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# READER
# IN LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

## FOR JUNIOR STUDENTS OF THE HUMANITIES

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# CONTENTS

**UNIT I. Language**

# THE BEGINNINGS OF ENGLISH

Our understanding of the history of English began at the end of the eighteenth century when Sir William Jones, a British judge who lived in India, began to study Sanskrit. This is the ancient language of India. Like others before him, Jones noticed many similarities between Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and other European languages. For example: 1

| **Sanscrit** | **Latin** | **Greek** | **English** |
|---|---|---|---|
| pitr | pater | pater | father |
| matar | mater | matr | mother |
| bhratr | frater | phrater | brother |
| asti | est | esti | is |
| trayah | tres | treis | three |
| sapta | septem | hepta | seven |
| ashta | octo | okto | eight |

People had thought that Latin, Greek and all European languages came from Sanskrit, but Jones disagreed. He believed that Sanskrit, Greek and Latin all came from a 'common source', which had perhaps disappeared. His idea caused a lot of interest and other people began to study these three languages. Their work supported his view. We now know that Sanskrit, Greek, Latin, English and many other languages all belong to one enormous ‘family’ of related languages called the Indo-European family. 2

The common source - the language from which all these languages developed - is now known as Proto-Indo-European. 3

It is thought that a group of people called the Kurgans spoke this language, or dialects of it, and lived in what is now southern Russia from some time after 5000 BC. In about 3500 BC the Kurgans probably began to spread west across Europe and east across Asia. As groups of Kurgans travelled further and further away from each other, they began to develop stronger differences in their dialects. With the passing of time, these dialects became different languages. When some of them (the Greek, Anatolian and Indo-Iranian languages) appear in written form in about 2000 to 1000 BC they are clearly separate languages.

By studying languages as they are spoken today we can see some similarities which suggest that they probably come from Proto-Indo-European. For example, there are similar words in European and Indo-Iranian languages for members of the family *(mother, father),* animals *(dog, sheep, horse),* parts of the body *(eye, ear),* the weather *(rain, snow),* and for tools and weapons. From these and other shared words we can imagine something of the life of the Kurgans; they were partly agricultural, made clothes from wool, and used wheels.

4

***(from "The History of the English Language"***
***by Brigit Viney)***

***Comprehension questions:***

*What makes us think that English, Latin and Greek trace back to a common source? What is this common source? Who is believed to have spoken this language?*

# ENGLISH IN AMERICA

At the time of independence in 1776, Americans began to take an interest in their language. They wanted to be separate from Britain in every way, and to feel proud of their country and way of life. Someone who felt particularly proud of American English was a teacher called Noah Webster (1758-1843). In 1783-5 Webster wrote a speller, a grammar and a reader for American schools. The speller was later sold as *The American Spelling Book*, and was hugely successful, selling more than eighty million copies in the following one hundred years. With the money, from its sales, Webster was able to write dictionaries. In these, he wanted to show that American English was as good as British English, and that Americans did not have to copy the British. His first dictionary appeared in 1806, followed by the famous *An American Dictionary of the English Language* in 1828. This was longer than Johnson's dictionary (it explained about 70,000 words) and so gave American English the same importance as British English in the minds of Americans. 1

Sixty years earlier, Benjamin Franklin had suggested many changes to English spelling, and his ideas influenced Webster. In both his dictionaries Webster suggested new spellings, and many of these are now the accepted American spellings; for example, *center, color,* and *traveled.* Webster also influenced American pronunciation by insisting that each part of a word must be clearly pronounced; for example, *se-cre-ta-ry* not *se-cre-t'ry.* 2

So what are the differences between American am

British English today? As well as differences in pronunciation, there are some small differences in grammar and spelling. But the main difference is in vocabulary. Thousands of words are used differently. For example, the bottom floor of a building is called *the first floor* in American English, and *the ground floor* in British English. You can walk on the *sidewalk* in America and the *pavement* in Britain. 3

The American expression *OK* is probably short for *Oll Korrect (All Correct),* which was used as a joke by some young people in Boston and New York in 1838. Then in 1840 one of the men who wanted to be president was known as *Old Kinderhook.* His followers created *the Democratic O.K. Club.* They used OK to get support for their man (but he didn't become president). 4

There are also different expressions in American and British English. For example, the American expression *to drop the ball (to make a mistake), to be in the chips (to suddenly have a lot of money)* and *to go south (to become less valuable)* are not used in British English. Similarly many British expressions are not part of American English. 5

Some British people dislike the influence of American English, but this has not stopped thousands of American words entering British English and becoming completely accepted: for example, *supermarket* (1933), *teenager* (1941) and *fast food* (1951). 6

Although there are clear differences between the British and American varieties of English, the huge popularity of television, pop music and films has helped people on both sides of the Atlantic to understand each other's English more easily. 7

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why was it so important for Americans to separate from the British in every way?*
2. *How did Webster's American Dictionary of the English Language help to do it?*

***Tasks for discussion:***

1. *Give examples of the differences between American and British English.*
2. *Which variety of English, British or American, would you like to master and why?*
3. *Do most foreigners speak good English?*

## BRITISH AND AMERICAN ENGLISH

Which version of English do you find the easiest to understand? British English or American English? There's no way of saying which is *the* easiest or *the* best. And a lot depends on which version you're more used to, and who your teacher is or was: an American or a British person. 1

The way that languages develop is interesting. Words and expressions are continuously coming into and going out of fashion. And these days there are new words every day as we try to keep up with technological advances. 2

Of course, most of these new words come from the USA. In fact, without the influence of the Americans, British English would be a poorer language. We wouldn't have words such as "commuter", "burger", "chewing gum", "motel", "BLT" (bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich) and "teenager"; and we wouldn't be able to use expressions such as "to face the music" (to accept criticism for something bad that you have done). 3

American English itself is a rich language, with influences from all over the world. In the past, the settlers in the New World had to find new words to describe their experiences in America. Many of these words came from non-English-speakers such as the Spanish (who gave us words like “patio” and “macho”), the Dutch (who gave us “boss”), and the Indians (who gave us “moccasin” and “canoe”). These days, there are new words coming from America all the time. Why is this? 4

There are various reasons. For a start the US is the dominant world power in cultural, financial and economical terms. It exports its way of life - and we consume it. The US also has a great publishing industry, with books that are read all over the world; and America is home to Hollywood, the biggest producer and exporter of English-language films and television programmes in the world. Finally, the US is a dynamic culture, at the forefront of medical and technological advances, which constantly require new words and ways of describing things. So what are the principal differences between British and American English? 5

In general, the two versions of English are very similar. Of course, there are some words that only exist either in America or Britain. For example, the British say “biscuit” and the Americans say “cookie”; and there are even some words that can cause real confusion. For example, the American word “pants”, which has a very different meaning in British English. There are also differences in the grammar, and pronunciation, with many vowel sounds that are pronounced completely differently. However, most of these differences are minor and do not interfere with communication. All right, mate? Or should I say, OK, buddy? 6

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why do new words come from America all the time?*
2. *Give examples of the principal differences between British and American English.*

3. *How do you feel about American invasion on all fronts - cultural, financial and economic?*

## COMMAND OF WORDS

The man or woman who seeks to put his ideas across to others by means 1
of words must make every effort consciously to widen his stock of words. Paradoxically enough, the man with the widest command of words is he who can express his thoughts most briefly; for from his well-stocked mind he can select at a moment's notice just that one word which will exactly hit off his meaning. No fumbling, no beating about the bush for him — always exactly the one right word in the right place.

We can increase our vocabulary in various ways. The best way is by wide 2
and constant reading. Unconsciously we assimilate new words, gathering their meaning from the context. But this process can be speeded up by deliberate effort; looking up in a dictionary and noting each new word as we come across it in reading, in conversation, or while watching television. Never let a new word pass you by. Have a dictionary always at hand and *use* it.

Browse in the dictionary, too, now and then, turning the pages at random
and gathering anything of interest that catches your eye. You will find there is a 3
vast deal of interest to be found in words — their origin and history, the changes they have gone through, and so on. Kipling used to take a dictionary away with him for holiday reading.

But it is not sufficient to know a large number of words in a vague and general way. Words are precision instruments to be used with exactness. If
words are used loosely one's meaning is not conveyed clearly to the reader and 4
so what is written fails of its purpose. English is one of the richest languages in the world, with a word for every idea and shade of meaning the human mind

can conceive. But if you throw words about recklessly you not only blunt your own meaning, but you are also helping to spoil the priceless heritage of the English language.

Notice that we have to consider not only the *meaning* of a word but also its *usage.* That is why the Oxford English Dictionary adds to its definition of each word a phrase or two *using* the word correctly. You will find that many apparent synonyms (words of similar meaning) are not always inter-changeable; we use one or other according to the setting. Thus "friendly" and "amicable" both have the same meaning but their usage is very different, as you will see if you try to put each into a sentence.

Finally, you must master the art of using words with the maximum of effect. Here brevity is most important. As a general rule, what is said most briefly is said most effectively.

Of course, brevity is not the whole of the story. It will not do to use just any words so long as you use only a few of them. Words must be selected, weighed, set one against the other. Some words have richer and deeper associations than others. Compare "house" and "home"; "maternal" and "motherly"; "infant" and "baby"; "affection" and"" love", and so on. You can evoke or conjure up all that store of latent emotion by the use of a word in just the right place, especially if it is allowed to stand out without being smothered under a heap of dead words with little meaning left in them.

Merely knowing words in your head is not enough. It is not until you have actually *used* a word that you really make it your own. Words by themselves, although interesting enough at times as museum pieces, are dead. They come to life only when they are set with others the task of expressing living thoughts and ideas. So whenever you learn a new word, seek the first opportunity to make use of it in speech or writing — not dragging it in by head and ears to show it off, but placing it naturally into a fitting context. The word is then yours, part of your active vocabulary.

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *How does a man with the widest command of words express his ideas?*
2. *How can we increase our vocabulary?*
3. *Why should we consider not only the meaning of a word but also its usage?*
4. *What is the only way to make a word your own? Do you agree with the author?*

## BY WORD OF MOUTH

Have you ever thought how many words you produce and receive (hear or read) every day? What are the shares of spoken and written words in the language surrounding us? On average, if you aren't a bookworm spending most of your time reading, your total exposure to language can be presented in the following way: 1

Linguists and other academics have been studying languages for thousands of years. But they have usually studied only the written form of each language because it remained static on the page and it was possible to study the written language of the past. 2

In 1992 the British government started a project to collect a corpus of 100 million words of British English. For the first time in the history of dictionaries it was decided to cover both spoken and written language. Longman, as one of the participants in the British National Corpus (BNC) project was given the responsibility of collecting the 10 million word corpus of Spoken English. 3

Half of this total (5 million words) was collected from what were called 'context-governed situations' — radio phone-ins, parliamentary debates, business meetings, conferences, college seminars, broadcast sports commentaries, all 'more structured' situations in which the speakers were 'on 4

their best behaviour'. This type of spoken English is sometimes called 'considered speech' - spoken language which has been at least partially planned before being uttered. In fact, in some cases, the words had been written and were read aloud by the speaker.

5 The other half of the BNC corpus of Spoken English contains five million words of recorded conversations involving nearly 2000 different individual speakers.

6 To make this part of the spoken corpus as representative as possible Longman employed a market research company to select about 200 individuals — men and women, old and young, rich and poor, from the north, from the midlands and from the south. The number of individuals in each group represented the British population of native speakers.

7 The individuals were given cassette recorders and a set of cassettes. Over a period of up to two weeks, they recorded all their conversations, in shops, at the office, on buses, at the dinner table and even in bed! (Of course permission was obtained from all participants.)

8 These cassettes were sent back to Longman and were transcribed by teams of expert audiotypists. Each speaker was identified by age, sex, origin and social class.

9 One of the first unexpected things discovered about spoken language came from comparing the frequency of words in the spoken and written corpuses. Some words seemed to be much more frequent in speech than in writing. One of these words was 'mean'. It occurs about 2700 times per million words in spoken English but only about 450 times per million words in writing. Further analysis of the spoken corpus showed that 'mean' appeared most frequently in semi-fixed phrases like *I mean... Do you know what I mean?.. I know what you mean…See what I mean?.. How do you mean?...* These semi-mixed phrases in fact were used as if they were individual words. They became known as lexical units which are a particular characteristic of spoken language and never were described by dictionaries before Longman Dictionary

of Contemporary English.

The word 'absolutely' occurs very frequently in speech because it is used to agree with another person. It is one of the 1000 most frequent words in spoken English. 10

Sometimes we find a curious difference of frequency in spoken and written English in words which are very similar in meaning. The word 'roughly' (meaning more or less) is more frequent in spoken English whereas 'approximately' is more frequent in written English. 11

Would you like to try and make your own guess? All the following questions are based on the results of the Spoken Corpus research and refer to the real language used currently by the British native speakers of English. 12

1. Which tense is usually used in reported speech, present or past?
2. Which area of Britain uses more swearwords, the north or the south?
3. What is a 'wicked' ice-cream?
4. What is a 'sad' shirt?
5. Who says 'gorgeous' more frequently, men or women?
6. Which is more frequently used in spoken English, 'can' or 'would'?
7. Is it more usual to say 'permit', 'let', or 'allow'?
8. Which is more frequently used in spoken English, 'began' or 'started'?

***Answers:***

*1. Present tense.*

*2. The South swears more.*

*3. It is ‘very good’ ice-cream.*

*4. Unfashionable.*

*5. Women – 3 times more than men.*

*6. ‘Would’ is twice as frequent as ‘can’.*

*7. ‘Let’ 790 million, ‘allow’ 160 million, ‘permit’ 10 million.*

*8. ‘Started’ 256 million, ‘began’ 18 million.*

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why was it decided to cover both spoken and written English in the British National Corpus (BNC) project? How was BNC collected?*
2. *What were the unexpected facts discovered about spoken English?*

## SLANG

The word 'slang' can mean several things. It can mean: the words and 1
expressions used by a particular group of people to show that they belong to the group; language that is not acceptable in official situations because it is often too impolite, or too new; any new words, or new meanings of old words, that people use in everyday conversation. Slang is colourful and often funny. There are thousands of slang words and expressions in English, from all over the world.

Most slang changes quite quickly as the people using it get bored with it, 2
and as they need to create new words to keep puzzling outsiders. But some slang lasts longer: for example, *bum* has been used as an impolite word for *bottom* since the fourteenth century. Some slang used by one particular group may become part of general slang. For example, in the twentieth century the word *wimp* moved from American teenage slang to general slang meaning *a weak person.* Slang can sometimes become part of Standard English. For example, *row* meaning *disturbance* was slang in Britain in the eighteenth century, but now is an acceptable word. Other slang words change in meaning over time. For example, in American English *previous* meant *arriving too soon* in the 1900s; in 1920 it meant *tight* (of clothes) and now it means *a bit rude.*

Slang is a very inventive part of language: new words are always 3
appearing and disappearing. Some words are used only by the small groups that created them, others become part of national or international slang, and others cross into everyday spoken language. In this way, slang is an important source

of new words in Standard English.

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What does the word ‘slang’ mean?*
2. *Is it useful or necessary for foreigners to learn slang?*

## MACHINE TRANSLATORS

Foreign-language translation may prove to be just a bit more than computer can handle. From the Tower of Babel on there have been countless examples of man's inability to understand man. What hope is there then for a machine to understand man, or even another machine? Machine translators would be an enormous boon, especially to science and technology. A machine translator would obviously be a great aid. 1

In the 80s a machine was developed that can optically scan the written characters and print out the translation. It has a program that translates Chinese into English and English into Chinese. At a press demonstration the programmer asked for a phrase to translate and a reporter said: "Out of sight, out of mind." The phrase was dutifully fed into the computer, which replied by printing out a string of Chinese characters. "There," said the programmer, "that means 'out of sight, out of mind'." 2

The reporter was sceptical. "I don't know Chinese and I don't know that that means 'out of sight, out of mind'." 3

"Well," replied the engineer, "it's really' quite simple. We'll ask the other program to translate the Chinese into English." 4

And so once again a string of characters, this time Chinese, was fed into the computer. The translation was typed out almost immediately and it read: "invisible idiot”. 5

In order to make communication between man and machine as painless 6

and easy as possible, the computer is being taught not only to speak but also to listen. The Autonctics Corporation has built a system completed with audio analysers and all of the complex electronics needed to give a computer "cars" that will actually hear the words spoken into its microphone. The vocabulary is still limited.

During a demonstration, the engineer spoke slowly and distinctly a handful of the computer's words, and the latter dutifully typed them back. But on one word it failed. While counting "one, two, three," the computer typed back, "one, two, four." Whereupon the demonstrator snapped "idiot," and the computer, in a veritable machine version of British aplomb, calmly replied, "Not in vocabulary." 7

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What is your experience in using machine translators? Have they improved since the time the text was written?*
2. *Do you think foreign-language translation with the help of a computer is possible or adequate?*

## ON ENGLISH PRONUNCIATION

Within the complex pattern of regional and social accents, most of us have a feeling that there is some *good* or *correct* pronunciation of English, without markedly regional or social connotations. Many would say that the BBC announcers have such a neutral pronunciation. The BBC encourage this type of pronunciation in its national service announcers mainly because it is widely intelligible - in a way that a regional accent such as that of Scotland or the West country might not be - and also because it does not generally excite in the minds of listeners the strong prejudices associated with other, more local, accents. But it is 1

not an invention of the BBC, even though it is often referred to as BBC English. It is a style of pronunciation which had currency and acceptance in this country for a long time; yet it cannot be said to be a *standard* in the sense that it has been consciously accepted as such or has had its features defined by an official body. Nor can it be called simply *educated* or *cultured* English pronunciation, since many highly educated people do not use it - and nor all of those who use it give evidence of any degree of culture. It has emerged as a somewhat vaguely accepted form of speech without narrowly prescribed limits, as a result of the interplay throughout our history of many regional and social influences.

There has always been in Britain, as in most other countries, a great regional variety in speaking the common language. But, especially in the last four centuries, one type of regional pronunciation has acquired a social prestige. This prestige has been attached to the pronunciation of the South-East of England. 2

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What is characteristic of the most socially prestigious pronunciation in Great Britain?*
2. *What are the common connotations of the adjectives "good" or "correct", "educated" or "cultured" as applied to English pronunciation?*

## From "SPOKEN ENGLISH AND BROKEN ENGLISH" by G. B. Shaw

I am now going to address myself especially to my foreign hearers. If you are learning English because you intend to travel in England and wish to be understood there, do not try to speak English perfectly because, if you do, 1

no one will understand you.

Though there is no such thing as perfectly correct English, there is presentable English, which we call "Good English," but in London nine hundred and ninety nine out of every thousand people not only speak bad English but speak even that very badly. You may say that even if they do not speak English well themselves they at least understand it when it is well spoken. They can when the speaker is English; but when the speaker is a foreigner, the better he speaks, the harder it is to understand him. No foreigner can ever stress the syllable and make the voice rise and fall in question and answer, assertion and denial, in refusal and consent, in enquiry or information exactly as a native does. Therefore the first thing you have to do is to speak with a strong foreign accent, and speak broken English: that is, English without any grammar. Then every English person to whom you speak will at once know that you are a foreigner, and try to understand and be polite and to use elaborate grammatical phrases. He will be interested in you because you are a foreigner, and pleased by his own cleverness in making out your meaning and being able to tell you what you want to know. If you say "will you have the goodness, sir, to direct me to the railway terminus at Charring Cross," pronouncing all the vowels and consonants beautifully, he will not understand you and will suspect you of being a beggar or a confidence trickster. But if you shout "please! Charring Cross! Which way!" you will have no difficulty. Half a dozen people will immediately overwhelm you with directions. 2

Even in private intercourse with cultivated people you must not speak too well. Apply this to your attempts to learn foreign languages, and never try to speak them too well. And do not be afraid to travel. You will be surprised to find how little you need to know or how badly you may pronounce. Even among English people to speak too well is a pedantic affectation. In a foreigner it is something worse than affectation; it is an insult to the native who cannot understand his own language when it is too well spoken. That is 3

all I can tell you...

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Do you think G. B. Shaw's lecture is just one of his witty paradoxes or is there any common wisdom in it?*
2. *What is your experience in communicating in a foreign country?*

## "JEET JET?"
## HOW WE THINK WE TALK AND HOW WE REALLY TALK

Those words in the quotes are not something any of us would ever write. 1
You'd write "Did you eat yet?", but do you always say them that way? Of course if you read from a prepared text to an audience, you pronounce carefully, more or less what you see. But most of us are 'off guard' most of the time. In that context, if we pronounced everything exactly as we write it we'd risk sounding pompous and maybe even machine-like.

In the comic strips you see things like *gimme, gotcha, didja, ol' man, this 'n' that*. Would you ever say them that way? You're already protesting "oh no, I'm careful with my English, I would never say anything sloppy like that." But wouldn't you? You know that the words *give me, got you, did you, old man, this and that* are 'there', but have you ever really heard yourself saying them? Few of us ever have heard what we really sound like when we had no reason to be on our linguistic good behavior (such as speaking into a tape recorder), and most of us would be surprised to hear how we talk in our daily one-on-one conversations. 2

Let's review a few things that are part of everybody's relaxed colloquial 3

English. The common pronouns that begin with ***h-*** or ***th-*** regularly lose this consonant in rapid speech. We normally say *must 'e?, tell 'im, give 'er, see 'em, took 'is time, took 'er time*. (Sometimes a rhyme won't even work without this: *Along came a spider /And sat down beside 'er*)

This is what is called **assimilation**, and it's one of the most common 4
processes going on in all languages all the time. It simply means that sounds next to each other have a strong tendency to become more like each other. Look at a little of the variety of sounds in clusters that merge with each other, making some vanish as we talk:

*give me* sounds like *gimme*
*don't know* sounds like *don' no, dunno*
*act stupid* sounds like *ac' stupid*
*ask me* sounds like *as' me*

(and have you tried pronouncing *si**xths*** recently?)

Another common assimilation, which we all do without being conscious 5
of it, is when the ***y-*** of *you* turns into ***ch-*** or ***j-*** when it follows a ***-t*** or a ***-d*** we write but we say

*don't you* *don'cha*
*did you* *dija*
*would you* *wooja*

(and are you going to claim you have never said *You betcha*?)

All this has been about consonants, but many vowels disappear too as 6
we're talking. Often they're at the beginnings of words, but not always.

*is that a fact?* *'zat a fact?*
*this and that* *this 'n' that*

This process of assimilation has always been going on in English, which 7
is why in some words, this rapid pronunciation has become the standard one,

with the spelling showing how it once was.

*cupboard* is no longer *cup* + *board* but *cubberd*
*comfortable* *comfort* + *able* *comfterble*
*handkerchief* *hand* + *kerchief* *hankerchiff*

Nearly all of these are things you do all the time, whether you prefer to think so or not. Most of us, though, would not go so far as that title, but we would say something like *Didja eat yet?* Incidentally, all these natural colloquial 'shortcuts' we don't even realize we're doing are one of the reasons why computer voice recognition has such difficulty with words not pronounced clearly and in isolation. 8

One final thought. In all these examples of natural colloquial speech, we're not saying they're mistakes we should not be making. No matter how much we try to speak carefully, we can never talk exactly like we write without sounding mechanical. If you think it's somehow a sorry state that we don't talk as we write, actually it's the other way around: it's up to our spelling system to adjust to the realities of what we say. On the other hand, it would be an oversimplification to say that we should simply spell all these colloquial 'shortcuts'. We can't do that because we always want to have the option of choosing to say *give her, kind of, don't know, did you...* 9

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What is "assimilation"?*
2. *Is it an indicator of careless speech? Should we try to avoid it in our native language?*
3. *Should spelling be adjusted accordingly?*
4. *Do you think foreign speakers risk sounding pompous or machine-like? Do they pronounce everything exactly as they write it?*
5. *Why do most foreigners usually sound unnatural even if they speak perfectly correctly?*

## THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS

There are seven words that the English uppers and upper-middles regard as unacceptable. Utter any one of these 'seven deadly sins' in the presence of these higher classes, and their on-board class-radar devices will start bleeping and flashing: you will immediately be demoted to middle-middle classes, at best, probably lower — and in some cases automatically classified as working class. 1

**Pardon.** This word is the most notorious pet hate of the upper and upper-middle classes. To them using such an unmistakably lower-class term is worse than swearing. Some even refer to lower-middle-class suburbs as 'Pardonia'. Here is a good class-test you can try: when talking to an English person, deliberately say something too quietly for them to hear you properly. A lower-middle or middle-middle person will say 'Pardon?'; an upper-middle will say 'Sorry?' (or perhaps 'Sorry - what?' or 'What - sorry?'); but an upper-class and a working-class person will both just say 'What?' The working-class person may drop the 't' - 'Wha'?' - but this will be the only difference. Some upper-working-class people with middle-class aspirations might say 'pardon', in a misguided attempt to sound 'posh'. 2

**Toilet** is another word that makes the higher classes flinch — or exchange knowing looks, if it is uttered by a would-be social climber. The correct upper-middle/upper term is 'loo' or 'lavatory' (pronounced lavuhtry, with the accent on the first syllable). 'Bog' is occasionally acceptable, but only if it is said in an obviously ironic-jocular manner, as though in quotes. The working classes all say 'toilet', as do most lower-middles and middle-middles, the only difference being the working-class omission of the final 't'. (The working classes may also sometimes say 'bog', but without the ironic quotation marks.) Those lower- and middle-middles with pretensions or aspirations, however, may 3

eschew 'toilet' in favour of suburban-genteel euphemisms such as 'gents', 'ladies', 'bathroom', 'powder room', 'facilities' and 'convenience'; or jokey euphemisms such as 'latrines', 'heads' and 'privy' (females tend to use the former, males the latter).

A '**serviette**' is what the inhabitants of Pardonia call a napkin. This is 4
another example of a 'genteelism', in this case a misguided attempt to enhance one's status by using a fancy French word rather than a plain old English one. It has been suggested that 'serviette' was taken up by squeamish lower-middles who found 'napkin' a bit too close to 'nappy', and wanted something that sounded a bit more refined. Whatever its origins, 'serviette' is now regarded as irredeemably lower class. Upper-middle and upper-class mothers get very upset when their children learn to say 'serviette' from well-meaning lower-class nannies, and have to be painstakingly retrained to say 'napkin'.

There is nothing wrong with the word '**dinner**' in itself: it is only a
working-class hallmark if you use it to refer to the midday meal, which should 5
be called 'lunch'. Calling your evening meal 'tea' is also a working-class indicator: the higher echelons call this meal 'dinner' or 'supper'. (Technically, a dinner is a somewhat grander meal than a supper: if you are invited to 'supper', this is likely to be an informal family meal, eaten in the kitchen - sometimes this is made explicit, as in 'family supper' or 'kitchen supper'. The uppers and upper-middles use the term 'supper' more than the middle- and lower-middles). 'Tea', for the higher classes, is taken at around four o'clock, and consists of tea and cakes or scones (which they pronounce with a short 'o'), and perhaps little sandwiches (pronounced 'sanwidges', not 'sand-witches'). The lower classes call this 'afternoon tea'. All this can pose a few problems for foreign visitors: if you are invited to 'dinner', should you turn up at midday or in the evening? Does 'come for tea' mean four o'clock or seven o'clock? To be safe, you will have to ask what time you are expected. The answer will help you to place your hosts on the social scale.

**Settee.** Or you could ask your hosts what they call their furniture. If an 6

upholstered seat for two or more people is called a settee or a couch, they are no higher than middle-middle. If it is a sofa, they are upper-middle or above. There are occasional exceptions to this rule, which is not quite as accurate a class indicator as 'pardon'. Some younger upper-middles, influenced by American films and television programmes, might say 'couch' - although they are unlikely to say 'settee', except as a joke or to annoy their class-anxious parents.

**Lounge.** And what do they call the room in which the settee/sofa is to be found? Settees are found in 'lounges' or 'living rooms', sofas in 'sitting rooms' or 7
'drawing rooms'. 'Drawing room' (short for 'withdrawing room') used to be the only 'correct' term, but many upper-middles and uppers feel it is bit silly and pretentious to call, say, a small room in an ordinary terraced house the 'drawing room', so 'sitting room' has become acceptable. You may occasionally hear an upper-middle-class person say 'living room', although this is frowned upon, but only middle-middles and below say 'lounge'. This is a particularly useful word for spotting middle-middle social climbers trying to pass as upper-middle: they may have learnt not to say 'pardon' and 'toilet', but they are often not aware that 'lounge' is also a deadly sin.

**Sweet.** Like 'dinner', this word is not in itself a class indicator, but it becomes one when misapplied. The upper-middle and upper classes insist that 8
the sweet course at the end of a meal is called the 'pudding' — never the 'sweet', or 'afters', or 'dessert', all of which are declasse, unacceptable words. 'Sweet' can be used freely as an adjective, but as a noun it is piece of confectionary — what the Americans call 'candy' — and nothing else. The course at the end of the meal is always 'pudding', whatever it consists of: a slice of cake is 'pudding', so is a lemon sorbet. Asking: 'Does anyone want a sweet?' at the end of a meal will get you immediately classified as middle-middle or below. 'Afters' will also activate the class-radar and get you demoted. Some American-influenced young upper-middles are starting to say 'dessert', and this is therefore the least offensive of the three — and the least reliable as a class indicator. It can also cause confusion as, to the upper classes, 'dessert' traditionally means a selection

of fresh fruit, served right at the end of a dinner, after the pudding, and eaten with a knife and fork.

***(from 'Linguistic Class Codes'/"Watching the English" by Kate Fox)***

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What are "the seven deadly sins' as regarded by the English higher class?*
2. *How do you understand the term "genteelism"? Give some examples to illustrate it.*
3. *Can any of the subtleties pose a real problem for a foreigner? In what case?*

***Tasks for discussion:***

1. *Have you ever misused words in the way that caused serious misunderstanding?*
2. *Is the manner of speaking an obvious and reliable class indicator in Russia?*

## ENGLISH ACCENTS IN HOLLYWOOD

For decades now, Hollywood has been making films with goodies and baddies. Which ones do you prefer? These days there's a new trend to use actors with posh English accents as the baddies. Why is this? 1

Films with goodies and baddies are much easier to follow. It's all so simple as the world is divided up into light and dark, night and day, and good and evil. Traditionally the goodie is the good-looking man or woman; and the baddie is the ugly one who smokes. Accents have also played an important part in identifying the goodies and the baddies. 2

Just after World War 2 the baddies were the ones with heavy German 3

accents. Then, during the Cold War, they had east European accents. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, it was the turn of the South Africans. But more recently, it's been the English. And the English accent most commonly used is a posh, upper-middle-class one.

4 If you've ever heard actors such as Laurence Olivier, Jeremy Irons, and James Mason, or people such as Prince Charles and the Queen speaking in English, you'll know which accent we're talking about. For many British and American people this accent has a ring of sophistication, cruelty and evil about it. It's symptomatic of arrogance and snobbishness, and it's the accent most associated with the image of the English as cold, calculating and superior.

5 So which films have baddies with posh English accents? There are lots of them to choose from. *Rob Roy* (starring Liam Neeson) is a good example with English actor Tim Roth as the sadistic English gentleman who rapes, kills and steals his way across Scotland. Another film to watch out for is *Michael Collins* (once again starring Liam Neeson), which is all about Ireland's struggle for independence from the British Empire. Charles Dance plays the part of an English agent with a posh accent who's been sent to Ireland to wipe out the Irish independence movement.

6 Some other good examples include the film *Robin Hood - Prince of Thieves* (starring Kevin Costner), with the evil sheriff of Nottingham played by English actor Alan Rickman. In this film, the goody is played by Kevin Costner, who has an American accent; and *The Silence of the Lambs,* with Anthony Hopkins (OK, he's Welsh, but he can speak with an English accent) who plays the role of the intellectual psycho: Hannibal Lecter. Here are some other films featuring baddies with English accents: Basil Rathbone in *The Mark of Zorro,* Christopher Lee in Star Wars: Attack of the Clones, and The Lord of the Rings: The Fellowship of the Ring, David Warner in *Titanic (not* the version with Leonardo Di Carprio), James Mason in *North by Northwest, Salem's Lot and The Verdict,* Jeremy Irons in *Die Hard With a Vengeance* and *The Lion King,* Jonathan Hyde in *Jumanji ,* Peter Cushing in *Star Wars,* Richard Attenborough

in *Jurassic Park,* Sir Ian McKellen in *X-Men.* Well, that's enough about baddies for now!

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why are films with goodies and baddies so popular in the U.S.?*
2. *What is the upper-middle-class English accent associated with for many British and American people?*
3. *What other characteristics distinguish goodies from baddies in Hollywood films?*
4. *Do Russian films have a similar division of characters?*

## THE FUTURE OF ENGLISH

English continues to influence speakers of other languages all over the world, and to be influenced by those languages. But will it remain in this extraordinary position for much longer? 1

One guess is that the number of people who can use English well will continue to grow - to over half the people in the world by 2050, and that English will remain a world language. In this view, America will probably remain the most important country in the world and so English will continue as the world language. The growing use of the Internet, which was developed in America, and satellite television will mean that more people use and understand English. Better communications between more countries will result in more international business, with English as its language. More higher education can be provided as distance learning to students all over the world, with courses given in English. 2

However, there are people who think that the position of English is not so certain. Asia - China, in particular - may become wealthier than America. Even if it does not, English may not remain a world language. Although 3

English is the main language used on the Internet, non-English speaking users already outnumber English-speaking users. Businesses and organizations will have to provide information and services in a number of languages for them. Similarly, satellite television companies will probably provide programmes in local languages as well as English. Although international business may increase, some of it may be in the same region, and other shared languages maybe used instead of English. Some countries may dislike the spread of English, and try to keep it out of education and government. For example, in 1999 Microsoft agreed to provide the Windows 98 program in Icelandic after opposition from the Icelandic government to English programs being used in schools.

If English *does* remain a world language, how will it change? Will it break up into lots of different languages, in the same way that Latin developed into French, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian and Italian? Or will the different varieties disappear and only one kind of English survive? 4

It seems likely that as English continues to be used internationally more and more, the need for a standard grammar and vocabulary, standard spelling and some standard pronunciation will remain. Perhaps a new kind of 'World Standard English' will develop from all the regional varieties, or perhaps American English will become this standard. 5

On the other hand, speakers of all the regional varieties of English will continue to create their own words, expressions, pronunciation and grammar. The varieties of English may become more and more different from the World Standard kind of English, although they may not become separate languages. 6

The next chapter in the history of English is hard to see accurately - the world around us is changing so fast. Will we recognize the English of today in the next century? Who will use it, and how? These are interesting questions for all users of English, wherever they are. 7

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Do you think English will remain in its extraordinary position by*

*2050? Why?*

2. *Will the 'World Standard English' change?*

## IN VOGUE

A language does not become a global language because of its intrinsic 1
structural properties, or because of the size of its vocabulary, or because it has been a vehicle of a great literature in the past, or because it was once associated with a great culture or religion. These are all factors which can motivate someone to learn a language, of course, but none of them alone, or in combination, can ensure a language's world ***spread.*** Indeed, such factors cannot even guarantee survival as a living language - as is clear from the case of Latin, learned today as a classical language by only a scholarly and religious few. Correspondingly, inconvenient structural properties (such as awkward spelling) do not stop a language achieving international status either.

A language becomes an international language for one chief reason: the 2
political power of its people - especially their military power. The explanation is the same throughout history. Why did Greek become a language of international communication in the Middle East over 2,000 years ago? Not because of the intellects of Plato and Aristotle: the answer lies in the swords and spears wielded by the armies of Alexander the Great. Why did Latin become known throughout Europe? Ask the legions of the Roman Empire. Why did Arabic come to be spoken so widely across northern Africa and the Middle East? Follow the spread of Islam, carried along by the force of the Moorish armies from the eighth century. Why did Spanish, Portuguese, and French find their way into the Americas, Africa and the Far East? Study the colonial policies of the Renaissance kings and queens, and the way these policies were ruthlessly implemented by armies and navies all over the known world. The history of a global language ***can be traced*** through the successful

expeditions of its soldier/sailor speakers.

But international language dominance is not solely the result of military might. It may take a militarily powerful nation to establish a language, but it takes an economically powerful one to maintain and expand it. This has always been the case, but it became a particularly ***critical*** factor early in the twentieth century with economic developments beginning to operate on a global scale, supported by the new communication technologies - telegraph, telephone, radio - and fostering the emergence of massive multinational organizations. The growth of competitive industry and business brought an explosion of international marketing and advertising. The power of the press reached unprecedented levels, soon to be surpassed by the broadcasting media, with their ability to cross national boundaries with electromagnetic ease. Technology, in the form of movies and records, fuelled new mass entertainment industries which had a worldwide impact. The drive to make progress in science and technology fostered an international intellectual and research environment which gave scholarship and further education a high profile. 3

Any language at the centre of such an explosion of international activity would suddenly have found itself with a global status. And English was in the right place at the right time. By the beginning of the nineteenth century, Britain had become the world's leading industrial and trading country. By the end of the century, the population of the USA (then approaching 100 million) was larger than that of any of the countries of Western Europe, and its economy was the most productive and the fastest growing in the world. British political imperialism had sent English around the globe, during the nineteenth century, so that it was a language 'on which the sun never sets'. During the twentieth century, this world presence was maintained and promoted, almost single-handedly, through the economic supremacy of the new American superpower. And the language behind the US dollar was English. 4

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *According to the author, what is the chief reason for a language to be established as an international language? What examples does he give? Do they seem convincing to you?*
2. *What is necessary for an international language to be maintained and promoted?*
3. *How do you understand the phrase "the language behind the US dollar was English"?*
4. *Is the language behind the euro also English?*

## THE DIFFICULTY OF *–IC* AND *–ICAL*

English vocabulary is often confusing for foreign learners. One reason for this is that the language has developed from so many other source languages - Latin, Greek, Anglo-Saxon, Old French, etc. - and has adopted duplicate words (sheep, mutton) or even triplicate words (kingly, royal, regal). Usage has lent particular force to such words: sheep is the live, woolly animal; mutton is the same, but dead, animal's flesh. The problem for the foreign learner is how to keep track of usage. 1

One area of vocabulary where confusion is widespread is that of the dual adjectives with endings in *-ic* and *-ical*. When is a document *historic* and when *historical*? When is a policy *economic* and when *economical*? 2

When they first entered the English language, at different times over the centuries, these dual forms were often synonymous; past writings give evidence of their interchangeability. But absolute synonyms are never allowed to exist in languages; usage quickly attributes different semantic forces to apparent synonyms. This is what has usually taken place with the dual adjectives in *-ic* and *-ical*. The form in *-ical* has gradually been adopted as the more common, and that in *-ic* has either become old-fashioned or has come to 3

hold some rarefied meaning. One would refer, for instance, to botanical specimens and geographical data; but specialized usage speaks of a botanic garden and of the *National Geographic Magazine.*

***Comprehension questions:***

*1. Why is English vocabulary often confusing for foreign learners?*

*2. Why is it impossible for absolute synonyms to exist in the language?*

## PUNCTUATING SENTENCES WITH THE EYEBROWS

Everybody has watched someone talking on the phone, often without hearing a word they are saying (such as when you see someone in an enclosed phone booth). You see a constant stream of smiles, frowns, raised eyebrows, shakes of the head, nods, hand gestures and often arm swinging. Why, when the listener on the other end obviously can't see a thing? 1

The simplest answer is that any of us would have to concentrate hard NOT to do this. All these expressions and gestures are such an inseparable part of speaking that it would take a mighty effort to separate them. Something we're hardly ever called on to do, fortunately. When we listen to a phone conversation or the radio, normally we get most of the clues we need as to what is being communicated. Even though an endless variety of facial expressions and gesticulations is accompanying the spoken words unseen. 2

But haven't you ever felt a vague sense of insecurity after a phone conversation on a delicate subject with someone you didn't know too well? Did you find yourself wondering whether you really got all that was being communicated between the lines? If so, this would suggest how dependent we all are on watching a person's face and body language for clues that may be crucial to grasping what is really being said. 3

Who hasn't had the experience at one time or another of hearing a 4

spoken message and at the same time seeing the speaker convey unambiguously that quite a different thing was intended? People may of course lie, but they may also say something that sounds awful but with a wink of an eye that takes all the sting out, or something that sounds complimentary but is accompanied by a grimace.

Most of the time we spend talking and listening to someone, we're watching their face - either in person or on TV. We're in constant close contact not only with the stream of speech but with the body language accompanying it. We're almost always completely unaware of how many extra clues we're getting to meanings and the speaker's feelings about what he's saying, as well as how much help we're getting in a noisy environment. 5

Most often, visual clues simply serve to underline words. Eyes widening or lighting up, eyebrows raised at significant points in the sentence, head tipping, an endless fund of hand gestures, arm motions - they all provide an important sort of `punctuation' we hardly think consciously about. We're taking in all these clues unconsciously all the time. 6

Try a little experiment. Ask someone to say this sentence as if they meant it, and watch carefully the expressions and gestures that go along with it: "Just imagine, it zipped around the corner, hit the fence with the most terrific crash you ever heard, and went on its way!!" 7

Did you see anything special timed with the words zipped, hit, and crash? Doesn't it feel natural to raise the eyebrows in disbelief on those last five words? 8

The more carefully we study these, the more they look like an elaborate and exacting language in their own right. Interestingly, they coordinate with the spoken words in a very close way. So gesture and expression have their own syntax which exactly matches the syntax of the words. Even though another language may have a totally different set of gestural habits, still these gestural `punctuations' tend to be very similar in all societies. 9

Incidentally, we sometimes indulge in a condescending smile at speakers 10

of some languages who `talk with their hands' a lot. But we shouldn't let this fool us into thinking that we need only the well-turned phrases themselves. We ALL show which words in a sentence we intend to be the important ones by all the means you just observed (did you try it, at least watching yourself in a mirror?).

Anyone who has had to learn a foreign language - and that goes for most of us - knows what valuable clues to understanding they can get from expression and gesture. More often than we're aware, these `extralinguistic' clues put us on the right track in understanding what is being communicated. 11

There is probably no heavier reliance put on expression and gesture than when we're in a foreign country where we don't understand the language. Most of us have had the gratifying experience of communicating straightforward wishes by nothing more than gesturing and watching expressions. But we find it surprisingly difficult to detach this from vocalization, understood or not. When two people who don't understand a word of each other's language try to communicate with each other by gesture and expression only, it's a safe bet that both will go ahead and talk out loud anyway.

Those with hearing handicaps who must depend heavily on `lip reading' are doing a great deal more than just watching lips. Since only a small percentage of speech sounds makes use of the lips themselves (`b ' or `m ' with lips pressed against each other, `o ' and `w ' with the lips pursed), they are in fact making full use of all these clues we have been talking about. 12

So in our everyday talking and listening, we're all masters of the art of mime without even being conscious of it. 13

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why do people use facial expressions and gestures even when they cannot be seen by their interlocutors?*
2. *Is effective communication possible without these extralinguistic elements?*

3. *What is meant by “punctuation” through vision clues?*
4. *What other elements does the body language include? What messages can they send?*

***Tasks for discussion:***

1. *Are you an active and expert user of the body language? Do you usually use it consciously or unconsciously?*
2. *Do you find speaking on the phone in a foreign language difficult?*
3. *Have you ever tried communicating with someone whose language you do not know? How did you do it?*

## "We Call that Symbol ‘@’ ", she said.
## What do you think she called it?

If she was speaking English, she probably said "at". But have you ever 1
stopped a moment to wonder what people in other countries call it? In just the last few years, use of it has spread quickly all around the globe, making it necessary for people everywhere to find something to call it.

Fortunately someone has put a lot of effort into asking speakers of a great 2
many languages what they call `@' and it is fascinating to see what colorful inventiveness the naming of this symbol has called forth. When you read the following discussion, remember that `@' has become a daily fact of life for many of us so quickly that most languages (not excepting English!) haven't had time yet to settle on one single name. That's why some languages appear two or three times.

You'll hardly be surprised to hear that some languages simply use the 3
English word `*at*', usually with some modification in pronunciation. For instance Arabic, Chinese, Farsi (Iran), Finnish, Greek, Indonesian, Japanese, Hebrew, Norwegian.

We first get a real multi-cultural experience, though, when we see how 4
many languages use a name expressing something about how people see the SHAPE of the symbol. In some countries, it's seen as resembling an ear. Speakers of Swedish prefer to see an elephant's ear. In Turkish they see the rose flower.

But most people around the world see an ANIMAL in it, and here it's 5
amusing to note which animals are seen, and tempting to speculate as to why. Let's look at a few. Turkish is the only language in which people call it a *horse*, not because anybody thinks it looks like one but simply because of the coincidence that the animal is called *at* in their language. In Russian it's often called *sobachka* `little dog'.

Cultures - especially neighbors of each other - have always borrowed 6
artefacts back and forth, and usually either the name is borrowed along with it, some existing word is broadened, or a new one is invented. In the past this slow assimilation and `naturalization' of words often took centuries, but by comparison the `@' symbol has been borrowed around the whole world at lightning speed. So we have a front-row seat to watch name-giving while it is still going on, with no time at all for the normal slow cultural diffusion.

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *What do people in different countries call '@'?*
2. *What does the shape of this symbol remind them of?*

***Tasks for discussion:***

*Can you think of other international symbols which are called differently in different cultures?*

# IS ‘PIDGIN ENGLISH’ JUST A MAKESHIFT?

Let's consider for a moment what a **pidgin** language is. For starters, the name probably has nothing to do with the bird. It's most likely `business' as pronounced by speakers of languages who couldn't wrap their tongues around our word. So we'll assume it's `Business English'. Many peoples around the world regularly use a modified form of English to each other when they don't speak each other's language and need to get some basic trading done. 1

Here's what a couple of simple sentences in Pidgin English look like. We'll write the sample three ways: (1) as this particular language is customarily written, (2) as the words would look if spelled in standard English, and (3) a translation of it. 2

(1)*Long moningtaim Dogare i kirap long slip na i baim bas i go long taun bilong painim wok. Em i raun i stap na i kamap long opis bilong wanpela kampani masta*. 3

(2)Along morning-time Dogare he get-up along sleep and he buy'im bus he go along town belong find'im work. Him he round he stop and he come-up along office belong one-fella company master. 4

(3)In the morning Dogare woke up and caught the bus to town to look for work. He walked around and arrived at the office of the manager of a company. 5

There are two reasons why the sentences in italics look so alien to us. One is simply that the pidgin is spelled phonetically, following the ways the speakers of these unrelated languages pronounce the English words. For instance, *pain* `find', *pela* `fella' and *opis* `office' show that the speakers have no sound `**f**' in their own languages, so they hear a `**p**' as the closest thing to it. The other and more interesting reason is that our familiar English grammatical patterns are only partially being followed. The English language is here being extensively modified to feel more comfortable to the speakers of the languages using it for communication - not with us but among 6

themselves.

The Pidgin English illustrated above is the one known as **Tok Pisin** (are you ready to guess which two English words those are?). It is widely spoken in Papua New Guinea, a country that is home to hundreds of mutually unintelligible languages, none of which dominates. It is a popular notion among us that pidgins are corrupted and rudimentary English, hardly above the gesture-and-grunt level. But they're not primitive or lazily used languages. They are creative and have evolved a complex set of phonetic and grammatical rules of their own. **Tok Pisin**, for instance, has a highly developed and standardized vocabulary and grammar, and allows its speakers the full range of expression that any language does. Today it is extensively used in press and broadcast media. 7

Did you know that there are dozens of English-based pidgins all around the world? They are most common in three areas: Melanesia (centered on the large island of New Guinea in the South Pacific), the coastal region of West Africa, and the West Indies. English is by no means the only widely-spoken language that has provided the basis for a pidgin. Spanish, Portuguese, French, Arabic, Swahili and Malay have all served this purpose. 8

You might be about to ask "What's the difference between a **pidgin** and a **creole language**?" Occasionally it happens that a pidgin language proves so effective that it gradually edges out the native languages of the speakers, and itself becomes their dominant and most fluent language - and eventually their only one. When a language has evolved in this way, we no longer call it a `pidgin' but instead a `**creolized language**' or simply a `**creole**'. Tok Pisin is already beginning to become a creole, the native language of some of its speakers. But the best-known one is probably Creole French, the standard language of Haiti. It is French as modified by people who were originally speakers of African languages. In fact, the entire Caribbean area was settled in relatively recent times by populations brought in from elsewhere, whose arrival overwhelmed the original Indian peoples. It has been said that there is 9

hardly any Caribbean island that is not home to some pidgin or creole language.

All this shows once again the irresistible strength of our urge to communicate with each other, across all language barriers. Since we have no way of knowing the scale of pidginization and creolization in the past, this may even be one of the ways in which languages came into being.

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *When and why do pidgin languages appear?*
2. *What language is spoken in Papua New Guinea? Is it just a corrupted and rudimentary English?*
3. *What is the difference between a pidgin and a creole language?*

## LITERACY LEVEL FALLING

At the turn of the century, literacy levels were understandably low. Extreme poverty and a lack of free educational facilities meant that only those born into families who were sufficiently wealthy and sufficiently concerned, received any sort of an education. Fortunately, there were those who believed that the alleviation of illiteracy and ignorance was the only effective way to combat poverty and various other associated social ills. They campaigned to change attitudes, and consequently legislation, in the hope that eventually everyone, regardless of social and financial status, would have the right to an education, be it ever so rudimentary, even in times of national crisis like the Second World War. Taking all this into consideration, how is it then that today when education is compulsory until the age of sixteen, literacy levels are once again falling?

A fundamental factor is the lack of government spending on education.

The scholastic system has become like a vast and complex machine and, like a piece of machinery, needs to be regularly oiled and constantly maintained. However, lack of funding has made this task impossible. Unable to afford the yearly salary expenditure, local authorities have forced schools to reduce their quotas of teachers and, as a result, classes have grown in size and overcrowding is the norm. Textbooks are either antiquated or scarce, and students end up using inadequate materials, sharing books or doing without. It may be argued that these factors are not sufficient in themselves to render students completely illiterate but they very definitely play a part for example in discouraging low-ability students and enabling individuals to leave school having received only a very basic and sketchy education.

Accompanying the problem of reduction in funding levels is the 3
problem of city growth. As the sizes of our cities grow, so does the concentration of students attending existing schools. In inner city areas, overworked teachers in increasingly overcrowded classrooms simply do not have the facilities nor the time to devote to individual students. As a result, more and more "problem" students are being allowed to slip though the net. The term "problem" students are a broad one and one which may include school-refuses, ' those individuals from one-parent or "problem" families, those who have learning difficulties - the list is endless. The withdrawal or reduction of funding means that cutbacks must be made within schools and, as it is obvious that they cannot be made within the mainstream structure, they must occur in the "optional extras" departments, which are the domain of the special needs teachers. The axing of these departments obviously has serious consequences for those children who simply cannot cope within the normal teaching structure. Their particular problems ignored, these children either lapse into apathy, become disruptive or simply stop attending - all of which obviously retards their education and may result in low or negligible levels of literacy.

A final factor contributing to the decline and fall of literacy, but one, 4

which may be worth considering, is the fact that we are living in the technological age. In terms of entertainment and communication, people are having to rely less and less on their own resources and efforts to maintain a normal social existence. Video, multi-channel television systems and sophisticated computer games have invaded our homes and are rapidly becoming part of the everyday fabric of life, taking away the necessity to indulge in activities requiring more imaginative effort. Why struggle with a novel when you can watch a film? Why write to a friend and wait for a reply when an easily remembered sequence of numbers will magically enable you to speak to them? Why indeed? Perhaps because, by not encouraging our children to exercise basic skills, we are acquiescing in the decline of literacy.

***Comprehension questions:***

1. *Why were literacy levels low at the turn of the previous century? Why are they once again falling now?*
2. *What is to be done if we don't want to put up with the reducing literacy level in the technological age?*
3. *Why struggle with a novel when you can watch a film?*

***Tasks for discussion:***

1. *Is there anything basically wrong with getting information through video, TV or computers? Can they replace books?*
2. *What aspects should the Russian National Project on education focus on?*

Supplement 1.

# British and American Poetry

## Chrisopher Marlowe

Christopher Marlowe was born in Canterbury in 1564, the same year as his great rival William Shakespeare. Though his father was only a shoemaker, Marlowe was educated at King's School and awarded a scholarship to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. While at Corpus Christi he studied philosophy, history, and theology.

At this point Marlowe disappeared from university, and later speculation was that he was recruited by the government for espionage work. When he returned to Cambridge, Marlowe was refused his M.A. degree due to suspected Catholic sympathies, until the Queen's Privy Council intervened on his behalf.

In 1587 Marlowe left Cambridge again, this time for the life of a London playwright. His first major work, Tamburlaine the Great, was performed in that year.

Christopher Marlowe was a quick-tempered man, quick to anger and quick to make enemies. He spent two weeks in Newgate Gaol in 1589, charged with murder, though he was later acquitted. Although suspected of a variety of crimes ranging from heresy to homosexuality, it seems clear that Marlowe's unknown government connections kept him out of serious trouble.

Marlowe's dramatic career was only to span six short years. In that time he wrote The Jew of Malta, The Tragical History of Doctor Faustus, The Queen of Carthage, Edward II, and The Massacre at Paris. His work ranged from tragedy to historical drama, but he also wrote popular poetry such as Hero and Leander, and The Passionate Shepherd ("Come live with me and be my love; and we shall all the pleasures prove...").

The difficulty in evaluating Marlowe's work is that so few good copies

exist. None of his plays were ever properly published. His great contribution to English theatre must lie in his influential use of blank verse in writing his dramatic works. Marlowe was the first to use blank verse in drama, but William Shakespeare soon followed his example to great acclaim.

Christopher Marlowe's death in 1593 was as shrouded in mystery as his life was clouded by controversy. The long-accepted version is that he and a close friend, one Ingram Frizer, dined in a tavern in Deptford. The two men quarreled over paying the bill, and in the fight that followed, Marlowe grabbed Frizer's dagger and attacked him from behind. Frizer managed to wrest the dagger from Marlowe and stabbed the author fatally in the eye.

However, the truth may not be so straightforward. One week before his death, Marlowe's roommate Thomas Kyd, was kidnapped and tortured by the Queen's Privy Council into implicating the author as a heretic and an atheist. A warrant was issued for his arrest, but death intervened.

**Who Ever Loved, That Loved Not at First Sight?**

It lies not in our power to love or hate,
For will in us is overruled by fate.
When two are stripped, long ere the course begin,
We wish that one should love, the other win;

And one especially do we affect
Of two gold ingots, like in each respect:
The reason no man knows, let it suffice,
What we behold is censured by our eyes.

Where both deliberate, the love is slight:
Who ever loved, that loved not at first sight?

The Passionate Shepherd to His Love

Come live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There will we sit upon the rocks
  And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
  By shallow rivers, to whose falls
  Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair lined slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be

Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

## William Shakespeare

William Shakespeare was born to John Shakespeare and mother Mary Arden some time in late April 1564 in Stratford-upon-Avon. There is no record of his birth, but his baptism was recorded by the church, thus his birthday is assumed to be the 23 of April. His father was a prominent and prosperous alderman in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon, and was later granted a coat of arms by the College of Heralds. All that is known of Shakespeare's youth is that he presumably attended the Stratford Grammar School, and did not proceed to Oxford or Cambridge. The next record we have of him is his marriage to Anne Hathaway in 1582. The next year she bore a daughter for him, Susanna, followed by the twins Judith and Hamnet two years later.

Seven years later Shakespeare is recognized as an actor, poet and playwright, when a rival playwright, Robert Greene, refers to him as "an upstart crow" in A Groatsworth of Wit. A few years later he joined up with one of the most successful acting troupe's in London: The Lord Chamberlain's Men. When, in 1599, the troupe lost the lease of the theatre where they performed, (appropriately called The Theatre) they were wealthy enough to build their own theatre across the Thames, south of London, which they called "The Globe." The new theatre opened in July of 1599, built from the timbers of The Theatre, with the motto "Totus mundus agit histrionem" (A whole world of players) When James I came to the throne (1603) the troupe was designated by the new king as the King's Men (or

King's Company). The Letters Patent of the company specifically charged Shakespeare and eight others "freely to use and exercise the art and faculty of playing Comedies, Tragedies, Histories, Inerludes, Morals, Pastorals, stage plays ... as well for recreation of our loving subjects as for our solace and pleasure."

Shakespeare entertained the king and the people for another ten years until June 19, 1613, when a canon fired from the roof of the theatre for a gala performance of Henry VIII set fire to the thatch roof and burned the theatre to the ground. The audience ignored the smoke from the roof at first, being to absorbed in the play, until the flames caught the walls and the fabric of the curtains. Amazingly there were no casualties, and the next spring the company had the theatre "new builded in a far fairer manner than before." Although Shakespeare invested in the rebuilding, he retired from the stage to the Great House of New Place in Statford that he had purchased in 1597, and some considerable land holdings ,where he continued to write until his death in 1616 on the day of his 52nd birthday.

1556 - Anne Hathaway is born.

1564 - William Shakespeare is born in April (probably the 23rd) in Stratford-On-Avon (94 miles from London.)

1582 - Marries Anne Hathaway on November 27.

1583 - Susanna Shakespeare is born.

1585 - The twins Judith and Hamnet Shakespeare are born.

1592 - After leaving Stratford for London, William was recognized as a successful actor, as well as a leading poet. He was a member of 'The Chamberlain's Men'.

1596 - Hamnet dies at the age of eleven. Shakespeare becomes a "gentleman" when the College of Heralds grants his father a coat of arms.

1597- He bought a large house called "The Great House of New Place".

1599 - The 'Globe Theater' is built from the pieces of 'The Theater' in July.

1603 - 'The Lord Chamberlain's Men' became 'The King's Men' on May 19.

1613 - The 'Globe Theatre' burns during a performance of Henry VII when a canon fired on the roof sets fire to the straw thatch. The theatre is rebuilt, but Shakespeare retires.

1616 - April 23, in Stratford, on his 52nd birthday he died.

**Sonnet LXVI**

Tired with all these, for restful death I cry,
*As*, to behold desert a beggar born,
And needy nothing trimm'd in jollity,
And purest faith unhappily forsworn,
And gilded honour shamefully misplaced,
And maiden virtue rudely strumpeted,
And right perfection wrongfully disgraced,
And strength by limping sway disabled,
And art made tongue-tied by authority,
And folly doctor-like controlling skill,
And simple truth miscall'd simplicity,
Arid captive good attending captain ill:
Tired with all these, from these would I be gone,
Save that, to die, I leave my love alone.

**Sonnet LXXIII**

That time of year thou mayst in me behold
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.
In me thou see'st the twilight of such day
As after sunset fadeth in the west,

Which by and by black night doth take away,
Death's second self, that seals up all in rest.
In me thou see'st the glowing of such fire
That on the ashes of his youth doth lie,
As the death-bed whereon it must expire,
Consumed with that which it was nourish’d by.
This thou perceivest, which makes thy love more strong,
To love that well which thou must, leave ore long.

**Sonnet CXVI**

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments. Love is not love
Which alters when it alteration finds,
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bark,
Whose worth's unknown, although his height be taken.
Love's not Time's fool, though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours and weeks,
But bears it out even to the edge of doom.
If this be error and upon me proved,
I never writ, nor no man ever loved.

## William Blake

William Blake was born on November 28, 1757 in London, the third of five children. His father James was a hosier, and could only afford to give William enough schooling to learn the basics of reading and writing, though for a short time he was able to attend a drawing school run by Henry Par.

William worked in his father's shop until his talent for drawing became so obvious that he was apprenticed to engraver James Basire at age 14. He finished his apprenticeship at age 21, and set out to make his living as an engraver.

Blake married Catherine Boucher at age 25, and she worked with him on most of his artistic creations. Together they published a book of Blake's poems and drawings called Songs of Innocence.

Blake engraved the words and pictures on copper plates (a method he claimed he received in a dream), and Catherine coloured the plates and bound the books. Songs of Innocence sold slowly during Blake's lifetime, indeed Blake struggled close to poverty for much of his life.

More successful was a series of copperplate engravings Blake did to illustrate the Book of Job for a new edition of the Old Testament.

Blake did not have a head for business, and he turned down publisher's requests to focus on his own subjects. In his choice of subject Blake was often guided by his gentle, mystical views of Christianity. Songs of Experience (1794) was followed by Milton (1804-1808), and Jerusalem (1804-1820).

In 1800 Blake gained a patron in William Hayley, who commissioned him to illustrate his Life of Cowper, and to create busts of famous poets for his house in Felpham, Suurey.

While at Felpham, Blake was involved in a bizarre episode which

could have proven disastrous; he was accused by a drunken soldier of cursing the king, and on this testimony he was brought to trial for treason. The cae against Blake proved flimsy, and he was cleared of the charges.

Blake poured his whole being into his work. The lack of public recognition sent him into a severe depression which lasted from 1810-1817, and even his close friends thought him insane.

Unlike painters like Gainsborough, Blake worked on a small scale; most of his engravings are little more than inches in height, yet the detailed rendering is superb and exact. Blake's work received far more public acclaim after his death, and an excerpt from his poem Milton was set to music, becoming a sort of unofficial Christian anthem of English nationalism in the 20th century.

William Blake died on August 12, 1827, and is buried in an unmarked grave at Bunhill Fields, London.

**London**

I wander thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear,
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry

Every black'ning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new born Infant's tear.
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

## George Gordon Byron

Lord George Gordon Byron (1788-1824) was as famous in his lifetime for his personality cult as for his poetry. He created the concept of the 'Byronic hero' - a defiant, melancholy young man, brooding on some mysterious, unforgivable event in his past. Byron's influence on European poetry, music, novel, opera, and painting has been immense, although the poet was widely condemned on moral grounds by his contemporaries.

George Gordon, Lord Byron, was the son of Captain John Byron, and Catherine Gordon. He was born with a club-foot and became extreme sensitivity about his lameness. Byron spent his early childhood years in poor surroundings in Aberdeen, where he was educated until he was ten. After he inherited the title and property of his great-uncle in 1798, he went on to Dulwich, Harrow, and Cambridge, where he piled up debts and aroused alarm with bisexual love affairs. Staying at Newstead in 1802, he probably first met his half-sister, Augusta Leigh with whom he was later suspected of having an incestuous relationship.

In 1807 Byron's first collection of poetry, Hours Of Idleness appeared. It received bad reviews. The poet answered his critics with the satire English Bards And Scotch Reviewersin 1808. Next year he took his seat in the House

of Lords, and set out on his grand tour, visiting Spain, Malta, Albania, Greece, and the Aegean. Real poetic success came in 1812 when Byron published the first two cantos of Childe Harold's Pilgrimage (1812-1818). He became an adored character of London society; he spoke in the House of Lords effectively on liberal themes, and had a hectic love-affair with Lady Caroline Lamb. Byron's The Corsair (1814), sold 10,000 copies on the first day of publication. He married Anne Isabella Milbanke in 1815, and their daughter Ada was born in the same year. The marriage was unhappy, and they obtained legal separation next year.

When the rumors started to rise of his incest and debts were accumulating, Byron left England in 1816, never to return. He settled in Geneva with Percy Bysshe Shelley, Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, and Claire Clairmont, who became his mistress. There he wrote the two cantos of Childe Harold and "The Prisoner Of Chillon". At the end of the summer Byron continued his travels, spending two years in Italy. During his years in Italy, Byron wrote Lament Of Tasso, inspired by his visit in Tasso's cell in Rome, Mazeppa and started Don Juan, his satiric masterpiece. While in Ravenna and Pisa, Byron became deeply interested in drama, and wrote among others The Two Foscari, Sardanapalaus, Cain, and the unfinished Heaven And Earth.

After a long creative period, Byron had come to feel that action was more important than poetry. He armed a brig, the Hercules, and sailed to Greece to aid the Greeks, who had risen against their Ottoman overlords. However, before he saw any serious military action, Byron contracted a fever from which he died in Missolonghi on 19 April 1824. Memorial services were held all over the land. Byron's body was returned to England but refused by the deans of both Westminster and St Paul's. Finally Byron's coffin was placed in the family vault at Hucknall Torkard, near Newstead Abbey in Nottinghamshire.

## Hebrew Melodies

I

Oh! snatch'd away in beauty's bloom,
On thee shall press no ponderous tomb;
But on thy turf shall roses rear
Their leaves, the earliest of the year;
And the wild cypress wave in tender gloom:

II

And oft by yon blue gushing stream
Shall Sorrow lean her drooping head,
And feed deep thought with many a dream,
And lingering pause and lightly tread;
Fond wretch! as if her step disturb'd the dead!

III

Away! we know that tears are vain,
That death nor heeds nor hears distress:
Will this unteach us to complain?
Or make one mourner weep the less?
And thou-who tell'st me to forget,
Thy looks are wan, thine eyes are wet.

## Love And Death

I watched thee when the foe was at our side,
Ready to strike at him – or thee and me
Were safety hopeless – rather than divide

Aught with one loved save love and liberty.

I watched thee on the breakers where a rock
Received our prow and all was storm and fear,
And bade thee cling to me through every shock;
This arm would be thy bark, or breast thy bier.

I watched thee when the fever glazed thine eyes,
Yielding my couch and stretched me on the ground,
When overworn with watching ne'er to rise
From thence if thou and early grave hadst found.

The earthquake came, and rocked the quivering wall,
And men and nature reeled as if with wine.
Whom did I seek around the tottering hall?
For thee. Whose safety first prove for? Thine.

And when convulsive throes denied my breath
The faintest utterance to my fading thought,
To thee – to thee – e'en in the gasp of death
My spirit turned, oh! oftener than it ought.

Thus much and more; and yet thou lovs't me not,
And never wilt! Love dwells not in our will
Nor can I blame thee, though it be my lot
To strongly, wrongly, vainly love thee still.

**Fare Thee Well**

Fare thee well! and if for ever,
  Still for ever, fare thee well:
Even though unforgiving, never
  ’Gainst thee shall my heart rebel.

Would that breast were bared before thee
  Where thy head so oft hath lain,
While that placid sleep came o’er thee
  Which thou ne’er canst know again:

Would that breast, by thee glanced over,
  Every inmost thought could show!
Then thou wouldst at last discover
  ’Twas not well to spurn it so.

Though the world for this commend thee—
  Though it smile upon the blow,
Even its praises must offend thee,
  Founded on another’s woe:

Though my many faults defaced me,
  Could no other arm be found,
Than the one which once embraced me,
  To inflict a cureless wound?

Yet, oh yet, thyself deceive not;
  Love may sink by slow decay,
But by sudden wrench, believe not
  Hearts can thus be torn away:

Still thine own its life retaineth,
  Still must mine, though bleeding, beat;
And the undying thought which paineth
  Is—that we no more may meet.

These are words of deeper sorrow
  Than the wail above the dead;
Both shall live, but every morrow
  Wake us from a widow’d bed.

And when thou wouldst solace gather,
  When our child’s first accents flow,
Wilt thou teach her to say ‘Father!’
  Though his care she must forego?

When her little hands shall press thee,
  When her lip to thine is press’d,
Think of him whose prayer shall bless thee,
  Think of him thy love had bless’d!

Should her lineaments resemble
  Those thou never more may’st see,
Then thy heart will softly tremble
  With a pulse yet true to me.

All my faults perchance thou knowest,
  All my madness none can know;
All my hopes, where’er thou goest,
  Wither, yet with thee they go.

Every feeling hath been shaken;
  Pride, which not a world could bow,
Bows to thee—by thee forsaken,
  Even my soul forsakes me now:

But ’tis done—all words are idle—
  Words from me are vainer still;
But the thoughts we cannot bridle
  Force their way without the will.

Fare thee well! thus disunited,
  Torn from every nearer tie,
Sear’d in heart, and lone, and blighted,
  More than this I scarce can die.

## John Keats

John Keats (1795-1821), English lyric poet, usually regarded as the archetype of the Romantic writer. Keats felt that the deepest meaning of life lay in the apprehension of material beauty, although his mature poems reveal his fascination with a world of death and decay.

Keats was born in London on October 31, 1795 as the son of a livery-stable manager. He was the oldest of four children, who remained deeply devoted to each other. After their father died in 1804, Keats's mother remarried but the marriage was soon broken. She moved with the children, John and his sister Fanny and brothers George and Tom, to live with her mother at Edmonton, near London. She died of tuberculosis in 1810.

At school Keats read widely. He was educated at Clarke's School in Enfield, where he began a translation of the Aeneid. In1811 he was apprenticed to a surgeon-apothecary. His first poem, "Lines in Imitation of

Spenser", was written in 1814. In that year he moved to London and resumed his surgical studies in 1815 as a student at Guy's hospital. Next year he became a Licentiate of the Society of Apothecaries. Before devoting himself entirely to poetry, Keats worked as a dresser and junior house surgeon. In London he had met the editor of The Examiner, Leigh Hunt, who introduced him to other young Romantics, including Shelley. His poem, "O Solitude", also appeared in The Examiner.

Keats's first book, Poems, was published in 1817. It was about this time Keats started to use his letters as the vehicle of his thoughts of poetry. "Endymion", Keats's first long poem appeared, when he was 21. Keats's greatest works were written in the late 1810s, among them "Lamia", "The Eve of St. Agnes", the great odes including "Ode to a Nightingale", Ode To Autumn" and "Ode on a Grecian Urn". He worked briefly as a theatrical critic for The Champion.

Keats spent three months in 1818 attending his brother Tom, who was seriously ill with tuberculosis. After Tom's death in December, Keats moved to Hampstead. In the winter of 1818-19 he worked mainly on "Hyperion".

In 1820 the second volume of Keats poems appeared and gained critical success. However, Keats was suffering from tuberculosis and his poems were marked with sadness partly because he was too poor to marry Fanny Brawne, the woman he loved.

Declining Shelley's invitation to join him at Pisa, Keats went to Rome, where he died at the age of 25, on February 23, 1821. Keats told his friend Joseph Severn that he wanted on his grave just the line, "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

**La Belle Dame sans Merci**

I

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
Alone and palely loitering?
The sedge has wither’d from the lake,
And no birds sing.

II

O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,
So haggard and so woe-begone?
The squirrel's granary is full,
And the harvest's done.

III

I see a lily on thy brow
With anguish moist and fever dew;
And on thy cheek a fading rose
Fast withereth too.

IV

I met a lady in the meads,
Full beautifizl-a faery's child,
Her hair was long, her foot was light,
And her eyes were wild.

V

I made a garland for her head,
And bracelets too; and fragrant zone;
She look'd att me as she did love,

And made sweet moan.

VI

I set, her on my pacing steed
And nothing else saw all day long,
For sideways would she bend, and sing
A faery's song.

VII

She found me roots of relish sweet,
And honey wild and manna dew,
And sure in language strange she said,
"I love thee true!"

VIII

She took me to her elfin grot,
And there she wept and sigh'd full sore;
And there I shut her wild, wild eyes
With kisses four.

IX

And there she lulled me asleep,
And there I droam'd-Ah! woe betide!
The latest dream I ever dream'd
On the cold hill's side.

X

I saw pale kings and princes too,
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all;
Who cried-"La Belle Dame sans Merci

Hath thee in thrall!"

XI

I saw their starved lips in the gloam
With horrid warning gaped wide,
And I awoke and found me here,
On the cold hill's side.

XII

And this is why I sojourn here
Alone and palely loitering
Througt the sedge is wither'd from the lake
And no birds sing.

## Percy Bysshe Shelley

Percy Bysshe Shelley was born on 4 August 1792 in Horsham, Sussex, England. He was the eldest of the seven children of Elizabeth Pilfold and Timothy Shelley, a country squire who would become baronet in 1815 on the death of his father. Young Percy attended Sion House Academy before entering University College, Oxford, in 1804. These years in a conventional institution were not happy ones for Shelley, where his idealism and controversial philosophies were developing. At this time he wrote such works as the Gothic Zastrozzi (1810) and The Necessity of Atheism (1811); "If the knowledge of a God is the most necessary, why is it not the most evident and the clearest?"

After Shelley's expulsion from Oxford College for expressing his atheistic views, and now estranged from his father, he eloped with sixteen-year old Harriet Westbrook (1795-1816) to Scotland. They married on 28 August 1811 and would have two children, daughter Ianthe born in 1813 (d.1876) and son Charles born in 1814. Inviting college friend Thomas Hogg into their household, Shelley attempted

an open marriage to the consternation of Harriet, which led to the demise of their marriage. For the next three years Shelley made several trips to London to the bookshop and home of atheist journalist William Godwin, the father of Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin (1797-1851). Influenced by William Wordsworth, he continued to write poetry including Queen Mab: A Philosophical Poem (1813) and participated in various political reform activities. He was also studying the writings of Godwin's and embracing his radical philosophy.

Percy Shelley's forays to the Godwin's also resulted in his acquaintance with his daughter Mary, who almost immediately proved to be his intellectual equal. The poets' fondness for each other soon grew and in 1814, Shelley eloped a second time with Mary and her stepsister Claire in tow, settling in Switzerland. This action drew the disapproval of both their fathers, and they struggled to support themselves. The Shelley's were spending much time with Lord George Gordon Byron who also led a controversial life of romantic entanglements and political activity. Shelley was passionate about life and very generous to his friends, which often caused him financial hardship. They passed their days sailing on the lake and telling each other ghost stories. Mary overheard Percy and Byron speaking one night of galvanism, which inspired her most famous novel Frankenstein or; The Modern Prometheus (1818) and which Percy wrote the introduction for.

In 1815 the Shelley's moved back to England and settled near London. The same year Percy's grandfather died leaving him a lucrative sum of £1000 per annum. The year 1816 was filled with highs and lows for Shelley. His wife Harriet drowned herself in the Serpentine river in Hyde Park, London and Mary's half sister Fanny committed suicide, but son William was born (d.1819) and he and Mary wed on 30 December. "Alastor or; The Spirit of Solitude" was published in 1816 and their joint effort based on their travels History of Six Weeks Tour was published in 1817.

In 1818, the Shelley's moved to Italy and their son Percy Florence was born a year later. Advocates of vegetarianism, the Shelley's wrote numerous articles

about the subject. Percy was working on his tragedy in five acts The Cenci and many other works including “Men of England” and his elegy for John Keats “Adonais” (1821). Mary too was busy writing while they lived in various cities including Pisa and Rome. Shelley continued to venture on sailing trips on his schooner ‘Don Juan’. It sank on 8 July 1822 in a storm and Shelley drowned, at the age of twenty-nine. His body washed ashore and he was cremated on the beach near Viareggio. His ashes are buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome, Italy.

The Shelley Memorial now stands at University College, Oxford, England, in honour of one of their most illustrious alumni. It features a white marble statue depicting Shelley as he appeared when washed ashore. Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, having moved back to London with her son Percy Florence, devoted much of her time after her husband’s death to compiling and publishing his works. Her fondness and respect for her husband is expressed in her extensive notes and introductions to his works contained in The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe (1824).

**Song to the Men of England**

I

Men of England, wherefore plough
For the lords who lay ye low?
Wherefore weave with toil and care
The rich robes your tyrants wear?

II

Wherefore feed, and clothe, and save,
From the cradle to the grave,
Those ungrateful drones who would
Drain your sweat-nay, drink your blood?

III

Wherefore, Bees of England, forge
Many a weapon, chain, and scourge,
That these stingless drones may spoil
The forced produce of your toil?

IV

Have ye leisure, comfort, calm,
Shelter, food, love's gentle balm?
Or what is it ye buy so dear
With your pain and with your fear?

V

The seed ye sow, another reaps;
The wealth ye find, another keeps;
The robes ye weave, another wears;
The arms ye forge, another bears.

VI

Sow seed,- but let no tyrant reap;
Find wealth,-let no impostor heap;
Weave robes,-let not the idle wear;
Forge arms,-in your defence to bear.

VII

Shrink to your cellars, holes, and *cells,*
In halls ye deck another dwells.
Why shake the chains ye wrought? 1'v see
The steel ye tempered glance on ye.

VIII

With plough and spade, and hoe and loom,
Trace your grave, and build your tomb,
And weave your winding-sheet, till fair
England be your sepulchre.

## Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882), the most popular American poet of the 19th century, whose works are still cited - or parodied. Among his most remembered works are Evangeline (1847), The Song Of Hiawatha (1855) and The Courtship of Miles Standish(1858).

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow was born on February 27, 1807, in Portland, Maine. His father, Stephen Longfellow, was a Portland lawyer and congressman, and mother Zilpah, was a descendant of John Alden of the Mayflower. Longfellow was fond of reading and at thirteen he wrote his first poem, "The Battle of Lovell's Pond," which appeared in the Portland Gazette.

Longfellow's translation of Horace earned him a scholarship for further studies. After graduating in 1825 he traveled in Italy, France and Spain from 1826 to 1829, and returned to the United States to work as a professor and librarian in Bodwoin. He translated for his students a French grammar, and edited a collection of French proverbs and a small Spanish reader. In 1831 he married Mary Storer Potter, and made with her another journey to Europe, where he studied Swedish, Danish, Finnish, and the Dutch language and literature. On this trip he fell under the influence of German Romanticism. Longfellow's wife died at

Rotterdam in 1835.

In 1839 he published the romantic novel Hyperion and a collection of poems Voices Of The Night, which became very popular. In 1840 he wrote "The Skeleton in Armor" and The Spanish Student, a drama in five acts. In 1836 Longfellow began teaching in Harvard, taking lodgings at the historic Craigie House, where General Washington and his wife had lived. He resigned from his post in 1854 and published next year his best-known narrative poem, The Song of Hiawatha, which gained immediate success. His second Frances died tragically in 1861 by burning - her dress caught fire from a lighted match. Longfellow settled in Cambridge, where he remained for the rest of his life.

Longfellow's later poetry reflects his interest in establishing an American mythology. Among his other works are Tales Of A Wayside Inn (1863), a translation of Dante's The Divine Comedy (1865-67) and Christus: A Mystery (1872), a trilogy dealing with Christianity from its beginnings.

The poet's 70th birthday in 1877 was celebrated around the country. Longfellow died in Cambridge on March 24, 1882. In London his marble image is seen in Westminster Abbey, in the Poet's Corner.

**The Rainy Day**

The day is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
The vine still clings to the mouldering wall,
But at every gust the dead leaves fall,
And the day is dark and dreary.
My life is cold, and dark, and dreary;
It rains, and the wind is never weary;
My thoughts still cling to the mouldering Past,

But the hopes of youth fall thick in the blast,
And the days are dark and dreary.

Be still, sad heart! and cease repining;
Behind the clouds is the sun still shining;
Thy fate is the common fate of all,
Into each life some rain must fall,
Some days must be dark and dreary.

## Edgar Poe

Edgar Poe was born on 19 January 1809 in Boston, Massachusetts, the son of actors Elizabeth Arnold Hopkins (1787-1811) and David Poe (1784-1810). He had a brother named William Henry (1807-1831) and sister Rosalie (1811-1874). After the death of his parents Edgar was taken in by Frances (d.1829) and John Allan (d.1834), a wealthy merchant in Richmond, Virginia.

Young Edgar traveled with the Allans to England in 1815 and attended school in Chelsea. In 1820 he was back in Richmond where he attended the University of Virginia and studied Latin and poetry and also loved to swim and act. While in school he became estranged from his foster father after accumulating gambling debts. Unable to pay them or support himself, Poe left school and enlisted in the United States Army where he served for two years. He had been writing poetry for some time and in 1827 “Dreams”—Oh! that my young life were a lasting dream! first appeared in the Baltimore North American, the same year his first book Tamerlane and Other Poems was published, at his own expense.

When Poe’s foster mother died in 1829 her deathbed wish was honoured by Edgar and stepfather John reconciling, though it was brief. Poe enlisted in the West Point Military Academy but was dismissed a year later. In 1829 his second book Al Aaraaf, Tamerlane and Minor Poems was published. The same year Poems (1831) was published Poe moved to Baltimore to live with his aunt Maria Clemm,

mother of Virginia Eliza Clemm (1822-1847) who would become his wife at the age of thirteen. His brother Henry was also living in the Clemm household but he died of tuberculosis soon after Edgar moved in. In 1833, the Baltimore Saturday Visiter published some of his poems and he won a contest in it for his story “MS found in a Bottle”. In 1835 he became editor and contributor of the Southern Literary Messenger. Though not without his detractors and troubles with employers, it was the start of his career as respected critic and essayist. Other publications which he contributed to were Burton’s Gentleman’s Magazine (1839–1840), Graham’s Magazine (1841–1842), Evening Mirror, and Godey’s Lady’s Book.

After Virginia and Edgar married in Richmond in 1836 they moved to New York City. Poe’s only completed novel The Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym was published in 1838. The story starts as an adventure for a young Nantucket stowaway on a whaling ship but soon turns into a chilling tale of mutiny, murder, and cannibalism.

Poe’s contributions to magazines were published as a collection in Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque (1840) which included “The Duc de L'Omelette”, “Bon-Bon” and “King Pest”. What some consider to be the first detective story, “The Murders in the Rue Morgue” was published in 1841;

Poe’s collection of poetry The Raven and Other Poems (1845) which gained him attention at home and abroad includes the wildly successful “The Raven” and “Eulalie” and “To Helen”;

Lo, in yon brilliant window-niche
How statue-like I see thee stand,
The agate lamp within thy hand,
Ah! Psyche, from the regions which
Are Holy Land!

Poe continued to write poetry, critical essays and short stories including “Ulalume”, “Eureka” and “The Cask of Amontillado” (1846);

It must be understood, that neither by word nor deed had I given Fortunato

cause to doubt my good will. I continued, as was my wont, to smile in his face, and he did not perceive that my smile now was at the thought of his immolation.

Now living in their last place of residence, a cottage in the Fordham section of the Bronx in New York City, Virginia died in 1847. Poe turned to alcohol more frequently and was purportedly displaying increasingly erratic behavior. A year later he became engaged to his teenage sweetheart from Richmond, Elmira Royster. In 1849 he embarked on a tour of poetry readings and lecturing, hoping to raise funds so he could start his magazine The Stylus.

There are conflicting accounts surrounding the last days of Edgar Allan Poe and the cause of his death. Some say he died from alcoholism, some claim he was murdered, and various diseases have also been attributed. Most say he was found unconscious in the street and admitted to the Washington College Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland. He died soon after, on 7 October 1849, and was buried unceremoniously in an unmarked grave in the Old Westminster Burying Ground of Baltimore. On this original site now stands a stone with a c with a carving of a raven and the inscription;

In a dedication ceremony in 1875, Poe's remains were reinterred with his aunt Maria Clemm's in the Poe Memorial Grave which stands in the cemetery's corner at Fayette and Greene Streets. A bas-relief bust of Poe adorns the marble and granite monument which is simply inscribed with the birth and death dates of Poe (although his birthdate is wrong), Maria, and Virginia who, in 1885, was reinterred with her husband and mother. Letters from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow and Lord Alfred Tennyson were read, and Walt Whitman attended. The mysterious Poe Toaster visits Poe's grave on his birthdays and leaves a partially filled bottle of cognac and three roses.

All that we see or seem

**The Raven**

Once upon. a midnight dreary, while I pondered, weak and weary,
Over many a quaint and curious volume of forgotten lore
While I nodded, nearly napping, suddenly there came a tapping,
As of some one gently rapping, rapping at my chamber door.
"Tis some visitor," I muttered, "tapping at my chamber door
Only this and nothing more."
Ah, distinctly I remember, it was in the bleak December,
And each separate dying ember wrought its ghost upon the floor.
Eagerly I wished the morrow;-vainly I had sought to borrow
From my books surcease of sorrow-sorrow for the lost Lenore
For the rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name Lenore
Nameless here for evermore.
And the silken, sad, uncertain rustling of each purple curtain
Thrilled me-filled me with fantastic terrors never felt before;
So that now, to still the beating of my heart, I stood repeating,
"Tis some visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door
Some late visitor entreating entrance at my chamber door; -
This it is nothing more."

Presently my soul grew stronger; hesitating then no longer,
"Sir," said I, "or Madam, truly your forgiveness I implore;
But the fact is I was napping, and so gently you came rapping,
And so faintly you came tapping, tapping at my chamber door,
That I scarce was sure I heard you"-here I opened wide the door:

Darkness there and nothing more.
Deep into that darkness peering, long I stood there wondering, fearing,
Doubting, dreaming dreams no mortal ever dared to dream before;
But the silence was unbroken, and the stillness gave no token,
And the only word there spoken was the whispered word, "Lenore?"
This I whispered, and an echo murmured back the word, "Lenore!"
Merely this and nothing more.
Back into the chamber turning, all my soul within me burning,
Soon again I heard a tapping somewhat louder than before.
"Surely," said I, "surely that is something at my window lattice;
Let, me see, then, what thereat is, and this mystery explore-
Let, my heart be still a moment, and this mystery explore;
'Tis the wind and nothing more!"

Open here I flung the shutter, when, with many a flirt and flutter,
In there stepped a stately Raven of the saintly days of yore;
Not the least obeisance made he; not a minute stopped or stayed he;
But, with mien of lord or lady, perched above my chamber door
Perched upon a bust of Pallas just above my chamber door
Perched, and sat, and nothing more.
Then this ebony bird beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,

By the grave and stern decorum of the countenance it wore,
"Though thy crest be shorn and shaven, thou," I said, "art sure no craven,
Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore
Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."
Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,
Though its answer little meaning-little relevancy bore;
For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being
Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door
Bird or beast upon the sculptured bust above his chamber door,
With such name as "Nevermore."
But the Raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only
That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpoor.
Nothing further then he uttered-not a feather then be fluttered -
Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other friends have flown before –

On the morrow he will leave me, as my Hopes have flown before."
Then the bird said, "Nevermore."
Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,
"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,
Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster
Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore -

Till the dirges of his Hope that melancholy burden bore

Of I Never- nevermore.'"
But the Raven still beguiling my sad fancy into smiling,
Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;
Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking
Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore
What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore
Meant in croaking "Nevermore."
This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing
To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;
This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining
On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,
But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er,
She shall press, ah, nevermore!
Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer
Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee-by these angels he hath sent thee
Respite-respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!
Quaff, oh, quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!-prophet still, if bird or devil! -
Whether Tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here

ashore,
Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted
On this home by Horror haunted-tell me truly, I implore-
Is there-is there balm in Gilead?-tell me-tell me, 1
implore!"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil!-prophet still, if bird or
devil!
By that Heaven that bends above us-by that God we both
adore-
Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,
It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name
Lenore
Clasp a rare and radiant maiden whom the angels name
Lenore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend!" I shrieked,
upstarting
"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian
shore!
Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath
spoken!
Leave my loneliness unbroken!-quit the bust above my door!
Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from ol'f my duurr"
Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore."
And the Raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sittint
On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;
And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that, is

dreaming,
And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow oil the flour;
And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor
Shall be lifted-nevermore!

**Annabel Lee**

It was many and many a year ago,
In a kingdom by the sea,
That a maiden there lived whom you may know
By the name of Annabel Lee;
And this maiden she lived with no other thought
That to love and be loved by me.

She was a child and I was a child,
In this kingdom by the sea,
But we loved with a love that was more than love
I and my Annabel Lee;
With a love that the winged seraphs of Heaven
Coveted her and me.

And this was the reason that, long ago,
In this kingdom by the sea,
A wind blew out of a cloud by night
Chilling my Annabel Lee;
So that her highborn kinsmen came
And bore her away from me,
To shut her up in a sepulchre
In this kingdom by the sea.

The angels, not half so happy in Heaven,
Went envying her and me:
Yes!-that was the reason (as all men know,
In this kingdom by the sea)
That the wind came out of the cloud chilling
And killing my Annabel Lee.

But our love it was stronger by far than the love
Of those who were older than we-
Of many far wiser than we
And neither the angels in Heaven above
Nor the demons down under the sea, Can ever dissever my soul from the soul
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee:
For the moon never beams without bringing me dreams
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And the stars never rise but I see the bright eyes
Of the beautiful Annabel Lee;
And so, all the night-tide, I lie down by the side
Of my darling, my darling, my life and my bride,
In her sepulchre there by the sea
In her tomb by the side of the sea.

## Emily Dickenson

Emily Dickinson was born into one of Amherst, Massachusetts' most prominent families on 10 December 1830. She was the second child born to Emily Norcross (1804-1882) and Edward Dickinson (1803-1874), a Yale

graduate, successful lawyer, Treasurer for Amherst College and a United States Congressman. Her grandfather Samuel Fowler Dickinson (1775-1838) was a Dartmouth graduate, accomplished lawyer and one of the founders of Amherst College. He also built one of the first brick homes in the New England town on Main Street, which is now a National Historic Landmark 'The Homestead' and one of the now preserved Dickinson homes in the Emily Dickinson Historic District.

Emily had an older brother named William Austin Dickinson (1829-1895) (known as Austin) who would marry her most intimate friend Susan Gilbert in 1856. Her younger sister's name was Lavinia 'Vinnie' Norcross Dickinson (1833-1899). The Dickinsons were strong advocates for education and Emily too benefited from an early education in classic literature, studying the writings of Virgil and Latin, mathematics, history, and botany. Until she was ten years old, she and her family lived with her grandfather Samuel and his family on Main Street. In 1840 they moved to North Pleasant Street, Emily's window overlooking the West Street Cemetery where daily burials occurred. The same year, Emily entered Amherst Academy under the tutelage of scientist and theologian, Edward Hitchcock.

Dickinson proved to be a dazzling student and in 1847, though she was already somewhat of a 'homebody', at the age of seventeen Emily left for South Hadley, Massachusetts to attend the Mount Holyoke Female Seminary. She stayed there less than a year and some of the theories as to why she left are homesickness and poor health. Another reason some speculate is that when she refused to sign an oath publicly professing her faith in Christ, her ensuing chastisement from Mary Lyon proved to be too much humiliation. Back home in the patriarchal household of aspiring politicians, Emily started to write her first poems. She was in the midst of the college town's society and bustle although she started to spend more time alone, reading and maintaining lively correspondences with friends and relatives.

In 1855 Emily and her sister spent time in the cities of Washington, D.C.

and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the same year her father bought the Main Street home where she was born. He built an addition to The Homestead, replete with gardens and conservatory. Thereafter he held a yearly reception for Amherst College's commencement, to which Emily made an appearance as the gracious hostess. In 1856 Emily's brother, now himself a successful Harvard graduate and Amherst lawyer, married her best friend Susan Gilbert. They moved into their home nearby 'The Evergreens', a wedding gift from his father. They frequently entertained such guests as Ralph Waldo Emerson and Samuel Bowles, editor of the Springfield Republican, who would publish a few of Emily's poems and become a great friend to her and possible object of affection in some of her poems. In 1862 Dickinson answered a call for poetry submissions in the Atlantic Monthly. She struck up a correspondence with its editor, Thomas Wentworth Higginson. He had tried to correct her work, but she refused to alter it, though they soon became friends and it is speculated that Emily also had romantic feelings for him.

Dark times were soon to fall on Emily. In 1864 and 1865 she went to stay with her Norcross cousins in Boston to see an eye doctor whereupon she was forbidden to read or write. It would be the last time she ventured from Amherst. By the early 1870's Emily's ailing mother was confined to her bed and Emily and her sister cared for her. Around the time her father Edward died suddenly in 1874 she stopped going out in public though she still kept up her social contacts via correspondence, writing at her desk in her austere bedroom, and seemed to have enjoyed her solitude. She regularly tended the homestead's gardens and loved to bake, and the neighborhood children sometimes visited her with their rambunctious games. In 1878 her friend Samuel Bowles died and another of her esteemed friends Charles Wadsworth died in 1882, the same year her mother succumbed to her lengthy illness. A year later her brother Austin's son Gilbert died. Dickinson herself had been afflicted for some time with her own illness affecting the kidneys, Bright's Disease, symptoms of which include chronic pain and edema, which may have contributed to her seclusion from the outside world.

‘Called Back’: Emily Dickinson died on 15 May 1886, at the age of fifty-six. She now rests in the West Cemetery of Amherst, Hampshire County, Massachusetts. Not wishing a church service, a gathering was held at The Homestead. She was buried in one of the white dresses she had taken to wearing in her later years, violets pinned to her collar by Lavinia.

**Indian Summer**

These are the days when birds come back,
A very few, a bird or two,
To take a backward look.

These are the days when skies put on
The old, old sophistries of June,
A blue and gold mistake.

Oh, fraud that cannot cheat the bee,
Almost thy plausibility
Induces my belief,

Till ranks of seeds their witness bear,
And softly through the altered air
Hurries a timid leaf!

Oh, sacrament of summer days,
Oh, last communion in the haze,
Permit a child to join,

Thy sacred emblems to partake,
Thy consecrated bread to break,

Taste thine immortal wine!

**I Cannot Live Without You**

I cannot  live with you,
It would be life,
And life is over there
Behind the shelf

The sexton keeps the key to,
Putting up
Our life, his porcelain,
Like a cup

Discarded of the housewife,
Quaint or broken;
A newer Sevres pleases,
Old ones crack.

I could not die with you,
For one must wait
To shut the other's gaze down, --
You could not.

And I, could I stand by
And see you freeze,
Without my right of frost,
Death's privilege?

Nor could I rise with you,
Because your face
Would put out Jesus',
That new grace

Glow plain and foreign
On my homesick eye,
Except that you, than he
Shone closer by.

They'd judge us -- how?
For you served Heaven, you know,
Or sought to;
I could not,

Because you saturated sight,
And I had no more eyes
For sordid excellence
As Paradise.

And were you lost, I would be,
Though my name
Rang loudest
On the heavenly fame.

And were you saved,
And I condemned to be
Where you were not,

That self were hell to me.

So we must keep apart,
You there, I here,
With just the door ajar
That oceans are,
And prayer,

And that pale sustenance,
Despair!

**Fire and Ice**

Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favor fire.
But if it had to perish twice,
I think I know enough of hate
To say that for destruction ice
Is also great
And would suffice.

**Summer Shower**

A drop fell on the apple tree,
Another on the roof;
A half a dozen kissed the eaves,

And made the gables laugh.

A few went out to help the brook,
That went to help the sea.
Myself conjectured, Were they pearls,
What necklaces could be!

The dust replaced in hoisted roads,
The birds jocoser sung;
The sunshine threw his hat away,
The orchards spangles hung.

The breezes brought dejected lutes,
And bathed them in the glee;
The East put out a single flag,
And signed the fete away.

## Walt Whitman

Born on May 31, 1819, Walt Whitman was the second son of Walter Whitman, a housebuilder, and Louisa Van Velsor. The family, which consisted of nine children, lived in Brooklyn and Long Island in the 1820s and 1830s. At the age of twelve Whitman began to learn the printer's trade, and fell in love with the written word. Largely self-taught, he read voraciously, becoming acquainted with the works of Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, and the Bible. Whitman worked as a printer in New York City until a devastating fire in the printing district demolished the industry. In 1836, at the age of 17, he began his career as teacher in the one-room

school houses of Long Island. He continued to teach until 1841, when he turned to journalism as a full-time career. He founded a weekly newspaper, Long-Islander, and later edited a number of Brooklyn and New York papers. In 1848, Whitman left the Brooklyn Daily Eagle to become editor of the New Orleans Crescent. It was in New Orleans that he experienced at first hand the viciousness of slavery in the slave markets of that city.

On his return to Brooklyn in the fall of 1848, he founded a "free soil" newspaper, the Brooklyn Freeman, and continued to develop the unique style of poetry that later so astonished Ralph Waldo Emerson. In 1855, Whitman took out a copyright on the first edition of Leaves of Grass, which consisted of twelve untitled poems and a preface. He published the volume himself, and sent a copy to Emerson in July of 1855. Whitman released a second edition of the book in 1856, containing thirty-three poems, a letter from Emerson praising the first edition, and a long open letter by Whitman in response. During his subsequent career, Whitman continued to refine the volume, publishing several more editions of the book.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, Whitman vowed to live a "purged" and "cleansed" life. He wrote freelance journalism and visited the wounded at New York-area hospitals. He then traveled to Washington, D.C. in December 1862 to care for his brother who had been wounded in the war. Overcome by the suffering of the many wounded in Washington, Whitman decided to stay and work in the hospitals. Whitman stayed in the city for eleven years. He took a job as a clerk for the Department of the Interior, which ended when the Secretary of the Interior, James Harlan, discovered that Whitman was the author of Leaves of Grass, which Harlan found offensive. Harlan fired the poet.

Whitman struggled to support himself through most of his life. In Washington he lived on a clerk's salary and modest royalties, and spent any excess money, including gifts from friends, to buy supplies for the patients he nursed. He had also been sending money to his widowed mother and an

invalid brother. From time to time writers both in the states and in England sent him "purses" of money so that he could get by.

In the early 1870s, Whitman settled in Camden, where he had come to visit his dying mother at his brother's house. However, after suffering a stroke, Whitman found it impossible to return to Washington. He stayed with his brother until the 1882 publication of Leaves of Grass gave Whitman enough money to buy a home in Camden. In the simple two-story clapboard house, Whitman spent his declining years working on additions and revisions to a new edition of the book and preparing his final volume of poems and prose, Good-Bye, My Fancy (1891). After his death on March 26, 1892, Whitman was buried in a tomb he designed and had built on a lot in Harleigh Cemetery.

**O Captain My Captain!**

O Captain my Captain! our fearful trip is done,
The ship has weathered every rack, the prize we sought is won,
The port is near, the bells I hear, the people all exulting,
While follow eyes the steady keel, the vessel grim and daring;
But O heart! heart! heart!
O the bleeding drops of red,
Where on the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

O Captain! my Captain! rise up and hear the bells;
Rise up--for you the flag is flung for you the bugle trills,
For you bouquets and ribboned wreaths for you the shores a-crowding,
For you they call, the swaying mass, their eager faces turning;
Here Captain! dear father!

This arm beneath your head!
It is some dream that on the deck,
You've fallen cold and dead.

My Captain does not answer, his lips are pale and still;
My father does not feel my arm, he has no pulse nor will;
The ship is anchored safe and sound, its voyage closed and done;
From fearful trip the victor ship comes in with object won;
Exult O shores, and ring O bells!
But I, with mournful tread,
Walk the deck my Captain lies,
Fallen cold and dead.

## Gilbert Keith Chesterton

Gilbert Keith Chesterton (1874-1936) was a prolific English critic and author of verse, essays, novels, and short stories. He is probably best known for his series about the priest-detective Father Brown who appeared in 50 stories. Between 1900 and 1936 Chesterton published some one hundred books.

G.K. Chesterton was born in London into a middle-class family on May 29, 1874. He studied at University College and the Slade School of Art (1893-96). Around 1893 he had gone through a crisis of skepticism and depression and during this period he experimented with the Ouija board and grew fascinated with diabolism. In 1895 Chesterton left University College without a degree and worked for the London publisher Redway, and T. Fisher Unwin (1896-1902). Chesterton later renewed his Christian faith; the courtship of his future wife, Frances Blogg, whom he married in 1901 also helped him to pull himself out of his spiritual crisis.

In 1900 appeared Greybeards At Play, Chesterton's first collection of poems. Robert Browning (1903) and Charles Dickens (1906) were literary biographies.

The Napoleon Of Notting Hill (1904) was Chesterton's first novel, a political fantasy, in which London is seen as a city of hidden fairytale glitter. In The Man Who Was Thursday (1908) Chesterton depicted fin-de-siècle decadence.

In 1909 Chesterton moved with his wife to Beaconsfield, a village twenty-five miles west of London, and continued to write, lecture, and travel energetically. Between 1913 and 1914 Chesterton was a regular contributor for the Daily Herald. In 1914 he suffered a physical and nervous breakdown. After World War I Chesterton became leader of the Distributist movement and later the President of the Distributist League, promoting the idea that private property should be divided into smallest possible freeholds and then distributed throughout society..

In 1922 Chesterton was converted from Anglicanism to Roman Catholicism, and thereafter he wrote several theologically oriented works, including lives of Francis of Assisi and Thomas Aquinas. He received honorary degrees from Edinburgh, Dublin, and Notre Dame universities. Chesterton died on June 14, 1936, at his home in Beaconsfield.

**Gold Leaves**

Lo! I am come to autumn,
When all the leaves are gold;
Grey hairs and golden leaves cry out
The year and I are old.

In youth I sought the prince of men,
Captain in cosmic wars,
Our Titan, even the weeds would show
Defiant, to the stars.

But now a great thing in the street

Seems any human nod,
Where shift in strange democracy
The million masks of God.

In youth I sought the golden flower
Hidden in wood or wold,
But I am come to autumn,
When all the leaves are gold.

## Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834), English lyrical poet, critic, and philosopher, whose Lyrical Ballads,(1798) written with William Wordsworth, started the English Romantic movement.

Samuel Taylor Coleridge was born in Ottery St Mary, Devonshire, as the youngest son of the vicar of Ottery St Mary. After his father's death Coleridge was sent away to Christ's Hospital School in London. He also studied at Jesus College. In Cambridge Coleridge met the radical, future poet laureate Robert Southey. He moved with Southey to Bristol to establish a community, but the plan failed. In 1795 he married the sister of Southey's fiancée Sara Fricker, whom he did not really love.

Coleridge's collection Poems On Various Subjects was published in 1796, and in 1797 appeared Poems. In the same year he began the publication of a short-lived liberal political periodical The Watchman. He started a close friendship with Dorothy and William Wordsworth, one of the most fruitful creative relationships in English literature. From it resulted Lyrical Ballads, which opened with Coleridge's "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" and ended with Wordsworth's "Tintern Abbey". These poems set a new style by using everyday language and fresh ways of looking at nature.

The brothers Josiah and Thomas Wedgewood granted Coleridge an annuity of 150 pounds, thus enabling him to pursue his literary career. Disenchanted with political developments in France, Coleridge visited Germany in 1798-99 with Dorothy and William Wordsworth, and became interested in the works of Immanuel Kant. He studied philosophy at Göttingen University and mastered the German language. At the end of 1799 Coleridge fell in love with Sara Hutchinson, the sister of Wordsworth's future wife, to whom he devoted his work "Dejection: An Ode" (1802). During these years Coleridge also began to compile his Notebooks, recording the daily meditations of his life. In 1809-10 he wrote and edited with Sara Hutchinson the literary and political magazine The Friend. From 1808 to 1818 he gave several lectures, chiefly in London, and was considered the greatest of Shakespearean critics. In 1810 Coleridge's friendship with Wordsworth came to a crisis, and the two poets never fully returned to the relationship they had earlier.

Suffering from neuralgic and rheumatic pains, Coleridge had become addicted to opium. During the following years he lived in London, on the verge of suicide. He found a permanent shelter in Highgate in the household of Dr. James Gillman, and enjoyed an almost legendary reputation among the younger Romantics. During this time he rarely left the house.

In 1816 the unfinished poems "Christabel" and "Kubla Khan" were published, and next year appeared "Sibylline Leaves". According to the poet, "Kubla Khan" was inspired by a dream vision. His most important production during this period was the Biographia Literaria(1817). After 1817 Coleridge devoted himself to theological and politico-sociological works. Coleridge was elected a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1824. He died in Highgate, near London on July 25, 1834.

**Youth And Age**

Verse, a breeze 'mid blossoms straying,

Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee
Both were mine! Life went a-maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young? Ah, woeful When!
Ah! for the change 'twixt Now and Then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er aery cliffs and glittering sands
How lightly then it flashed along,
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When Youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; Love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O the joys! that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old? Ah woeful Ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet
'Tis known that Thou and I were one,
I'll think it but a fond conceit
It cannot be that Thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled
And thou wert aye a masker bold!

What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But Springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes:
Life is but Thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are housemates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve
With oft and tedious taking-leave,
Like some poor nigh-related guest
That may not rudely be dismist;
Yet hath out-stayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

## John Donne

John Donne (1572-1631) was the most outstanding of the English Metaphysical Poets and a churchman famous for his spellbinding sermons.

Donne was born in London to a prominent Roman Catholic family but converted to Anglicanism during the 1590s. At the age of 11 he entered the University of Oxford, where he studied for three years. According to some accounts, he spent the next three years at the University of Cambridge but took no

degree at either university. He began the study of law at Lincoln's Inn, London, in 1592, and he seemed destined for a legal or diplomatic career. Donne was appointed private secretary to Sir Thomas Egerton, Keeper of the Great Seal, in 1598. His secret marriage in 1601 to Egerton's niece, Anne More, resulted in his dismissal from this position and in a brief imprisonment. During the next few years Donne made a meager living as a lawyer.

Donne's principal literary accomplishments during this period were Divine Poems (1607) and the prose work Biathanatos (c. 1608, posthumously published 1644), a half-serious extenuation of suicides, in which he argued that suicide is not intrinsically sinful. Donne became a priest of the Anglican Church in 1615 and was appointed royal chaplain later that year. In 1621 he was named dean of St. Paul's Cathedral. He attained eminence as a preacher, delivering sermons that are regarded as the most brilliant and eloquent of his time.

Donne's poetry embraces a wide range of secular and religious subjects. He wrote cynical verse about inconstancy, poems about true love, Neoplatonic lyrics on the mystical union of lovers' souls and bodies and brilliant satires and hymns depicting his own spiritual struggles. The two "Anniversaries" - "An Anatomy of the World" (1611) and "Of the Progress of the Soul" (1612)--are elegies for 15-year-old Elizabeth Drury.

Whatever the subject, Donne's poems reveal the same characteristics that typified the work of the metaphysical poets: dazzling wordplay, often explicitly sexual; paradox; subtle argumentation; surprising contrasts; intricate psychological analysis; and striking imagery selected from nontraditional areas such as law, physiology, scholastic philosophy, and mathematics.

Donne's prose, almost equally metaphysical, ranks at least as high as his poetry. The Sermons, some 160 in all, are especially memorable for their imaginative explications of biblical passages and for their intense explorations of the themes of divine love and of the decay and resurrection of the body. Devotions upon Emergent Occasions (1624) is a powerful series of meditations,

expostulations, and prayers in which Donne's serious sickness at the time becomes a microcosm wherein can be observed the stages of the world's spiritual disease.

Obsessed with the idea of death, Donne preached what was called his own funeral sermon, "Death's Duel" just a few weeks before he died in London on March 31, 1631.

**The Sun Rising**

Busy old fool, unruly Sun,
Why dost thou thus,
Through windows, and through curtains, call on us?
Must to thy motions lovers' seasons run?
Saucy pedantic wretch, go chide
Late schoolboys, and sour prentices,
Go tell court-huntsmen that the king will ride,
Call country ants to harvest offices,
Love, all alike, no season knows, nor clime,
Nor hours, days, months, which are the rags of time.
Thy beams, so reverend and strong
Why shouldst thou think?
I could eclipse and cloud them with a wink,
But that I would not lose her sight so long:
If her eyes have not blinded thine,
Look, and tomorrow late, tell me
Whether both the'Indias of spice and mine
Be where thou leftst them, or lie here with me.
Ask for those kings whom thou saw'st yesterday,
And thou shalt hear: "All here in one bed lay."

She'is all states, and all princes I,
Nothing else is.
Princes do but play us; compar'd to this,
All honour's mimic, all wealth alchemy.
Thou, sun, art half as happy'as we,
In that the world's contracted thus;
Thine age asks ease, and since thy duties be
To warm the world, that's done in warming us.
Shine here to us, and thou art everywhere;
This bed thy centre is, these walls, thy sphere.

Another is the Same
TIS true, 'tis day ; what though it be?
O, wilt thou therefore rise from me?
Why should we rise because 'tis light?
Did we lie down because 'twas night?
Love, which in spite of darkness brought us hither,
Should in despite of light keep us together.

Light hath no tongue, but is all eye ;
If it could speak as well as spy,
This were the worst that it could say,
That being well I fain would stay,
And that I loved my heart and honour so
That I would not from him, that had them, go.

Must business thee from hence remove?
O ! that's the worst disease of love,
The poor, the foul, the false, love can

Admit, but not the busied man.
He which hath business, and makes love, doth do
Such wrong, as when a married man doth woo.

**The Dream**

Dear  love, for nothing less than thee
Would I have broke this happy dream ;
It was a theme
For reason, much too strong for fantasy.
Therefore thou waked'st me wisely ; yet
My dream thou brokest not, but continued'st it.
Thou art so true that thoughts of thee suffice
To make dreams truths, and fables histories ;
Enter these arms, for since thou thought'st it best,
Not to dream all my dream, let's act the rest.
As lightning, or a taper's light,
Thine eyes, and not thy noise waked me ;
Yet I thought thee
—For thou lovest truth—an angel, at first sight ;
But when I saw thou saw'st my heart,
And knew'st my thoughts beyond an angel's art,
When thou knew'st what I dreamt, when thou knew'st when
Excess of joy would wake me, and camest then,
I must confess, it could not choose but be
Profane, to think thee any thing but thee.

Coming and staying show'd thee, thee,
But rising makes me doubt, that now

Thou art not thou.
That love is weak where fear's as strong as he ;
'Tis not all spirit, pure and brave,
If mixture it of fear, shame, honour have ;
Perchance as torches, which must ready be,
Men light and put out, so thou deal'st with me ;
Thou camest to kindle, go'st to come ; then I
Will dream that hope again, but else would die.

**Sir Walter Raleigh**

**Life**

What is our life? A play of passion,
Our mirth the music of division,
Our mother's wombs the tiring-houses be,
Where we are dressed for this short comedy.
Heaven the judicious sharp spectator is,
That sits and marks still who doth act amiss.
Our graves that hide us from the setting sun
Are like drawn curtains when the play is done.
Thus march we, playing, to our latest rest,
Only we die in earnest, that's no jest.

**A Vision upon the Fairy Queen**

Methought I saw the grave where Laura lay,

Within that temple where the vestal flame
Was wont to burn; and, passing by that way,
To see that buried dust of living fame,
Whose tomb fair Love, and fairer Virtue kept:
All suddenly I saw the Fairy Queen;
At whose approach the soul of Petrarch wept,
And, from thenceforth, those Graces were not seen:
For they this queen attended; in whose stead
Oblivion laid him down on Laura's hearse:
Hereat the hardest stones were seen to bleed,
And groans of buried ghosts the heavens did pierce:
Where Homer's spright did tremble all for grief,
And cursed the access of that celestial thief!

## Scott Fitzgerald

Scott Fitzgerald (1896-1940) is best known for his novels and short stories which chronicle the excesses of America's 'Jazz Age' during the 1920s.

Born into a fairly well-to-do family in St Paul, Minnesota in 1896 Fitzgerald attended, but never graduated from Princeton University. Here he mingled with the monied classes from the Eastern Seaboard who so obsessed him for the rest of his life. In 1917 he was drafted into the army, but he never saw active service abroad. Instead, he spent much of his time writing and re-writing his first novel This Side of Paradise, which on its publication in 1920 became an instant success. In the same year he married the beautiful Zelda Sayre and together they embarked on a rich life of endless parties.

Dividing their time between America and fashionable resorts in Europe, the Fitzgeralds became as famous for their lifestyle as for the novels he wrote. Fitzgerald once said 'Sometimes I don't know whether Zelda and I are real or whether we are characters in one of my novels'. He followed his first success with

The Beautiful and the Damned (1922), and The Great Gatsby (1925) which Fitzgerald considered his masterpiece. It was also at this time that Fitzgerald wrote many of his short stories which helped to pay for his extravagant lifestyle.

The bubble burst in the 1930s when Zelda became increasingly troubled by mental illness. Tender is the Night (1934), the story of Dick Diver and his schizophrenic wife Nicole, goes some way to show the pain that Fitzgerald felt. The book was not well received in America and he turned to script-writing in Hollywood for the final three years of his life. It was at this time he wrote the autobiographical essays collected posthumously in The Crack-Up and his unfinished novel, The Last Tycoon. He died in 1940.

**Princeton -The Last Day**

The last light wanes and drifts across the land,
The low, long land, the sunny land of spires.
The ghosts of evening tune again their lyres
And wander singing, in a plaintive band
Down the long corridors of trees. Pale fires
Echo the night from tower top to tower.
Oh sleep that dreams and dream that never tires,
Press from the petals of the lotus-flower
Something of this to keep, the essence of an hour!

No more to wait the twilight of the moon
In this sequestrated vale of star and spire;
For one, eternal morning of desire
Passes to time and earthy afternoon.
Here, Heracletus, did you build of fire
And changing stuffs your prophecy far hurled

Down the dead years; this midnight I aspire
To see, mirrored among the embers, curled
In flame, the splendor and the sadness of the world.

## Oscar Wilde

Oscar Wilde (1854-1900), Irish poet and dramatist whose reputation rests on his comic masterpieces Lady Windermere's Fan(1892) and The Importance of Being Earnest (1895). Among Wilde's other best-known works are his only novel The Picture of Dorian Gray(1891) and his fairy tales especially "The Happy Prince."

Wilde was born on October 16, 1854 in Dublin to unconventional parents - his mother Lady Jane Francesca Wilde (1820-96), was a poet and journalist. His father was Sir William Wilde, an Irish antiquarian, gifted writer, and specialist in diseases of the eye and ear. Wilde studied at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, County Fermanagh (1864-71), Trinity College, Dublin (1871-74) and Magdalen College, Oxford (1874-78).

In 1878 Wilde received his B.A. and in the same year he moved to London. His lifestyle and humorous wit soon made him the spokesman for Aestheticism, the late 19th century movement in England that advocated art for art's sake. He worked as art reviewer (1881), lectured in the United States and Canada (1882), and lived in Paris (1883). Between the years 1883 and 1884 he lectured in Britain. From the mid-1880s he was a regular contributor for Pall Mall Gazette and Dramatic View. In 1884 Wilde married Constance Lloyd (died 1898), and to support his family Wilde edited in 1887-89 Woman's World. In 1888 he published The Happy Prince and Other Tales, fairy-stories written for his two sons. Wilde's marriage ended in 1893. He had met an few years earlier Lord Alfred Douglas, an athlete and a poet, who became both the love of the author's life and his downfall.

Wilde made his reputation in the theatre world between the years 1892 and 1895 with a series of highly popular plays. Lady Windermere's Fan (1892) dealt

with a blackmailing divorcée driven to self-sacrifice by maternal love. In A Woman of No Importance (1893) an illegitimate son is torn between his father and mother. An Ideal Husband (1895) dealt with blackmail, political corruption and public and private honor. The Importance of Being Earnest (1895) was about two fashionable young gentlemen and their eventually successful courtship. Before his theatrical success Wilde produced several essays. His two major literary-theoretical works were the dialogues "The Decay of Lying" (1889) and "The Critic as Artist" (1890).

Although married and the father of two children, Wilde's personal life was open to rumors. His years of triumph ended dramatically, when his intimate association with Alfred Douglas led to his trial on charges of homosexuality (then illegal in Britain). He was sentenced to two years hard labor for the crime of sodomy. Wilde was first in Wandsworth prison, London, and then in Reading Gaol. During this time he wrote De Profundis (1905), a dramatic monologue and autobiography, which was addressed to Alfred Douglas.

After his release in 1897 Wilde in Berneval, near Dieppe. He wrote "The Ballad of Reading Gaol", revealing his concern for inhumane prison conditions. Wilde died of cerebral meningitis on November 30, 1900, penniless, in a cheap Paris hotel at the age of 46.

**Amor Intellectualis**

Oft have we trod the vales of Castaly
And heard sweet notes of sylvan music blown
From antique reeds to common folk unknown:
And often launched our bark upon that sea
Which the nine Muses hold in empery,
And ploughed free furrows through the wave and foam,
Nor spread reluctant sail for more safe home
Till we had freighted well our argosy.

Of which despoilèd treasures these remain,
Sordello's passion, and the honied line
Of young Endymion, lordly Tamburlaine
Driving his pampered jades, and more than these,
The seven-fold vision of the Florentine,
And grave-browed Milton's solemn harmonies.

## William Wordsworth

William Wordsworth was born on 7 April 1770 in Cockermouth, Cumberland, in the Lake District. His father was John Wordsworth, Sir James Lowther's attorney. The magnificent landscape deeply affected Wordsworth's imagination and gave him a love of nature. He lost his mother when he was eight and five years later his father. The domestic problems separated Wordsworth from his beloved and neurotic sister Dorothy, who was a very important person in his life.

With the help of his two uncles, Wordsworth entered a local school and continued his studies at Cambridge University. Wordsworth made his debut as a writer in 1787, when he published a sonnet in The European Magazine . In that same year he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, from where he took his B.A. in 1791.

During a summer vacation in 1790 Wordsworth went on a walking tour through revolutionary France and also traveled in Switzerland. On his second journey in France, Wordsworth had an affair with a French girl, Annette Vallon, a daughter of a barber-surgeon, by whom he had a illegitimate daughter Anne Caroline. The affair was basis of the poem "Vaudracour and Julia", but otherwise Wordsworth did his best to hide the affair from posterity.

In 1795 he met Coleridge. Wordsworth's financial situation became better in 1795 when he received a legacy and was able to settle at Racedown, Dorset, with

his sister Dorothy.

Encouraged by Coleridge and stimulated by the close contact with nature, Wordsworth composed his first masterwork, Lyrical Ballads, which opened with Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner." About 1798 he started to write a large and philosophical autobiographical poem, completed in 1805, and published posthumously in 1850 under the title The Prelude.

Wordsworth spent the winter of 1798-99 with his sister and Coleridge in Germany, where he wrote several poems, including the enigmatic 'Lucy' poems. After return he moved Dove Cottage, Grasmere, and in 1802 married Mary Hutchinson. They cared for Wordsworth's sister Dorothy for the last 20 years of her life.

Wordsworth's second verse collection, Poems, In Two Volumes, appeared in 1807. Wordsworth's central works were produced between 1797 and 1808. His poems written during middle and late years have not gained similar critical approval. Wordsworth's Grasmere period ended in 1813. He was appointed official distributor of stamps for Westmoreland. He moved to Rydal Mount, Ambleside, where he spent the rest of his life. In later life Wordsworth abandoned his radical ideas and became a patriotic, conservative public man.

In 1843 he succeeded Robert Southey (1774-1843) as England's poet laureate. Wordsworth died on April 23, 1850.

**Daffodils**

I wandered lonely as a cloud
That floats on high o'er vales and hills,
When all at once I saw a crowd,
A host, of golden daffodils;
Beside the lake, beneath the trees,
Fluttering and dancing in the breeze.

Continuous as the stars that shine
And twinkle on the milky way,
They stretched in never-ending line
Along the margin of a bay:
Ten thousand saw I at a glance,
Tossing their heads in sprightly dance.

The waves beside them danced, but they
Out-did the sparkling leaves in glee;
A poet could not be but gay,
In such a jocund company!
I gazed—and gazed—but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought:

For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
They flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

## Robert Louis Stevenson

Robert Louis Stevenson (1850-1894), Scottish essayist, poet and author of fiction and travel books, known especially for his novels of adventure.

Stevenson was born on November 13, 1850 in Edinburgh as the son of Thomas Stevenson, joint-engineer to the Board of Northern Lighthouses. Since his childhood Stevenson suffered from tuberculosis. In 1867 he entered Edinburgh University to study engineering, but changed to law and in 1875 he was called to

the Scottish bar. During these years his first works were published in The Edinburgh University Magazine (1871) and The Portfolio (1873).

Instead of practicing law, Stevenson devoted himself to writing travel sketches, essays, and short stories for magazines. An account of his canoe tour of France and Belgium was published in 1878 as An Inland Voyage, and Travels With A Donkey In The Cervennes appeared next year. In 1879 Stevenson moved to California with Fanny Osbourne, whom he had met in France. They married in 1880, and after a brief stay at Calistoga, which was recorded in The Silverado Squatters (1883), they returned to Scotland, and then moved often in search of better climates.

Stevenson became famous with the romantic adventure story Treasure Island, which appeared in 1883. Among his other popular works are Kidnapped (1886), The Strange Case Of Dr. Jekyll And Mr. Hyde (1886) and The Master Of Ballantrae (1889). He also contributed to various periodicals, including The Cornhill Magazine and Longman's Magazine, where his best-known article "A Humble Remonstrance" was published in 1884. It was a reply to Henry James's 'The Art of Fiction' and started a lifelong friendship between the two authors.

From the late 1880s Stevenson lived with his family in the South Seas, in Samoa. Fascinated by the Polynesian culture, Stevenson wrote several letters to The Times on the islanders' behalf and published novels like The Beach Of Falesa (1893) and The Ebb-Tide (1894), which condemned European colonial exploitation.

Stevenson died on December 3, 1894, in Vailima, Samoa. His last work, Weir Of Hermiston (1896), was left unfinished.

**Heather Ale**

**(A Galloway legend)**

From the bonny bells of heather
  They brewed a drink long-syne,
Was sweeter far then honey,
  Was stronger far than wine.
They brewed it and they drank it,
  And lay in a blessed swound
For days and days together
  In their dwellings underground.

There rose a king in Scotland,
  A fell man to his foes,
He smote the Picts in battle,
  He hunted them like roes.
Over miles of the red mountain
  He hunted as they fled,
And strewed the dwarfish bodies
  Of the dying and the dead.

Summer came in the country,
  Red was the heather bell;
But the manner of the brewing
  Was none alive to tell.
In graves that were like children's
  On many a mountain head,
The Brewsters of the Heather
  Lay numbered with the dead.

The king in the red moorland
  Rode on a summer's day;
And the bees hummed, and the curlews

Cried beside the way.
The king rode, and was angry,
Black was his brow and pale,
To rule in a land of heather
And lack the Heather Ale.

It fortuned that his vassals,
Riding free on the heath,
Came on a stone that was fallen
And vermin hid beneath.
Rudely plucked from their hiding,
Never a word they spoke;
A son and his aged father --
Last of the dwarfish folk.

The king sat high on his charger,
He looked on the little men;
And the dwarfish and swarthy couple
Looked at the king again.
Down by the shore he had them;
And there on the giddy brink --
"I will give you life, ye vermin,
For the secret of the drink."

There stood the son and father,
And they looked high and low;
The heather was red around them,
The sea rumbled below.
And up and spoke the father,
Shrill was his voice to hear:

"I have a word in private,
  A word for the royal ear.

"Life is dear to the aged,
  And honour a little thing;
I would gladly sell the secret,"
  Quoth the Pict to the king.
His voice was small as a sparrow's,
  And shrill and wonderful clear:
"I would gladly sell my secret,
  Only my son I fear.

"For life is a little matter,
  And death is nought to the young;
And I dare not sell my honour
  Under the eye of my son.
Take him, O king, and bind him,
  And cast him far in the deep;
And it's I will tell the secret
  That I have sworn to keep."

They took the son and bound him,
  Neck and heels in a thong,
And a lad took him and swung him,
  And flung him far and strong,
And the sea swallowed his body,
  Like that of a child of ten; --
And there on the cliff stood the father,
  Last of the dwarfish men.

"True was the word I told you:
  Only my son I feared;
For I doubt the sapling courage
  That goes without the beard.
But now in vain is the torture,
  Fire shall never avail:
Here dies in my bosom
  The secret of Heather Ale."

**Foreign Lands**

From Child's Garden of Verses
Up into the cherry tree
Who should climb but little me?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad in foreign lands.

I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers, before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.

I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree
Farther and farther I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips

Into the sea among the ships,

To where the road on either hand
Lead onward into fairy land,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all the playthings come alive.

**In the States**

With half a heart I wander here
  As from an age gone by
A brother -- yet though young in years,
  An elder brother. I.

You speak another tongue than mine,
  Though both were English born.
I towards the night of time decline,
  You mount into the morn.

You shall grow great and strong and free,
  But age must still decay:
To-morrow for the States -- for me,
  England and Yesterday.

## Joseph Rudyard Kipling

Joseph Rudyard Kipling was born on 30 December 1865 in Bombay (now Mumbai) India, son of Alice née MacDonald (1837-1910) and John Lockwood

Kipling (1837-1911) Head of the Department of Architectural Sculpture at the Jejeebhoy School of Art and Industry in Bombay. Some of Kipling's earliest and fondest memories are of his and sister Alice's trips to the bustling fruit market with their ayah or nanny, or her telling them Indian nursery rhymes and stories before their nap in the tropical afternoon heat. His father's art studio provided many creative outlets with clay and paints. Often the family took evening walks along the Bombay Esplanade beside the Arabian Sea, the dhows bobbing on the glittering waters.

"I have always felt the menacing darkness of tropical eventides, as I have loved the voices of night-winds through palm or banana leaves, and the song of the tree-frogs"—from his autobiography Something of Myself (1937)

The newly opened Suez Canal created a bustling port city which captivated young Rudyard, an intersection to the ancient cultures and mystical rites of Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, Anglo-Indians and their then colonial rulers.

The idyllic days were to end when in 1871 Rudyard and Alice were sent to school in Southsea, England, to live with Captain Holloway and his wife. She ruled the boarding house with fire and brimstone and Kipling was often beaten by her and her son. "Then the old Captain died, and I was sorry, for he was the only person in that house as far as I can remember who ever threw me a kind word."—ibid. Kipling soon learned to read and found solace in literature and poetry, voraciously turning to the magazines and books his parents sent him including Daniel Defoe's Robinson Crusoe. Wilkie Collins' The Moonstone and works by the likes of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Bret Harte also left an indelible impression on Kipling.

Respite from the Holloway household was gained when he spent one month a year in London with his mother's kindly sister Aunt Georgie and her husband, pre-Raphaelite painter Edward Burne Jones and their children. Those months of December were a veritable paradise to Kipling; North End House was constantly brimming with visiting friends and relatives, and the homey and artistic effects of the affectionate couple were everywhere. Their home echoed with laughter and the

patter of little feet or was eerily hushed as the children raptly listened to fantastic stories told by Edward. They also played the organ, sang songs, dressed up in costumes and acted out plays.

In 1877 Kipling's mother returned to England and collected him from 'The House of Desolation' as he grimly refers to the Holloway's over sixty years later in his autobiography, so that he could attend the United Services College in Westward Ho!, Devon. He was now armed with spectacles, for Kipling was nearly blind without them and his undiagnosed vision problems were the source of much grief from Mrs. Holloway and his schoolteachers. He learned to defend himself from bullies and settled into the life of a student, became the editor of the school paper, and in his second year started writing his own Schoolboy Lyrics (1881) printed by his parents. In 1878 his father took him to the Paris Exhibition where he was allowed to wander freely and gained much appreciation for French culture which he wrote about in Souvenirs of France (1933).

In 1881 Kipling traveled back to Lahore, India to live with his parents. It was a happy homecoming and his ayah was overjoyed to see him too. Ensconced in his own office he became the assistant editor for the Anglo-Indian Civil and Military Gazette and later The Pioneer. He had suffered frail health as a child and his penchant for working ten or more hours a day may have led to a later nervous breakdown.

Thus began Kipling's career as roving reporter, traveling to various parts of India and the United States. He wrote dozens of essays, reviews and short stories like "The Man Who Would Be King" (1888) and "Gunga Din" (1890) which would later be collected in such volumes as Departmental Ditties (1886, poetry), Plain Tales From the Hills (1888, short stories), Wee Willie Winkie (1888, short stories), American Notes (1891, non-fiction), and his first major success Barrack-Room Ballads (1892, poetry). In 1887, he met professor Alec Hill who would become a great friend and travel companion.

Now living just off the Strand in London, England on Villiers Street, Kipling enjoyed the success of many of his publications and continued his prodigious

output. During the influenza epidemic, on 18 January 1892 Kipling married Caroline ‘Carrie’ Balestier, the sister of his American publisher. American author Henry James attended. The Kiplings started their ‘magic carpet’ honeymoon in a wintry Canada (they bought twenty acres of land in North Vancouver only to learn several years later that it was owned by someone else) then went on to Yokohama, Japan, but the same day an earthquake struck he was informed by the bank that all his funds with the New Oriental Banking Corporation were lost when it failed. Left with the clothes on their backs and what they owned in their trunks, they made their way back to the United States, first living in ‘Bliss Cottage’ in the New England town of Brattleboro, Vermont before moving into ‘The Naulakha’. Their first daughter Josephine was born in 1892, Elsie in 1896, and son John “on a warm August night of ‘97’”. After a legal falling out with his publisher and brother-in-law Beatty Balestier, Kipling decided to move to England in 1896 and settled at ‘The Elms’ in Rottingdean, Sussex. He was now a success in India and America and The Jungle Book (1894) established his fame in England. Many other titles were published around this time including The Naulahka: A story of West and East (1892), The Second Jungle Book (1895) and Captains Courageous (1896).

In the winter of 1898, the Kiplings went on their first of many holidays in South Africa. “the children throve, and the colour, light, and half-oriental manners of the land bound chains round our hearts for years to come.” While in the United States a year later, Josephine died of pneumonia. Kipling had been gravely ill from it too and her death was a terrible blow to him. When the Boer War broke out Kipling joined in campaign efforts to raise money for the troops and reported for army publications. During a harrowing two-week stay in Bloemfontein he came face to face with the tragedies of war; the deaths by typhoid and dysentery and appalling conditions in the barracks. “They were wonderful even in the hour of death—these men and boys—lodge-keepers and ex-butlers of the Reserve and raw town-lads of twenty.”—Something of Myself

Embittered by the Great War Kipling sought solitude in the Sussex downs and in 1902 he and Carrie found the house ‘Bateman’s’ in Burwash, which he

purchased and lived in for the rest of his life. First serialised in McClure's Magazine, Kim was published in 1901. It follows the adventures of Kimball O'Hara in the Himalayas and reflects the conflicts between Britain, Russia, and central Asia. Kipling had thus far refused many awards and honours including that of England's Poet Laureate but in 1907 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature "in consideration of the power of observation, originality of imagination, virility of ideas and remarkable talent for narration which characterize the creations of this world-famous author."

In 1915 during World War I Kipling visited the Western Front as reporter and wrote "France at War". The Fringes of the Fleet (1915) was followed by Sea Warfare (1916). His son John died at the age of eighteen while fighting with the Irish Guards in the Battle of Loos which he wrote about in The Irish Guards in the Great War (1923). In 1922 he was named Lord Rector of the University of St Andrews in Scotland. The same year he produced "The Ritual of the Calling of an Engineer" or "The Iron Ring Ceremony" and Obligation at the request of the University of Toronto Engineering department. In 1926 he was featured on the cover of Time magazine. In 1935 Kipling gave an address to the Royal Society of St. George, "An Undefended Island", outlining the dangers Nazi Germany posed to Britain.

Rudyard Kipling died of a hemorrhage on 18 January 1936 in London, and his ashes are interred in the Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey, London, England near to T. S. Eliot. Today his study and the gardens at 'The Elm' are preserved by the Rottingdean Preservation Society, and Bateman's is held by the National Trust. The Kipling Society was founded in 1927. From his poem "Recessional"—Lest we forget is now a popular epitaph used by many including the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (est.1917) which Kipling worked as literary adviser for during World War I.

**If**

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breath a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,

Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!

**An American**

The American Spirit speaks:
If the Led Striker call it a strike,
  Or the papers call it a war,
They know not much what I am like,
  Nor what he is, My Avatar.

Through many roads, by me possessed,
  He shambles forth in cosmic guise;
He is the Jester and the Jest,
  And he the Text himself applies.

The Celt is in his heart and hand,
  The Gaul is in his brain and nerve;
Where, cosmopolitanly planned,
  He guards the Redskin's dry reserve

His easy unswept hearth he lends
  From Labrador to Guadeloupe;
Till, elbowed out by sloven friends,
  He camps, at sufferance, on the stoop.

Calm-eyed he scoffs at Sword and Crown,
  Or, panic-blinded, stabs and slays:
Blatant he bids the world bow down,
  Or cringing begs a crust of praise;

Or, sombre-drunk, at mine and mart,
  He dubs his dreary brethren Kings.
His hands are black with blood -- his heart
  Leaps, as a babe's, at little things.

But, through the shift of mood and mood,
  Mine ancient humour saves him whole --
The cynic devil in his blood
  That bids him mock his hurrying soul;

That bids him flout the Law he makes,
  That bids him make the Law he flouts,
Till, dazed by many doubts, he wakes
  The drumming guns that -- have no doubts;

That checks him foolish-hot and fond,
  That chuckles through his deepest ire,
That gilds the slough of his despond
  But dims the goal of his desire;

Inopportune, shrill-accented,
  The acrid Asiatic mirth
That leaves him, careless 'mid his dead,
  The scandal of the elder earth.

How shall he clear himself, how reach
  Your bar or weighed defence prefer --
A brother hedged with alien speech
  And lacking all interpreter?

Which knowledge vexes him a space;
  But, while Reproof around him rings,
He turns a keen untroubled face
  Home, to the instant need of things.

Enslaved, illogical, elate,
  He greets the embarrassed Gods, nor fears
To shake the iron hand of Fate
  Or match with Destiny for beers.

Lo, imperturbable he rules,
  Unkempt, desreputable, vast --
And, in the teeth of all the schools,
  I -- I shall save him at the last!

**The English Way**

After the fight at Otterburn,
  Before the ravens came,
The Witch-wife rode across the fern
  And spoke Earl Percy's name.

"Stand up-stand up, Northumberland!
  I bid you answer true,

If England's King has under his hand
A Captain as good as you?"

Then up and spake the dead Percy-
Oh, but his wound was sore!
"Five hundred Captains as good," said he,
"And I trow five hundred more.

"But I pray you by the lifting skies,
And the young wind over the grass,
That you take your eyes from off my eyes,
And let my spirit pass."

"Stand up-stand up, Northumberland!
I charge you answer true,
If ever you dealt in steel and brand,
How went the fray with you?"

"Hither and yon," the Percy said;
"As every fight must go;
For some they fought and some they fled,
And some struck ne'er a blow.

"But I pray you by the breaking skies,
And the first call from the nest,
That you turn your eyes away from my eyes,
And let me to my rest."

"Stand up-stand up, Northumberland!
I will that you answer true,

If you and your men were quick again,
How would it be with you?"

"Oh, we would speak of hawk and hound,
And the red deer where they rove,
And the merry foxes the country round,
And the maidens that we love.

"We would not speak of steel or steed,
Except to grudge the cost;
And he that had done the doughtiest deed
Would mock himself the most.

"But I pray you by my keep and tower,
And the tables in my hall,
And I pray you by my lady's bower
(Ah, bitterest of all!)

"That you lift your eyes from outen my eyes,
Your hand from off my breast,
And cover my face from the red sun-rise,
And loose me to my rest!"

She has taken her eyes from out of his eyes-
Her palm from off his breast,
And covered his face from the red sun-rise,
And loosed him to his rest.

"Sleep you, or wake, Northumberland-
You shall not speak again,

And the word you have said 'twixt quick and dead
I lay on Englishmen.

"So long as Severn runs to West
Or Humber to the East,
That they who bore themselves the best
Shall count themselves the least.

"While there is fighting at the ford,
Or flood along the Tweed,
That they shall choose the lesser word
To cloke the greater deed.

"After the quarry and the kill-
The fair fight and the fame-
With an ill face and an ill grace
Shall they rehearse the same.

"Greater the deed, greater the need
Lightly to laugh it away,

Shall be the mark of the English breed
Until the Judgment Day!"

## Emily Bronte

Emily Bronte was born on 30 July 1818 at 74 Market Street in Thornton, Bradford, Yorkshire, England. She was the fourth daughter of Maria Branwell (1783-1821), who died of cancer when Emily was just three years old, and Irish clergyman Patrick Bronte (1777-1861). After her youngest sister Anne (1820-

1849) was born the Bronte's moved to the village of Haworth where Patrick had been appointed rector. Emily had four older siblings; Maria (1814-1825), Elizabeth (1815-1825), Charlotte (1816-1855) and Patrick Branwell "Branwell" (1817-1848). Emily's "Aunt [Elizabeth] Branwell" (1776-1842) had moved in to the Parsonage after her sister Maria's death to help nursemaids Nancy and Sarah Gars raise the six young children.

In 1824, Emily, with her four sisters entered the Clergy Daughter's School at Cowan Bridge, near Kirkby Lonsdale. When Maria and Elizabeth died there a year later of tuberculosis, she and Charlotte returned home to Haworth. Their father was a quiet man and often spent his spare time alone, so, the motherless children entertained themselves reading the works of William Shakespeare, Virgil, John Milton, and the Bible and played the piano, did needlepoint, and told each other stories. The four often 'paired up'; Charlotte and Branwell started writing of their imaginary world 'Angria', Emily and Anne writing of its rival, 'Gondal'. Penning their kingdoms' histories and developing characters to populate them, the young Bronte girls found a creative outlet in writing stories and poetry. Emily was becoming an independent and opinionated young woman as her poem "The Old Stoic" reveals;

> And if I pray, the only prayer
> That moves my lips for me
> Is, 'Leave the heart that now I bear,
> And give me liberty!'

In 1835 Emily enrolled at Miss Wooler's school at Roe Head, Mirfield where Charlotte was teaching, but she soon returned home when she became profoundly homesick and ill. After a few years as governess at Law Hill Hall in Halifax, West Yorkshire, Emily and her sisters Charlotte and Anne travelled to Brussels, Belgium in 1842. There at the Pensionnat Heger under teacher Constantin Heger they immersed themselves in the study of French, German and literature with the aim of starting their own school someday. When their Aunt Branwell died Emily alone

returned to Haworth for her funeral and stayed on there, just her and her father. She helped around the home and continued writing and editing her poems. By 1845 her sisters had given up their dream of starting their own school and the three were together at Haworth again. It was Charlotte’s idea to publish the poems of Currer, Ellis and Acton Bell in 1846. The following year Wuthering Heights was published to mixed reviews, although it was soon lauded as an original and innovative tragic romance. Tragedy loomed large in Emily’s life as well: her brother Branwell had become an alcoholic and addicted to opium and the family were constantly dealing with his depressions and at times mad ravings. He died in 1848 and while at his funeral Emily caught a cold and died soon after, on 19 December 1848. She now rests with her mother and father and sisters Charlotte, Maria, and Elizabeth and brother Branwell in the family vault at the Church of Saint Michael and All Angels in Haworth, West Yorkshire, England.

**At Castlewood**

The day is done, the winter sun
Is setting in its sullen sky;
And drear the course that has been run,
And dim the hearts that slowly die.

No star will light my coming night;
No morn of hope for me will shine;
I mourn not heaven would blast my sight,
And I ne'er longed for joys divine.

Through life's hard task I did not ask
Celestial aid, celestial cheer;

I saw my fate without its mask,
And met it too without a tear.

The grief that pressed my aching breast
Was heavier far than earth can be;
And who would dread eternal rest
When labour's hour was agony?

Dark falls the fear of this despair
On spirits born of happiness;
But I was bred the mate of care,
The foster-child of sore distress.

No sighs for me, no sympathy,
No wish to keep my soul below;
The heart is dead in infancy,
Unwept-for let the body go.

## Alfred Tennyson

Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892), English poet often regarded as the chief representative of the Victorian age in poetry. Tennyson succeeded Wordsworth as Poet Laureate in 1850.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson was born on August 5, 1809 in Somersby, Lincolnshire. His father, George Clayton Tennyson, a clergyman and rector, suffered from depression and was notoriously absentminded. Alfred began to write poetry at an early age in the style of Lord Byron. After spending four unhappy years in school he was tutored at home. Tennyson then studied at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he joined the literary club 'The Apostles' and met Arthur Hallam, who became his closest friend. Tennyson published Poems, Chiefly

Lyrical, in 1830, which included the popular "Mariana".

His next book, Poems (1833), received unfavorable reviews, and Tennyson ceased to publish for nearly ten years. Hallam died suddenly on the same year in Vienna. It was a heavy blow to Tennyson. He began to write "In Memoriam", an elegy for his lost friend - the work took seventeen years. "The Lady of Shalott", "The Lotus-eaters" "Morte d'Arthur" and "Ulysses" appeared in 1842 in the two-volume Poems and established his reputation as a writer.

After marrying Emily Sellwood, whom he had already met in 1836, the couple settled in Farringford, a house in Freshwater on the Isle of Wight in 1853. From there the family moved in 1869 to Aldworth, Surrey. During these later years he produced some of his best poems.

Among Tennyson's major poetic achievements is the elegy mourning the death of his friend Arthur Hallam, "In Memoriam" (1850). The patriotic poem "Charge of the Light Brigade", published in Maud (1855), is one of Tennyson's best known works, although at first "Maud" was found obscure or morbid by critics ranging from George Eliot to Gladstone. Enoch Arden (1864) was based on a true story of a sailor thought drowned at sea who returned home after several years to find that his wife had remarried. Idylls Of The King (1859-1885) dealt with the Arthurian theme.

In the 1870s Tennyson wrote several plays, among them the poetic dramas Queen Mary (1875) and Harold (1876). In 1884 he was created a baron.

Tennyson died at Aldwort on October 6, 1892 and was buried in the Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey.

**The Poet's Song**

The rain had fallen, the Poet arose,
  He passed by the town, and out of the street,
A light wind blew from the gates of the sun,
  And waves of shadow went over the wheat,

And he set him down in a lonely place,
  And chanted a melody loud and sweet,
That made the wild-swan pause in her cloud,
  And the lark drop down at his feet.

The swallow stopt as he hunted the bee,
  The snake slipt under a spray,
The hawk stood with the down on his beak
  And stared, with his foot on the prey
And the nightingale thought, “I have sung many songs,
  But never a one so gay,
For he sings of what the world will be
  When the years have died away.

**Lost Love**
**(From "In Memoriam")**

I envy not in any moods
  The captive void of noble rage,
  The linnet born within the cage,
That never knew the summer woods;

I envy not the beast that takes
  His license in the field of time,
  Unfetter’d by the sense of crime,
To whom a conscience never wakes;

Nor, what may count itself as blest,
  The heart that never plighted troth

But stagnates in the weeds of sloth;
Nor any want-begotten rest.

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'T is better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

## Robert Burns

Robert (Rabbie) Burns was born on 25 January, 1759 in Alloway, Ayrshire of south west Scotland, the son of a poor tenant farmer or "cotter" William Burnes [Burness] (1721-1784) and his wife Agnes Broun [Broun]. The Burns family lived in a cottage that William himself had built, and which John Keats would later visit and write his sonnet "Written in the cottage where Burns was born". The cottage and property now belong to the Burns National Heritage Park. Young Robert and his siblings worked the fields with their father, which was hard manual labour near the shores of the Firth of Clyde. They were exposed to the sometimes fair but more often harsh climes of Scotland that would take their toll on Robert's constitution. He and his younger brother Gilbert also attended the local school and were tutored by John Murdoch.

Burns became a voracious reader of many classic Greek, English and Scottish literary works including William Shakespeare's, Allen Ramsay's, and Robert Fergusson's. He also studied the Bible, French, Latin, arithmetic, geography, and history, and his childhood nurse Betty Davidson is said to have introduced him to the world of Scottish folklore and witchcraft as in "Tam o'Shanter". The family moved to the farm Mount Oliphant in 1766, then a year later to Lochlea farm. Burns was a handsome, dark-haired young lad; a hard worker at the plow, and he worked as a flax dresser for a time. He also started on

his life-long habit of spending nights out drinking Scotch whiskey and flirting with the ladies. Burns became a Freemason in 1781 and after the death of his father in 1784, he and Gilbert rented Mossgiel farm, near Mauchline, but it proved an unsuccessful business venture.

Around the age of fifteen Burns had started writing poems in the Ayrshire dialect of Lowlands Scots, including his first, “Handsome Nell” (1771-79);

O once I lov'd a bonie lass,
Ay, and I love her still;
And whilst that virtue warms my breast,
I'll love my handsome Nell.

Other early poems include the oft-quoted “To A Mouse” (1785) written by Burns when he overturned their nest whilst plowing a field. It inspired the title of novelist John Steinbeck’s masterpiece Of Mice and Men (1937).

Around the age of twenty-five Burns fell in love with Jean Armour, to whom “Bonie Jean” (1793) is addressed, and with whom he had twins. He wanted to marry her but her father and the Kirk opposed it. Frustrated with this turn of events, he decided to emigrate and seek his fortunes in the West Indies. In order to fund his passage he had his first collection of Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect (Kilmarnock edition) published in 1786.

However, his plans soon changed when the joy of fatherhood set in and Poems immediately received high acclaim. Burns “the Ploughman’s Poet” became popular among Edinburgh society; he was guest of the Duke and Duchess of Atholl, his principal patron the Earl of Glencairn fêted him, and William Creech published Edinburgh editions of his works. Though he was not aware of his contemporary William Blake, a fifteen year old Sir Walter Scott met him. With Armour’s father seeing a more respectable man who could provide for his daughter, he encouraged their marriage and in 1788 Robert and Jean finally married and settled down on the farm Ellisland in Dumfriesshire.

The Ellisland farm proved yet another failure and Burns with his wife and children moved to Dumfries near the Solway Firth where he obtained a position as Excise man in 1789. He worked in the Port collecting taxes on cargo and seizing smuggling ships, though he did not entirely enjoy it or take it too seriously, as his poem “The Deil's Awa wi' th' Exciseman” (1792-The Devil has Taken the Exciseman), poking fun at the position, suggests;

The deil cam fiddlin' thro' the town,
And danc'd awa wi' th' Exciseman,
And ilka wife cries, "Auld Mahoun,
I wish you luck o' the prize, man."

The annual pay of £50 finally provided Burns with a regular and comfortable income with which he could support his family, though he received little recompense for his literary efforts. In 1787 he also enjoyed travels throughout the country. Due to his love of music, he and James Johnson set to the task of collecting together all the traditional Scottish songs, music and lyrics, published as The Scots Musical Museum (1787) which grew to six volumes. A Select Collection of Original Scottish Airs (1793) was also partly produced by Burns, with George Thomson. Burns joined the democratic militia group Royal Dumfries Volunteers in 1795. The same year his beloved three year old daughter Elizabeth died.

Years of working in the fields and a penchant for debauchery and drink no doubt contributed to Burns’ ill-health, but there is much speculation as to what caused his death. He did contract rheumatic fever as stated in a letter to his friend Mrs. Dunlop of Dumfries on 31 July, 1796. Under the care of Doctor Maxwell, he knew his prognosis was grim. With four surviving children and his wife due to have her ninth at any moment, Burns wrote her father to send assistance for her confinement. Robert Burns died on 21 July, 1796, aged thirty-seven, at his home in Mill Vennel, now called Burns House. His son Maxwell, named after his doctor, was born three days later. Burns' remains now rest in the Mausoleum in St Michael's Kirkyard. Jean Armour died in 1834 and now rests beside him.

Robert Burns is now considered a pioneer in the Romantic, socialist, and liberalism movements. While he often wrote with light-hearted humour, some of his works with their universal humanistic appeal contributed to his becoming a Scottish cultural icon. Burns' “Scots Wha Hae” (1793) served as an unofficial national anthem for many years. Inspired by his admiration of 13th century patriot William Wallace and his demise by the English, he penned it after the charge of sedition and trial of Thomas Muir. It is written in the form of a speech given by Robert the Bruce before the battle of Bannockburn, during which Scotland regained its independence from England;

Scots, wha hae wi' Wallace bled,
Scots, wham Bruce has aften led,
Welcome to your gory bed,
Or to Victorie!

Now's the day, and now's the hour:
See the front o' battle lour,
See approach proud Edward's power -
Chains and Slaverie!

Wha will be a traitor knave?
Wha will fill a coward's grave?
Wha sae base as be a slave?
Let him turn and flee!

Wha, for Scotland's King and Law,
Freedom's sword will strongly draw,
Freeman stand, or Freeman fa',
Let him on wi' me!

By Oppression's woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!

Lay the proud usurpers low!
Tyrants fall in every foe!
Liberty's in every blow! -
Let us do or die!

Robert Burns' birthday is now celebrated the world over as “Robbie Burns Night” with special suppers of cock-a-leekie soup, haggis, and typsy laird for dessert. Guests Address the Haggis, Toast the Lasses with Whiskey, and recite his poems and sing his songs. Burns’ “Auld Lang Syne” is still sung to celebrate the New Year and Scottish Hogmany (last day of the year). Many of his songs and poems on this site have notes by Burns himself, and Allan Cunningham, who edited The Complete Works of Robert Burns in 1855. In some cases there is more than one version of the same poem or song. Some of them are revisions by Burns of older works.

**A Man’s A Man for A’ That**

Is there for honest poverty
That hangs his head, an’ a’ that
The coward slave, we pass him by
We dare be poor for a’ that
For a’ that, an’ a’ that
Our toil’s obscure and a’ that
The rank is but the guinea’s stamp
The man’s the gowd for a’ that

What though on hamely fare we dine
Wear hoddin grey, an’ a’ that
Gie fools their silks, and knaves their wine
A man’s a man, for a’ that
For a’ that, an’ a’ that
Their tinsel show an’ a’ that
The honest man, though e’er sae poor
Is king o’ men for a’ that

Ye see yon birkie ca’d a lord
Wha struts an’ stares an’ a’ that
Tho’ hundreds worship at his word
He’s but a coof for a’ that
For a’ that, an’ a’ that
His ribband, star and a’ that
The man o’ independent mind
He looks an’ laughs at a’ that

A prince can mak’ a belted knight
A marquise, duke, an’ a’ that
But an honest man’s aboon his might
Gude faith, he maunna fa’ that
For a’ that an’ a’ that
Their dignities an’ a’ that
The pith o’ sense an’ pride o’ worth
Are higher rank that a’ that

Then let us pray that come it may
(as come it will for a’ that)

That Sense and Worth, o’er a’ the earth
Shall bear the gree an’ a’ that
For a’ that an’ a’ that
It’s coming yet for a’ that
That man to man, the world o’er
Shall brithers be for a’ that