



UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT
SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

BA/BSc
(III SEMESTER)

SIGNATURES:
EXPRESSING THE SELF
(COMMON COURSE : ENG3 A05)



CBCSS
(2019 ADMISSION
ONWARDS)

SIGNATURES

EXPRESSING THE SELF

STUDY MATERIAL

THIRD SEMESTER

COMMON COURSE : ENG3 A05

For

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UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT

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ENG3 A05 : SIGNATURES:EXPRESSING THE SELF

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INTRODUCTION

"Signatures : Expressing the Self" is an interesting collection of personal narratives of the great personalities in the world. This text is designed to introduce the students to the personal and political life of world renowned personalities and enable them to understand " how personal narratives interest with the larger social realities" and go on to realize that personal narratives are not about individual stories, but encompass the collective self.

The course is divided into three modules. the first module entitled " Autobiographical writings and Memoirs include the writings of Pablo Neruda and Jeanette Armstrong – all inspiring writers who have connected with their times. Module Two: Speeches and Testimonies" is an interesting blend of the narratives of actor Chaplin, dramatist Pinter, poet Janie Miri Kitani and the disturbing voices of Chernobyl. The last module consists of " Diaries and Letters" that reveals the heartbreaking experiences of Anne Frank, Adrian Mole and the mothers of Endosulfan victims in Kasaragod District in Kerala.

Dear students, wish you a happy reading experience and we are sure that these valuable words from the enlightened hearts will definitely enrich your knowledge.

MODULE - I

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITINGS AND MEMOIRS

Introduction

Autobiography, the biography of oneself narrated by oneself. Autobiographical works can take many forms, from the intimate writings made during life that were not necessarily intended for publication (including letters, diaries, journals, memoirs, and reminiscences) to a formal book-length autobiography.

Formal autobiographies offer a special kind of biographical truth: a life, reshaped by recollection, with all of recollection's conscious and unconscious omissions and distortions. The novelist Graham Greene said that, for this reason, an autobiography is only "a sort of life" and used the phrase as the title for his own autobiography (1971). The line between memoir and autobiography is a fuzzy one, especially in this modern literary era where writers are constantly blurring the boundaries between genres to create a new, exciting one. As an autobiography, **a memoir** is a narrative that reveals experiences within the author's lifetime. But there are obvious and practical differences between the two similar genres.

In essence, an autobiography is a chronological telling of one's experience, which should include phases such as childhood, adolescence, adulthood, etc., while a memoir provides a much more specific timeline and a much more intimate relationship to the writer's own memories, feelings, and emotions. Now let us have a look at an excerpt entitled 'The Word' from famous Latin American poet Pablo Neruda's "Memoirs"

Excerpts from Memoirs

About the author

Neftali Ricardo Reyes Basoalto (Pablo Neruda) the internationally acclaimed Latin American poet, was born in 1904 in Parral, Chile. In 1920 he went to Santiago to study and published his first book of poems, *La Cancion de la fiesta* (1921); and his second collection, *Crepusculario* (1923), brought him instant recognition. In 1924 he published the enormously popular *Veinte poemas de amor y una cancion desesperada* (Twenty Love poems and Songs of Despair). From 1927 to 1945 he served as Chilean counsel in Rangoon, Java, and Barcelona, and was writing continuously. Greatly influenced by events in the Spanish Civil War, Neruda joined the Communist Party after the Second World War, and his changed attitudes registered themselves in his poetry. From now on he regarded poetry not as an elite pursuit but as a statement of human solidarity addressed to 'simple people'. *Canto general* (one part of which is *The Heights of Macchu Picchu*, translated by Nathaniel Tarn) is a poem of epic proportions, tracing the history of Latin America and evoking the grandeur of its landscapes. Always a prolific poet, Neruda continued to write poetry throughout the fifties and sixties, and in 1971 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Poetry. From 1970 to 1973 he served under Allende as Chilean ambassador to Paris. Pablo It is reported that Neruda died in 1973 due to cancer but it was interpreted by many as murder.

Memoirs

As the name suggests, *Memoirs* are about his entire life, literary influences on him. A major portion of his *Memoirs* details his political birth and subsequent political career, which simultaneously influenced his poetry. In fact, Neruda began to use poetry as a medium to express his political beliefs, as well as detail the momentous political occurrences happening all around him.

In his memoirs, Neruda talks about several themes, such as his politics, patriotism/nationalism, communism, socialism, local politics, regional politics, world politics, the literary circles Neruda had moved in, all the writers, poets, editors he met throughout his life. These are the major themes of the book and by extension, his life.

About the Text

The excerpt from the 'Memoirs' of Pablo Neruda, 'The word' proves the multitude potential of words and his intimate affiliation with words, that portray his personal and political life. Words can manifest vivid expression, whether in poetry or prose, words sing and descend and the poet even bows to them. He expresses his intense love towards words. He always clings to words and try to tame it while writing. Sometimes he runs after words and all his acts of life are closely associated with words.

Sometimes words come like unexpected rain and he waits for them greedily, to drop down. He loves vowels and compares it with vivid objects in nature like coloured stones, silverfish, foam, thread, metal, and dew. While writing poems, he often runs after beautiful words to make them fit into his poems. He compares his encounter with words to the everyday activities in a human life. He deals with words like dealing something edible, for he says he cleans them, peels them and make them his meal.

He finds words from everything that exists in this world. The words gather its meaning through long journeys from country to country and that carry the inheritance of ancient culture and history. Neruda is so proud of the language that inherited according to him from the brave Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru. In this small extract, he brings the memory of his great ancestors who struggled to build up a civilized culture. Amidst of these struggles they paid special attention to literature and arts. Luminous words were left here. They carried off the gold and left gold, (glittering words), for the future generations. He believes that the words are the gift from the great ancestors.

Exercise

1. Discuss the domestic images that surface in the passage
2. 'The Word' is Neruda's tribute to his uncontrollable passion for poetry. Discuss.

Glossary

Agates: a mineral of the quartz family used as a protective stone.

Conquistadors: a conqueror, one of the Spanish conquerors of Mexico and Peru.

Barbarians : Uncivilized people

Voracious : unquenchable, greedy

Cordilleras: A chain of mountains

For further reading

Memoirs ; Pablo Neruda, tr. by Hardie

PILGRIM AT TINKER CREEK

Annie Dillard

Introduction

Annie Doak, known as Annie Dillard is an American poet and naturalist. She was born on April 30, 1945 in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, United States. Getting inspired by the writers like Henry David Thoreau and Walt Whitman, Dillard writes compressed lyric poetry and prose. Dillard's essays of contemplation on the world of nature made her popular in the mainstream literature. She is also a naturalist theologian, collagist and a singer. Her major works are *Tickets for a Prayer Wheel* (1974), *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek* (1974), *Holy the Firm* (1977), *Living by Fiction* (1982) and *An American Childhood* (1987). *An American Childhood* is her autobiography.

Dillard's essays were highly poetic and deeply philosophical. She puts together her ideas as a theologian and naturalist when she says 'strange things become familiar and vice versa'. She had a very joyful childhood and she used to read on a wide range of subjects such as Geology, Natural History, entomology, poetry and so on. Her mother influenced her a lot to shape her holistic approach to nature. She was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for general notification in 1975 for her work *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek

This book details the narrator's explorations near her home, and various contemplations on nature and life. The title refers to Tinker Creek, which is outside Roanoke in Virginia's the Blue Ridge Mountains. Dillard began writing *Pilgrim* in the spring of 1973, using her personal journals as inspiration. Separated into four sections that signify each of the seasons, the narrative takes place over the period of one year. In *Pilgrim at Tinker Creek*, Dillard looks at the marvels of nature and searches for God. She is undertaking a pilgrimage into nature and observes nature with a microscopic eye. This book has been described as a naturalist classic. It portrays the personal experience of Dillard during a whole year in her neighborhood in Tinker Creek. She carefully crafted this by observing and researching the natural world.

Outline of the Text

In the opening paragraph of the excerpt, she begins with the common experience regarding the frogs and their invisible positions. The frogs would hide somewhere and jumped over your feet and splash into the water. We would yell in the panic obviously. For the narrator, it is always an amusement. She even observes the changes in texture of the light reflected from the mud bunk, water, grass or frog. The frog looks like a schematic diagram of amphibian. When she keeps closer, the frog begins to shrink like a deflating football. Suddenly the frog, she saw was being sucked by a giant water bug. She describes how does water bugs eat their prey. These descriptions make us think about how the biological cycle of this organic world has created in such a manner.

Then she gives the minute details of the eating style of animals. There are different methods of eating by animals. Some carnivorous animals eat their prey alive. The common way of defeat the prey is to down or grasp, and then eating at the whole, or biting. Frogs stuff their preys on the tongue, which is sticky.

These small wonders in nature drive her thought to God and his creations. She quotes from the Koran to talk about the creation. In the Koran, Allah asks "The heaven and the earth and

all in between, thinkest thou I made them in jest?"She invites our attention to the very act of creation and the existence of God. The term 'Deus Absconditus' was used by Blaise Pascal, one of the greatest Christian apologists, physicist and writer, to describe the notion of the creator. It is a Latin phrase means the hidden God. Einstein describes God as subtle, but not malicious. He says that 'nature conceals her mystery by means of her essential grandeur not by her cunning'. For Einstein, God was a metaphor for nature and natural order.

Dillard believes that God has not absconded but spread as a fabric of spirit very subtly and we can only feel blindly of its hem. She wonders, however, if our consciousness has evolved to that point.

Exercises:

Answer the following questions

1. What is the meaning of 'Deus Absconditus'?
2. Who made the statement "God is subtle but not malicious"?
3. What is the sight that continues to amuse Dillard?
4. What is the shrinking frog compared to?
5. Describe the transformation that the frog underwent
6. The marvels of nature explored by Dillard
7. Analyse Pilgrim at Tinker Creek as a spiritual excursion into the natural world

I STAND WITH YOU AGAINST THE DISORDER

Jeanette Armstrong

About the Author

Jeanette Armstrong, an Okanagan Indian, is a writer, Indigenous Civil Right Activist and an educationalist who was born in 1948 on Okanagan Reserve in British Columbia. Armstrong is the first Native woman novelist from Canada. Interestingly, she is also the grand-niece of Hum-Ishu-Ma (Mourning Dove, b. 1927), the first Native American woman novelist. She is a powerful spokesperson for Indigenous People's right. She has been in the quest to change deeply biased misconceptions about the Aboriginal People. Armstrong also helps aid in the empowerment of all Native people by teaching them writing skills. In 1989, she became the director of the En'owkin School of International Writing where she teaches writing classes. She is also a professor of Indigenous Studies and Educates the mind of Young people. She finds excitement and Inspiration in teaching them as there are many new thoughts among them.

Armstrong's objective is to develop a pride among the people about their independent culture and languages. She Learnt Indian languages and exhibits pride in her heritage. She believes that Western philosophy and Education only serve to estrange the Indians from their culture and Languages. Armstrong considers connecting Individuals, regardless of their sex, race or class will make big difference. According to her conception, a democracy should respect and protect every Individual's rights and if a single person is denied them, it threatens the rights of others including that of women, minority and others.

Known for her literary works Armstrong has written about creativity, education, ecology and indigenouness. She began her literary career by writing a poem on John F Kennedy. There are two novels to her credit; *Slash*(1985) which is her first and most famous novel and *Whispering shadows*(2000). She also published an Anthology of poems "*Breath Trades* in 1991.

All my Relations: an Anthology of contemporary Canadian native fiction is a collection of her short stories and children's literature.

An outline of the text

"I Stand with you Against Disorder" is an article by Jeanette Armstrong appeared in YES Magazine.org on November 8, 2005. It was adapted from another book namely *Paradigms Wars; Indigenous people's Resistance to Economic Globalization*. In this Article, Armstrong deals with the consequences of Economic Globalization. She also points out to the issues such as the threat of deposition, privatization, and exploitation of resources.

She declares solidarity with the protests against cultural imperialism and also expresses her loyalty towards all the indigenous tribal communities who are becoming the victims of privatization of land. She brings the idea of altering the prevalent paradigms of development by uniting the Okanagans.

Jeanette begins the essay by introducing herself to the readers. She describes the geographical and cultural features of her land. The Okanagan native tribes belong to the northern part of British Columbia, known as the Okanagan Valley. She goes on explaining how the native people meet their livelihood and how nature, for instance, the river influences their daily lives. She points out that when she introduces herself to her people in her own language, it signifies her goals and objectives, and reflect her thoughts. Armstrong believes in the ability of the mother tongue to captivate their emotions and feeling as it is. She thinks that it is difficult to express themselves in English or any other language, like the way they are. She writes,

"when we say the Okanagan word for ourselves we are actually saying "the ones 'who are dream and land together". She points out the identity crisis when one's mother tongue is replaced with another language. She says that the dream is the closest word that approaches the meaning of the word Okanagan. She describes themselves as the dream, memory, and imagination.

Another part of the word refers to that 'tied into one or part of everything else'. She believes that it is the dream part of them, and this unity or togetherness forms their community. The Okanagan tribes have a deep connection with the environment, to the earth and they believe that their body is earth itself. Their word for body literary means "the land dreaming capacity". Hence their body is the realm of their dreams, hopes, and wishes.

As an Individual, an Okanagan possesses the four selves; the physical self, the emotional self, the thinking intellectual self, and spiritual self and all these four selves are deeply connected to mother earth. The word that represents their thinking/ logic and storage of information literally means "the spark that ignites". She adds that the phrase means the other capacities they engage in when the action taken is directed by the spark of memory once it is ignited.

The emotional self of Okanagan helps them to connect everything to their heart, as does the word mean. everything is connected almost as inseparable.

In addition, she talks about how the educational practices in Okanagan make them disciplined by collaborating themselves with other selves. They strongly believe that one's intellectual self must be attached to the heart in order to make him humane.

Okanagans are taught that each person is born into a family and in a community. In other words, each individual is a social animal. This truth cannot be neglected in any way. The action of one individual affects all the members of the family and community. The word that refers to the relationship to others means 'our one skin' They share the flesh of many people who came before

and many ahead of them. The foremost teaching of Okanagans is that, the community comes first, then family and then only comes individuals because they strongly believe that the existence is meaningless without family and community.

Exercises

Answer the following questions

1. What is the meaning of the Okanagan word that refers to relationships?
2. What are the four main capacities that operate together when Okanagans speak of themselves as individuals?
3. How do Okanagans treat the body?
4. What is unique about the Okanagan educational practices?
5. Discuss the philosophy of Okanagan community in general.

Activity

Read the complete article “ I Stand with you Against the Disorder.”

For further reading

Visit <http://www.ipl.org/div/natam/bin/browse.pl/A9>

<https://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/spiritual-uprising/i-stand-with-you-against-the-disorder>

WHEN I WAS GROWING UP

Nellie Wong

Introduction

The daughter of Chinese immigrants, Nellie Wong was born in Oakland, California, on September 12, 1934. As a teenager, she worked in her parents' Chinese restaurant, and after graduating high school, she took a job as a secretary for Bethlehem Steel Corporation, where she worked until 1982. In her mid-thirties, she began studying creative writing at San Francisco State University. During the second world war, Japanese Americans were evacuated to concentration camps since Japan bombed America's naval base at Pearl harbour. It had a fearful and painful impact on Wong's family because they were considered as Japanese where they were actually Chinese Americans.

Wong published her first book of poetry, *Dreams in Harrison Railroad Park* (Kelsey Street Press), in 1977. Wong's anthology of poetry includes *The Death of Long Steam Lady* (1986), *Stolen Moments* (1997) and *Breakfast, Dinner, Lunch* (2012). She addressed issues such as feminism, Immigration, and identity through her poems. Wong was also involved with women writer's union on campus, organizing programmes on issues of race, sex, and class. She had a great adherence to Asian American culture and her literary discourses discussed these Identity issues at length.

Wong, writing directly from her working life as well as from her family history, profoundly declared her feminist socialist perspective. She wrote, "The more I see some people fighting back, the more I see everyone acquiring the strength to fight back". She delivered a series of lectures in the Radical Women's Conference, namely "Women and revolution alive and inseparable" which reflected her feminist ideologies. She considered the freedom of women as necessary as breath. The preaching of Wong reminds us the word personal is political. She was an advocate of revolutionary feminism and believed that women are not a mere victim on the earth, instead, they should fly with colours.

About the poem

‘When I was Growing up’ is an autobiographical poem, which was published in 1973. In this poem, Wong emphasizes on the identity crisis experienced by the Asian Americans and thus it depicts the history of the poet and her family. The poem is composed in past tense. At the outset of the poem the speaker describes her desperation in a society that celebrates white beauty; When she grew up, she realized that it was white people who appeared in movies, magazines and they were elevated as the so-called desirable women. It signifies that how the popular culture in America has cultivated these ideas of beauty by creating a wrong notion of being white. The poet herself imagined as white and started to wear pale skin.

The speaker narrates how she was trying to be adapted to the western language and culture. She met white girls who wore imported cotton dresses and thought that she too should have these fortunes. When she grew up, she longed for the American food and style. The word ‘hungered’ shows the intensity of her desire to imitate American white's lifestyle. She began to hate yellow men and she felt ashamed of being with them, and their acts were considered as cultureless.

When she grew up, people would ask about her nationality and that made an identity crisis in her. She felt that her dark skin was dirty and tried to wash it away. She says "I could not shed my skin in the gray water" she swore she would run away to somewhere unoccupied with yellow people.

Wong concludes this poem with a note of self-realization about her identity. She reconciles herself with her Chinese American Identity, thereby dismantling the stereotype of the western beauty cult.

Exercises

Answer the following questions

1. What was life like for the speaker growing up and why?
2. Why is being Chinese as “limiting” by the speaker?
3. What is the image of the desirable woman that is seen in the poem?
4. What made the poet proud of herself and experience a sense of belonging?
5. Identify the images of self-loathing in the poem
6. What are the images of racial stereotyping in the poem?
7. Discuss the evolution of identity in the poem
8. How does Nellie Wong depict the dominant white culture and its encoded precepts of beauty as victimizing the women of other races?

Activity:

Listen to Nellie Wong's lecture series on "Women and Revolution Alive and Inseparable" on YouTube.

Read articles about racial and caste discriminations.

Glossary

Oriental chick: An Asian female, a girl with Asian proportions of beauty

China Town: An area of the city outside China where many Chinese people live.

Yellow Town: people having a yellowish skin regarded as an offensive term for Asians

Stereotype: standard conventional image, cliché, typecast.

Filipino: a native or inhabitant of the Philippines

Polynesian: the indigenous people who inhabit the islands

Gardenia: a shrub of warm climates with large fragrant white or yellow flowers often associated with purity and love.

MODULE - II

SPEECHES AND TESTIMONIES

Introduction

This module introduces two modes of communication namely, speeches and testimonies. Let us explore the possibilities of these as modes of expression.

Speech

Speech is a mode of spoken communication addressed to an audience. The content of the speech will be universal in nature delivered in a rhetorical manner. The purpose of a speech is to inspire the audience and make them think. The history of public speaking or oration can be traced to the ancient Greeks. The art of public speaking was considered to be an inevitable quality of politicians or people of the court during those days. Rhetorical style remained the main feature of oration during Renaissance and the subsequent periods. Other elements of a speech are tone and sound of the speaker, gestures and body language of the speaker, humour and vocabulary.

In this module we have two speeches. One is an excerpt from the film “**The Great Dictator**” by Charlie Chaplin and the other titled “**Art, Truth and Politics**” is the Nobel Prize acceptance speech by Harold Pinter, the well known British playwright and director.

THE FINAL SPEECH FROM “THE GREAT DICTATOR”

About the author

Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977) is an English comedian, actor, producer and director of silent films. His last film “The Great Dictator”, is the only talking film which he has acted, directed and produced. Most of his films are satires of the socio political conditions of his times. His characters portrayed the anxieties of common man in the industrial society with humour and pathos. His role in the film “The Tramp” later became an iconic figure in the history of film. “The Gold Rush”, “Limelight” “City Lights”, “Modern Times” and “The Great Dictator” are some of his noted films.

About the film

“The Great Dictator” is a comedy written, acted and produced by Charlie Chaplin in 1940. The film is the first “talkie”, non silent film of Chaplin. It is a political satire condemning Hitler and the fascist regime in Germany during the World War II. The given text is the edited version of the speech delivered by Chaplin’s character at the end of the film. In the film he played a dual role

1) as Adenoid Hynkel, the great dictator and the ruler of Romania

2) as a Jewish barber whose shop has become a part of the ghetto during the time of the war.

Satirizing on the similarity of appearance between Chaplin’s character and Hitler, the film explicitly criticizes Hitler and his Nazi Regime for the violence committed against the Jews. The speech urges all the humanity to unite and fight for peace and justice for everyone regardless of colour, race and gender. The speech also emphasized the power of democracy in safeguarding the rights of the oppressed.

Outline of the Text

Chaplin’s speech is addressed to soldiers in the film. He begins his speech by saying the crowd that he does not want to become an emperor or conquer anyone ; but to help people.

Human beings by nature want to live by each other's happiness, not by suffering or detest. He emphasises the ability of humanity to live in harmony regardless of colour, race and gender.

He then talks about how 'greed' has destroyed 'human souls' and divided the world with hate. Technology should have brought human beings closer. Instead human beings are more segregated. The society has become more mechanistic and lost the capacity to feel. The need of the hour is to become humane, and have kindness and gentleness without which the society will perish.

He addresses the entire sections of people who are suffering, and asks them "not to despair". The present situation will change and peace will be restored when people fight collectively against "the forces that divides them". He asserts the strength of democracy and the belief in collective strength of the people.

He asks soldiers to use their reason before blindly following any regime that dictates them. He reminds them that they are not "machines" but human beings who can love and have the power to think and act. Therefore instead of blindly surrendering to slavery, they should fight for liberty and justice.

He quotes from the 17th Chapter of St.Luke that "Kingdom of God is within man". Everyone has the capacity to create happiness and make this life peaceful and beautiful. Therefore people should fight collectively for peace and justice. He reminds the significance of democracy for creating a better world where everyone will have a future. Dictators, though they make promises of better world, in fact, enslave people.

The speech ends with the exaltation that in order to save democracy they should unite. They should all unite and fight for a world devoid of greed and hatred; devoid of barriers; and a world of reason where science and progress make human life better and happy.

Conclusion

Throughout the speech he maintains connection with the audience. The use of the words like 'we', 'us' etc... makes it easier for the audience to connect to the speaker. Repetition of words is another technique which makes the communication of an idea easier. Here the rhetorical and the repetitive use of words increase the intensity of the ideas expressed by him. An emotionally charged speech with a sense hope and love of humanity makes the audience look forward for a better future.

Activities

- 1) Watch the film "The Great Dictator" and listen to the speech.
- 2) Listen to famous speech "I have a Dream" by Martin Luther King.
- 3) Try to answer the following questions

Answer the following questions in or two sentences

1. Name the power that will unite the world
2. What is the role that Chaplin plays in the film

Answer the following questions in a paragraph

1. The power of Democracy according to Chaplin

Attempt an essay on the following questions

1. How does Chaplin critic dictatorship in "The Great Dictator"

ART, TRUTH AND POLITICS

“Art, Truth and Politics” is the Nobel Prize acceptance speech given by Harold Pinter (1930-2008), the English dramatist, actor, and screen writer, on 7 December 2005.

About the author

Harold Pinter is one of the well known modern British playwrights of the twentieth century. He began his career in theatre with the play “The Room” in 1957. He is well known for his play “The Birthday Party” (1957). Some of his well known plays are “The Home coming” (1964) and “the Betrayal” (1978) which were adapted to the screen as well. Pinter wrote plays for radio, television and film. He also adapted other’s works for screen. “The Servant” (1963), “The Go-Between” (1971), “The French Lieutenant’s Woman” (1981), “The Trial” (1993) are some of the famous adaptations. Influenced by Samuel Beckett’s works, Harold Pinter delineates the confusions and anxieties of a post World War society in Europe.

The given section, “Art, Truth and Politics”, is an edited version of his Nobel Prize acceptance speech. It was projected on screen on 7 December 2005 since he was not present at the ceremony due to his illness. In his speech he criticizes the US government’s war policies and its attempts to become the ‘Big Brother’. In the end he reminds the audience the importance to fight for a War-free, peaceful society for the future generation. The speech also reminds the role of an artist as a citizen to respond critique and condemn the injustices enforced by the State.

Outline of the Text

He begins the speech by distinguishing between real and unreal, true and false in the realm of art. But in everyday life it is important for a citizen to know the truth. In art, as he says, truth is “elusive”. The idea of a real truth can not be found in dramatic art. One come across many truths and they may challenge or reflect or critique the idea of a single truth. Therefore the function of language is ambiguous in art. For political theatre the situation is different. It has to be objective and should not take the form of a sermon. But as a dramatic form it should represent multiple perspective. The dramatist should be ready to present a number of perspective and keep away his own prejudices. But this does not work in most cases.

He then deviates to some of the contemporary political events to discuss the thin line between true or false in our daily life. He mentions how the war on Iraq was initiated on the basis of an allegation that Saddam Hussain possessed dangerous weapons. Similarly it was alleged that Iraq shared the responsibility with Al Qaeda for 9/11 attack and declared as a threat to the US. But later it became clear that these two were not true. Therefore truth here is what US understood and wanted to present before the world.

He then discusses in detail the history of war crimes committed by the US. Though the war atrocities committed by Soviet Union has been documented well, not much has been discussed about US government’s war crimes and foreign policies. He says that direct attack on countries has never been a policy of the US. Instead it preferred ‘low intensity conflict’ which meant a slow and a gradual intervention by planting a “malignant growth” and allow it to grow and then intervene with military. In the end proclaim that for protecting democracy military intervention was needed. Harold Pinter argues that similar pattern can be found in most of the military interventions done by the US across the world. He mentions the example of Nicaragua where the US has intervened.

US supported the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua for forty years. Later The Sandinistas, supported by the people of Nicaragua, established a government which was “stable, decent and pluralistic”. It was a welfare oriented government. The US after persistent attempts and bloodshed managed to overthrow the government thereby restored ‘Democracy’. Pinter cites several instances like this in Central and South America and countries like Indonesia, Turkey Greece, Chile etc.. In all these cases the death tolls of civilians were high. But there was never any mention of the war crimes and atrocities of the US anywhere. He says, “ It never happened. Nothing ever happened. Even while it was happening it wasn’t happening”.

He raises questions regarding the collective conscience against these atrocities. He then mentions about the violations done by the US at Guantanamo Bay prison. The tortures and physical violations committed against the prisoners at Guantanamo are against the Geneva conventions. He then questions how international community has responded to this. Millions of people across the world has been tortured by the brutal violence committed by the US. The case of Iraq invasion is a clear example of such violations and the number of deaths of Iraqi civilians were irrelevant and never counted. Pinter there criticises British Prime Minister Tony Blair and his association with US President George Bush in these invasions.

In this speech Pinter vehemently criticises the US Govt’s foreign policy from second world war onwards till the contemporary period. He also points out how the US becomes a threat to every nation with the history of bloodshed and violence that it has committed in these years. He ends the speech by explaining the role of the writer in these political turmoil and how vulnerable an artist in these situations. He argues that as a citizen, it is their responsibility ‘to define the real truth of their society’ with great ‘intellectual determination’. Such a responsibility is required to restore the “dignity of man” which is being violated in these war crimes.

Conclusion

Harold Pinter’s speech is an explicit political statement against the war atrocities and military interventions carried out by the US. The speech is a call for justice for the innocent civilians caught up in these warfares. It also reminds the artist community about their responsibility as citizens in condemning the violence of the State. The question of the role of the artist becomes relevant as the speech is delivered to the community of artists and writers at the Nobel Prize ceremony.

Unlike the earlier speech by Chaplin, Pinter’s speech is less rhetorical. It offers a clear and direct political critique of the State.

Activity

1) Listen to the Nobel Prize acceptance speech delivered by Gabriel García Márquez titled the “Solitude of Latin America”.

2) Answer the following questions in one or two sentences

1. Explain ‘ low intensity conflict’
2. Why did the US invade Iraq? What was the justification given?
3. Pinter says that truth in dramatic art is elusive. Elaborate

3) Answer the following question in a paragraph

How does Pinter criticise American foreign policies?

4) Attempt an essay on the following questions

How does Harold Pinter express his passionate concern for the victims of oppression in his Nobel Prize Lecture ‘Art, Truth and Politics’.

Testimony

Testimony refers to the affirmation for proving a fact. In the context of law, it may be written or oral form. It refers to declaration of a witness or a victim communicated orally or in written form. In the field of literature, the idea of testimony is significant while expressing the experiences of trauma. Testimonies in the field of literature refer to the accounts of personal experiences of important historical traumatic events (Felman and Traub 1992¹). In this section we have two testimonies. One is an excerpt from the book “Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster” written by Svetlana Alexievich and the other is a poem titled “Breaking the Silence” by Janice Miri Kitani.

VOICES FROM CHERNOBYL: THE ORAL HISTORY OF A NUCLEAR DISASTER

About the author

Svetlana Alexievich, Belarusian journalist and writer, won Nobel Prize for Literature in 2015. Her works are known for "polyphonic writings, a monument to suffering and courage in our time"². She is well known for the book “Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster” which captured the voices of ordinary people affected by the destructive and dangerous nuclear explosion at Chernobyl in 1986 and its aftermath. Some of her works are “War’s Unwomanly Face” (1985), “Last Witnesses” (1985), “Zinky Boys” (1990), “Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster” (1997), and “Secondhand Time” (2013).

The book, “Voices from Chernobyl: The Oral History of a Nuclear Disaster” (1997) is one of the early works that have recorded the personal testimonies of the victims of the tragedy. Journalist and writer Svetlana Alexievich interviewed hundreds of victims of the disaster and documented the personal accounts of the incident and their life after the tragic nuclear explosion. The interviews captured mainly the voices of the ordinary people who had experienced and suffered the tragic event. Written in the form of monologues, these narratives registered the intensity of the trauma that the survivors had to endure throughout their life. The subjective narration gives authenticity to the emotions of fear, anger and insecurity that is associated with the trauma of the event. The book documented in detail the personal stories of the victims from a broad range of backgrounds. The stories of the wife of the fireman, employees working in the reactor, people of the town, doctors and rescue teams who later succumbed to death are some of them.

Outline of the Text

The book which won the National Book Critics Circle Award, is a compilation of the interviews of the survivors of the accident. The book explores the effects of radioactive contamination which is relevant in the contemporary times as well. The section given here titled “A Solitary Human Voice” is an edited version of the excerpt recorded by Svetlana Alexievich, translated by Keith Gessen. The narrator is Lydmilla Ignatenko, the pregnant wife of the fire fighter, Vasily Ignatenko, who immediately responded to the fire at Reactor 4 of the Chernobyl.

¹ Felman, S and Traub, D. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis and History*. New York: Routledge, 1992.

² The Nobel Prize in Literature 2015. NobelPrize.org. Nobel Media AB. 6 Sep 2018. <<https://www.nobelprize.org>>

He later succumbed to death due to radiation. Lydmilla Ignatenko narrates the incidents from the night of the accident till the slow death of her husband and her life afterwards.

They were newlyweds and were staying in the dormitory of the fire station at the time of the accident. At night she woke up from her sleep hearing a noise. Her husband informed her that a fire had broken out at the reactor and had been called for duty. She remembers that the heat was unbearable and the sky was radiant. Nobody was informed about the gravity of the situation and the firemen did not take any precautions.

The next day she found her husband in the hospital. His body was swollen and puffed up. The doctors told her that he was exposed to radiation and she should not go near him or touch him as she was pregnant. Most of them admitted in the hospital were throwing up and they were put on IVs. Their body reacted as if they were exposed to some chemicals. The doctors and nurses who initially treated these firemen later succumbed to death due to radiation.

The Govt transported them to hospital no 6, at the Shchukinskaya bus stop in Moscow for further treatment in radiology department. The Head Radiologist Angelina Vasilyvena Guskova explained Lydmilla Ignatenko about the condition of her husband. His central nervous system was completely affected and skull was also damaged. She was prevented from going near him or touching him. The doctor also advised her not to have kids anymore as she might be exposed to radiation.

She narrates in detail the last two weeks she spent with him in the hospital at Moscow. At the hospital his condition got worse as days went by and the body began to change. Burns surfaced and the colour of the body began to change. The doctors already informed her about how body reacts differently to radiation. While narrating she repeatedly says that it is impossible to put down what she has seen in words. Her narration is deeply personal with feelings of love towards her husband, anxiety, fear, and despair.

Her husband died after two weeks and she recollects clearly the last days she spent with him. The doctors told her that he had become a radio active object. His body degenerated so badly that even the internal organs began to come out and he was choking of his internal organs. Similarly his skin and hair began to peel off and body produced stools with mucous and blood frequently.

One or two days before his death he asked her to name the baby as Vasya if it is a boy and Natasha if it is a girl and told her to raise the baby alone. Throughout the narration she recollects vividly moments of love and affection that they shared in the hospital. In one of those days he told her how he wanted to show her the fireworks at Moscow during Valentine's day. Throughout the narration she recollects their moments of intimacy during the last two weeks at the hospital. After his death the body was not handed over to the relatives and buried in Moscow with special care as the risk of radiation still persisted. Two months later she gave birth to a baby girl, 'Natashenka', who later died due to birth defects following the effects of radiation. The body of the child was also buried with special care. The State had relocated the survivors of the tragedy and gave them separate apartments. Some of them continued to work at the reactor. Most of them were disabled and many others succumbed to death due to radiation.

She concluded the story by saying that nobody would understand what they saw and experienced and it is difficult to put them to words. Though everyone talked about the tragedy what she wanted to narrate is the story of their love.

Conclusion

The book compiled firsthand accounts of the victims and rescuers involved in the disaster. The personal, concrete narrations of the trauma reveal the intensity of the accident. Therefore personal accounts of the victims become relevant in revealing the different dimensions/ aspects of the trauma.

Activity

Try to answer the following questions:

I. Answer the following questions in one or two sentences

- 1) What was Vasily Ignatenko's job? How did he die?
- 2) What did Lyudmilla name her baby and why?

II. Answer the following questions in a paragraph

- 1) Recount the story of Lyudmilla Ignatenko as narrated by Svetlana Alexievich

III. Attempt an essay on the following question

- 2) Discuss how Svetlana Alexievich capture the voices of the victims in her book, 'Voices from Chernobyl'?

BREAKING THE SILENCE

The poem, "Breaking the Silence" is a testimony against the injustices experienced by Japanese- Americans when they were put into internment in America during the World War II. The testimony is in the form of a poem where the poet narrates the accounts of her mother before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Japanese American Civilians in 1981.

About the author

Janice Mirikitani is a Japanese American poet, dancer and activist well known for her anti war campaigns and her works against institutional racism and exploitation of women and poor. Her collections of poetry include *Awake in the River* (1978), *Shedding Silence* (1987), *We, the Dangerous: New and Selected Poems* (1995), and *Love Works* (2001). In 2000, she was named the second poet laureate of San Francisco. Born and raised in California, US, she and her parents were interned in an Arkansas camp during World War II. Later they were shifted to Chicago. While growing up in America after World War II, she went through to emotional isolation as an Asian American, racial prejudices, and sexual abuse from her step father. Her poems often deal with the trauma of her past experiences. She is also an activist working for the rights of the marginalised communities and runs an organisation names Glide Foundation for providing support to them.

About the Poem

Janice Mirikitani's "Breaking the Silence" deals with the experiences of Japanese-Americans when they were put into internment during the World War II. The poem discusses the silence of her mother's generation of Japanese Americans about how they were dehumanized and isolated during the internment years in America. Most of them remained in silence for years and they were reluctant to speak about the trauma of war time experiences. The poet narrates how her mother testifies before a commission after forty years of silence.

Outline of the Text

The poet begins by informing the reader that her mother went to testify after forty years before the Commission on Wartime Relocation and Internment of Japanese American Civilians in

1981 about the experience of Japanese Americans in World War II and narrates how she testifies her experiences before the Commission.

Her mother narrated how their property was confiscated and was forced to sign documents before going to giving the authority to take. All their property was destroyed. The poet explains how her mother's silence was broken and how words were 'peeling off from her' body. All her work over the years were silenced when they were asked to give up everything. The poet laments that the colour of their skin betrayed them. They were singled out due to the colour of their skin. All her mother's hard work toil and hope were destroyed when they were incarcerated. For her mother, the silence of the 'crippled tongue' and the 'muted eyelashes' speak more powerfully about their subdued existence. For her silence expresses depth and intensity of their trauma.

After forty years she is breaking her silence before the Commission to claim her past. She speaks for those who had suffered in silence. They would speak about humiliations they had suffered; about war crimes committed by the government; about their longings and hope. She says how they have become 'clear like a glass' when they began to speak about their wounds and tears. They began to recognise themselves and the noises within themselves. The poet ends by saying that after breaking silence they are not scared and feel that their language is beautiful.

Conclusion

As said in the introduction giving testimony or speaking about traumatic experiences is significant in understanding the underlying scars of individuals in historic events. Breaking the silence becomes important as they develop a language to speak up or narrate the intensity of the unspeakable.

Activity

Answer the following question in one or two sentences

- 1) Who is testifying against the war crimes in the poem and to whom?
- 2) How does the poet end the poem?

Answer the following in a paragraph

- 1) Theme of the poem "Breaking the Silence"

Attempt an essay on the following question

- 1) How does the poet describe the trauma of the war time experiences.

MODULE - III

DIARY ENTRIES AND LETTERS

Introduction

This module introduces two of the important forms of personal narratives. They are diary entries and letters. In this module, we are exploring the significance of these two forms in the world of literature.

First, let us discuss diary entries. Diary is a form of autobiographical writing. It can be defined as a day-to-day record of events in one's life, written for personal satisfaction, with little or no thought of publication. Its ancient lineage is indicated by the existence of the term in Latin *diarium* which is derived from *dies* meaning “day” or “daily allowance”. Someone who keeps a diary is known as diarist. It is also to be noted that the word **journal** maybe sometimes used for diary. Apart from a diarist's personal experiences, diaries have been of immense importance for the recording of social and political history.

Let us discuss in detail the excerpts of the diary entries prescribed in this module. There are two diary entries - **THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL** and **THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE AGED 13³/4**

THE DIARY OF A YOUNG GIRL by Ann Frank

Introduction

Anne Frank (1929- 1944)

Anne Frank was a German Jewish girl who was the victim of the anti-Jewish law of Nazi Germany. She was the second daughter of Otto Frank and Edith Frank, both belong to respectable German Jewish families who were engaged in business for many generations. She had an elder sister, Margot. Both the sisters were raised in Germany in an atmosphere of forbearance and friendliness. In 1933, when the Nazis ascended to power all the conditions prevailing there changed and animosity towards the Jews multiplied. Though Jewish population was less than 1 percent in Germany, they were blamed for the social, economic and political hardships escalating in the country. The Franks and many German Jews left Frankfurt for Amsterdam, the Netherlands, a safe haven for religious minorities for many centuries. They were living happily there free from Nazi attacks. All these hopes shattered when in May 1940, the Germans invaded the Netherland and once again, the Franks came under Nazi rule.

As the situation got worse, the Frank family went into hiding. They moved to a place they had in their mind - an annex of rooms above Otto Frank's office at 263 Prinsengracht in Amsterdam. Anne called this hiding place as " Secret Annex". They lived there for almost two years until they were found out in 1944 as someone betrayed them. Consequently, they were arrested by the Nazi police, **Gestapo** (German Secret State Police during the Nazi regime) on 4th august 1944.

About The Diary:

She kept a diary from June 12, 1942 to August 1, 1944. Initially, she wrote for herself. One day in 1944, Gerrit Bolkestein, a member of the Dutch Government in exile, announced in a radio broadcast from London that after the war he was planning to draw together an eyewitness

account of the suffering of the Dutch people under the German regime. He also added that it would be made available to the public. Anne was impressed by this speech and she decided to publish a book based on her diary once the war ended. She began rewriting and editing her diary. She named it **version b**. The last entry was dated August 1, 1944. On August 4, 1944, eight people hiding in the Secret Annex were arrested.

After the mass attack, Meip Gies and Bep Voskuijl, two secretaries working in the building found Anne's diaries scattered all over the floor. Later when it was confirmed that Anne was dead, they gave the diaries unread to Anne's father, Otto Frank.

After long deliberation Otto Frank decided to fulfill his daughter's wish and published her diary. Initial publication was in 1947. Out of respect for the dead, Otto Frank omitted a number of anti-flattering passages about his wife and other residents of the Secret Annex.

Anne Frank, who was thirteen when she began her diary and fifteen when she was forced to stop, wrote without reserve about her likes and dislikes. The diary, addressed to Kitty, was a red and white checkered book that she received as a gift on her thirteenth birthday.

Outline of the Text:

Here we are analyzing two of the many entries in her diary.

The first entry being discussed is the one on Monday, 22 May 1944. She begins the entry by addressing her fictitious friend, Kitty. She expresses her concern for her fellow Jewish community. She explains the terror that was being spread due to anti-Semitism, i.e., hatred of Jews. The cause of this hatred towards Jews was because the Christians blamed them for the terrible punishments and a dreadful fate faced by them.

She also stresses that one must look at these matters from both the sides. She is in dilemma of the attitude of Christians at her place and that of suffering Jews. She feels that one day their silence will be broken.

With the regime of Hitler, German Jews who emigrated to Holland and Poland were not allowed to return to Netherlands. She is in dilemma whether all of them are fighting together for freedom, truth and right or whether Jews once again would become worthless.

All the attitudes of the people confirmed the old truth "what one Christian does is his own responsibility, what one Jew does is thrown back at all Jews". This implies that whatever the Jews did they were looked down upon mercilessly.

There is a mention about the attitude of the Dutch in this diary entry. She wonders how did the Dutch who are such a good, honest and upright people judge the Jews as the most oppressed, the unhappiest and the most pitiful among the peoples of the whole world.

She is on the hope that someday this hatred of the Jews will end and that the Dutch will be considerate and noble towards them.

On the other side, if that terrible threat becomes true, it will lead to a situation where the minority of Jews would have to leave Holland. Similarly, the Franks also will have to leave that beautiful country.

In the end, she shows her love for Holland and she wishes it would become her fatherland and she continues with that hope. In this, she expresses her agony of not having a land of their own.

The next entry to be dealt with is the one on Thursday, 25th May 1944. Two days later she began the diary afresh. Later, she narrates of the incident where the vegetable man was picked up

for helping two Jews to hide in his house. This has been a terrible situation for both the man himself and the Jews who are on the verge of fall.

In this entry, Anne explains the condition of the people in the society. The world has turned upside down. People with noble status in the society are sent to concentration camps, prisons, and lonely cells; also the other people who are young and old, rich and poor. People reached this trap through black market, by helping other Jews or people who have not gone "underground". Anyone who was not the member of NSB i.e., National Socialist German Workers' Party, did not know their fate.

She also mentions about the atrocities caused against the Jews. The loss of the man and the condition of the girls are miserable. The only way to solve this issue is to eat less. One way is to cut out breakfast altogether and have porridge and bread for lunch and to have fried potatoes for supper. Another alternative was to consume vegetable or lettuce only once or twice per week. She also states that it is better to remain hungry than being discovered by them.

On the whole, this diary entry gives an insight into the plight of the Jews under the Nazi Germany.

Activities:

- **Watch the movie titled "The Diary of Anne Frank" (1959)**

- **Answer the following questions in one word or a phrase or two sentences:**

1. Which country does Anne Frank consider her fatherland?
2. What is the Secret Annexe?
3. What is Anne Frank's only hope?

- **Answer the following in a paragraph:**

1. "What one Christian does is his own responsibility, what one Jew does is thrown back at all Jews." Explain.

- **Attempt an essay on the following :**

1. What were the atrocities committed against the Jews in Nazi Germany?

Let us discuss the second diary entry in this section. This is a novel written in the form of a diary through the perspective of Adrian Mole, the most famous adolescent hero in English literature before Harry Potter.

THE SECRET DIARY OF ADRIAN MOLE AGED 13 3/4

Introduction

About Sue Townsend

Her full name is Susan Lillian 'Sue' Townsend. She is one of the Britain's most celebrated comic writers, novelist, playwright, and journalist. She wrote repeatedly about the way ordinary lives are disfigured by politics. Her ability to entertain without compromising her integrity was a gift that defined her and her writing.

Sue Townsend was born in 1946 at Leicester, eldest of five sisters. She got married at 18 and her marital life was never a bed of roses. It ended in a divorce, that is, when she was only 23 and she became a single parent of three children Sean, Daniel, and Victoria. To look after her kids, she tried several jobs including working as a factory owner, shop assistant, receptionist and petrol station attendant.

Later she married Colin Broadway in her early 30's who encouraged her in 1975 to join a writers group at the Phoenix theatre, Leicester, where she became a writer-in residence. Here she wrote her first play, 'Womberang', which won the Thames Television Playwright Award. In 2007, she suffered from kidney failure and was put on dialysis. After two years, her kidney was transplanted. In 2014, she suffered from stroke and she died at the age of 68.

Her works include novels, plays, and works of journalism. In addition to this, Sue is best known for creating the character Adrian Mole and for the fictional diaries of Adrian Mole, a character who is allowed to grow up from adolescent to the middle-aged. The glory of Mole is his inability to see the funny side, his self-importance, and the way in which his diaries unwittingly accommodate his creator's social commentary. The Mole books have been translated in 48 languages and sold more than 10 million copies.

She is best known for her Adrian Mole books, a series of nine books, diary entries of a teenage boy named Adrian Mole. They are *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole, Aged 13 3/4* (1982), *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* (1984), *The True Confessions of Adrian Albert Mole* (1989), *Adrian Mole and the Small Amphibians* (1991), *Adrian Mole: The Wilderness Years* (1993), *Adrian Mole: The Cappuccino Years* (1999), *Adrian Mole and the Weapons of Mass Destruction* (2004), *the Lost Diaries of Adrian Mole, 1999-2001* (2008) and *Adrian Mole: The Prostrate Years* (2009).

Her second novel *The Growing Pains of Adrian Mole* established her as a bestselling novelist. Adrian Mole books are written in comic point of view. It is an entertaining account of various episodes in the life of Adrian Mole. The original name of Adrian was Nigel Mole.

The novels were adapted for radio, television, and theatre. *Mr. Bevan's Dream: Why Britain Needs Its Welfare State* is her work of non-fiction. Some of her major plays are *The Great Celestial Cow*, *Ten Tiny Fingers*, *Nine Tiny Toes*, *You, Me and Wii*, *Groping for Words* and *Ear, Nose and Throat*.

She is the recipient of many awards and recognitions. She received James Joyce Award of the Literary and Historical Society of University College, Dublin, and the Frink Award at the Women of the Year Awards. In 2009, she was given the Honorary Freedom of Leicester.

About the book:

David Williams wrote the foreword to *The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole Aged 13 3/4*. He addressed the book as "a genuine phenomenon". The fictional narration is so realistic that it takes the readers to an elevated height where they feel it as slice of one's life apart from being mere series of jokes. Mole tries to depict vividly the life of his family and make them live through the pages of his novel. Here are few bits and pieces from the novel that would be amusing to read and enjoy. All these bits depict the teenager's anxiety at the spot on his face, his self-pretensions on being intellectual, his worries about health, his crush towards Pandora, his girl friend and the effects of his parents' quarrel on him. The diary begins when Adrian is aged 13 3/4 and ends with Adrian's fifteenth birthday.

Outline of the text:

The first part of the diary entries are some of the days in the month of January. Here Adrian expresses his concerns and anxiety being a teenager. The first entry is on Wednesday, 14

January. He writes about his first day on joining the library. He got two books. One was *Care of the Skin*, *Origin of Species* and another was by a woman. That book was *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. Adrian felt he impressed the librarian and he added that she might be intellectual like him and that is why she did not notice his spot on the face.

Adrian also realizes that none of his teachers has noticed him as an intellectual. He also assumed his teachers would be sorry if he becomes famous. Next, he mentioned about a new girl in his class. Her name was Pandora, but she preferred to be addressed as 'Box'. She sat next to him in Geography class. He also felt he might fall in love with her considering his age.

Next entry was on Saturday, January 17. Here he writes about Dr. Taylor, his physician to whom Adrian shared all his worries regarding his spot, his family, and his poor diet. Dr. Taylor consoled him and often advised him that he was well nourished and to count on his blessings, especially for the National Health Service.

Another entry was on Tuesday January 20 titled **Full Moon**. In this, he talks about his mother who was searching for a job. He expressed his insecurity and dilemma about his vacation, his worry regarding who would take care of him and what would he eat all day. He was sure that he would be forced to eat crisps and sweets until his skin be ruined and teeth fell out. He even felt he was being selfish. He even had a notion that his mother would not be good at any jobs and according to him she was not brilliant enough as well.

In the latter entry on Thursday, January 22, Adrian talks about his mother's interview for a job. He put across his fear regarding the situation at home after his mother gets the job. It was because as she started typing, she failed to do cooking. He even felt his father should look into the matter seriously before their house gets shattered.

Next entry is on Sunday January 25. It is titled **Third after Epiphany**, which means revelation. In the morning he was feeling ill with all the worries and was unable even to write well. He even complained that no one noticed him of not having breakfast.

In the afternoon, Adrian had two junior aspirins and was getting better. He anticipated that once when he becomes famous and when his diary discovered, people would understand the agony of being a 13³/₄ year old undiscovered intellectual. Later, in the evening he thought of Pandora, his lost love. Finally, during midnight, he had a crab paste sandwich and Satsuma as it was good food for his skin.

Second part contains some of the entries in the months of February and March. In this, the first entry is on Saturday February 7. Here he talks about the dispute between his mother and father for hours. It started on an argument over the bacon in the fridge and went on to a raging exchange of words over the expense of repairing his car. As it became unbearable, Adrian went to his room and put his Abba record on. His father became furious and ordered to turn down the volume. When his father went down, he turned the volume up. That day no one cooked dinner so Adrian went to the Chinese chip shop and bought a carton of chips and a sachet of soya sauce.

The next entry was on Monday March 2. In this, he writes about his mother. How she introduced the matter of their divorce to Adrian. Adrian's mother tried to explain to him that she needed to find herself and that her marriage can be like a prison for some women. He felt his mother was becoming melodramatic. She was talking about 'adult relationship' and as life

becoming 'complicated'. However, he felt his mother was enjoying more freedom than what she was lecturing.

Later entry was on Sunday March 8. It was titled **First in Lent**. In this part, he talked humorously about his mother's attempt at attending assertiveness training. Interestingly, men were not allowed to attend the same. When Adrian enquired his father about this, he was told that his father was unaware of that and he stated that it was a bad news for him.

That Sunday they had boil - in - the bag cod in butter sauce and oven cooked chips for dinner along with tinned peaches and dream topping. Adrian's father allowed him to taste white wine, though he was not aware of it much. Later, they watched film on television.

Later, that day his mother returned and started bossing them around about the changes that are to be implemented in the house. As a part of it, she went into the kitchen and prepared a chart dividing the household works into three. In the meanwhile, when Adrian pointed out his inconvenience in helping her by listing all his existing commitments, she did not listen to his words and even did not consider him.

In another entry on Monday March 9, which was titled **Commonwealth Day**, he talks about the household duties entrusted to him before going to school and after returning from school. He had to clean toilet, wash basin and bath before doing his paper. He had to prepare breakfast and put washing in machine before going to school.

After school, he had to vacuum hall, lounge, and breakfast room. He had to peel potatoes, chop up cabbage, prepare food, serve it on table, wash dishes and dry washed clothes. He had to feed dog. Besides, he even had to iron PE kit, and clean shoes. Later he did homework and took dog for a walk. Finally, he refreshed and prepared three cups of tea. In this part, he explains the bad luck of having an assertive mother.

In another entry on Wednesday March 18, Adrian discussed his parents' critical stage of divorce. Both were fighting for the custody of Adrian. He expected him to be a tug-of - love child and that his picture would appear in newspaper. But then again he was worried about the spot on his face than the tug of war between his parents.

In the last part of the diary, entries are some of the days during the months of September, November, and January. The first snippet is on Monday September 14. It was again titled **Full Moon**. After several months, he writes this entry. Here he talks about his school dinner. He started to dislike his school dinners then owing to change in menu. A typical menu was introduced which included hamburger, baked beans, chips, carton of yogurt or a doughnut which was not enough for a healthy body. In connection with this, he put up an idea of protest against Mrs. Thatcher.

The next entry is on Friday November 13. In this, he talks about his girl friend Pandora. They had a serious talk about their relationship that night and came to know that she doesn't want to marry him in two years time. Instead, she wants to focus her career. Adrian was devastated by her words. He even told her to go for small jobs in cake shop but she insisted that she wanted to go to university. Finally, harsh words were exchanged between them and he says her words were harsher than that of his.

The last entry is on Sunday, January 10. It was titled **First After Epiphany**. Here he talks about his father. He feels his father looks more older at 41 when compared to President Reagan at 70. He says his father looks like dead haggard. Poor President Reagan has to carry world's safety on his shoulders yet he always looks positive and cheerful. It doesn't make sense for him.

On the whole, all these snippets give us a clear cut impression about a teenager who is obsessed with his skin, who is concerned about his lost love and who is hurt by his parents' strained marital life and furthermore, he believes himself to be an intellectual though he struggles with school work. Besides, he dislikes sports.

As we all know, Adrian is the main character and it is through his eyes we see the whole events with a humorous tinge. In a way, he is a kind of anti-hero, someone with flaws and that makes him one among us.

For Further reading,

Visit https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sue_Townsend

<https://www.bookreports.info/the-secret-diary-of-adrian-mole-summary/>

Activities:

- Write a fictional diary of a teenage girl
- Read Jeff Kinney's *Diary of Wimpy Kid* book series
- Answer the following questions in one or two sentences:
 1. How does Mole compare his father to President Reagan?
 2. Why is Mole anxious about his mother taking up a profession?
 3. Why does Adrian criticize his school teachers?
 4. Explain the expression 'latchkey kid'.
- Answer the following in a paragraph:
 1. Discuss the anxieties of teenage that the diaries portray.
 2. Discuss the outcome of the mother's 'assertiveness' training.
- Attempt an essay on the following:
 1. Bring out the humour in Adrian Mole's diaries and the effect of the relationship between his parents on him.

Conclusion:

The two diary forms discussed in this module are forms of personal narratives. The common feature of both the diaries is that they are written by two teenagers, Anne Frank and Adrian Mole respectively. We can see a glimpse of the foibles and tribulations of a teenager growing up into adulthood. In the process of their growing up, they come across various experiences in life-both good and bad. These diaries discuss their perspectives of life on political, social, and economic grounds. Besides, these diaries convey all the dreams, anxieties, confusions, surprises, and insecurities of adolescence in a serious and comical way. Hence, both the works have their own space in the world of literature, which open up a wide range of interpretations of the same.

LETTERS

Introduction

Another form to explore in this module is **letters**. A letter is a message written to another pertaining to some matter of common concern. Here we are talking about literary letters that is published because a well known person wrote it or because it defines the times in which it was written. These letters encourage readers to think critically on various issues and themes. It has become a way of self-expression and exchange of ideas with like-minded others.

Under this topic, we have two letters to study. The first one is *Letters from the Mothers of Nenjamparambu to the Supreme Court*, which is a letter dealing with a very serious social issue. The other one is *Letter to Adolf Hitler*, which is a political letter dealing with political strategies and methods.

LETTERS FROM THE MOTHERS OF NENJAMPARAMBU TO THE SUPREME COURT

About The Author

M A Rahman is a retired professor who is well known as an activist, critic and film maker. He has been at the forefront of the eco movement against Endosulfan. He has been the recipient of the Odakuzhal Award, an Indian literary award to honour writers for an outstanding work in Malayalam language. He was honoured with this award for the work '*Oro Jeevanum Vilappettatanu*'. In addition to this, his documentary *Basheer, the Man* won the National Award for the best biographical documentary in 1988. His other renowned documentaries are *Kumaranelluril Kulangal* and *A Paradise for the Dying*. His films were screened at the International Film Festivals at London, Paris, Taiwan, Estonia and Houston. His other major works are *Basheer Kalam Desam* and *Basheer Bhoopadangal*.

Outline of the text:

Letters from Mothers is an affidavit submitted to Supreme Court on behalf of tens of thousands of victims who are struggling with the terrible misery caused by the poisonous chemical, Endosulfan in the form of deadly diseases. Many have met untimely death in the last 20 years. Many children who are ill-fated, are dying day by day, trapped between life and death.

It was based on a news item that appeared in the **Mathrubhumi** daily of 9 May, 2011 with the headline, "New born infant of Endosulfan afflicted family dies". The child who died was born to Mamtha and Narayanan of Adhur, Kaithode. The child had a premature death at Kasargod General Hospital. He did not have eyes. Their second son, Naveen, a nine-year-old boy, was included in the list of Endosulfan victims. Their another son, Nagesh, who was four years old was also affected. In her third delivery Mamatha gave birth to twin, both the children died. As an evidence, the photograph of the eyeless child was enclosed along with the letter.

Another victim was from Nenjamparambu. The photograph of this child was captured by a journalist, Shafi Theruvath moving against the authorities of Kasargod General Hospital. To our wonder, this infant is not included in the Government's list of people dead due to Endosulfan.

Now when we consider Naveen, he is a child who survives with both his legs crippled. He is even blind. He received a pension of Rs. 2000 every month and that is the only evidence to prove that his family is affected by Endosulfan. Otherwise, no help from the side of government's laments his mother, "The Government took away the eyes of my child. They inflated his head and enlarged his neck with poison. I will bear no more children."

The above statement is the voice of every mothers of Nenjamparambu. Through this letter, they are trying to persuade the Supreme Court to the fact that there are many such mothers who lament on their fate in Kaithode Valley of Nenjamparambu. Spraying Endosulfan was stopped in 2000. Still, the children born in Karadukka Panchayat are malformed, even after ten years. Here, these mothers raise question to the Health Department. They accuse the health department of its carelessness and lack of sincerity. It is because of their lack of seriousness, there are many people in that place with family facing multiple deaths and diseases.

They also point out the truth that proper studies are not undergone in this area and consider it as a criminal negligence of the Health Ministry. \

In 2002, the documentary 'A Paradise for the Dying' was shot in Nenjamparambu. This hill is known as 'Minji Padave' in Kannada. There, they met Achuthan Maniyani, a Plantation labourer. His job was to mix Endosulfan. He has done this job for ten years and has lost his health completely. From Achuthan Maniyani's revelation it is clear that malformed children are born in Nenjamparambu due to the excessive spray of Endosulfan.

Another important fact is that the vast Nenjamparambu lies at the heart of Minjipadavu mountain in Adhur. Kerala Plantation Corporation's Minji Padavu estate (Adhur estate) lies there. The huge cement tank in which Endosulfan was prepared act as landing place for helicopters. It is situated in Nenjamparambu. Around this, the pure water veins of Nenjamparambu flows and these sources of water trickle in streams to the villages in the valley. They over flow over the top soil and the roads. There are two manmade tunnels in Nenjamparambu nearby area. A tunnel is called 'Surangam' in Kannada and in Malayalam it is called 'Thurangam'. These streams flow to Bellur village in the left and on the right towards Adoor village which includes Kaithodu. Organic farmers laid out this natural pond to preserve the virginity of the soil. The water collected in these tunnels quenches the thirst of the villagers in the valley during the scorching summer.

Long back, one of the streams of that hill was diverted to a village in the valley through the exertions of a hardworking organic farmer, Mammadcha. He lived on the side of the hill and dug tunnels. Armed with only a spade, he diverted the stream to the village down below. Thus the village acquired the name Kaithodu which means a stream made by one's own hand.

Mammadcha's daughter Hajira lived on the banks of that stream. Hajira's children were born as the victims of Endosulfan. One of her children, Umaibath Shariya is with an abnormally enlarged head. The stream which her father had transformed into a blessing for the villagers has now turned to be a curse because Endosulfan buried high above has flowed downstream. Meanwhile, it affected the Kaithode village adversely. Consequently, Umaibath Shariya, who endured tortuous pain for five years passed away in July 2012.

The Plantation Corporation, the Agricultural Scientists, the Central Agricultural Department and the manufacturers of Endosulfan could not evade the responsibility for this. An epidemiology study was conducted for ICMR under the Community Health Department of Calicut Medical College as per the direction of Supreme Court. They discovered high levels of Endosulfan in blood samples from Nenjamparambu.

Apart from this, the Kerala State Council for Science, Technology and Environment (KSCSTE) in its study conducted test to measure Endosulfan levels in the water and soil in the area, discovered Endosulfan particles in Nenjamparambu.

It was found that the life span of Alpha Endosulfan is approximately 88days. In the case of Beta Endosulfan, it is 40days. The presence of Endosulfan in the soil even after ten years shocked the scientists. Kamalaksha Kokkal, Deputy Director of KSCSTE was of the opinion that since Endosulfan remained in the soil of Nenjamparambu even after so many years there is a possibility of it having contaminated the food chain. From plants it must have entered vegetables and fruits, then animals, then to human body and wreaked havoc. From the study conducted it would be revealed once again that the countless deformed children who lead a death in life are creation of Endosulfan. The Central Agricultural Department, which is manifesting undue haste to export Endosulfan is actually playing with people's life. They never tried to resist this monstrous life destructive phenomenon.

The mercenary profiteers among the academic community of the Agricultural Scientists are ignorant of the geography or culture of Kasargod. They are trying to deprive the victims of even their basic humanitarian consideration they deserve. Shockingly, the manufacturers of pesticides have issued notice against the doctors in the area.

The NIOH study of 2002 has proved (equivocally) that these diseases are caused by Endosulfan. The writer even openly state that the CA Department suppressed this 92 page report and it is they who steered clear of trouble. Had the government taken the initiative to conduct autopsy of the victims who are dying day by day and undertaken legal measures to ascertain the levels of Endosulfan in the fat accumulated in the internal organs of the victims, matter would have become easier and more scientific.

Another shocking contradiction referred to in this affidavit is that the Central University was allotted 300 acres of land in Periya by the Government of Kerala. The situation was such that the land will be accepted only if it is uncontaminated by Endosulfan. The pesticide issue is impacting the rights of civil society.

On the whole, now the villages of Kasargod have become the setting for the macabre dance of death. On the one hand, there is the dread trepidation about the poison deposits in Nenjamparambu. On the other hand, the everyday dance of death. The affidavit was submitted before the Supreme Court on the firm conviction that those reasons would be enough to ban Endosulfan. Moreover, that affidavit was on the behalf of the infants of Nenjamparambu.

Activity:

- **Answer the following questions in one or two sentences:**

1. Who are referred to as 'mercenary profiteers'?
2. Why do women fear conception to abortion?
3. How did the village acquire the name of Kaithode?
4. What was the shocking news item that appeared in the Mathrubhumi daily of May 9, 2011?

- **Answer the following in a paragraph:**

1. How did endosulfan pollute the water bodies?
2. "Endosulfan spraying was stopped in 2000. In spite of this...malformed children continue to be born." Discuss the gravity of this statement.

- **Attempt an essay on the following:**

1. Discuss the impact of this letter on the crusade against endosulfan.

Letter To Adolf Hitler by Mahatma Gandhi.

Introduction

About the author

Mahatma Gandhi was a prolific writer and a very significant political leader. He employed non-violent principles and peaceful disobedience in his freedom struggle. In India, he is known as 'Father of the Nation'.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2 October 1869, in Porbandar, Gujarat. He was born into a Hindu Modhu (social caste of tradesmen) family. Though his mother was illiterate, his upbringing was infused with the Jain pacifist teachings of mutual tolerance, non-injury to living beings and vegetarianism. Later, he became involved with the Vegetarian Society. He studied law from London.

After his return to India from South Africa where he had been practicing as a lawyer, in 1915, he organized peasants, farmers, and urban labourers to protest against excessive land tax and discrimination. Assuming leadership of the Indian National Congress in 1921, Gandhi led nationwide campaigns for various social cause and for achieving Swaraj which means self-rule. Nathuram Godse, a religious extremist on 30 January 1948, gunned him down. He was assassinated on 30 January 1948 immediately after fulfilling his mission of Indian independence.

His major literary works include *Hind Swaraj*, one of his earliest publications. He also has an autobiography to his credit known as *An Autobiography - The Story of My Experiments with Truth*. He edited a few newspapers like *Harijan*, *Young India* and *Navajeevan*.

About Hitler

Adolf Hitler, a contemporary of Gandhi, was the Chancellor of Germany from 1933 to 1945. He initiated the Second World War in Europe with the invasion of Poland in September 1939. His autobiography *Mein Kampf* (meaning my struggle) promoted Pan Germanism, anti-Semitism and anti-communism. He was notorious for the holocaust, one of the greatest atrocities committed against humanity. At least 5.5 million Jews were killed in the name of ethnic cleansing. He argued for the racial purity and believed that the impure races had to be wiped out of the society. Followed by the defeat in the second world war, Hitler committed suicide.

Outline of the text

The prescribed letter was written on 24 December 1940. Gandhi begins the letter by addressing Hitler as 'Dear friend'. He affirms Hitler that he has no enmity towards Hitler and that his business in life for the last 33 years is to create friendship universally by befriending mankind regardless of race, colour or creed. He seeks the attention of Hitler towards the humanity who live under the influence of that doctrine of universal friendship view Hitler's action. Gandhi also states that there is no doubt regarding his bravery or devotion to his fatherland and that no one believe him to be a monster as described by his challengers. But doubt arises due to Hitler's own writings and pronouncements and that of his friends and admirers. The reason is his acts are monstrous and inappropriate of human dignity and unacceptable for those who believe in universal friendliness. Especially, humiliation of Czechoslovakia, the rape of Poland and the swallowing of Denmark. Those are virtuous acts for Hitler while for Gandhi they are acts degrading humanity. Gandhi talked about their unique position. He compares British imperialism with Nazism. According to him, the difference is in the degree. One fifth of the human race has been brought under the British control and Gandhi affirms that their resistance is not to harm the British people. The main aim is to convert them rather than defeating them in the battle fields. He also points out that their revolt against British rule is unarmed and also by using non violent non cooperation.

Gandhi says non-violence is a method that is indefensible by nature. It is based on the knowledge that no spoliator (one who damages) can accomplish his desire without a certain degree of cooperation, willing or compulsory, of the victim.

He also states that rulers may capture their land and bodies but not their souls. Even they can have the former only by complete destruction of every Indian, be it man, woman and child. Gandhi also says that if fair number of Indians- both men and women surrender themselves before the spoliators without any ill will against them, there begins the way to freedom from the tyranny of violence. Gandhi asks Hitler to believe Indians for they have been trained for the last twenty years.

Indians have been struggling for the past half a century to throw off the British rule. The movement of independence are becoming stronger than before. This momentum has been achieved by the most powerful political organization, the Indian National Congress. Gandhi assures Hitler that they attained success through non-violent effort. It was the right tool to combat the most organized violence in the world which the British power represents. Gandhi expresses his dilemma in seeing which is better organized, the German or the British.

Gandhi informs Hitler that they never wish to end the British rule with German aid as Indians have found a strong force in non-violence which if organized well can stand itself against all the violent forces in the world.

Non- violent technique is a 'do or die' step without killing or hurting and hence there is no such thing called defeat. It can be used without money and without the aid of science of destruction.

Gandhi warns Hitler that Hitler's methods and weapons could be used against him by the British or some other powers for his acts as he is not leaving any legacy for his people to be proud off. Hitler's people cannot take pride in the grandeur of his cruel deeds. Hence, Gandhi requested him to stop war in the name of humanity.

Gandhi reinforces the power of his method of non-violence to Hitler and he claims that he had already requested the Britons to follow it. In fact, Briton is a friend for Gandhi though, he seems to be a rebel for them at that point of time.

Gandhi made his proposal simple because his intention was to make things more practical and familiar. He also brings the attention of Hitler towards the fact that Indians have delayed their own peaceful struggle for the people of Europe who yearned for peace. Thus, pleads Hitler to make an effort for the same.

In short, Gandhi has intended to address a joint appeal to Hitler and Signor Mussolini. Gandhi met Mussolini during his visit to England as a delegate to the Round Table Conference. Gandhi ends his letter on a positive hopeful note by stating himself as Hitler's sincere friend.

Activity:

- **Answer the following questions in one or two sentences:**

1. Why does Gandhi address Hitler as friend?
2. How does Gandhi compare British imperialism to Nazism?
3. "We seek to convert them, not to defeat them on the battle-field." What does Gandhi mean?

- **Answer the following in a paragraph:**

1. How does this letter exude Gandhi's unflinching confidence in non-violent method of struggle?

- **Attempt an essay on the following:**

1. Discuss the relevance of Gandhi's letter as historical document.