

MARUDHAR KESARI JAIN COLLEGE FOR WOMEN (AUTONOMOUS)

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PG and Department of English

1st All UG – Semester - II

E-Notes (Study Material)

Core Course -1: General English	Code: 24UFEN21
UNIT – II 1.The Scribe 2. The Lady or The Tiger 3. The Road Not Taken 4. Snake	
Learning Objectives: LO1: To understand the various features of Indian Literature in English.	
Course Outcome: 1. Students will be able to examine the concepts of Indian English Poetry.	

1.The Scribe

Introduction:

Kristin Hunter's "The Scribe" delves into the theme of identity, illustrating how individual experiences and relationships within a community shape one's sense of self. The narrative centers on the protagonist's role as a scribe, highlighting the significance of communication and understanding in navigating the complexities of identity. Through the protagonist's journey, Hunter explores how storytelling and shared experiences contribute to the formation of identity, emphasizing the interconnectedness of individuals within a community.

Subtitles and Explanations:

The Role of the Scribe as a Catalyst for Identity Formation:

The protagonist's role as a scribe serves as a catalyst for exploring identity, as he is tasked with documenting the lives of others. This responsibility encourages him to engage with the

experiences of those around him, fostering a deeper understanding of his own identity. Through the act of writing, he learns to appreciate the richness of individual stories and how they contribute to the collective identity of the community.

The Interplay of Communication and Identity:

Communication is central to the theme of identity in "The Scribe." The protagonist's interactions with others highlight the importance of dialogue in shaping self-perception and understanding. As he navigates the complexities of communication, he recognizes that identity is not only a personal construct but is also influenced by the relationships and connections he forges within the community.

Challenges of Miscommunication:

The story also addresses the challenges of miscommunication, which can hinder the formation of meaningful connections. The protagonist's experiences reflect the difficulties individuals face in expressing themselves and being understood. These challenges underscore the complexities of identity, illustrating how misunderstandings can shape perceptions and relationships within a community.

The Significance of Cultural Identity:

Hunter's narrative emphasizes the significance of cultural identity in shaping the protagonist's understanding of self. The characters' diverse backgrounds and experiences contribute to a rich tapestry of community life, highlighting the importance of embracing one's cultural heritage in the journey of identity formation. This exploration invites readers to consider how their own cultural identities influence their sense of self.

The Journey of Self-Discovery:

The protagonist's journey of self-discovery is a key element of the narrative, as he learns to navigate his role within the community. Through his experiences as a scribe, he gains insight into the complexities of identity and the interconnectedness of individual stories. This journey emphasizes the idea that identity is not static but evolves through interactions and shared experiences.

The Role of Community in Shaping Identity:

The community plays a vital role in shaping the protagonist's identity, as his interactions with others provide a mirror for self-reflection. The relationships he develops highlight the importance of connection in understanding one's place within a social context. This

exploration of community reinforces the idea that identity is inherently relational, shaped by the dynamics of social interaction.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Kristin Hunter's "The Scribe" offers a nuanced exploration of the theme of identity, reflecting the complexities of communication and community. Through the protagonist's journey as a scribe, the narrative highlights the significance of storytelling and shared experiences in shaping individual identities. Hunter's work encourages readers to embrace their connections with others, recognizing the transformative power of understanding and empathy in the ongoing journey of self-discovery.

Practice Questions:

1. What is the main theme of "The Scribe"?
2. How does the protagonist's role as a scribe influence his perspective?
3. What does the act of writing symbolize in the story?
4. How does Hunter use dialogue to develop character relationships?
5. What role does setting play in the story?

Reference:

https://moorthisukumarpgtrbenglishliterature.blogspot.com/2024/11/part-ii-english-second-semester-2322e_5.html

2.The Lady, or the Tiger

"The Lady, or the Tiger?" is set in a kingdom in the "the very olden time," where a half-civilized and half-barbaric king reigns. The king is prone to "exuberant fancy," and as a result of his great power, is able to bring his every fancy to life. He admires the concept of the "public arena," where certain subjects can exhibit their valor before the entire kingdom. He has an amphitheater built where his entire kingdom can gather. Instead of being used for artistic performances or to stage conflict, the amphitheater acts as "an agent of poetic justice."

In the amphitheater, the king tries his subjects and leaves their judgment—and therefore their fate—up to chance. When a subject is accused of a crime, he is taken to the amphitheater. The king, who is seated on his throne on one side of the arena, gives a signal, and the accused subject is released. The subject faces two identical doors. He must choose one of them. Behind one door is a ravenous tiger who will certainly eat the man on trial, and behind the

other is an unmarried lady whom the accused will then marry. It does not matter if the man is already married or in love with another—if he opens the door with the lady, then they will be forced to marry right in the amphitheater.

The door that the man chooses decides both his fate and his guilt: in the king's view, the innocent men will choose the door hiding the lady and the guilty will choose the tiger. The king's method of deciding justice depends entirely on chance. Whatever the outcome, the accused person automatically receives his punishment or reward. In other words, "[t]here was no escape from the judgments of the king's arena" (47).

The king has a beautiful daughter who has a similar nature to himself. She is his favorite person in the world. She falls in love with one of the king's courtiers, who is far beneath her in status. When the king finds out about this relationship, he is enraged. He immediately places the youth in prison and sets a day for his trial in the amphitheater. He searches for the most feral and vicious tiger as well as the most beautiful lady in the kingdom for the courtier's punishment or reward. No matter how the trial turns out, the king will be appeased: either way, the courtier will be taken off his hands.

On the day of the courtier's trial, everyone in the kingdom gathers in the amphitheater. The princess's lover is released into the arena. He turns to bow to the king, but his eyes are on the princess, who is sitting next to her father. It is revealed that the princess has obsessed over this exact moment for days. In fact, she had taken the initiative of finding out which door would hide the lady and which door would hide the tiger: "gold, and the power of a woman's will, had brought the secret to the princess" (48). The princess also knows the identity of the lady hiding behind the door; she is one of the fairest ladies in the entire kingdom. The princess had been jealous of the lady before the trial began: she had seen her and the courtier exchange glances and hold brief conversations in the past. The princess hates her.

When the courtier looks at the princess, their eyes meet. He instantly knows that she knows which door holds the lady and which door holds the tiger. He asks her with a glance which door he should choose. The princess understands him: "[i]t was as plain to her as if he shouted it from where he stood" (49). The princess raises her hand and makes a slight movement towards the door on the right. The courtier chooses that door without hesitation.

The story does not reveal to us what the door on the right holds. Instead, it prompts us to wonder ourselves: "Did the tiger come out of that door, or did the lady?" (50). It also compels us to think about the princess, despairing at losing her lover. She cannot imagine him

succumbing to the "cruel fangs of the tiger" (50). Neither can she, however, imagine him marrying another lady in joyous celebration. The princess gave the courtier an answer in an instant, but in fact she spent many days agonizing over the answer. What do you think was waiting behind that door? The lady, or the tiger?

Practice Questions:

1. How does the story The lady or the Tiger? begin?
2. What would happen if a criminal chose any of the two doors?
3. What does the king become aware of?
4. Justify the Title The lady or the Tiger”?
5. Discuss the wit of the king.

Reference:

[The Lady or the Tiger? “The Lady, or the Tiger?” Summary and Analysis | GradeSaver](#)

3.The Road Not Taken

The poet was walking down the road when he found a diversion where two roads diverged in different directions. The poet felt sorry that he could not travel on both roads. He had to make one decision and choose a single path. At the junction, the poet stood for a long time and tried to look at the roads as far as he could. He wanted to see the roads in full and wanted to know about both paths. But, he could not see anything beyond the diversion as the roads were curved and covered with trees. In the stanza, the yellow wood refers to the forest with leaves which were shed on the road and had turned yellow. This indicates that it was the autumn season. Through this stanza, the poet wants to convey that in everyone’s life, there comes a time when we have to make choices. We have alternatives, but we have to choose only one. At that time, we see the pros and cons of the situation and take the time to decide which path to take. Similarly, the poet is also taking time before making any decision.

After pondering on it for a long time, the poet decided to take the other road. He felt that both roads were equally good. He started walking on the road which had grass on it and felt that it was a better road for him. The grassy road means that the road was not used, and the wanted wear means that only a few people have walked through it. After walking some distance on the road, the poet felt that both paths were almost the same. There was hardly any difference between them. Through this, the poet conveys that, in our life, whatever decisions we take or choices we make, each choice has some advantages and some disadvantages. Problems are everywhere, so we must be ready to face them.

The poet says that both paths seemed to be similar that morning. Leaves were shed on both roads, and they were still green. It means that no one had walked on the roads. He decided to take one path that day and the other path on another day. However, he knows that one way leads to another way. He could not go back and take the other path once he moved ahead with one. Similarly, in our life, when we make one decision, we can't go back. We have to move ahead with the same choice and face the consequences which come our way.

The poet says that in the future, he will take a deep breath and say that once upon a time, he reached a point in life where he had to make one choice. There were two options for him, and he had to opt for one. At that time, he decided to take that road which was less travelled by people. It means that he took a decision which rare people take. And that decision has changed his entire life. Through the poem, the poet sends a powerful message that people should decide wisely in their life because the decision they take will have an impact on the rest of their life.

We hope students have found the summary and explanation of CBSE Class 9 English Beehive The Road Not Taken Poem useful for their studies. They can also access essays on different topics, such as Essay on Republic Day and Essay on the Constitution of India. By going through these essays, students will get an idea of how to write a good essay for the exam.

Practice Questions:

1. Who is the poet of the poem 'The Road Not Taken'?
2. Why is it important to make the right choices in life?
3. Whom should one consult for advice?
4. Bring out the natural scene of the snake.
5. Narrate the incident of the author and snake in detail.

Reference:

[The Road Not Taken Summary: CBSE Class 9 English Beehive Poem by Robert Frost](#)

3. Snake

About the Poet

D.H. Lawrence is one of the most prominent figures in 20th century English literature. He was a novelist, story writer, poet, and painter. The poem, Snake is a part of the reptile section

of his book *Birds, Beasts, and Flowers*. The poem was written when the poet lived in Taormina, Sicily. The poem is not written in a rhythm. It is written in free verse like a story. The poem represents the modern way of writing poems.

Theme

The poem 'Snake' gives a detailed description of the moments when the poet encountered a snake at his water trough. First, the poet talks about how he is fascinated by the snake but then later fear creeps into him and he did an inappropriate act for which he felt guilty. He said that his feelings were quite similar to the feelings of the ancient mariner.

The poet describes how a snake came to his water trough to drink water on one hot day. The poet threw a log at it but the snake escaped into a hole. The poet felt guilty and criticized himself for his actions. What he says in his reaction is the subject of the poem.

In this poem 'Snake', the poet is full of admiration and respect for snakes. He regards them as a beautiful creation of God but at the same moment, he also fears them because of the education that he got when he was young.

It was a very hot day in Taormina, Sicily where the poet lived. The poet went to his water trough in the backyard of his house to fill water in a pitcher. The water trough was present in the deep and scented shade of the carob tree. There he saw a golden brown coloured snake drinking water from the trough. For a moment, the poet got scared but he was also very glad to have a guest. So, he patiently waited for his turn at the water trough.

The poet admired the beauty of the snake, which appeared to be harmless. He realized that the snake had just come to drink water and quench its thirst. It would return to its home peacefully. The poet had many conflicting thoughts in his mind. He says that his education in his childhood taught him that golden brown coloured snakes are poisonous and dangerous. His inner voice was coaxing him to kill him but at the same time, he was in full admiration of the creation of God.

The snake was unaware of the presence of the poet. It drank water to its satisfaction and raised its head dreamily. It flickered its forked tongue and also licked its lips. The snake looked like a God. Slowly it turned and moved away from the trough and probably it was on its way back to his hole. When the poet saw the snake moving away, he was terror struck. To prove himself that he was not a coward, he picked up a log of wood and threw it at the snake. The poet missed the target but the snake sensed danger and disappeared hastily inside the hole.

However, the poet stared with fascination at the snake but at the same time, a feeling of guilt for treating his guest in a dishonored way gripped him. He regretted his act of trying to hit the snake. In the beginning, he felt honored that it had come to his trough to drink water but later his fear forced him to kill it. He found his feelings of repentance quite similar to the feelings of an ancient mariner who had killed the Albatross bird. He considered his action of hitting his 'guest' to be a sin. He started hating himself and his human education.

The poet hoped and wished for the snake to come out of his hole so that he could apologize and make amends for his mistake. The poet thinks that the snake is actually the uncrowned king. So it hides in the interior of the Earth in exile. He felt that he missed a chance to crown and honour the king. The poet ardently wishes to crown the snake.

Practice Questions:

1. What is the snake doing?
2. How does the poet describe the day and the atmosphere when he saw the snake?
3. What does the poet want to convey by saying that the snake emerges from the 'burning bowels of the earth'?
4. Do you think the snake was conscious of the poet's presence? How do you know?
5. How do we know that the snake's thirst was satiated?

Reference:

[Summary of Snake: A Poem by D.H. Lawrence](#)