History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Page 117 - Poetic Diction and Alexander Pope's Early Life

Q1. What happened to language when the classic poet undertook to refashion the crude stuff of an old ballad?

A. They made it simpler and more direct

B. They substituted grandiloquent phrases and pompous circumlocutions for plain/direct expressions (e.g., 'Eternal blessings on his shade attend' instead of 'God rest his soul')

C. They translated it into French

D. They refused to touch it

Answer: B

Q2. Who would later enter an emphatic protest against this 'gaudiness and inane phraseology'?

A. Alexander Pope

B. John Dryden

C. William Wordsworth

D. John Milton

Answer: C

Q3. What form did classic poetry adhere to as the only possible form for serious work in verse?

A. Blank verse

B. The closed couplet

C. Free verse

D. The sonnet

Answer: B

Q4. While the closed couplet's epigrammatic terseness lent itself admirably to the popular poetry of the time, what was its major flaw?

A. It was too short to tell a story

B. It was bound to grow monotonous and was too narrow/inflexible for high passion or strong imagination

C. It required too much knowledge of Greek

D. It was illegal to write

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Q5. Who was the greatest master of this classic school?

A. John Dryden

B. Alexander Pope

C. Edmund Waller

D. Sir John Denham

Answer: B

Q6. In what year was Alexander Pope born?

A. 1660

B. 1688

C. 1700

D. 1744

Answer: B

Q7. Why was Pope excluded from public schools and universities?

A. He was too poor

B. On account of his religion (his father was a Roman Catholic)

C. He was physically unable to attend

D. He was expelled for fighting

Answer: B

Q8. Because of his haphazard education, what is apparent in Pope's work?

A. Perfect mathematical logic

B. The want both of sound learning and of mental discipline (he never became an accurate scholar)

C. An incredible mastery of Greek

D. Complete historical accuracy

Answer: B

Q9. What enabled Pope to buy a house at Twickenham in 1719?

A. His father's inheritance

B. The financial success of his translation of Homer

C. He won the lottery

D. A gift from the King

Answer: B

Q10. How are Pope's relations with his contemporaries described in literary history?

A. A perfect model of friendship and collaboration

B. A tangled record of miserable jealousies and quarrels, due to the petty spitefulness of his nature

C. He had no contemporaries

D. He was universally loved without issue

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Page 118 - Pope's Early Works and Masterpiece

Q1. How should our judgment upon Pope's extreme irritability and peevishness be tempered?

A. By recognizing that he was right about everything

B. By the recognition that it was in large measure the consequence of chronic ill-health (his life was one 'long disease')

C. By understanding that it was just an act for the public

D. By knowing he was extremely wealthy

Answer: B

Q2. Into how many periods does Pope's poetic career naturally fall?

A. Two

B. Three (early original work, translation, late original work)

C. Four

D. Five

Answer: B

Q3. In Pope's poem 'Windsor Forest', what is easy to perceive about the classic school?

A. Their deep love for the English countryside

B. Their indifference to the real beauties of nature (the landscape is copied out of Greek/Latin poets rather than painted from first-hand knowledge)

C. Their hatred of the King

D. Their skill in botany

Answer: B

Q4. Which remarkable early poem by Pope is 'all stolen' (lacking fresh thought) but puts standard critical ideas into wonderfully terse, quotable verse?

A. The Messiah

B. The Rape of the Lock

C. Essay on Criticism

D. The Dunciad

Answer: C

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Q5. What poem may safely be called Pope's masterpiece?

A. Windsor Forest

B. The Rape of the Lock

C. The Dunciad

D. Essay on Man

Answer: B

Q6. What real-life incident was 'The Rape of the Lock' founded upon?

A. A major political assassination

B. A practical joke where Lord Petre cut a lock of hair from Arabella Fermor's head, leading to a family quarrel

C. The stealing of the crown jewels

D. A duel over a gambling debt

Answer: B

Q7. Pope defines 'The Rape of the Lock' as 'heroi-comical'. What is a better term to call it?

A. A tragedy

B. A Mock Epic

C. A pastoral

D. A historical drama

Answer: B

Q8. How does 'The Rape of the Lock' differ from the humor in Butler's 'Hudibras'?

A. It uses rough doggerel verse

B. Trivial occurrences are handled with all the dignity and seriousness which properly belong to the epic

C. It is entirely serious without any jokes

D. It is written in prose

Answer: B

Q9. What is the essence of this particular kind of parody (the Mock Epic)?

A. Using animal characters

B. A calculated and sustained discrepancy between theme and treatment

C. Copying the plot exactly

D. Changing the language to French

Answer: B

Q10. What does the general flippancy and cynical attitude towards women in 'The Rape of the Lock' show us about Pope's age?

A. The deep respect they held for women

B. The fundamental callousness of feeling which superficial gallantry scarcely served to veil

C. Their strong religious convictions

D. Their progressive views on gender

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Page 119 - Pope's Homer and Later Satires

Q1. What major translations represent the labours of Pope's second period?

A. The Bible

B. The Iliad and the Odyssey (his 'Homer')

C. The Aeneid

D. The Divine Comedy

Answer: B

Q2. Did Pope's translation of Homer accurately capture the spirit of the original Greek?

A. Yes, it is the most accurate translation ever made

B. No, neither he nor his age could understand or enter into the spirit of Homer; it contains far more of Pope than of Homer

C. Yes, he spent years studying ancient Greek

D. No, because he translated it into Latin

Answer: B

Q3. What kind of version did Pope's public actually want?

A. A strictly literal translation for universities

B. A readable, drawing-room rendering in accordance with the taste of their own time

C. A prose summary

D. They didn't want Greek literature at all

Answer: B

Q4. As Gibbon afterwards said, Pope's translation has every merit except what?

A. Fidelity to the original

B. Good rhythm

C. Clear grammar

D. Humorous content

Answer: A

Q5. After publishing his Homer, what kinds of poetry did Pope almost wholly confine himself to?

A. Epic and pastoral

B. Satiric and didactic poetry

C. Lyrical and romantic poetry

D. Religious hymns

Answer: B

Q6. Which poem contains the famous character-study of Addison under the name of 'Atticus'?

A. The Dunciad

B. Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot (Prologue to Satires and Epistles of Horace Imitated)

C. Essay on Man

D. Windsor Forest

Answer: B

Q7. What makes the 'Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot' specially valuable?

A. It is the longest poem ever written

B. It is the most frankly personal of all Pope's writings

C. It is the only poem he wrote in blank verse

D. It accurately predicted the future

Answer: B

Q8. What is 'The Dunciad'?

A. A translation of Dante

B. A long and elaborate satire on the 'dunces' (bad poets, pedants, and pretentious critics) of Pope's day

C. A poem celebrating the King

D. A tragic play

Answer: B

Q9. Where is the inspiration for 'The Dunciad' to be sought?

A. In Greek mythology

B. In Pope's innumerable quarrels with all sorts of people

C. In the Bible

D. In English history

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Q10. Why does 'The Dunciad' lose much of its point for the modern reader despite being extremely clever?

A. The English language has changed too much

B. The utter obscurity of most of the dunces attacked

C. It was never finished

D. It lacks any rhyme scheme

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Page 120 - Pope's Essay on Man and Legacy

Q1. In 'Essay on Man', Pope undertakes a defense of the moral government of the universe on what optimistic postulate?

A. 'All you need is love'

B. 'Whatever is, is right'

C. 'Life is but a dream'

D. 'Man is born free, but everywhere is in chains'

Answer: B

Q2. Why is 'Essay on Man' hopelessly confused and self-contradictory?

A. Because Pope was not a philosopher, had no training for it, and dabbled in it due to the influence of his Deistic friend Lord Bolingbroke

B. Because the printer mixed up the pages

C. Because he wrote it while asleep

D. Because he was trying to confuse the King

Answer: A

Q3. Despite not being useful as a philosophical treatise, why is 'Essay on Man' still famous?

A. It is hilarious comedy

B. It contains many passages that are justly famous and often quoted for their rhetorical beauty and power

C. It is the only poem written in 1733

D. It correctly predicted modern physics

Answer: B

Q4. What is the modern critical view of Pope as a poet?

A. He is the greatest poet who ever lived

B. We can no longer regard him as a great poet because he lacked the imaginative power and depth of feeling without which great poetry is impossible

C. He was a great philosopher but a terrible writer

D. He is only famous for his plays

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Q5. However, what was Pope the very embodiment of?

A. Religious fanaticism

B. The kind of intelligence currently known as 'wit', which that age cultivated and admired

C. True romantic passion

D. Unrestrained emotionalism

Answer: B

Q6. What writing style assumed perfection in Pope's hands?

A. Free verse

B. The neat, compact, antithetic, and epigrammatic style of writing which was the classical ideal

C. Blank verse tragedy

D. The sonnet

Answer: B

Q7. After Shakespeare, what distinction does Pope hold among English poets?

A. He wrote the most plays

B. He is the most frequently quoted of English poets

C. He lived the longest

D. He made the most money

Answer: B

Q8. Who wrote the line: 'A little learning is a dangerous thing.'?

A. William Shakespeare

B. Alexander Pope

C. John Milton

D. John Dryden

Answer: B

Q9. Who wrote the line: 'And fools rush in where angels fear to tread.'?

A. Alexander Pope

B. Geoffrey Chaucer

C. Edmund Spenser

D. Christopher Marlowe

Answer: A

Q10. Who wrote the line: 'To err is human, to forgive divine.'?

A. Samuel Johnson

B. Alexander Pope

C. Ben Jonson

D. Sir Philip Sidney

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 24)

Page 121 - Other Poets of Pope's Era

Q1. Who wrote the famous line: 'The proper study of mankind is man.'?

A. Francis Bacon

B. Alexander Pope

C. Thomas Hobbes

D. John Locke

Answer: B

Q2. How did Pope alter the classic couplet compared to Dryden?

A. He made it much longer

B. He trimmed it of licenses Dryden permitted, confining the sense more rigorously than ever within the two lines

C. He stopped using rhyme

D. He changed the meter entirely

Answer: B

Q3. How did other poets who used the couplet treat Pope's perfected model until the early 19th century?

A. They ignored it completely

B. They followed it with slavish fidelity

C. They rebelled against it immediately

D. They found it too difficult to write

Answer: B

Q4. Which poet takes precedence in time even of Pope, known for light society verses and an imitation of Hudibras called 'Alma'?

A. John Gay

B. Matthew Prior

C. Edward Young

D. Jonathan Swift

Answer: B

Q5. Which intimate friend of Swift and Pope wrote 'Fables' and the mock-pastoral series 'The Shepherd's

Week'?

A. Matthew Prior

B. John Gay

C. Edward Young

D. Joseph Addison

Answer: B

Q6. What humorous description of the London streets did John Gay write?

A. The Beggar's Opera

B. Trivia

C. The Town and Country Mouse

D. The Dunciad

Answer: B

Q7. What was John Gay's immensely popular travesty of Italian opera that took the 'Town' by storm?

A. The Beggar's Opera

B. Trivia

C. The Shepherd's Week

D. Alma

Answer: A

Q8. Who wrote the gloomy and unwholesome poem 'Night Thoughts'?

A. John Gay

B. Edward Young

C. Matthew Prior

D. Alexander Pope

Answer: B

Q9. How does the text describe Edward Young personally?

A. As a saintly figure

B. As a most contemptible person

C. As a brilliant philosopher

D. As the King's closest friend

Answer: B

Q10. How is 'Night Thoughts' characterized in the text?

A. A light, comedic masterpiece

B. Full of copybook moralisings couched in florid and pompous verse, but with occasional passages of rhetorical power

C. A political satire

D. A deeply romantic and emotional love poem

Answer: B