

جامعة تكريت
كلية التربية للعلوم الإنسانية
قسم اللغة الانكليزية



لمرحلة: الثانية

Subject Name: Intoduction to liteature

Lecture: whats literature

Full name: Dr. Dheyaa R. Alwan

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First lecture

Introduction to English Literature For First-Year Students

Page 1: What is Literature?

Literature is the art of written or spoken expression that captures human experiences, thoughts, emotions, and culture. It serves as a reflection of society and a medium for storytelling, knowledge sharing, and self-expression.

The word "literature" originates from the Latin word *litteratura*, meaning "writing formed with letters." Over time, it has grown to encompass a wide range of works, including novels, poems, plays, and essays. Literature is not confined to any one culture or language but is a universal phenomenon.

The significance of literature lies in its ability to inspire, educate, and entertain. It connects us to the past, helps us understand the present, and encourages us to think critically about the future.

Key Characteristics of Literature

- 1 .Creativity: Literature showcases the imaginative power of writers.
- 2 .Universality: Themes in literature often address universal human experiences.

3 .Emotional Appeal: It engages emotions, offering comfort, excitement, or catharsis.

4 .Aesthetic Quality: Literature is valued for its artistic beauty in language and form.

Page 2: Types of Literature

Literature can be classified into various types based on its form and content. Broadly, it is divided into two categories:

1 .Fiction:

Definition: Fiction refers to imaginary works created by an author. It may include realistic or fantastical elements.

Examples: Novels, short stories, and fables.

Key Features: Plot, characters, setting, and themes.

2 .Non-Fiction:

Definition: Non-fiction refers to factual works based on real events, people, and experiences.

Examples: Essays, biographies, memoirs, and historical accounts.

Key Features: Accuracy, clarity, and evidence-based arguments.

Subcategories of Literature

Poetry: Expresses ideas and emotions through rhythm, imagery, and metaphor.

Drama: Written for performance, featuring dialogue and stage directions.

Prose: Written in ordinary language, encompassing both fiction and non-fiction.

Page 3: English Literature and Its Importance

English literature refers to the body of written works produced in the English language. It spans centuries and reflects the evolution of English society, culture, and language.

Why Study English Literature?

Cultural Insight: English literature provides a window into the history, beliefs, and values of English-speaking societies.

Language Skills: It enhances vocabulary, grammar, and comprehension.

Critical Thinking: Literature encourages analysis and interpretation.

Personal Growth: It fosters empathy and self-reflection.

Page 4: Historical Overview of English Literature

English literature has a rich history, often divided into several periods:

1 .Old English Period:(1066–450)

Earliest works, such as Beowulf.

Focused on heroism, religion, and mythology.

2 .Middle English Period:(1500–1066)

Emergence of works like Geoffrey Chaucer's The Canterbury Tales.

Themes of chivalry, religion, and morality.

3 .Renaissance Period:(1660–1500)

Marked by William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, and Ben Jonson.

Themes of humanism, love, and the exploration of human potential.

4 .Neoclassical Period:(1785–1660)

Focused on reason, order, and satire.

Prominent writers: Alexander Pope and Jonathan Swift.

5 .Romantic Period:(1832–1785)

Celebrated nature, imagination, and individualism.

Notable poets: William Wordsworth, John Keats, and Lord Byron.

6 .Victorian Period:(1901–1837)

Explored social issues, industrialization, and morality.

Famous authors: Charles Dickens, the Brontë sisters, and Thomas Hardy.

Page 5: Themes in English Literature

English literature covers a vast array of themes that resonate universally.

1 .Love and Relationships: Explored in works like Shakespeare's sonnets and Jane Austen's novels.

2 .Conflict and War: Addressed in Wilfred Owen's war poetry and George Orwell's 1984.

3 .Identity and Society: Highlighted in works like Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre and Toni Morrison's Beloved.

4 .Nature and Environment: Central to Romantic poetry and contemporary eco-literature.

5 .Morality and Ethics: Seen in moral dilemmas in works by Charles Dickens and Joseph Conrad.

Page 6: How to Approach the Study of Literature

1 .Read Actively: Engage with the text by noting key ideas, themes, and literary devices.

2 .Understand Context: Learn about the historical and cultural background of the work.

3 .Analyze Language: Pay attention to the author's choice of words, tone, and style.

4 .Interpret Meaning: Reflect on the deeper messages and themes.

5 .Participate in Discussions: Share ideas with peers for a broader perspective.

Conclusion

Studying English literature is not just about understanding language and storytelling. It is about connecting with the human experience across time and cultures. As first-year students, you are beginning a journey into a field that offers endless opportunities for learning, growth, and inspiration