistake
Military hotel: non-vegetarian hotel
Pin-drop silence: dead silence
Platform: pavement or sidewalk

GRAMMAR

I ***am owning*** two houses (own)
She ***is knowing*** the answer (knows)
Pay ***attention on*** (Pay attention to)
Who you have come to see? (Who have you……?)
What this is made of? (What is …?)
You like coffee, ***isn't it***? (……. don't you?)
They are late, ***isn't it***? (…… aren't they?)

Nissim Ezekiel, a famous writer of English poetry has given us a satirised version of Indian English in the poem *Goodbye Party for Miss Pushpa T.S.*

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GOODBYE PARTY FOR MISS PUSHPA T.S.

Friends,
our dear sister
is departing for foreign
in two three days,
and
we are meeting today
to wish her bon voyage.

You are all knowing friends,
what sweetness is in *Miss Pushpa*.
I don't mean only external sweetness
but internal sweetness.

Miss Pushpa is smiling and smiling
even for no reason
but simply because she is feeling.

Miss Pushpa is coming
from very high family.
Her father was renowned advocate
In Bulsar or Surat,
I am not remembering which place....

Exercises

1. Write T for true and F for false statements:

a) There is no difference between American English and British English.
b) Indian English is closer to American English.
c) Indian English has developed a distinct set of words and sentence patterns that do not exist in British English.

2. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. Which speech came to be known as 'Received Pronunciation'?
2. What has made English 'the most gloriously, impure language'?
3. Name two effects of the worldwide spread of English.

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CHAPTER 8
FUTURE OF ENGLISH

The story of English cannot be concluded in the manner in which some of the greatest creations in the language can. When we come to the end of Milton's epics or **'The Tale of the Ancient Mariner'** or **'The Eve Of St. Agnes'** Keats or the tragedies and the comedies of Shakespeare we experience a fulfillment which a work of art can provide. But it would be safe and correct to say that the story of English is the story of the evolution of modern man. Each person gifted with the power of speech comes and performs his part on the world stage.

The main purpose of adopting this story-telling technique is to familiarise the language 2 and language 3 learners to understand, enjoy and equip themselves to master a language which will enable better human understanding, co-operation and work culture. All individuals can contribute to the story of English and it will lead from one to another very much in the manner of our very own story telling methods found in **The Mahabharat**, **Panchatantra** and the **Jataka Tales**.

Despite our deliberations on the growth of English, the question that remains nagging is: What is the future of English? Some people think that history will repeat itself, and English will go the same way as Latin.

About 800 years ago, Latin was a world language. It spread all over Europe as the Roman Empire grew and many new varieties came into being. With the fall of the Roman Empire, the varieties moved apart from Latin and from one another. The different varieties became new languages: Spanish, French, Italian, etc. Latin became a language no longer in popular use.

Some other people think that the different varieties will move closer together and form a Global Standard English which will be spoken by all. It will be one common language for use in –

- International travel and tourism
- Internal press coverage

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- Means of communication between governments
- Multinational business organisations

So, will English fall apart and go out of use like Latin? Or, will it develop into a single global standard? We have to wait and see; only time will tell.

MODERN USAGE OF ENGLISH

In the last few decades of the 20th century the English language has seen rapid changes and many of the earlier concepts of standard grammar, spellings and pronunciation have been diluted. One major factor for this is the internet. In a little over ten years the internet has become a global phenomenon. Only about 45 million people used the internet in 1995 around the world. In 2006 the figure increased to more than double. The number of Cyber cafes and outlets in all big and small cities and towns of India is an indicator of not only of the popularity of computers and the internet but also its indispensability. The computer as of now is using the English language for a variety of purposes though many countries are trying to develop programmes in their own language.
And the story of English goes on. .....

Exercises

1. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. Name the language which was a world language about 800 years ago.
2. Why is Latin no longer in popular use?
3. Name three areas of English language in which rapid changes have been noticed in the last few decades.



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Section II

Story of English Literature

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SECTION 9
The Story of Poetry

You have read many poems in your textbooks **'Rainbow' Part 1 & 2**. You must have noticed certain common things in them. The meaning of words in a poem is quite different from what we find in a short story or in a drama. Here, words are used not just for meaning, but also for their sound and images; let us recall the following lines from W.H. Auden:

Now the leaves are falling fast,
Nurse's flowers will not last;
Nurses to the graves are gone,
And the prams go rolling on.

You must have noticed the images of leaves, flowers, graves and prams. What about arrangements of words in separate lines which rhyme at the end? Don't you think they together suggest the cyclic process of life and death!

You may be interested in having an idea of the time when poetry began to be written in England. Poetry started its journey from the time Man used language to express his emotion. It began with the beginning of the history of the English people on the continent. During the Anglo Norman and Anglo –Saxon period English language was in its primitive form. The 'Old English', as it is called, had many French and German words. The poets told the stories of great crusades and sea-voyages. The tales of King Arthur and his Round Table were the result of this trend.

During the Middle English period we notice the emergence of a national language and literature. Geoffrey Chaucer made great contribution in this regard. In his the **The Canterbury Tales** he describes the country, the people and their beliefs. These things still appeal to us. The poem presents characters such as the wife of Bath, the noble knight, the Squire, the Friar, Prioress and others. They still amuse us because of their peculiarities. In his poetic works Chaucer did not use the Old English irregular lines and alliteration, "the rim, ram, roff" as he humorously calls it. Another important poet of the time was William

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Langland. His **The Vision of Piers the Plowman** consists of a series of dream visions. In this poem, he attacks the social ills and urges men to "learn to love".

It may be surprising for you to know that for nearly 200 years after Chaucer there was no great literary work produced in England. One important exception is Sir Thomas Malory's **Le Morte d'Arthur**. The poem is a collection of stories about King Arthur.

During the 15th century an intellectual movement called the Renaissance swept Europe. The word Renaissance means 'rebirth' and refers to revival of ancient Greek learning. The spread of learning was aided by the Printing presses. This made the classics available for the common men. This generated a new spirit of enquiry and overthrew the institutions and beliefs of the mediaeval age. In England, the influence of the Renaissance was felt clearly during the period from the accession of Elizabeth in 1558 to the death of James I in 1625. Under Elizabeth's brilliant rule, England experienced internal peace and economic prosperity and emerged a world power. The three great poets of the time were Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser and William Shakespeare. They practised and perfected several kinds of verse-forms such as epic-romance, pastoral, elegy, sonnet, lyric, satire etc. Marlowe was basically a lyric poet. Even his plays like **Tamburlaine the Great**, **Dr Faustus**, and **Edward II** reveal his imaginative approach and a quest for ideas. Spenser's **Shepherd's Calendar** is a pastoral poem. His best known work **The Faiery Queene** is a romantic epic based on chivalry. It is also read for its allegorical meaning and design. From this point of view, the poem portrays the political and religious problems of the age. Shakespeare was the greatest poet of the age. In his romantic comedies and tragedies he presents the Renaissance concept of 'free will'. Human destiny is shaped by human actions themselves. God or 'fate' does not influence it. His tragedies, specially **Othello**, **Hamlet**, **Macbeth** and **King Lear** contain fine poetic passages. Written in blank verse they explore the working of human passion and emotions. Shakespeare has to his credit two narrative poems, **Venus and Adonis** and **Lucrece** and a sequence of 154 of sonnets. These sonnets deal with tragic failure in love and broken friendship. Another important thing is that he developed his own structure and rhyme-scheme of a sonnet. You are correct in your guess that his sonnets are called Shakespearean sonnets because of this reason.

It was the time when poetry began to be published in anthologies. The best known of these is **Tottle's Miscellany** (1557). It contained songs and sonnets of poets like Wyatt and Surrey. They adopted the Italian sonnet for English use. A third nobleman with a talent for writing was Sir Philip Sidney. He wrote a beautiful sonnet, **Astrophel and Stella** (1591).

The 17th century is called both an age of transition and an age of revolution. The English society witnessed political and social struggles. These resulted in the civil war and

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the formation of government under Oliver Cromwell. The old unity of the Elizabethan life was gone. The national pride of Englishmen lessened as the crown lost dignity. The activities of James I Charles I and Charles II showed a downfall from the Elizabethan height. A new middle class began to show power. The imagination and enthusiasm of Marlowe and Spenser gave way to a rational and scientific attitude.


John Milton

The scientific spirit of the time, however, did not destroy poetry. The great poet of the time was John Milton. He was a Puritan who served Cromwell as Latin Secretary. He first wrote some short poems such as **L'Allegro** and **IL Penseroso**. His elegy **Lycidas** laments the death of a friend. He is mainly known for producing truly English epics such as **Paradise Lost** and **Paradise Regained**. These epics seek to 'justify the ways of God to Man'. Milton is regarded the most sublime of English poets. He is a master of what is called 'the grand style'. He makes use of abstract words, many of them of Latin origin.


John Donne

An important group of 17th century writers were the metaphysical poets. With John Donne as the leading figure, George Herbert, Andrew Marvell, Richard Crashaw and Henry Vaughan were important poets of the group. While reading Donne's poem – you may have noticed the use of uncommon similes and metaphors! Do they have some important function in the poem? They bring to our notice relationships among uncommon things. The metaphysical poets wrote on spiritual aspects of life. But their love poems are equally fascinating.


George Herbert

The major poet of the later part of the country was John Dryden. His major poetic works **Mac Flecknoe** and **Absalom and Achitophel** are satires; they deal with the political controversies of the time. He is basically a satirist. Still, he makes imaginative and creative use of language. We also know him for his use of classic or heroic couplet for serious English poetry. Only one other poet of the period is important for us. This is Samuel Butler whose **Hudibras** is a satire on the Puritans.

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When we approach the 18th century, we find reason and optimism as the main qualities of the age. People believed that theirs is a golden period similar to that of the Roman Emperor Augustus. Hence, the name "Augustan' was given to the early 18th century. The poets used Greek and Roman authors or classical antiquity as models of style. Hence, the period is also described 'neo classic'. Alexander Pope was the representative poet of the time. He has written some short poems on nature and seasons, such as **Four Pastorals.** But he is mainly known for his critical and satirical pomes such as the **Rape of the Lock**, the **Dunciad** and the **Epistle to Dr Arbuthnot**. His poetry is noted for 'verbal intelligence'; it is also called 'wit'. He makes fine use of classic couplet to make condensed observations; such as:

'A little learning is a dangerous thing'

or

'To err is human, to forgive divine.'



William Wordsworth

Before we come over to the early part of the 19th century we meet several poets who contributed to the 'romantic revival' in English poetry. James Thomson, Robert Blair, William Collins, Thomas Gray, Robert Burns and William Cowper are regarded the poets of the age of transition. Their love for nature and presentation of human feelings in simple language are noteworthy. Don't you feel that Burns' "*My love is like a red, red rose*" and Gray's "*Elegy written in a country Churchyard*" look like any other 'romantic poems'?

The Romantic Revival in English poetry is often associated with the works of William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The movement refers to a renewed interest in Nature and simple life, an interest in the past and the exotic. Don't you notice certain common things in the works of the poets? - individualism, free play of imagination and a humanitarian outlook. You may regard it a 'democratic' or liberalising movement. The poets sought to do away with the rigid application of classic norms and conventions in their writing. In this regard, you will have to remember the great influence of the French Revolution that made 'Liberty, equality and Fraternity' the very basis of social life. There were also certain other influences at work: the writing of the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau, the works of German Schlegel brothers (August Wilhelm and Friedrich) and the growing interest in ballads and English medieval literature. Bishop Percy's **Reliques of Ancient English Poetry** (1765) kindled this interest. Wordsworth wrote

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lyrics, ballads, odes, sonnets, verse-tales and reflective poems. Be it Lucy-poems or **The Prelude**, his love of nature is always prominent. Nature, for him, is a spiritual presence; it provides creative training to human sensibility.

It may be an interesting fact to know that Coleridge joined Wordsworth in the publication of the **Lyrical Ballads** (1798), the book which gave a new direction to English poetry. While Wordsworth represented the familiar as 'unfamiliar', Coleridge did the reverse. In **Kubla Khan**, **The Ancient Mariner** and **Christabel,** Coleridge shows his interest in medieval folklore and legend. Other poets like Lord Byron, Percy Bysshe Shelley and John Keats are regarded the younger Romantics. Byron's works – **Manfred, Cain, Childe Harold**, **Vision of Judgement** and **Don Juan,** show his passion for liberty and defiance of convention. Shelley as a poet is a revolutionary idealist. Some of his well known poems are '***Adonais***', '***The Skylark***', '***The Cloud***', the '***Ode to the West wind***', and ***Revolt of Islam*** and '***Queen Mab***'. In his longer poems he gives vent to his passion for reform. In the shorter poems like odes and lyrics, he laments the hardships into which he has landed. In Keats's narrative poems like the **Eve of St Agnes**, **Lamia**, the odes and ballads we find his sensitive approach to the beauty of nature. He has also an admiration for the Greek love of perfection. The most striking quality of Keats's poetry is its appeal to the senses.


John Keats

In the following lines from 'Ode *to Psyche*' the words present to the eye the picture of the Nature:

hushed cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed,
Blue, silver-white and budded Tyrian,'

As we proceed further, we find Queen Victoria ascending the throne. The period from 1837 to 1901 witnessed some important events – the rise of democracy, the expansion of the British Empire and the progress of science and technology. A number of inventions and discoveries took place during the period. The most significant of them was Darwin's theory of the Origin of Species. It had the greatest impact on the age. It challenged the biblical version of the creation and shook people's faith in Christianity. Despite this, romantic tradition continued in the later part of the 19th century. However, the rise of democracy and the expansion of the reading public changed function of poetry. It came to be related more to life than the romantic. The representative poets of age – Alfred Tennyson, Robert

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Browning and Matthew Arnold – gave voice to the common man's doubts, fears and distractions. At the same time, they reassured them that all was right with the world. Tennyson's poems and well-known elegy **In Memoriam** make an attempt to reconcile the conflicting claims of science and religion. Browning's poetry made use of a new technique known as 'dramatic monologue'. It is used to explore the thoughts and feeling of the poet himself. Arnold describes poetry as the criticism of life. His **Sohrab and Rustam, The Scholar Gipsy** and some memorable poems '*Dover Beach*', expresses the doubts and frustrations of the age. At the same time, he insists on a code of conduct. For him, the object of poetry is to make men happy.

Besides these poets, Dante Gabriel Rossetti, William Morris, A.C. Swinburne, C.G. Rossetti also deserve our attention. They are known as the Pre-Raphaelites, the term owes its name to a school of painting, called the Pre-Raphaelites Brotherhood. It aimed to revive in poetry the ideals of painting - sincerity, simplicity and truths to life – that inspired the Italian painters before Raphael. In the works of these poets there is a stress on beauty, an interest in middle ages and use of words for their pictorial quality.

Gerard Manley Hopkins is a poet different from his age. His poems were published in 1918 after his death. His poems normally deal with religious aspects of life. Some of his poems like '**Pied Beauty**' portray Nature. But he certainly turns away from the romantic style of poetry. His imagery and rhythm are quite modern and has influenced many poets of the 20th Century.


Yeats

English poetry in the 20th century is varied in theme but more sensitive to the new crises in human life. Poets like Robert Bridges, A.E. Houseman and John Mansfield continued with the 'romantic themes'. They also expressed the 'pessimism' of the age. Walter de la Mare, in his '**Songs for Children**', '**Peacock Pie**' and other poems, explores the wonder of the child's world and the 'fantasy' of the supernatural world. The poets, who had Irish origin, were rooted in the history and tradition of Ireland. Poets like W.B. Yeats, J.M. Synge and Lord Dunsame looked to their own country for inspiration. W. B. Yeats (1865-1939) in the poems such as '**Among School Children**', '**Sailing to Byzantium**' and '**Second Coming**' reveals his concern for youth, 'age' and the possibility of regeneration.

The early part of the 20th century witnessed World War I. Along with annihilation of life and property, it brought disillusionment and frustration. The poets voiced the concern that knowledge and progress could not save humanity. Some of the early poets like Rupert

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Brooke and Wilfred Owen had an ideal view on war. T.S. Eliot (1888 -1965) was certainly the most influential poet of the time. In his early poems such as the **'The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock'** and **'The Wasteland'**, he presents the hollowness and vulgarity of the modern civilization which does not have any awareness of spiritual values. His later poems such as **'Ash Wednesday'** and **'Four Quartets'**, portray the disillusionment, agony and a search for values.

During the 1930s a group of poets such as W.H. Auden, Cecil Day Lewis, Louis MacNeice and Stephen Spender reacted against 'Art for Art's sake'. They tried to combine Marxist philosophy with Freud's psychology. Auden, in his **'Poems'** (1930), and particularly **'Look, Stranger'** reveals his impatience with capitalism. William Empson and Dylan Thomas belong to another group of poets who sought to escape from the world of ideas ad problems. They chose to express the inner chaos through devices such as 'ambiguity' and 'inexact'. Dylan Thomas was a new romantic. His poems have rich Freudian overtones. They explore the relation between man and his natural environment.


Dylan Thomas

During and after the World War II, English poetry became quite diverse. It is difficult to use any single defining term or 'movement' . The significant poets of the period are Thomas Gunn, Ted Hughes, Donald Davie and Philip Larkin. While Hughes in **'Jaguar'** and **'Hawk Roosting'** depict violence and ferocity of animal as well as human world, Larkin was an anti-romantic, who presents in an objective way the harsh realties such as time and death. Some of the distinctive poets, writing during the 1980s and 1990s are Blake Morrison, Peter Reading ad Craig Raine. Women poets such as Edith Sitwell, Stevie Smith, Elizabeth Jenning and Carol Ann Duffy made their presence felt in the second part of the 20th century. They touched sensitive aspects of relationship between husband and wife and mother and children.


Ted Hughes

The story of English poetry will remain incomplete if we do not take into account poets from the Commonwealth countries, who also used English language for creative purposes. The use of English in America, Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, South Africa, Nigeria and in Caribbean island, is certainly the result of British colonialism. What was first the language of commerce

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and administration, soon emerged as a natural medium of exploring and understanding social realties.

American poetry in English began from the American War of Independence. It was basically patriotic but imitative of English poetry. The real poetry, however, was written during the period 1850 -55, also called the American Renaissance. The favourite poets of the 19th century were Edgar Allan Poe and W.H. Longfellow. Longfellow was a story teller in verse. Do you remember his '**A Psalm of Life**'? Except for E.A. Robinson, Robert Frost and Carl Sandburg, American poetry in the early 20th century was largely experimental. Frost portrays countryside with a tone of sadness and hint of life's responsibility. Poets like Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, Wallace Stevens, William Carols Williams and E.E. Cummings used concrete images and precise words to represent ideas and attitudes of mind. Pound and Eliot made significant contribution by their objective and imperosnal account of the degeneration and depravity of modern life. Most of the American poets writing in English were engaged in two-fold tasks – to define the 'self' and to identify the 'nation'. The two concerns often merge in the question – 'What is an American?'

In India, poetry began to be written as early as the early part of the 19th century. Henry Lois Vivian Derozio, Kasi Prasad Ghosh, Toru Dutt and Manmohan Ghosh, were the pioneers. Their major concerns were patriotism and the glorious past of India. Sarojini Naidu, also known as the 'nightingale of India' wrote poems with ease. Her poems such as '**Village Song**', '**Songs of Radha**' and '**A Soul's Prayer**' reveal the real 'heart of India'. Rabindranath Tagore, the Nobel laureate, in **The Gitanjali** and Aurobindo Ghosh in '**The Savitri**' made moral and spiritual quest. Their poetry was an attempt to restore the lost glory of India. Indian poetry in English matured and began to express modern Indian sensibility in the later part of 20th century. Poets like Nissim Ezekiel, A. K. Ramanujan, R. Parthasarathy, Jayant Mahapatra, P. Lal, Keki N. Daruwala, Shiv K. Kumar, Pritish Nandi, Arun Kolatkar and Kamala Das transformed Indian poetry in English. When Ezekiel describes the island of Bombay as: -

Unsuitable for song as well as sense
the island flowers into slums
and skyscrapers, reflecting
precisely the growth of my mind



Sarojini Naidu

- he voices the disillusionment of his age. At the same time, he uses controlled statements with ironical meaning. The language was suitable for depicting harsh realities of life. Kamla Das is more bold and bitter in portraying her frustration as a woman.

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Canadian poetry is quite varied in its thematic concerns. Some of the poets like Jeannethe Armstrong, Claire Harris, Cyril Dabydeen and Arnold Itwaru suggest a closeness to and harmony with Nature. It reflects the Native's concept of the land as Mother. Their poetic works - **First people, Blood of My Country** and **Wind Women** by Armstron; **Translation into Fiction** by Harris; **The Forest** by Dabydeen and **Sacred Presence** by Arnold Itwaru – are rich in symbols and metaphors. These depict the agony of the 'colonialism' and an intense search for 'roots'. Margaret Atwood (**The Circle Came,** and **The Animals in that Country**), Robert Kroestsch (**The Stone Hammer Poems** and **Seed Catalogue**), and Fred Wah (**Breathin' My Name With a Sigh**) are some other representative Canadian poets in English. The Montreal Group of poets such as A.J. M. Smith and A.M. Klein, uses simple language to express the metaphysical agony of the uprooted people.



Ezra Pound

It is quite interesting to know that we have some of the finest poetic utterances by the Nigerian, Caribbean, African, and South African poets. These are the poets committed to a 'cause'. South African poets like Dennis Brutus (**Sirens, Knuckles, Boots, Stubborn Hope**) and Chinua Achebe (**Beware Soul-Brother, Christmas in Biafra**) record the violence and torture of the 'white' rule. They wrote against the intrusion of Western customs into their 'native culture'.



Wole Soyinka, a Nigerian poet, reveals an uncompromising sense of justice and humanity. In his **Poems from Prison,** he tries to locate traditional African beliefs in modern life. He got Nobel Prize for literature in 1986. Chinua Achebe, basically a novelist, is another important Nigerian poet. In his **Beware Soul-Brother** and **Christmas in Biafra**, he resents the loss of traditional values.



Wole Soyinka

Dennis Brutus, a South African poet, is an opponent of apartheid. In his **Sirens, Knuckles, Boots** and **Stubborn Hope,** he voices the suffering and agony of the fellow black. Derek Walcott, who got Nobel Prize for literature in 1992, worked for a Caribbean culture. His

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famous poetic works are **In a Green Night**, **The Castaway**, **The Gulf** and the autobiographical poem Another Life. He has tried to develop English as the language of the educated people 'Where nothing was/ the language of a race.'

This discussion clearly shows that English as a language is spoken in many parts of the world. Not only this, poets from the commonwealth nations and from African and Asian countries have successfully used English for creative purposes. They have added variety to and infused vitality into what we today call 'English poetry'. Would you not agree that English poetry does not mean today poetry written by English poets alone? It is the total body of poetry being written in English in any part of the world!

Exercises

1. Complete the statements given below:

a) Words in a poem are used for ....., ... and .....
b) In his poetic words, Chaucer did not use the .....
c) The word Renaissance means .....
d) The three great poets of the Elizabethan period are ....., ...and .....
e) **The Faiery Queene** is a .....
f) Shakespeare's sonnets deal with .....

2. Answer these questions very briefly:

1. What does Langland do in **The Vision of Piers the Plowman**?
2. When was the influence of the Renaissance felt clearly in England?
3. Who wrote **Astrophel and Stella**?
4. Name the two epics in English.
5. Name four leading Romantic poets of the nineteenth century.
6. Who has described poetry as the criticism of life?
7. Name any three Pre- Raphaelites poets.
8. What aspect of modern civilization does T.S. Eliot present in his poems?
9. What were the two concerns of the American poets writing in English?
10. What were the major concerns of the early Indian poets writing in English?
11. Name four Canadian poets writing in English.

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