History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 12)

Page 57 - Other Elizabethan Poetry and John Donne

Q1. Which Italian poetic form, introduced by Wyatt and Surrey, established itself and was used by Spenser, Shakespeare, and others?

A. The Epic

B. The Sonnet

C. The Ode

D. Blank Verse

Answer: B

Q2. What is the Italian plan of writing sonnets that became popular?

A. Writing them in sequences (like Spenser's Amoretti)

B. Writing them only in Latin

C. Writing them as political manifestos

D. Never publishing them

Answer: A

Q3. Who is the author of the sonnet sequence 'Astrophel and Stella'?

A. Samuel Daniel

B. Michael Drayton

C. Sir Philip Sidney

D. William Shakespeare

Answer: C

Q4. Which class of poetry from this era is historically significant for expressing powerful patriotic feeling?

A. Sonnet sequences

B. Poetry inspired by national themes (chronicles and histories)

C. Pastoral elegies

D. Religious hymns

Answer: B

Q5. Who wrote the enormous poetical description of England in thirty books called 'Polyolbion'?

A. William Warner

B. Samuel Daniel

C. Michael Drayton

D. John Donne

Answer: C

Q6. Drayton's 'Polyolbion' was referred to by the author himself as what?

A. A gentle breeze

B. His 'Herculean toil'

C. A minor fragment

D. An absolute failure

Answer: B

Q7. What defines the Jacobean division of the Age of Shakespeare as a period of decline?

A. The complete ban on all poetry

B. The Elizabethan inspiration was waning, subject matter was exhausting, and a tendency to imitation set in

C. Shakespeare died before it began

D. The printing press was destroyed

Answer: B

Q8. Who began a new kind of poetry characterized by harsh metres and 'conceits' during the time of James I?

A. Michael Drayton

B. John Donne

C. Samuel Daniel

D. Edmund Spenser

Answer: B

Q9. What was John Donne's profession besides being a poet?

A. A celebrated divine and preacher

B. A military general

C. A royal architect

D. A physician

Answer: A

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 12)

Q10. John Donne's historical importance lies in initiating what school of poetry?

A. The Romantic school

B. The Metaphysical school

C. The Neoclassical school

D. The Cavalier school

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 12)

Page 58 - Note on Poetry

Q1. Based on the text on page 58, what is provided on pages 76-8 of the book?

A. A detailed biography of Shakespeare

B. A Table of the Poetry of the Age of Shakespeare

C. A map of Elizabethan London

D. An index of classical playwrights

Answer: B

Q2. The strained and whimsical images and turns of speech used by Donne are called what?

A. Sonnets

B. Metaphors

C. Conceits

D. Similes

Answer: C

Q3. How is the metre of John Donne's poetry described?

A. Flawlessly smooth

B. Harsh

C. Purely iambic

D. Composed only of dactyls

Answer: B

Q4. Despite the harsh metres and conceits, what characterized all of Donne's writings?

A. A complete lack of emotion

B. Much genuine poetic feeling

C. A strict adherence to French rules

D. A focus solely on comedic satire

Answer: B

Q5. True or False: John Donne's work belongs essentially to the time of Queen Elizabeth.

A. True, he died before she did

B. False, his work belongs essentially to the time of James I

C. True, he was the Queen's favorite poet

D. False, he wrote during the Victorian era

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 12)

Page 59 - The Elizabethan Romantic Drama (Part 1)

Q1. What term describes the quarter-century following the production of Gorboduc in English drama?

A. A period of absolute perfection

B. A period of great confusion

C. The golden age of classicism

D. The death of the theater

Answer: B

Q2. What ambition did some scholars and humanists like Sir Philip Sidney cherish during this period?

A. Naturalising the Senecan or 'classic' species of play

B. Creating an entirely new form of drama never seen before

C. Banning all plays from England

D. Only performing plays in Italian

Answer: A

Q3. According to these humanists, what was the only sure way to a really artistic drama?

A. By letting actors improvise everything

B. Through the faithful imitation of ancient models

C. By making every play a musical

D. By writing exclusively about modern politics

Answer: B

Q4. What did the miscellaneous unscholarly public care much about in their plays?

A. The decorous Senecan conventions

B. Strict adherence to Aristotle's rules

C. Exciting plots and vigorous action

D. Beautifully constructed Latin dialogue

Answer: C

Q5. How did the writers who catered to this unscholarly public respond to the Senecan conventions?

A. They adopted them completely

B. They rejected them altogether and struck out into a variety of crude experiments

C. They forced the public to read Seneca

D. They compromised perfectly with the humanists

Answer: B

Q6. What were these new, crude dramatic experiments a natural elaboration of?

A. The dramatic elements of the older English stage (miracle/morality plays)

B. French ballet

C. Greek mythology

D. Spanish romances

Answer: A

Q7. Between which two groups was there a temporary conflict in the dramatic world?

A. The King and the Parliament

B. The humanists (standing for classical tradition) and the strong national taste of the English public

C. The actors and the playwrights

D. The Protestants and the Catholics

Answer: B

Q8. In the end, which side triumphed in this conflict of dramatic styles?

A. The classical tradition

B. The national taste

C. Neither, drama was banned

D. The French style

Answer: B

Q9. What form of drama was definitely established just before Shakespeare began his career?

A. The strict neoclassical drama

B. The 'romantic' form of drama

C. The modern musical

D. The purely historical documentary play

Answer: B

Q10. Who were the immediate predecessors of Shakespeare that established this romantic drama?

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A. The monks of Canterbury

B. A group of university men trained in the classics who carried forward the free tradition of the popular stage

C. The King's royal guards

D. Foreign ambassadors from Italy

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 12)

Page 60 - Classic vs. Romantic Drama

Q1. How does the 'classic' drama treat the spheres of tragedy and comedy?

A. It blends them constantly

B. It keeps them entirely separate (no humor in tragedy, no tragedy in comedy)

C. It only recognizes comedy

D. It insists that all tragedies must end happily

Answer: B

Q2. In 'classic' drama, how is the dramatic action typically handled?

A. Everything happens on stage

B. There is little or no dramatic action on stage; incidents are reported in dialogue and set narrative

C. There is no dialogue, only action

D. The audience participates in the action

Answer: B

Q3. What are the three unities that controlled the construction of 'classic' drama?

A. Unity of time, place, and action

B. Unity of character, setting, and plot

C. Unity of poetry, prose, and song

D. Unity of author, actor, and audience

Answer: A

Q4. What does the unity of 'time' mean in the classic drama?

A. A play must last exactly one hour

B. The entire story must be confined to a single day

C. The play must take place in the present day

D. The characters cannot age

Answer: B

Q5. What does the unity of 'action' mean in the classic drama?

A. There must be constant sword fighting

B. It must be one single story only, without subplots or minor episodes

C. Everyone on stage must be moving at all times

D. The story must span across multiple generations

Answer: B

Q6. From whose practice and teachings were these classic principles supposedly derived?

A. The Attic writers of tragedy and the Greek critic Aristotle

B. The early Christian saints

C. The Egyptian pharaohs

D. The Norse gods

Answer: A

Q7. Through whose plays did these classic principles come into the modern drama in their severest form?

A. Shakespeare

B. Seneca

C. Chaucer

D. Boccaccio

Answer: B

Q8. How does the 'romantic' (or Shakespearean) drama handle theme and tone?

A. It keeps them strictly separated

B. It makes free use of variety, often blending tragic and comic incidents and characters in the same piece

C. It only uses comedy

D. It is always depressing

Answer: B

Q9. How does the 'romantic' drama handle dramatic action?

A. Everything happens off-stage

B. It is essentially a drama of action; nearly everything that happens is represented on the stage

C. It relies entirely on a narrator

D. It uses only pantomime

Answer: B

Q10. How does the 'romantic' drama handle the three unities?

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A. It adheres to them even more strictly than the classic drama

B. It repudiates them (allowing time to extend, changing scenes, and employing subplots)

C. It keeps unity of time but ignores the others

D. It only follows the unity of place

Answer: B

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Page 61 - Shakespeare's Predecessors

Q1. What did Shakespeare's predecessors achieve for him?

A. They wrote all of his plays for him

B. They prepared the way for him by ensuring the triumph of the free and flexible 'romantic' form of drama

C. They built the Globe Theatre

D. They convinced the Queen to fund his work

Answer: B

Q2. What is the common name given to this group of Shakespeare's predecessors?

A. The Oxford Scholars

B. The University Wits

C. The Globe Masters

D. The Senecan Society

Answer: B

Q3. What did the term 'University Wits' imply about these men?

A. They were all expelled from university

B. They were all men of academic training brought into touch with the new learning at Oxford or Cambridge

C. They were strictly comedic writers

D. They wrote only in Latin

Answer: B

Q4. Despite their academic training, to what did these men (with one exception) give their talents?

A. The Church

B. The public stage

C. Writing legal treatises

D. Royal diplomacy

Answer: B

Q5. Which of the following is NOT listed as one of the 'University Wits'?

A. John Lyly

B. Christopher Marlowe

C. Thomas Kyd

D. Ben Jonson

Answer: D

Q6. Which two writers are noted as having special significance due to their direct influence upon Shakespeare?

A. Lyly and Marlowe

B. Peele and Greene

C. Lodge and Nash

D. Kyd and Lyly

Answer: A

Q7. What prose romance is John Lyly most widely known as the author of?

A. Morte d'Arthur

B. Euphues

C. Utopia

D. Arcadia

Answer: B

Q8. How many comedies does John Lyly's dramatic work consist of?

A. Two

B. Five

C. Eight

D. Twelve

Answer: C

Q9. Which of the University Wits wrote around the years 1564-1593 and had a direct influence on Shakespeare?

A. Thomas Kyd

B. Christopher Marlowe

C. George Peele

D. Thomas Lodge

Answer: B

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Q10. What role did the strong national taste of the audience play in the work of the University Wits?

A. It had a good deal to do with the class of drama they produced

B. They ignored it completely

C. They tried to educate the audience out of it

D. It caused them to stop writing plays

Answer: A