

MAR GREGORIOS COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCE

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DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

SUBJECT NAME: LANGUAGE THROUGH LITERATURE

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UNIT I: PROSE 1

TOASTED ENGLISH BY R. K. NARAYAN

Narayan is known for his simple language and realistic characters. **“Toasted English”** is a half-humorous, half-serious essay about how the same language English differs from one country to another. In the essay, the difference between American and British English has been shown in an amusing way. The author tells that like Indians, Americans also drove the British out of their country but adopted English. The Americans used the English Language in an easy way and left the use of passive voice. They also gave up formalism and used certain keywords for their convenience. This process of modifying English is called **“Toasting”**. Foreexample, Instead of “Trespassing Prohibited”, they say ‘Newly Planted, don’t walk’ on the notice board. The new words became very handy because they could be used for multiple meanings.

‘Ok’, ‘Yeah’, ‘Yes’, are more commonly used expressions. Narayan mentions the Example of the word “Check” which may safely be labeled the **American National Expression**. While The British use this word according to the definitions, the American uses it anywhere. I’ll check means I’ll find out, examine verify. ‘Your check’ means your ticket, token ‘Check girl’ is one who takes care of your coat, umbrella, or anything you have.

Further **R.K. Narayan** discusses the bazaar status of English. It is used in a polite way in London. The conductor will never say, “Ticket, Ticket on a London bus, but simply go near the passenger and say, “Thank you” on receiving the fare and issuing the ticket also. We have no need to use ‘Yes Sir, ‘yes darling’ with the words yes. The words yes, okay are self-sufficient word which needs no suffix to show any special respect. “Yeah” seals the sentence without any fuss to continue the dialogue or conversation. ‘Yeah’ is spoken in a short-base of the tongue grant.

R.K. Narayan feels that the time has come when English should come out in the open in dusty streets and become the language of the common man. Like Americans, it should also adapt according to the Indian needs and atmosphere. He does not want the mongrelisation of English. Grammatical rules should have remained the same. Like ‘Toasted English, India should develop a Bharat brand of English. One should not have to think before speaking. The author wants that Indian English should have its own identity- its **“Swadeshi Stamp”**. It should be unique and distinct from the present English.

PROSE 2

THE MONEY BOX BY ROBERT LYND CRITICAL ANALYSIS

This essay examines an important problem of the human psyche. He considers the desire to save and the desire to spend, which arises in many people recognition. Robert Lind believes that our human recognition consists of two “I”. The first “I” saves, but the second, on the contrary, spend. The “I” that tries to save is

perspicacious and it must ensure the upcoming of the world. At once in the essay frequently the first “I” that is trying to save is contested with the second one that spends. That who spends loves every minute of his life and wants to live life to the fullest. He sees no purpose why the joyfulness of the present-day should be left for the future. This is why the struggle between the “I” what saves and the “I” what spend follows. A still small voice acts as a judge. The essay itself is easy to read, as it is described with the help of jokes, suggestions, and references. The money box is an instrument in order to present the author’s opinion on the preservation and expenditure of funds. The story opens with a dialogue amid the author and his niece who is trying to discover how to open the money box, before putting in a coin. The money box is like the delusion of wealth. When the coins get into the box, it becomes not quite a pleasant thing. However, opening this box becomes a significant concern for the mind. It is understood that the desire to spend something overcomes the desire to save, even at such a young age. The writer believes that the money box as a gift is absurd since parents give children a sentiment of their own greed. When the author considers the money box, he is transferred to the remembrances of his childhood. He remembers how he did everything possible to turn up his money box, which he articulated calmly, using a diversity of images and comparisons. This exciting essay ends with a reference to the money box. The writer in it suggests that there is an extremely vital need for a balance among saving and spending. The author demonstrates that preservation should not be an obsession, and if we talk about spending, then they should not be meaningless. In his essay, the author uses specific and rather sensitive words and phrases, such as “a lot of mickle makes a muckle”. Of course, they are a very suitable choice for writing natural prose. In many cases, in the essay, the author gives human capacity to the money box. This gives it a humorous and truthful image. There are also mythical figures, such as Tantalus, as well as modern figures such as George Cruikshank, Arnold Bennett, and Balzac. The essay is really easy to read and carries with it an incredible life experience. Robert Wilson Lynd was an astounding Irish writer, a polite literary essayist, and a strong Irish nationalist. Thanks to his “The Money Box” essay you will not only get the pleasure of reading but also immerse yourself in the most significant reflections. Of course, his essay and what he tried to convey in it will leave an impact in the life of each reader, or at least make the reader to think a little. CENTRAL THEME Robert Lynd is one of the most outstanding and certainly one of the most delightful, of modern essayists. Like most of the modern essayist he possesses, to a high degree, the ability to write on any topic howsoever trivial it may be, and he can discover a wealth of meaning in an object which to a common eye may appear without much significance. About Robert Lynd we can say that there is no subject which is too trivial or too insignificant for his consideration. Consider his delightful reflections in his essay 'on "Money Box" -The gift of a money box to child, says Lynd, is with a view to train him in the art of saving because wisdom lies in saving for the future. The child who saves carefully becomes a perfect miser in the end, and he who, every now and then, takes out the money -box, turns out to be a perfect spendthrift. In both the cases the result is the same - to end up as a physical wreck either through abstinence or through over-indulgence. This leads on Lynd to say that the gift of a money -box is a fatal kindness. Reference:

PROSE 3

ECONOMIC POSSIBILITIES FOR OUR GRANDCHILDREN BY JOHN MAYNARD KEYNES

Intro to *Economic Possibilities for our Grandchildren* by John Maynard Keynes

Keynes makes it clear that his purpose of the essay is to make long-term predictions—specifically 100 years into the future.

- “What can we reasonably expect the level of our economic life to be a hundred years hence? What are the economic possibilities for our grandchildren?”
- “From the earliest times of which we have record—back, say, to two thousand years before Christ—down to the beginning of the eighteenth century, there was no very great change in the standard of life of the average man living in the civilised centres of the earth.”
- “This slow rate of progress, or lack of progress, was due to two reasons—to the remarkable absence of important technical improvements and to the failure of capital to accumulate.”
- “The modern age opened; I think, with the accumulation of capital which began in the sixteenth century.”
- “From the sixteenth century, with a cumulative crescendo after the eighteenth, the great age of science and technical inventions began, which since the beginning of the nineteenth century has been in full flood.”

He even mentions “technological unemployment” in 1930:

- “We are being afflicted with a new disease of which some readers may not yet have heard the name, but of which they will hear a great deal in the years to come—namely, technological unemployment. This means unemployment due to our discovery of means of economising the use of labour outrunning the pace at which we can find new uses for labour.”

What Keynes Got Right: Economics & Money

It’s now 88 years later, and he’s nailed this one:

- “Mankind is solving its economic problem. I would predict that the standard of life in progressive countries one hundred years hence will be between four and eight times as high as it is today.”

Keynes is right on the mark. Modern economists say the actual number is four or five today and could reach eight by 2030. Keynes goes on to theorize:

- “This means that the economic problem is not—if we look into the future—the permanent problem of the human race.”
- “Why, you may ask, is this so startling? It is startling because—if, instead of looking into the future, we look into the past—we find that the economic problem, the struggle for subsistence, always has been hitherto the primary, most pressing problem of the human race—not only of the human race, but of the whole of the biological kingdom from the beginnings of life in its most primitive forms.”

Where Keynes Missed the Mark: Work & Leisure Time

His expert prediction on the economic/money side is juxtaposed with a complete miss on his work/leisure prediction.

His predictions here describe what life could be like *assuming* economic concerns are a thing of the past:

- “When the accumulation of wealth is no longer of high social importance, there will be great changes in the code of morals. We shall be able to rid ourselves of many of the pseudo-moral principles which have hag-ridden us for two hundred years, by which we have exalted some of the most distasteful of human qualities into the position of the highest virtues.”
- “We shall once more value ends above means and prefer the good to the useful. We shall honour those who can teach us how to pluck the hour and the day virtuously and well, the delightful people who are capable of taking direct enjoyment in things.”
- “Thus for the first time since his creation man will be faced with his real, his permanent problem—how to use his freedom from pressing economic cares, how to occupy the leisure, which science and compound interest will have won for him, to live wisely and agreeably and well.”

These are fascinating predictions: reverting to better morals that aren’t based on wealth, honoring people who can teach you how to live a good life of virtue, and learning how to positively use your time on this planet when it isn’t all spent just trying to get by and survive. It sure sounds nice, but the vision of the future he paints gets even better. Since the economic problem has been solved, people don’t have to work as much to meet their needs.

Keynes is often referenced for predicting “three-hour shifts or a fifteen-hour week.”

Perhaps he put too much optimism in human beings in developed nations being able to properly prioritize their needs:

- “Now it is true that the needs of human beings may seem to be insatiable. But they fall into two classes—those needs which are absolute in the sense that we feel them whatever the situation of our fellow human beings may be, and those which are relative in the sense that we feel them only if their satisfaction lifts us above, makes us feel superior to, our fellows. Needs of the second class, those which satisfy the desire for superiority, may indeed be insatiable; for the higher the general level, the higher still are they. But this is not so true of the absolute needs—a point may soon be reached, much sooner perhaps than we are all of us aware of, when these needs are satisfied in the sense that we prefer to devote our further energies to non-economic purposes.”

What Keynes likely failed to predict was the modern prioritization of those two types of needs. You would think that the absolute needs would be the priority since they fall on the lowest levels of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, but those “insatiable” second class of needs that “satisfy the desire for superiority” (e.g. [keeping up with the Joneses](#), [lifestyle inflation](#), etc) are very alive and well today. Pervasive digital connection and social media addiction have taken social comparison to new levels. And, at least in the US, people are *choosing* to work more for more money and more consumption instead of work less for less money and more leisure time.

Keynes realizes the power of habit. He acknowledges that this shift will not exactly be easy because we’ve been trained to not enjoy:

- “Yet there is no country and no people, I think, who can look forward to the age of leisure and of abundance without a dread. For we have been trained too long to strive and not to enjoy.”

What would life be like in this future of less working hours?

His predictions could still happen. Other modern day experts like Duane Elgin believe that a path of [simplicity will lead to humanity’s evolution](#). Keynes final thoughts are in line with that thinking:

- “I look forward, therefore, in days not so very remote, to the greatest change which has ever occurred in the material environment of life for human beings in the aggregate.”
- “Meanwhile there will be no harm in making mild preparations for our destiny, in encouraging, and experimenting in, the arts of life as well as the activities of purpose.”
- “It will be those peoples, who can keep alive, and cultivate into a fuller perfection, the art of life itself and do not sell themselves for the means of life, who will be able to enjoy the abundance when it comes.”

Closing Thoughts

If you've made it this far, think about what you are prioritizing in your life. Are you prioritizing accumulation (wealth, stuff, etc) which requires evermore work? Or, are you actively thinking about the point at which you have *enough* (wealth, stuff, etc) so that you can take back your time, work less, and use your newfound leisure time any way you want? Even though the work and leisure predictions of Keynes aren't yet here on a mass scale, you can choose to take steps in your own life to make them a reality today.

UNIT II: POETRY 1

THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH WITH US BY WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

The world is too much with us; late and
soon, Getting and spending, we lay waste
our powers;—Little we see in Nature that is
ours;

We have given our hearts away, a sordid
boon! This Sea that bares her bosom to
the moon; The winds that will be
howling at all hours, And are up-
gathered now like sleeping flowers; For
this, for everything, we are out of tune;
It moves us not. Great God! I'd rather be
A Pagan suckled in a creed outworn;
So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,
Have glimpses that would make me less
forlorn; Have sight of Proteus rising from
the sea;

Or hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.

The poet wrote these words at a time before global warming was a real concern. The line, “A pagan suckled in a creed outworn,” shows his need to go back to a time before his own, a time of paganism when people made a religion out of worshipping nature. At the time Wordsworth was living in Christian Europe, presumably as a Christian man, and to pray for a return to paganism was blasphemous. His blasphemy only makes his desperation for a different time palatable throughout the poem.

“The world is too much for us” reminds me of Dylan Thomas’ “Do not go gently into that good night.” They both have narrators who are in denial about the inevitable change to come.

Despite Wordsworth’s brave criticism of his time, he knew there was nothing he could do to

make things right. There will never be another communion between man and nature as it was in days gone by. The only thing he could do was to overlook the ocean and find solace by communing with nature in his own way. Wordsworth time was just the beginning of mankind's nature to engorge in material decadence. I do not think he could imagine any of us not only

neglecting nature, but hurting nature as well. The saddest part is that there isn't much we could do about the destruction of the earth, but make a personal choice, much like Wordsworth did, to turn our backs on materialism, stare into the ocean, and commune with nature in our own way William Wordsworth published the sonnet "The world is too much with us" in 1807. The sonnet's speaker explores nature, the sublime, and the past. The speaker rejects civilization and laments that humanity has lost touch with nature. "The world is too much with us" invites readers to consider their relationship to the world around them.

The sonnet begins with a declaration: "The world is too much with us." The speaker suggests that humanity's focus on civilization, or the "world," has resulted in the loss of a deeper connection to nature. The first line then ends with "late and soon," claiming that this preoccupation with the world has plagued humanity for some time and will continue to do so. The next two lines call attention to how the world may negatively affect humanity:

- In **line two**, the speaker claims that too much time is wasted on "getting and spending," and by focusing on such actions, we ignore what is natural and nourishing and thus "lay waste our powers."
- In **line three**, the speaker says that "little we see in nature that is ours." This suggests a fundamental separation from nature, not only in understanding but also through a lack of control and ownership.
- The speaker then declares in **line four** that we have "given our hearts away, a sordid boon!" This idea could be interpreted as an unfortunate bargain or choice. The words "sordid" and "boon" create an **oxymoron** that expresses an uneasy trade.

The speaker's lament suggests that humanity has given away its connection to nature for commerce and industrialization. Modernity may appear beneficial, but as a consequence humanity has lost its sense of belonging and orientation in the natural world.

Wordsworth's sonnet exhibits a poetic style characteristic of **Romanticism** in its description of nature. The speaker makes use of the **sublime**, which in poetry is meant to highlight the greatness of the subject matter and bring ecstasy to the reader. Two instances of the sublime can be found in the first eight lines:

- In **line five**, the speaker describes the sea with grandeur, casting it as a feminine entity that "bares

her bosom to the moon.” This description **anthropomorphizes** the sea, creating a maternal figure.

- In **line six**, the speaker describes the winds as “howling at all hours” and couples that with a **simile** in which the winds are “gathered up like sleeping flowers.” Here, the speaker juxtaposes the violence of winds howling with the gentleness of sleeping flowers.

The speaker illustrates the varying degrees of nature and its changeability, and laments that we are unable to see and experience these phenomena. Perhaps seeing and being a part of nature would be nourishing for the human soul; when humans are only focused on the world (civilization) and not nature, we are left impoverished.

The sonnet then shifts with the **volta** at **line nine**, when the speaker exclaims “—Great God!” in between two thoughts.

- This sudden shift rhythmically breaks the line in half, resulting in a **caesura**.
- It also marks the turn in the poem, in which the speaker wishes to be separate from the world and surrounded by the beauty and grandeur of nature.

Having suggested in the octave that humanity is “out of tune” with nature, the speaker begins the sestet by expressing that he would “rather be / A pagan suckled in a creed outworn.” The use of the word “pagan” suggests a tradition deeply connected to the natural world. Whereas the world represents civilization and an established Christian doctrine, the speaker wishes to view the world through a lens distinct from the artificial creations of humanity.

The **last four lines** of the poem express a wistfulness for the past. The speaker believes that that while “standing on a pleasant lea” he would find happiness in seeing nature and the old pagan gods, such as “Proteus rising from the sea.” Characteristic of Romantic poetry, the speaker makes several **allusions** to Greek mythology by introducing Proteus, the prophetic Greek god of seas and rivers, and Triton, the messenger god of the sea and the son of Poseidon. In a figure for his desire to connect with the natural world and receive its truths, the speaker longs to “hear old Triton blow his wreathèd horn.” Wordsworth’s sonnet expresses a wish to go back to a past in which humans were more connected to nature and less taken in by industry and commerce.

POETRY 2

HOPE IS THE THING WITH FEATHERS BY EMILY DICKINSON

“Hope” is the thing
with feathers - That
perches in the soul -
And sings the tune
without the words - And
never stops - at all -

And sweetest - in the
Gale - is heard - And sore
must be the storm -
That could abash
the little Bird That
kept so many
warm -

I've heard it in the
chillest land - And
on the strangest
Sea -
Yet - never -
in
Extremity, It
asked a
crumb - of
me.

Summary:

- The speaker defines "Hope" as a feathered creature that dwells inside the human spirit. This feathery thing sings a wordless tune, not stopping under any circumstances.

Its tune sounds best when heard in fierce winds. Only an incredibly severe storm could stop this bird from singing. The "Hope" bird has made many people feel warm.

The speaker has heard the bird's singing in the coldest places, and on the weirdest seas. But in the speaker's experiences, even the most extreme ones, the bird has never asked for anything in return.

Hope for Emily in this poem is “A bird with feathers”. Feathers are the source of helping and assisting the

bird so for human being's life is enjoyed and nourished by the feathers of hope. Again she is of the view

about hope that hope is a “Tune without words” because it is abstract although yet exists as a strong and

motivated feeling for human beings. Dickenson further declares, “I have heard it in the chilliest land”. She further maintains that no matter how much pressing and difficult the circumstances are she even then felt the presence of hope in her life. She is not so much highest in describing her passion that she may cross the limits yet she maintains and balances between hope and its description and does not cross her limits. She

says, “Yet never in extremity, it asked a crumb of me”. At the end of the poem, she finalized her decision

that hope demands nothing in return even not a little thing it just gives to its holder.

POETRY 3

SITA BY TORU DUTT

Three happy children in a darkened
room! What do they gaze on with
wide-open eyes?

A dense, dense forest, where no sunbeam
pries, And in its centre a cleared spot.—
There bloom Gigantic flowers on creepers
that embrace

Tall trees: there, in a quiet lucid lake
The while swans glide; there, "whirring from the
brake," The peacock springs; there, herds of wild
deer race; There, patches gleam with yellow
waving grain;

There, blue smoke from strange altars rises
light. There, dwells in peace, the poet-
anchorite.

But who is this fair lady? Not in vain
She weeps,—for lo! at every tear she
sheds Tears from three pairs of young eyes
fall amain, And bowed in sorrow are the
three young heads. It is an old, old story,
and the lay

Which has evoked sad Sîta from the past
Is by a mother sung.... 'Tis hushed at
last And melts the picture from their
sight away, Yet shall they dream of it
until the day!

When shall those children by their
mother's side Gather, ah me! as erst at
eventide?

Introduction: The poem “Sita” has been written by Toru Dutt. She is one of the famous Indo-Anglian poets of the 19th century. She was influenced by the British Romantics. She wrote her poetry, Novels, and stories both in French and English. Her life was a mix of joy and agony. Her best original work is “Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan” from which the poem ‘Sita’ has been extracted. She died at the age of 22.

Summary of the poem “Sita”

The poem “Sita” reveals Toru Dutt’s love for Indian myths and her sensitivity to women’s sufferings and victimization even in the ancient times. The poem forms a part of the collection of poems Ancient Ballads and Legends of Hindustan which was published posthumously in 1882 with a foreword by Edmund Gosse who wrote, “We believe that the original English poems which we present to the public for the first time today will be ultimately found to continue Toru’s chief legacy to posterity.” This is considered to be her most mature contribution which shows how much rooted she was into the soil of Hindu thought and

tradition. There are nine ballads in this collection based on Indian myths and legends: “Savitri”,

“Lakshman”, “Jogadhya Uma”, “The Royal Ascetic and the Hind”, “Dhruva”, “Butto”, “Sindhu”, “Prahlad” and “Sita” and miscellaneous poems. With these poems, a new phase started in the development of Toru Dutt’s poetic genius as she desired to give poetic expression to her intense love for her homeland and its traditions from which she had been alienated for a long period by French and English literatures. Her one year’s study of Sanskrit and the inspiration she got from her recollection of the religious stories told by her [mother](#) bring her back to the very heart of India. Haydn Moore Williams remarks about these poems, “Apart from her mastery of English verse forms, the poems show the emergence of an independent poetic individuality. The themes of these ballads are sublime.” Hari Mohan Prasad and Chakradhar Prasad Singh call this collection “a cultural and philosophical anthropology and a religious and moral instrument”. The ballads are not only rich in philosophical thought and moral vision but also reveal the poet’s stylistic maturity, felicity of expression, descriptive splendour, narrative vigour, lyrical simplicity and romantic remoteness. C. N. Srinath pays a tribute to Toru’s contribution to Indian poetry in English with reference to these ballads:

The achievement is admirable when we think of Toru’s literary context more than a hundred years ago when she had no local models in poetry to look up to but had all the disadvantages of being a young poet amid elder poets in the family who imitated the familiar modes and styles of English poetry. She can also be called a pioneer in children’s poetry as the first poet to tell the Indian tales in English. The tone of the tale and the conscious simplicity of narrative suggest the audience for whom

it was probably meant but the power and conceptual wisdom of the tale and the values that emerge out of the various struggles and tensions and the nobility of characters have a great spell on the adult imagination as well.”

POETRY 4

IF BY RUDYARD KIPLING

If you can keep your head when
all about you Are losing theirs and
blaming it on you,

If you can trust yourself when all
men doubt you, But make allowance
for their doubting too;

If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't
deal in lies, Or being hated,
don't give way to hating,

And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise:

If you can dream—and not make dreams
your master; If you can think—and not
make thoughts your aim;

If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just
the same;

If you can bear to hear the truth
you've spoken

Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your
life to, broken, And stoop and build 'em
up with worn-out tools:

If you can make one heap of all your
winnings And risk it on one turn of
pitch-and-toss,

And lose, and start again at your
beginnings And never breathe a word
about your loss;

If you can force your heart and nerve and
sinew To serve your turn long after they
are gone,

And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: 'Hold on!'

If you can talk with crowds and keep your
virtue, Or walk with Kings—nor lose the
common touch,

If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too
much; If you can fill the unforgiving

minute

With sixty seconds' worth of
distance run, Yours is the Earth and
everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son!

The poem 'If' by the India-born British Nobel laureate **poet** Rudyard Kipling is a poem of ultimate inspiration that tells us how to deal with different situations in life. The poet conveys his ideas about how to win this life, and after all, how to be a good human being. The poem, written in 1895 and **first published** in 'Rewards and Fairies', 1910 is 32 lines long with four stanzas of eight lines each. It is a tribute to Leander Starr Jameson. The poem is written in the form of paternal advice to the poet's son, John.

The whole poem is written in **a single complex sentence**. So all the subordinate clauses begin with 'if' and the main clause concluding the entire theme comes at the end, and the poem ends with a full stop.

To be a good human being and to succeed in life, we should keep calm when other people around us are losing their cool. We should not lose our temperament even if others are blaming us for their fault. Losing the temper does not solve a problem, rather intensifies that. Keeping the head cool makes us think wisely to face those tough situations, and ultimately a solution comes out. We should have the faith in ourselves, even when others doubt us. But after that, we should give some importance to their doubt too and try to find out what may be the reason for their suspicion. After all, 'To err is human...'. So, By keeping faith in ourselves we make sure that we don't get demoralized or disheartened. And, by allowing others' doubt a little space of thought, we ensure that we are not doing something wrong knowingly or unknowingly. We should work hard and wait for the result patiently. We should not get tired by waiting.

There are a number of real life examples where people missed big opportunities only by losing their patience. Moreover, there goes a number of proverbs. "Hurry will bury you." "Haste makes waste." "Patience pays off." So, it's quite understandable why the poet makes a point for patience here. People may lie about us to others, but we should not indulge ourselves in lies. In other words, we should always remain truthful. If we are misled or tempted to lie, people would ultimately discover the truth and won't believe us anymore. That's why it's important to speak the truth even if that hurts us. People may show

their hatred towards us, yet we should not hate them. We should show our love and respect to others. No man or woman is perfect in this world. Everyone has his strengths and weaknesses. We have to accept that and respect them for the good qualities in them. We should not show us as too good a person or talk too wisely with common people, even after possessing such qualities. Having acquired all these good qualities mentioned above, people generally feel proud and tend to show off how good they are. But, the poet warns us not to go that way. In that case, others would feel uncomfortable in our company and avoid us. Even others may try to prove us wrong at any cost, leading to an unhealthy competition.

To do something bigger, we should dream first. But the poet also reminds us not to be guided by unrealistic dreams. If dreams take the driver's seat, we would get detached from reality and eventually fail. There goes a saying – “You have to dream first before your dream can come true.” So we should dream to reach great heights in life, but keeping the reality in mind. We should be able to think over a matter, but should not make the thoughts our aim. That is to say that we often lose our radar and get detached from the main point. So our thinking should not be scattered misleading us away from the target. Life is a combination of success and failure, joy and sorrow, good times and bad times. We should accept both and face both situations with similar treatment. Here the poet personifies Triumph and Disaster, capitalizing and calling them ‘two impostors’ (pretenders or cheaters). People become too happy in success and forget their duty at hand. We may also get too complacent or proud at a small success, reducing our chances to reach higher goals. Again, at bad times, if we are too grieved, we may lose our faith and confidence. In both cases, our regular course of work is hampered. That is why the poet calls triumph and disaster ‘two impostors’. He asks us to treat those deceivers similarly, with a smiling face. In short, don't be too happy or too sad under any circumstances. We have to bear the tough situations where we see that our speech or statement is distorted by someone to befool others. Very often we see that people misinterpret or even deliberately distort our words to use it in their favour. We should not lose our temper hearing that. Rather we should tolerate that, ensuring we have spoken the truth. We have to hold our nerves even after seeing that our favourite thing that we built with all our effort and time is broken. Then we have to pick up the scattered parts and build it all over again. This is another key to getting to the top of the world, according to the poet. To keep our cool is not easy in such a situation. But patience and the mental toughness would help us build them again. Indeed, there is a story about Newton that the papers containing his theories were destroyed in fire, and he wrote them again from the beginning.

We should be able to accumulate all we have and take a risk in one turn of the game of pitch-and-toss. We may lose the game and all our possessions. But we have to stay calm without uttering a word about that loss and rebuild it from the beginning. Here the poet talks about the capability of taking big risks to achieve much greater success and keeping quiet even if we lose the bet. This is yet another aspect of our mental toughness that we need to possess.

The poet continues the same theme of mental strength and the power of Will. We have to force our body (heart and nerve and sinew) to serve us even after it has lost the strength due to old age or illness. Thus we should keep on working driven by the power of Will which would ask them (heart and nerve and sinew) to 'hold on' compelling them to do their job. If we want to do something great from our heart, the Will inside us would prevent the body from getting tired. Indeed, there goes a proverb: "When going gets tough, the tough gets going." We should stay in touch with people from every class of the society. We should be able to talk with common mass without losing our virtue or moral values. Again, we should be able to walk with kings without going beyond the reach of the common people. The common touch would help us realize the reality and feel the needs of the society. On the other hand, the noble touch would give us the power and opportunity to reach higher goals. We should build ourselves strong enough, mentally and physically, so that neither enemies nor loving friends can hurt us. Moreover, we should develop healthy relationship with everyone around us, and should not allow anyone to harm us. We have to develop our personality the right way, so that everyone supports us and gives us importance (count with you), but none too much. If we allow someone to give us too much importance, we may be emotionally bound. That may restrict our freedom and prevent us from doing our duty. Or, we may get complacent thinking that we are so much liked by people, thus reducing our effort. Time is precious. A minute is filled with sixty seconds. Time (minute) is here called unforgiving, as it waits for none and doesn't forgive him who wastes it. We should utilize every minute of our life in productive work. Wasting time is not something we can afford in our short lifespan. Finally comes the achievement that we can get if we fulfill all the conditions mentioned so far. We can win this earth and everything in it. We can go to top of the world and rule over everything. And what is more, We would be a complete and perfect human being. We should not forget that Kipling wrote this poem for his son, as it is addressed in the very last line. The poet wanted to show his son the right way to be a future leader. But it has inspired many a man in their journey of life on earth so far.

POETRY 5

IF WE MUST DIE BY CLAUDE McKAY

If we must die, let it not be like
hogs Hunted and penned in an
inglorious spot,
While round us bark the mad and hungry
dogs, Making their mock at our accursèd
lot.
If we must die, O let us nobly die,
So that our precious blood may not be
shed In vain; then even the monsters
we defy

Shall be constrained to honor us though
 dead! O kinsmen! we must meet the
 common foe!
 Though far outnumbered let us show us
 brave, And for their thousand blows deal one
 death-blow! What though before us lies the
 open grave?
 Like men we'll face the murderous, cowardly pack,
 Pressed to the wall, dying, but fighting back!

“If We Must Die” is a poem about confronting oppression. The speaker addresses a group of oppressed people—a group that the speaker identifies with and seems to be part of. These people have been stripped of their dignity and their freedom and they are in despair, cornered by violent oppressors. Faced with this desperate situation, the speaker proposes a radical solution for their suffering. The poem argues that violent, even suicidal, acts of resistance are the only viable option for this oppressed group—the only way they can reclaim their dignity and freedom.

The people that the speaker of “If We Must Die” addresses are oppressed, so much so that they are in danger of losing not only their lives, but also their humanity. The speaker describes these people as surrounded by “monsters” and “mad and hungry dogs” who will inflict a “thousand blows” upon them.

They are “far outnumbered” by these monsters. These metaphors indicate that the group of people the poem addresses are a minority community threatened by violence from a larger and more powerful group.

The oppression that the group suffers threatens to turn them into animals, figuratively speaking—to deprive them of their humanity. As the speaker notes in line 1, they are in danger of dying “like hogs.” But the people who oppress them have also lost their humanity. The speaker consistently describes these oppressors as horrifying, inhuman creatures: “mad and hungry dogs” and “monsters.” The poem thus hints that oppression diminishes the humanity of everyone involved, both oppressor and oppressed.

The speaker goes on to propose a way for the oppressed group to regain its humanity: violent resistance. The speaker proposes to match violence with violence, saying that the group being addressed should exchange “their [the oppressor’s] thousand blows” for “one death blow.” Though the speaker acknowledges that this group must die, they can nonetheless die “fighting back.”

Essentially, “If We Must Die” offers two options to the oppressed group of people it addresses: they can either die “like hogs” or “like men.” Notably, the speaker and the group of oppressed people don’t have any choice about whether they live or die. Their situation is so desperate that they can only

decide *how* they die. But, the speaker points out, not all deaths are equal. To die “like hogs” will only underline the oppression they already suffer. To die “like men,” however, will allow them to attain some measure of freedom and dignity and to retain—in death if not in life—the humanity they are in danger of losing. As a result of their bravery, the “monsters” who oppress them will be forced to recognize their humanity, to “honor [them] though dead.”

The poem thus proposes violent resistance as the only way to reclaim humanity and dignity in a desperate situation. However, it also indicates that some form of oppression may always persist, when the speaker says: “even the monsters we defy / Shall be constrained to honor us though dead!” The oppressed people’s bravery, it seems, forces the oppressors to recognize their humanity. That is, humanity only comes when the oppressors finally grant it—even if the oppressed take the action the speaker recommends. In this way, the poem underscores the persistence of precisely the problem the speaker is trying to overcome: the oppressors have the power to deprive other people of their humanity, and taking that power away from them may be a nearly impossible task.

UNIT III: SHORT STORY 1

HOW MUCH LAND DOES A MAN NEED – LEO TOLSTOY

An elder sister from the city visits her younger sister, the wife of a peasant farmer in the village. In the midst of their visit, the two of them get into an argument about whether the city or the peasant lifestyle is preferable. The elder sister suggests that city life boasts better clothes, good things to eat and drink, and various entertainments, such as the theater. The younger sister replies that though peasant life may be rough, she and her husband are free, will always have enough to eat, and are not tempted by the devil to indulge in such worldly pursuits.

Pahom, the husband of the younger sister, enters the debate and suggests that the charm of the peasant life is that the peasant has no time to let nonsense settle in his head. The one drawback of peasant life, he declares, is that the peasant does not have enough land: “If I had plenty of land, I shouldn’t fear the Devil himself!” The devil, overhearing this boast, decides to give Pahom his wish, seducing him with the extra land that Pahom thinks will give him security.

Pahom’s first opportunity to gain extra land comes when a lady in the village decides to sell her three hundred acres. His fellow peasants try to arrange the purchase for themselves as part of a commune, but the devil sows discord among them and individual peasants begin to buy land. Pahom obtains forty acres of his own. This pleases him initially, but soon neighboring peasants allow their cows to stray into his meadows

and their horses among his corn, and he must seek justice from the district court. Not only does he fail to receive recompense for the damages but also he ruins his reputation among his former friends and neighbors; his extra land does not bring him security.

Hearing a rumor about more and better farmland elsewhere, he decides to sell his land and move his family to a new location. There he obtains 125 acres and is ten times better off than he was before, and he is very pleased. However, he soon realizes that he could make a better profit with more land on which to sow wheat. He makes a deal to obtain thirteen hundred acres from a peasant in financial difficulty for one thousand rubles and has all but clinched it when he hears a rumor about the land of the Bashkirs.

There, a tradesman tells him, a man can obtain land for less than a penny an acre, simply by making friends with the chiefs.

Fueled by the desire for more, cheaper, and better land, Pahom seeks directions for the land of the Bashkirs and leaves on a journey to obtain the land that he thinks he needs. On arrival, he distributes gifts to the Bashkir leaders and finds them courteous and friendly. He explains his reasons for being there and, after some deliberation, they offer him whatever land he wants for one thousand rubles. Pahom is pleased but concerned; he wants boundaries, deeds, and “official sanction” to give him the assurance he needs that they or their children will never reverse their decision.

The Bashkirs agree to this arrangement, and a deal is struck. Pahom can have all the land that he can walk around in a day for one thousand rubles. The one condition is that if he does not return on the same day to the spot at which he began, the money will be lost. The night before his fateful walk, Pahom plans his strategy; he will try to encircle thirty-five miles of land and then sell the poorer land to peasants at a profit. When he awakes the next day, he is met by the man whom he thought was the chief of the Bashkirs, but whom he recognizes as the peasant who had come to his old home to tell him of lucrative land deals available elsewhere. He looks again, and realizes that he is speaking with the devil himself. He dismisses this meeting as merely a dream and goes about his walk.

Pahom starts well, but he tries to encircle too much land, and by midday he realizes that he has tried to create too big a circuit. Though afraid of death, he knows that his only chance is to complete the circuit. “There is plenty of land,” he says to himself, “but will God let me live on it?” As the sun comes down, Pahom runs with all his remaining strength to the spot where he began. Reaching it, he sees the chief laughing and holding his sides; he remembers his dream and breathes his last breath. Pahom’s servant picks up the spade with which Pahom had been marking his land and digs a grave in which to bury him: “Six feet from his head to his heels was all he needed.”

SHORT STORY 2

THE YELLOW WALLPAPER BY CHARLOTTE PERKINS GILMAN

"The Yellow Wallpaper" details the **deterioration of a woman's mental health** while she is on a "rest cure" on a rented summer country estate with her family. Her obsession with the yellow wallpaper in her bedroom marks her descent into psychosis from her depression throughout the story.

The narrator of "The Yellow Wallpaper" begins the story by discussing her move to a beautiful estate for the summer. **Her husband, John, is also her doctor**, and the move is meant in part to help the narrator overcome her "illness," which she explains as nervous depression, or nervousness, following the birth of their baby. John's sister, Jennie, also lives with them and works as their housekeeper.

Though her husband believes she will get better with rest and by not worrying about anything, **the narrator has an active imagination and likes to write**. He discourages her wonder about the house, and dismisses her interests. She mentions her baby more than once, though there is a nurse that cares for the baby, and the narrator herself is too nervous to provide care.

The narrator and her husband move into a large room that has **ugly, yellow wallpaper** that the narrator criticizes. She asks her husband if they can change rooms and move downstairs, and he rejects her. The more she stays in the room, the more the narrator's fascination with the hideous wallpaper grows.

After hosting family for July 4th, the narrator expresses feeling even worse and more exhausted. She struggles to do daily activities, and her mental state is deteriorating. John encourages her to rest more, and the narrator hides her writing from him because he disapproves.

In the time between July 4th and their departure, **the narrator is seemingly driven insane by the yellow wallpaper**; she sleeps all day and stays up all night to stare at it, believing that it comes alive, and the patterns change and move. Then, she begins to believe that there is a woman in the wallpaper who alters the patterns and is watching her.

A few weeks before their departure, John stays overnight in town and the narrator wants to sleep in the room by herself so she can stare at the wallpaper uninterrupted. She locks out Jennie and **believes that she can see the woman in the wallpaper**. John returns and frantically tries to be let in, and the narrator refuses; John is able to enter the room and finds the narrator crawling on the floor. She claims that the woman in the wallpaper has finally exited, and John faints, much to her surprise.

SHORT STORY 3

THE VERGER BY WILLIAM SOMERSET MAUGHAM

Maugham's short story "The Verger" is a tale about a simple man Albert Edward Foreman. He has been a verger in St. Peter's Neville Square Church, doing his duties with great enjoyment and dedication. His routine work is disturbed with the arrival of new vicar in the church. He wants everything to be perfect and when he comes to know that Foreman is an illiterate he immediately takes action. The vicar feels that things like ability to read and write reflect the good character of St. Peter's.

Foreman's impeccable record doesn't help him to retain his job. The vicar is ready to offer Foreman three month grace period to become a literate. But he refuses the proposal saying that he cannot learn to read and write at this age.

The vicar announces that the parish has decided to quit him from the service because Foreman is not literate. For Foreman, this decision of the priest is a great blow he has never anticipated. After his appointment sixteen years ago as a verger he had thought that the appointment was for life. But suddenly he becomes unemployed after a long service of sixteen years. He doesn't want to demean himself by accepting any domestic services other than the divine church service.

When Foreman leaves the church he is very much upset and deeply distressed. He, instead of heading towards his home, takes a wrong turning. He walks along the long road deeply thinking about his next move.

anything. He is a non-smoker but when he feels distressed and tired, he enjoys a cigarette. He feels like having a cigarette which would comfort him. He cannot find a cigarette shop in the long street. It sounds strange to him. He thinks that a tobacco shop in such a place would be profitable. His plan comes to execution the very next day. He rents a suitable shop and starts his tobacco business. It goes well. He makes profit and within ten years he opens ten branches throughout London. He becomes a great businessman

He has got a meagre amount of money but not enough to meet all his family requirements without doing and bank balance rises up to thirty thousand pounds.

One-day the manager of the bank advises him to invest his amount in some safe securities. Albert says that he does not want to take risk and want his money safe in the bank. Moreover he does not know how and in which securities he can invest. The manager replies that he is there to look after his investment and the only thing he has to do is put his signature. After setting up the business, Albert has learnt to sign. He asks the manager how he could know where he is investing. The manager says that he can read the document and then put his signature on that. Albert confesses that he is an illiterate.

The manager is astonished at his confession. Without knowing how to read or write Albert has amassed a huge sum. What he could have done if he were a literate and educated. But Albert humbly answers him that if he knows to read and write he would be a verger at St. Peter's Neville Square and nothing more.

SHORT STORY 4

AAYAH BY T. JANAKIRAMAN AND TRANSLATED BY ANITA BALAKRISHNAN

The present short story was first published in a Tamil magazine Amudhasurabhi and then republished in the anthology Thi Janakiramanin Sirukadhaigal Muzhuthoguppu by Kalachuvadu Publications in 2014. It narrates the ironic turn of events that take place when a young man attends a job interview for a position as a teacher in a small elementary school. The author uses story within a story technique to reveal the economic conditions of the young man.

The young man is asked to narrate a story for the interview panel, considering them as 4th std students. After a bit of hesitation, the young man starts telling the story. There were a couple. Father works in army and mother is a house wife. Father comes home once in a while. He is a drunkard and doesn't support the family. Mother finds it very hard to run the family. Father spends whatever money he has to drink and then starts threatening his wife to give money. He also beats her. Their children, a son and a daughter are silent watchers of the atrocities of their father, as they are too young to retaliate. The mother starts working as maid in a couple of houses after the father leaves home to join duty. She gets a bit of money to run the family. Luckily, she gets an opportunity to work in a young couple's house as maid. Her main duty is to take care of the child. She was taking care of the child so well that the child became too close with the mother. Because of this, the parents of the kid were also very affectionate towards the mother. They helped the mother whenever she was in need of money by giving advance from her salary. But her need for money rapidly increased as her daughter attained puberty and her son got promoted to higher classes. Her relatives started advising her that she should get her daughter married. She couldn't pay the fees for her son.

One day the mother came home and informed her son that she was dismissed from the job, as the parents of the kid suspected her of stealing money. Her son asked her whether she did so. After a little bit of

hesitation, the mother admits that she stole money to pay his fees and to arrange for his sister's marriage. The mother did not admit her theft to the parents for the fear of being called a thief.

The young boy stops the narrating the story. The interview panel members ask him whether the story is over. The boy replies yes. One of the panel members ask whether the mother is still jobless. And the boy replies yes. The compassionate interview panel understood that the boy had told his own life story and decides to appoint his mother as a nanny in the elementary school.

UNIT IV: NON-FICTION 1

THE COLLAPSE OF MEANING IN A POST-TRUTH WORLD – by Chi Luu

This essay questions the implications of the explosion of information, both authentic and fake, due to the global reach of the internet. The author considers 2016 to be a year of disaster due to act of terrorism around the world, record breaking climate change disasters, and societal instability. Many artists and cultural shapers also passed away in this year. The way we use language to convey our collective fears and anxieties about the state of society seems fractured. Trust in Public institutions like media, police and government got broken. People have rejected objective facts and choose to believe what feels right and real to them. Actually, the facts are considered irrelevant and there are politicians who mislead the people. Overwhelmed by a barrage of news stories, either real or fake, the public has lost its stability to distinguish between the two and choose to believe what feels right to them.

George Orwell said that language in his time was being used to mislead, the author says that we cannot be sure that the words and truths we refer to are stable. We know that language change and changes in meaning are inevitable, but this process usually steady and slow. However, due to the all-consuming nature of the internet and social media, this change takes place faster than it ever has before. Meanings of words change time to time. New words and terms are introduced , old expressions gain, lose, broaden, narrow and change their word senses. Good words, for example, 'idiot' which used to mean 'private person' can become bad[pejoration] and bad words can become good [amelioration].With the accumulation of new meanings, words have become more and more complex. Languages seem stable because semantic change generally happens slowly and steadily, but if meaning changes too fast then it will be very difficult for the speakers to keep up with.

Due to all-consuming culture of the internet and social media, the English language is changing at a faster rate than any other time in history. Introduction of new words at a faster rate increases the complexity in semantics. For example new words like 'fomo', 'bae' and 'fleck' lost its favour in due course of time. Innovations in language on a larger scale can be a disturbingly powerful force in influencing the outcomes of certain events in the real world. Mialon and Mialon discuss that using indirect or figurative speech can convey a lot of necessary information between two people who can figure out the hidden messages from the

context.

In a post-truth era, public discourse can be confusing as words rapidly develop new meanings and connotations for different groups resulting in an unimaginable complexity.

NON-FICTION 2

WAKING UP TO MENTAL HEALTH – By K. C. Vijayakumar

K. C. Vijayakumar is a well-known sports journalist. The focus in this article is on the mental health challenges faced by sports people both nationally and internationally. In today's world, sports people are constantly in the glare of media: the print, visual and digital versions. According to the author, this feeling of constantly being under pressure to perform at an optional level causes almost intolerable levels in players.

Glenn Maxwell is an Aussie super-hero, the kind who chews nails, parts seas and has a laugh when the required run-rate shows inflationary tendencies. When he opted for a mental break citing the fog in his mind and the anxiety attacks lurking below his smile, we knew the amount of depression he had felt. Normally we all believe in our sub conscious level that death, depression, defeats and debts may happen to others but not to us.

Cricketers and actors undergo a lot of depression. It's very true that nobody can see the pressure and depression that they are undergoing. Graeme Thorpe, Jonathan Trott and Marcus Trescothick have talked about their mental trauma. M. S. Dhoni also talks about switching on and switching off while in the field. Rahul Dravid and V. V. S. Laxman used to discuss about their children, family and other matters while fielding just to ease out the pressure. Laxman said that when he was not picked up for 2003 world cup, he was totally upset. He went to United States to spend time with his family and friends to come out of the depression.

Another cricketer Vishwanath got depressed. He suddenly became a distracted wicketkeeper tending to talk too much in the field. He lost favour in the game. Later he got a second chance by becoming an umpire. When one of the players started getting heated up in a match, Vishwanath advised him to be calm and not to mess up and spoil his career which happened in his own life. Virat Kohli also admitted that 2014 England Tour brought him lot of pressure. James Anderson was bothering him always and he tried his level best to shut his mind from the thought of Anderson and practised hard to face the balls of Anderson. Many overseas players have talked openly about their depression unlike the Indian players. Kohli was an exception and he paved a new way by revealing his anxiety. Recently former Indian Cricketer V. B. Chandrasekar committed suicide leaving a trail of unanswered questions.

BCCI and the National Cricket Academy have to devise sessions on mental conditioning. A cricketer is just a human being needing that warm embrace and a compassion that goes beyond the numbers he or she stacked up or didn't on the field. Admitting that one suffers from depression is a start that needs to be done to protect players who are often emotionally vulnerable to the situation.

NON-FICTION 3

OOTACAMUND BY S. MUTHAIAH

This brief account chronicles the discovery and settlement and transformation of Ootacamund/Ooty into the 'Queen of the British Hill Stations. This essay traces the initial discovery of the place by Jesuit Priest Fr. Jacome Ferrari, who went into 'Todamala' to search for a Christian branch of the Todas in 1602. The next explorer was Dr. Francis Buchanan-Hamilton in 1800, when he was conducting the great flora and fauna survey. In 1816, Col. Colin Makenzie's local surveyors produced a map of "the Nilgris Mountains". This work appears to have done from 1816 by two surveyors named Keys and McMahon. The best exploration was said to be done by two junior civilians from Coimbatore, Whish and Kinderley in 1818. In 1819, John Sullivan, the then collector of Coimbatore visited the place and decided to develop Ootacamund.

The first reference to Ootacamund was made by Sullivan in April 1822 when he refers to having paid the Todas for the property he acquired. He began his work "Stone House" in the same year. This building was entirely built of stone and was in a habitable condition. His wife and baby visited the place and lived there for four years. Later Sullivan was transferred. The building was owned by many people in due course of time. It passed out of Sullivan's hands in 1846. The Government used it as its summer Secretariat and built a council hall next to it. Both are now part of Government Arts and Science College, Ooty.

Sullivan introduced Horticulture with the help of Johnston, a gardener. This led to the earliest economic development of the Blue Mountains. Potato, Barley, apples and other English fruits, vegetables and grains were some of the crops introduced by these two people. Sullivan's next contribution was the lake that he planned and developed as a means of providing Irrigation to the horticulturalists. However, it never served the purpose. Later on it became a tourist spot.

The Sullivan family had a long association with the Madras Presidency. His grandfather, Laurence Sullivan, was a Director of the East India Company. His father Stephen John Sullivan, was a Madras Civilian who

joined the company as a "Persian Translator" and then served as a Resident in the court of Tanjore in 1782. John Sullivan's second son Henry Edward joined the MCS in 1850 and in 1869 became the Collector of Coimbatore. After serving in several districts he, like his father, became a member of the Governor's Council from 1882 till his retirement in 1886. The Sullivan connection with Madras appears to have vanished after that but they set a unique record: Three generations rising to the rank of Secretary.

Another relative John Sullivan was the civilian turned contractor who built the Grand Arsenal in Fort. St. George in 1772. At the same time he built first buildings for the General Hospital at the present site.

NON-FICTION 4

IS THIS ART, TOO? BY ANJANA PREMCHAND

This essay discusses the changing idea of what constitutes art in the age of social media and mobile phone cameras. The author begins by mentioning the sale for an enormous sum of a self-portrait by Andy

Warhol, a noted artist, that was taken in a photo booth. The comparison of self-presentation through selfies and the traditional high art genre of self-portraiture is examined by academic Deeptha Achar in Marg's recent issue. She says that the democratization of visual production has led to a tension between the domain of social media and that of art. Anybody can open Snapchat and create art. In a recent article, Kuna Ray suggests that photographs taken by museum visitors can also be considered as art. This suggestion makes clear that art can be interpreted and re-interpreted. Many iconic images have broken the internet record, which led to many discussions and interpretations in any and every form, especially memes and edits.

Best example is the photo of the senator Bernie Sanders taken by AFP photographer Brendan Smialowski. This photo became viral. The photo of Bernie Sanders was photoshopped into many famous artworks. This fact of a single image creating a range of reactions is not a huge surprise. While art collectors and gallerists usually hold the monopoly in appraising art, images take a life of their own when thrown open to a world audience on the internet. There is a sense of ownership, coming from relating to the image in unique ways.

We cannot decide on what is art, whether it is a photograph clicked with a camera or a meme made on Photoshop, whether it hangs on a wall or on an Instagram page. The author posts a question at the end whether a new definition is to be given of art for our times.

UNIT V: ONE ACT PLAY

A MARRIAGE PROPOSAL BY ANTON CHEKOV

The proposal summary is based on a Ruritanian play written by Anton Chekhov. It is a short story that speaks about the tumultuous strain between two wealthy neighbors. The discontentment and lust within to increase their property and wealth induce them to the most straightforward way known to man, marriage.

In the proposal, Ivan Lomov is 35 years old and a wealthy bachelor who has a heart issue. He desires to marry his neighbor's, daughter Natalya, who is 25 years old. However, he needs the approval of her father,

Stepan Chubukov, who is a wealthy landowner.

Introduction to the Proposal

The proposal is a truthful play that was written by Anton Chekhov during the 18th century. His works are widely popular because they deal with practical issues that plague society today. The proposal is a short, hilarious, and practical short story about two wealthy neighbors.

The summary of the proposal is about how families with immense wealth want to enhance their earthly possessions through marriage further. The author finds it amusing that though they have already filled their coffers with plenty of gold and silver, their desire and lust for money knows no bounds.

The play begins with Ivan Lomov, who is a wealthy man. Lomov seeks the hand of his wealthy neighbor, Stepan Chubukov's daughter Natalya. Stepan's immense real estate wealth in the form of Oxen Meadows is hard to resist for Ivan.

Sadly, things do not go as planned, and all three of them end up arguing about their wealth. Each of them, Stepan, Natalya, and Lomov, want to stake claim even for the dogs. The beauty of the summary of the proposal is that they forget the primary purpose, the proposal.

Stepan does not want to lose out on a good deal for his 25-year-old daughter, Natalya, and accepts the marriage proposal. Things take a turn for the worse as the new couple begins from where they started arguing about the material possessions.

Conclusion of the Proposal

The proposal summary in English is a beautiful short story about how wealthy families seek to tie up with one another through marriages to increase their property and wealth. They do not seem to be satisfied with what life has given to them.

All three characters in the summary of the proposal are quarrelsome and arrogant in their ways. Things become humorous to a certain extent when they call each other names and argue whose dog is better and expensive.

The story beautifully illustrates that at the end of the day, we are human, after all.
