History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Page 62 - Lyly, Marlowe, and Shakespeare's Early Life

Q1. John Lyly's comedies (like Campaspe and Endymion) were written for performance at court. What did the interest in them depend on?

A. The complex plot

B. Deep characterization

C. Language (wit, point, ingenuity, and grace of dialogue)

D. Spectacular stage effects

Answer: C

Q2. What did John Lyly help give comedy at a time when public stage humors ran into coarseness?

A. A purely tragic ending

B. An intellectual tone

C. A political message

D. A musical score

Answer: B

Q3. In his clever repartee and verbal fireworks, who did Lyly anticipate and undeniably master in comedy?

A. Christopher Marlowe

B. Ben Jonson

C. William Shakespeare

D. John Donne

Answer: C

Q4. Which of Marlowe's plays gives him the place of pre-eminence among pre-Shakespearean playwrights despite their bombast?

A. Tamburlaine the Great, Dr. Faustus, The Jew of Malta, Edward II

B. Roister Doister and Gorboduc

C. The Spanish Tragedy

D. The Four Ps

Answer: A

Q5. What poetic form did Marlowe introduce to the romantic drama and the public stage in these plays?

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

A. The sonnet

B. Rhyme royal

C. Blank verse

D. The heroic couplet

Answer: C

Q6. Which of Shakespeare's narrative poems is in part inspired by Marlowe's 'Hero and Leander'?

A. Lucrece

B. Venus and Adonis

C. The Tempest

D. A Midsummer Night's Dream

Answer: B

Q7. When and where was William Shakespeare born?

A. 1564 at Stratford-on-Avon

B. 1558 in London

C. 1579 in Oxford

D. 1592 in Cambridge

Answer: A

Q8. What was the profession of Shakespeare's father?

A. A university professor

B. A prosperous tradesman who became High Bailiff

C. A poor farmer

D. A wealthy nobleman

Answer: B

Q9. Why was Shakespeare taken from school when he was about fourteen?

A. He was expelled

B. He was accepted into Oxford

C. Financial misfortunes overtook his father, and he had to help the family earn money

D. He wanted to become an actor immediately

Answer: C

Q10. Who did Shakespeare marry in his 19th year?

A. Elizabeth Boyle

B. Anne Hathaway

C. Mary Arden

D. Queen Elizabeth

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Page 63 - Shakespeare's Life (Part 2)

Q1. How is Shakespeare's marriage to Anne Hathaway described?

A. Hasty, ill-advised, and apparently unhappy

B. The happiest marriage of the century

C. A politically arranged marriage

D. A purely business transaction

Answer: A

Q2. What are the names of Shakespeare's three children?

A. Mary, Elizabeth, and John

B. Susannah, and the twins Judith and Hamnet

C. Romeo, Juliet, and Hamlet

D. Thomas, William, and Anne

Answer: B

Q3. According to tradition, what escapade obliged Shakespeare to fly from home?

A. A duel with a rival poet

B. A deer-stealing escapade in the woods of Charlecote Hall

C. Stealing money from his father

D. Treason against the Queen

Answer: B

Q4. Roughly when did Shakespeare leave his native town to seek his fortunes in London?

A. 1575

B. 1587

C. 1600

D. 1610

Answer: B

Q5. How do we know that Shakespeare was well known as a successful author by 1592?

A. He received an award from the Queen

B. An ill-natured reference to him in a pamphlet written by Greene on his deathbed

C. His first folio was published

D. He was knighted

Answer: B

Q6. How long did Shakespeare remain in London producing on average a couple of plays a year?

A. 5 years

B. 10 years

C. Upwards of 20 years

D. 40 years

Answer: C

Q7. Shakespeare became a shareholder in which two leading theatres?

A. The Swan and The Rose

B. The Globe and the Black-friars

C. The Royal and The Court

D. The Queen's and The King's Men

Answer: B

Q8. Between 1610 and 1612, where did Shakespeare retire?

A. To London

B. To a monastery

C. To Stratford, where he bought a house known as New Place

D. To America

Answer: C

Q9. Who did Shakespeare's elder daughter, Susannah, marry in 1607?

A. Thomas Quiney

B. Dr. John Hall (a celebrated physician)

C. Christopher Marlowe

D. Ben Jonson

Answer: B

Q10. On what date did Shakespeare die?

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

A. 23rd April 1616

B. 1st January 1600

C. 25th December 1625

D. 4th July 1612

Answer: A

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Page 64 - Shakespeare's Character and Early Works

Q1. What does Shakespeare's biography prove conclusively about his character?

A. He was a pure dreamer

B. Like Chaucer, he was no dreamer but a practical man of affairs

C. He was hopelessly inept with money

D. He hated writing plays

Answer: B

Q2. How did Shakespeare reach London, and how did he leave it?

A. He reached it wealthy, and left it bankrupt

B. He reached it poor and friendless; he left it rich and respected

C. He arrived as a king and left as a peasant

D. He never left London once he arrived

Answer: B

Q3. How is the learning shown in Shakespeare's plays described?

A. The accurate learning of a trained scholar like Bacon or Jonson

B. A wide miscellaneous knowledge accumulated by an extraordinarily assimilative mind

C. Entirely lacking; he knew nothing of history

D. Purely religious learning

Answer: B

Q4. What gave Shakespeare easy access to the treasures of ancient literature?

A. He was fluent in ancient Greek

B. Translations

C. He stole books from Oxford

D. The King taught him personally

Answer: B

Q5. Shakespeare's non-dramatic poetry consists of two narrative poems and a sequence of how many sonnets?

A. 50

B. 100

C. 154

D. 200

Answer: C

Q6. Who are the 154 sonnets addressed to?

A. All to Queen Elizabeth

B. The first 126 addressed to a man, the remainder addressed/referring to a woman

C. All to his wife Anne Hathaway

D. All to God

Answer: B

Q7. What is the only certainty regarding Shakespeare's sonnets?

A. They are exactly autobiographical

B. They were written by Queen Elizabeth

C. They contain in places the finest lyrical poetry of their time

D. They were a financial failure

Answer: C

Q8. How many plays does the commonly accepted canon of Shakespeare's dramatic work comprise?

A. 15

B. 24

C. 37

D. 52

Answer: C

Q9. Over how many years did Shakespeare's activity as a writer for the stage extend?

A. 10 years

B. Some 24 years (beginning about 1588, ending about 1612)

C. 40 years

D. 50 years

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Q10. How have Shakespearean critics agreed to subdivide these 24 years of dramatic writing?

A. Into two halves: Comedy and Tragedy

B. Into four periods

C. Into ten distinct phases

D. They do not subdivide it

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Page 65 - Shakespeare's First Two Periods

Q1. What years constitute Shakespeare's First Period (the period of early and experimental work)?

A. 1588-1593

B. 1594-1600

C. 1601-1608

D. 1608-1612

Answer: A

Q2. Which of the following plays belongs to the First Period (1588-93)?

A. Hamlet

B. Romeo and Juliet

C. Macbeth

D. The Tempest

Answer: B

Q3. How is the work of the First Period generally characterized?

A. Deep and penetrative

B. Extremely slight in texture, superficial treatment of life, and immature art

C. Sombre and bitter

D. Careless in construction

Answer: B

Q4. What is a prominent technical feature of the First Period?

A. Free and flexible blank verse without rhyme

B. The prominence of rhyme, stiffness of blank verse, and constant use of puns and conceits

C. Entirely written in prose

D. It completely lacks rhyme

Answer: B

Q5. What years constitute Shakespeare's Second Period (the period of the great comedies and chronicle plays)?

A. 1588-1593

B. 1594-1600

C. 1601-1608

D. 1608-1612

Answer: B

Q6. Which of the following plays belongs to the Second Period (1594-1600)?

A. The Merchant of Venice

B. Othello

C. The Winter's Tale

D. Titus Andronicus

Answer: A

Q7. How does the work of the Second Period compare to the First Period?

A. It becomes more artificial and stiff

B. It becomes independent, far more massive, with deep and penetrative characterization and humor

C. It is entirely tragic and bitter

D. It is exactly the same

Answer: B

Q8. What happens to Shakespeare's technical style in the Second Period?

A. He uses more rhyme than ever

B. Rhyme is largely abandoned for prose and free/flexible blank verse

C. He abandons blank verse completely

D. He writes only in Latin

Answer: B

Q9. Which play is an example of the First Period's comedies where Lyly's influence is pronounced?

A. As You Like It

B. Love's Labour's Lost

C. Twelfth Night

D. Much Ado about Nothing

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Q10. Which period features the history play 'Henry V'?

A. First Period

B. Second Period

C. Third Period

D. Fourth Period

Answer: B

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Page 66 - Shakespeare's Last Two Periods

Q1. What years constitute Shakespeare's Third Period (the period of great tragedies and sombre comedies)?

A. 1588-1593

B. 1594-1600

C. 1601-1608

D. 1608-1612

Answer: C

Q2. What is the striking change that occurs in the entire spirit of Shakespeare's work during the Third Period?

A. He writes only lighthearted farces

B. His attention is pre-occupied with the darker side of human experience, destructive passions, and evil

C. He returns to the artificial style of his youth

D. He writes entirely about religion

Answer: B

Q3. Which of the following plays belongs to the Third Period (1601-1608)?

A. Hamlet, Othello, King Lear, Macbeth

B. Richard II, Henry IV

C. The Tempest, Cymbeline

D. Romeo and Juliet, Midsummer Night's Dream

Answer: A

Q4. Even when Shakespeare writes comedies in the Third Period, what is their tone?

A. Bright and joyful

B. Satirical and musical

C. Either grave or fierce, with emphasis thrown on evil

D. Romantic and pastoral

Answer: C

Q5. What years constitute Shakespeare's Fourth Period (the period of later comedies or Dramatic Romances)?

A. 1588-1593

B. 1594-1600

C. 1601-1608

D. 1608-1612

Answer: D

Q6. How does the temper of Shakespeare's work change again in the Fourth Period?

A. It becomes even darker and more depressing

B. The heavy clouds roll away, evil is controlled/conquered by good, and a tender, gracious tone prevails

C. He returns to writing history plays

D. He writes exclusively in prose

Answer: B

Q7. What is true of Shakespeare's dramatic powers in the Fourth Period?

A. They reach their absolute peak

B. They show a decline, often being careless in construction and unsatisfactory in characterization

C. They are exactly the same as the Third Period

D. They are superior to everything else he ever wrote

Answer: B

Q8. Which three plays are entirely Shakespeare's from this final period?

A. Hamlet, Macbeth, King Lear

B. Cymbeline, The Tempest, The Winter's Tale

C. Twelfth Night, As You Like It, Much Ado

D. Richard II, Richard III, Henry V

Answer: B

Q9. Which play from the Fourth Period was completed by his younger contemporary and friend, Fletcher?

A. The Tempest

B. Pericles

C. Henry VIII

D. Cymbeline

Answer: C

History of English Literature - Important MCQs (Part 13)

Q10. Does the author agree that Shakespeare was so entirely a dramatist that no trace of his own thoughts is found in his work?

A. Yes, absolutely

B. No, the author is certain the work tells us much about Shakespeare's life and character

C. The author does not comment on this

D. The author believes Shakespeare didn't exist

Answer: B