

A COURSE IN BRITISH LITERATURE

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The Elizabethan Age



Facts about the Queen

- Queen Elizabeth was born from King Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn.
- She reigned for 45 years, from 1558-1603.
- During her reign, there was an increase in literacy rates and fine arts.
- The Queen was highly intelligent, and could speak several languages including Latin, Spanish, Welsh, and French.



The Elizabethan Age - characteristics

- England during this period had a centralized, well-organized, and effective government. They were also greatly profiting from trade with the colonies.
- This age – also known as the *English Renaissance* -- is considered the GOLDEN AGE in English history
 - literature, poetry, and theatre all broke away from the past and expanded in new creative directions.



Elizabethan Literature

- Literature was extremely important during this time. It was a form of entertainment as well as a form of education.
 - Romanticism: Literature this time that focused on philosophical and artistic writing.
 - Realism: Literature this time that focused on every day life.



Literature Continued

- During the Elizabethan era, Poetry and plays were a major part of writing.
 - Many people enjoyed viewing plays from theaters such as the Globe Theater.
 - Sonnets was the form of poetry that was most commonly heard during this era.

**The bottom/
ground level was
for poor
commoners**

**The first level
cost a penny
more and had
seats.**

**The 2nd level was
for rich and
royalty. The seats
were cushioned.**



Fun fact: Women were not allowed on stage at the Globe.

Elizabethan Art

- Elizabethan art advanced and varied in form
 - Writing, sculptures, paintings, and music
 - Before it was mostly textiles, cloth weaving, and tapestry
 - Stone, silver, and wood was used in most of the sculptures.
 - Queen Elizabeth loved and very much appreciated art.



The Passionate Shepherd to His Love by Christopher Marlowe

- Christopher Marlowe (1564-1593) was a poet and playwright at the forefront of the 16th century dramatic renaissance. His works influenced William Shakespeare and generations of writers to follow.

- Marlowe was born to John Marlowe and Elizabeth Archer in the cathedral city of Canterbury, and baptised on 26 February 1564. John was a shoemaker, and a notably argumentative man, a characteristic he shared with his son, who was involved in several violent confrontations.
- In 1589 Marlowe got into a fight, in which a man was killed, and he was briefly imprisoned; in May 1592 he was arrested after a street fight

- In 1578, at about 14, Marlowe was enrolled as a scholar of King's School in Canterbury, and in 1580 he went to Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, on a scholarship given to able scholars who could also, if possible, 'make a verse'. Around 1585, it is said he started working as a government agent.

- Marlowe's theatrical career kicked off in the later 1580s with Tamburlaine the Great, first performed in London in about 1587 to great popular success. A sequel was quickly produced, and the plays were printed together in 1590.
- The chronology of the rest of Marlowe's plays is uncertain, but the first recorded performance of The Jew of Malta was in 1592, and The Massacre at Paris in 1593. The sophisticated and poetic Edward II may be one of Marlowe's last works. This play's depiction of a love relationship between two men has often been taken as evidence of Marlowe's own homosexuality. Another major work from the 1590s is the sensual, homoerotic poem Hero and Leander.

- Rumours about Marlowe's unconventional religious and political beliefs intensified before his death. On 30 May Marlowe was stabbed to death during a fight at a house in Deptford, apparently after an argument about a bill. The real circumstance of Marlowe's death was not clear so it was considered as a mysterious death in British history.
(<https://www.bl.uk/people/christopher-marlowe>)

- ‘*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*’ by Christopher Marlowe is a six stanza poem which is made up of sets of four lines, or quatrains. Each of these quatrains follows the consistent rhyming pattern of aabb ccdd... and so on.
- The poet has chosen to utilize this rhyming pattern in an effort to create a sing-song-like melody to the poem. It is a piece with a hopeful and pleasant tone, and the rhyme scheme emphasizes this feature.

SUMMARY

- '*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*' describes the life that a shepherd wishes to create for his lover if she agrees to come and live with him.
- The poem begins with the speaker asking his lover to come and be with him forever. If she does this simple thing, they will be able to experience all the joy that the world has to offer. They will have all the best in life.

- He continues on to state that not only will they be happy in their love, but that he will create for her the most lovely of items. He will use the flowers in their new abode to craft pieces of clothing like hats and petticoats. The shepherd will also use the wool from their lambs to make her dresses. He clearly believes that these items of clothing will be enough, along with his love, to entice her to live with him.
- By the end of the piece, it is not clear whether or not she accepts his offer, but he seems to understand that it is up to her. He has done his best, and is awaiting her answer.

- Stanza One
 - Come live with me and be my love,
 - And we will all the pleasures prove,
 - That Valleys, groves, hills, and fields,
 - Woods, or steepy mountain yields.
- The speaker of this poem, the “Passionate Shepherd,” begins by making the one request of his lover that serves as the basis for the rest of the poem. He at once lives up to his name as he asks his unnamed lover to “Come live with me.” He is hoping that she, upon hearing his request, will leave whatever life she is living behind, and come and “be [his] love” wherever he may be.

- Stanza Two

And we will sit upon the Rocks,
Seeing the Shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow Rivers to whose falls
Melodious birds sing Madrigals.

- In the second stanza of '*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*', the speaker goes on to describe some day to day details of what their lives would be like together. He states that they will "sit upon the Rocks" of this new and beautiful world they are living in together and "See" the "Shepherds" with their flocks of sheep. They will observe the world that they used to live in, and appreciate its intricacies.

- Stanza Three

And I will make thee beds of Roses

And a thousand fragrant posies,

A cap of flowers, and a kirtle

Embroidered all with leaves of Myrtle;

- The shepherd still has a number of different enticements to offer his lover in the hope that she will join him. He describes how he will “make [her] a bed of Roses.” He will fill her life with flowers by creating for her a “kirtle” or an outer gown, and a “cap,” which will all be “Embroidered...with the leaves of Myrtle,” a common flowering shrub.

- Stanza Four

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;

- In the fourth quatrain and the halfway point of '*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*', the speaker continues on describing the different pieces of clothing and accessories that he will craft for his lover. It is important to remember that all of these items are contingent on her coming to live with him.
- He will spin for her a "gown made of the finest wool" from the lambs that they will tend together. His occupation is now working in her favor and he is able to make her exactly, what he thinks, she wants.
- He does not neglect her feet and states that she will also have "Fair lined slippers" that she can wear when it gets cold. Her buckles on her shoes will be made of the "purest gold."

- Stanza Five

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.

- In the second to last stanza, he begins to conclude his offer. He finishes up describing the wardrobe she will have by describing her gaining a belt made “of straw and Ivy buds.” It will also feature “Coral clasps and Amber studs.” It is clear that the speaker is doing his utmost to find and describe things that he thinks she wants the most. Whether this is the case or not the reader will never know.

- Stanza Six

The Shepherds' 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.

- In the final section of '*The Passionate Shepherd to His Love*' the speaker describes how after she has accepted his offer the "Shepherds' Swains," or their comrades and lovers, will "dance and sing." All people will "delight" in the fact that they are finally together as they should be.
- In the last two lines, he repeats, for the third time, his offer. He asks that if "these delights" move "thy mind" then she should come "live with [him], and be [his] love."

Sir Walter Raleigh



The Nymph's Reply to the
Shepherd by Sir Walter
Raleigh

- Sir Walter Raleigh (1552-1618) was an English adventurer, writer and nobleman. After growing close to Elizabeth I during his time in the army, Raleigh was knighted in 1585 and became captain of the guard. During Elizabeth's reign, Raleigh organised three major expeditions to America, including the ill-fated Roanoke settlement.

- His courage and good looks made him a favourite of the Queen's, and she rewarded him handsomely for his expeditions and his service when fighting the Spanish Armada. Raleigh was also a scholar and a poet, but he is usually remembered for introducing the essential potato, and the addictive tobacco. He later drew the Queen's wrath and was imprisoned in the Tower of London.
- After Elizabeth's death in 1603, Raleigh was implicated as an enemy of her successor, James I, and given a death sentence. The sentence was commuted, and Raleigh was freed from the Tower of London to lead an expedition to the New World, but its failure sealed his fate, and he was executed in 1618.

- *'The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd'* was written as a response to *'The Passionate Shepherd to His Love'* by Christopher Marlowe. The speaker is a young, beautiful female nymph. A "nymph" is a creature from Greek mythology who is considered to be a personification of nature. They usually reside in the woods or the sea. They are minor deities in the larger Greek pantheon. In this poem, she replies to the shepherd's proffered love by depicting the temporary nature of all pleasures.

SUMMARY

- Throughout this poem, the nymph describes how time, pleasure, and all possessions, are fleeting. These joys won't last forever, nor will impetuous choices and sweet words. All of these things are like "spring" to "fall". They might be beautiful now but when it comes time for the season to change they are going to fade like everything else.

STRUCTURE

- '*The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*' by Sir Walter Raleigh is a six stanza poem that is separated into sets of four lines. These lines follow a rhyme scheme of AABB CCDD, and so on, changing end sounds from stanza to stanza.
- Raleigh made use of iambic tetrameter when it came to the metrical pattern. This means that each line is made up of four sets of two beats. The first of these is unstressed and the second is stressed. He also avoids using enjambment, preferring to end the lines with end-punctuation.

LITERARY DEVICES

- Raleigh makes use of several literary devices in '*The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*'. These include but are not limited to caesura, alliteration, and simile. The latter, a metaphor, is a comparison between two, unlike things that do not use "like" or "as" is also present in the text. When using this technique a poet is saying that one thing is another thing, they aren't just similar. There is a good example at the end of stanza three with the phrase "A honey tongue, a heart of gall, / Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall". Here, the speaker is comparing sweet, yet, at the end, meaningless, words, and impetuous choices to "spring" and "fall".
- Alliteration occurs when words are used in succession, or at least appear close together, and begin with the same sound. For example, "Rivers rage and Rocks" in line three of the second stanza and "complains of cares to come" in the same stanza.

- Caesura occurs when a line is split in half, sometimes with punctuation, sometimes not. The use of punctuation in these moments creates a very intentional pause in the text. A reader should consider how the pause influences the rhythm of one's reading and how it might precede an important turn or transition in the text. A good example can be found at the end of the first stanza with the line: "To live with thee, and be thy love".

Stanza one

If all the world and love were young,
And truth in every Shepherd's tongue,
These pretty pleasures might me move,
To live with thee, and be thy love.

In the first stanza of '*The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*,' the speaker, the nymph, begins by describing a possible world. She presents a hypothetical, "if all the world in love for young" and if "there was truth in every Shepherd's tongue". But, by suggesting these things, the nymph is implying that they are not true and do not exist.

- She says that if they did exist then she might be moved to "live with thee, and be thy love". This is directed to the shepherd who made his plea to the nymph in Christopher Marlowe's poem.
- It's obvious from the first lines that later on in the poem any hope the shepherd might've had is going to be dashed. Several of the lines in this poem can also be found in Marlowe's poem. For example, the phrase "live with me, and be my love". This is an example of an allusion. A reader should also take note of the use of alliteration in the third line with the phrase "pretty pleasures" and following it, "might me move".

Stanza two

Time drives the flocks from field to fold,
When Rivers rage and Rocks grow cold,
And Philomel becometh dumb,
The rest complains of cares to come.

- In the second stanza of '*The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*,' the nymph alludes to the way she really feels about the entire situation. She says that rather than the world being "young" and beautiful it is filled with the ravages of time. The flocks are driven from "field to fold" and the "rivers rage" while the "rocks grow cold". These images are clear examples of the pastoral poetic form. In the third line of this stanza, the nymph mentions Philomel, another character from Greek mythology. She is often referenced in literary works. In the stories, she was the younger of two daughters and was raped and mutilated by her sister's husband. She takes revenge and is transformed into a nightingale. If, as the speaker states, she were to "becometh dumb" she would become mute and lose her ability to sing, her defining characteristic.

- Stanza Three

The flowers do fade, and wanton fields,
To wayward winter reckoning yields,
A honey tongue, a heart of gall,
Is fancy's spring, but sorrow's fall.

- The third stanza of '*The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd*' brings in several images of nature fading. The flowers die, they wanton fields lose their crops and winter comes upon everything that was once prosperous. The next two lines reference someone's "honey tongue," an example of metonymy, meaning spoken sweet words. The "heart of gall" represents bitterness or impetuosity. The speaker is suggesting that bold and thoughtless choices, at least thoughtless in regards to the future, as well as "honey tongue[d]" words are related to spring and fall. They are ultimately going to end in nothing just like spring. It is a time of prosperous growth that ends in fall when everything dies.

Stanza four

Thy gowns, thy shoes, thy beds of Roses,

Thy cap, thy kirtle, and thy posies

Soon break, soon wither, soon forgotten:

In folly ripe, in reason rotten.

- A similar set of images is conveyed in the fourth stanza of *'The Nymph's Reply to the Shepherd'* where the speaker says that everything the shepherd has gathered including "downs, "shoes, "and "beds of roses" are all going to break in winter. The simple pleasures won't last through the seasons.

- Stanza Five

Thy belt of straw and Ivy buds,
The Coral clasps and amber studs,
All these in me no means can move
To come to thee and be thy love.

- Since the nymph knows that everything is temporary and that no single thing is going to last forever, she tells the shepherd that his possessions are not going to convince her to love him. They mean nothing to her and cannot move her.

- Stanza Six

But could youth last, and love still breed,

Had joys no date, nor age no need,

Then these delights my mind might move

To live with thee, and be thy love.

- In the final stanza of the poem, the speaker suggests that if youth could last and love was able to persevere throughout all the seasons. Plus, if joy did not have an expiration date then these “delights my mind might move”. But, this is not the case. She will not be moved to be the shepherd’s love.

The Life of William Shakespeare



Birth

- **William Shakespeare was born April 23rd, 1564 in Stratford upon Avon.**
- **He was baptized on April 26th.**



Family

- **William was the third child, and first son, of John and Mary Shakespeare.**
- **John Shakespeare, was a whittawer, a maker of leather goods. (such as purses, belts and gloves).**
- **John was also a prominent man in Stratford. By 1560, he was one of fourteen members of the town council.**

Education

- Shakespeare attended the Stratford King's Grammar School.
- The school taught boys basic reading and writing.



Rise to fame

- **By 1592, Shakespeare was established in London as a playwright and poet.**
- **In January of 1593, the theaters in London closed because of the plague and remained closed until spring of 1594. (Shakespeare wrote much of his poetry during this time)**

Career

- In December of 1594, along with Will Kemp, Richard Burbage, and 4 others, Shakespeare started a new theater company called The Lord Chamberlain's men.
- By 1599, the Lord Chamberlains Men had become the most popular acting group in London.



Late career



- In 1603, Queen Elizabeth died and James VI of Scotland became James I of England.
- Shakespeare and his friends changed their acting companies name to the King's Men and became more popular than ever.



Works

- Between 1595 and 1611, William Shakespeare wrote 37 plays and hundreds of Sonnets and other poems.
- His plays can be grouped into 3 categories: Comedies, Tragedies, and Histories (**Chronicles**).



Comedies



- A comedy can be recognized by its name; it is named for the situation of the play.
- Some of his popular comedies are: *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *As You Like It*, and *Much Ado about Nothing*,

Tragedies



- A tragedy can be identified because the plays are named for the main character(s).
- Some of his popular tragedies are: *Macbeth*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, and *Romeo and Juliet*.

Histories

- **A History can be identified by the name as well. They are named after British Kings.**
- **The more famous ones are Henry V, Henry VIII and Richard III.**

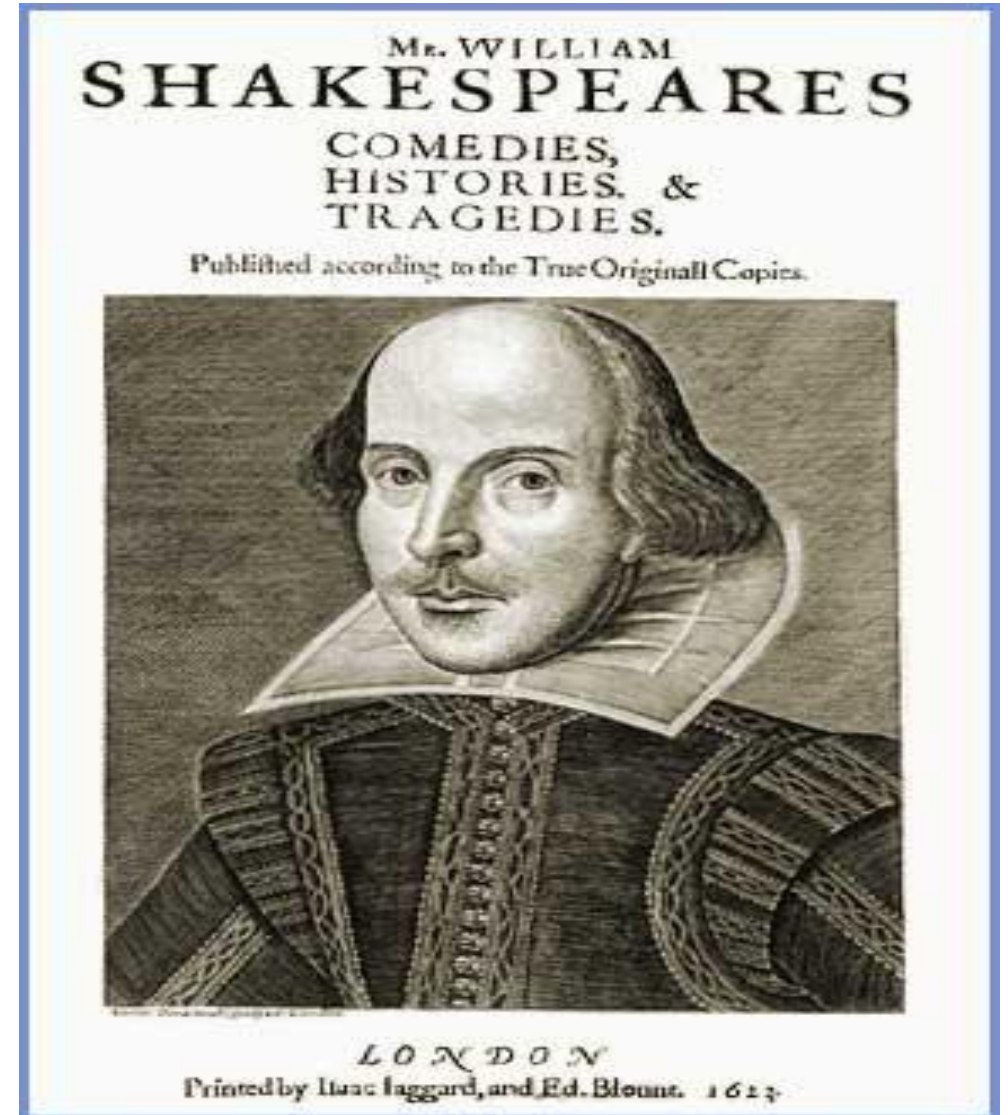
Death

- **Records reveal that Shakespeare revised his will a month before he died on April 23rd, 1616.**
- **He is still buried at the Holy Trinity Church in Stratford.**



First Folio

- In 1623, actors in Shakespeare's theatre company put together the First Folio, a published collection of all of Shakespeare's plays and poems.



SONNETS

- The word sonnet is derived from the Italian word “sonetto,” which means a “little song” or small lyric. Each sonnet has 14 lines, and is written in iambic pentameter. An Italian sonnet consists of two parts, an octave (the first 8 lines) which describes the problem and a sestet (the last six lines) which proposes a solution.

- English sonnets were introduced by Thomas Wyatt (1503–1542) in the early 16th century. Of all the sonnet sequences written by Elizabethan poets, none can equal the sonnets of Shakespeare in perfect form and depth of thought and feeling; nor have they been excelled in all English literature.

- . No one knows whether Shakespeare's sonnets – one hundred and fifty-four in all – reflect the poet's own emotional experiences or imaginary situations. Many of them seem to be addressed to a young friend and another group to a mysterious "dark lady" with whom he apparently is deeply in love. The identity of these persons has been guessed at by never proved by Shakespearean scholars.

- Shakespeare does not use the Italian rhyme scheme but a form preferred by many of the Elizabeth sonneteers. You will notice that there are three four-line stanzas with an alternate rhyme in each. Then the thought is summarized in a rhymed couplet at the end.

SONNET 18

- Shakespeare uses Sonnet 18 to praise his beloved's beauty and describe all the ways in which their beauty is preferable to a summer day.
- The stability of love and its power to immortalize someone is the overarching theme of this poem.

- The poet begins with an opening question: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” and spends the rest of the poem answering that question.

- The poem is straightforward in language and intent.

- Several poetic devices enhance the poem's meaning through the use of form, imagery, and figurative language to express how his beloved possesses an eternal beauty that far surpasses the brightness of that all-too-fleeting summer day.
- Shakespeare uses these devices to also ensure the permanence of his poem, ensuring that it is everlasting and never succumbs to death like his beloved.



Daniel Defoe
(1660-1731)

1. Defoe's life

- Born into a family of **Dissenters** in 1660.
- Studied **modern languages, economics, geography**, besides the traditional subjects.
- Started to write in **Whig** papers; his greatest achievement was ***The Review***.

1. Defoe's life

- Queen Anne had him **arrested**, **tried** and **imprisoned**.
- Denied his Whig ideas and became a **secret agent** for the new government.
- Started to write **novels** when was about sixty.
- Died in **1731**.



2. Defoe's works

Robinson Crusoe (1719)

- The story of a shipwreck on a desert island

Captain Singleton (1720)

- The voyage story of a captain who becomes a pirate

Colonel Jack (1722)

- The story of a pickpocket who repents

2. Defoe's works

Moll Flanders (1722)

- The adventures of a woman who becomes a thief and a prostitute to survive but finally leads a respectable life

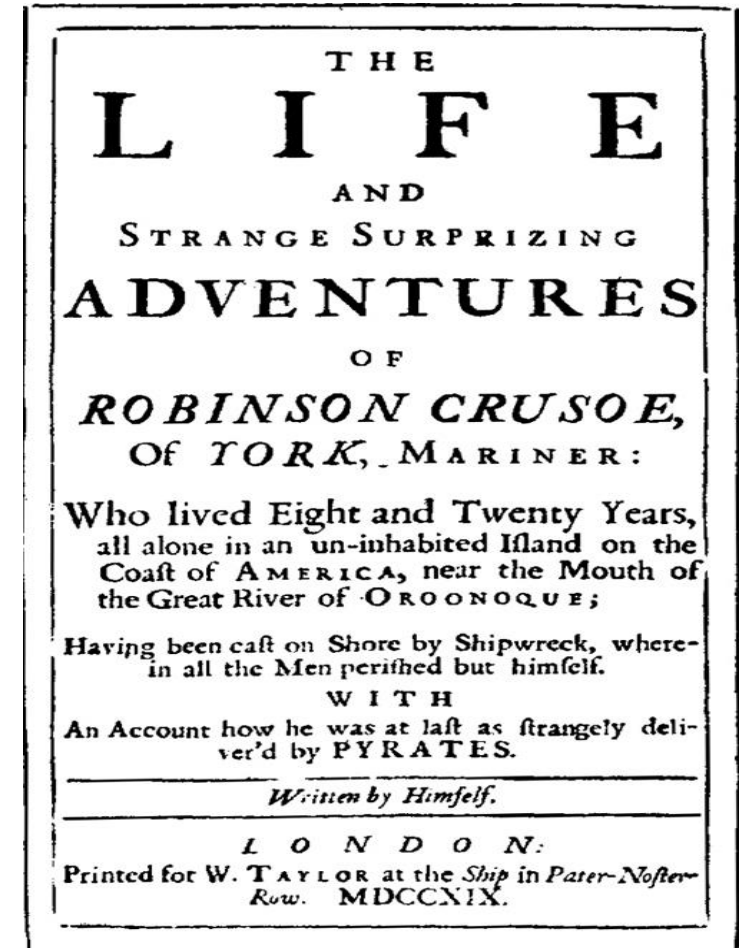
Roxana (1724)

- The adventures of a high-society woman who exploits her beauty to obtain what she wants.

3. Defoe's novels: structure

Fictional autobiographies.

- A series of **episodes and adventures**.
- Unifying presence of a **single hero**.



3. Defoe's novels: structure

- Lack of a **coherent plot**.
- Retrospective **first-person narration**.
- The author's **point of view** coincides with the main character's.
- Characters presented **through their actions**.

4. Robinson Crusoe: the middle-class hero

Robinson shares restlessness with classical heroes of travel literature



An act of transgression, of disobedience



His isolation on the island after the shipwreck

5. Robinson Crusoe: a spiritual autobiography

Full of religious references to God, sin, providence, salvation

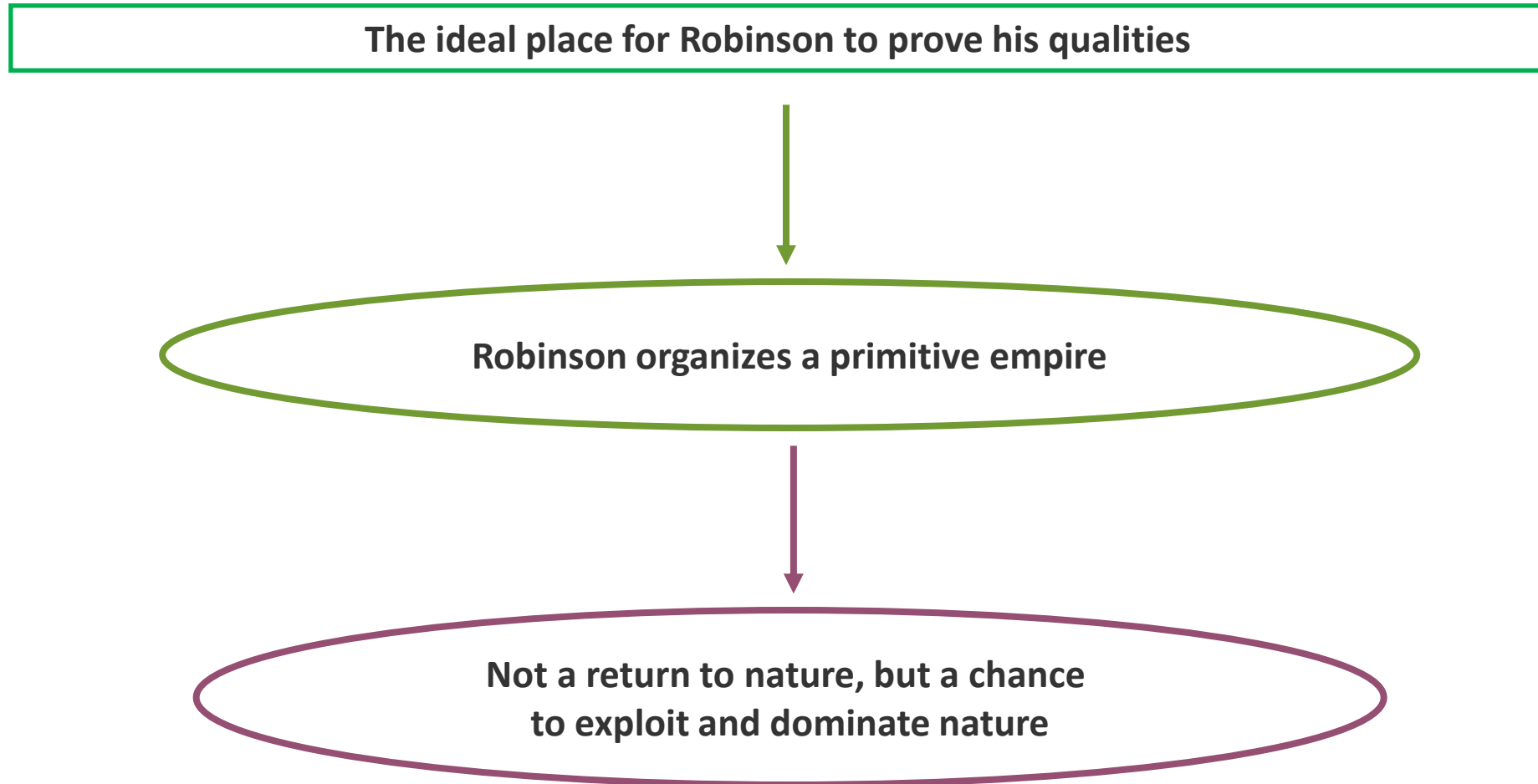


The hero reads the Bible to find comfort and guidance



Defoe explores the conflict between
economic motivation and spiritual salvation

6. Robinson Crusoe: the island



7. Robinson Crusoe: the individual and society

The society Robinson creates on the island is not an alternative to

but an exaltation of 18th-century England,
its ideals of mobility, material productiveness, and individualism

Though God is the prime cause of everything,
the individual can shape his destiny
through action

8. Robinson Crusoe: the style

- Clear and precise details.
- Description of the primary qualities of objects.



solidity, extension and number

- Simple, matter-of-fact and concrete language.

THEMES

- **Christianity and Divine Providence**
- **Society, Individuality, and Isolation**
- **Advice, Mistakes, and Hindsight**
- **Contentment vs. Desire and Ambition**
- **Strangers, Savages, and the Unknown**

ROBERT BURNS



- **Robert Burns** was a Scottish poet born in 1759, and though he lived less than forty years before his 1796 death, he managed to pen a number of poems and become a staple in Scottish literature. Though controversial, his poems still remain relevant in today's society.

Family

- Robert Burns was born in 1759, in Alloway, Scotland, to William and Agnes Brown Burnes

Career

- Like his father, Burns was a tenant farmer. However, toward the end of his life he became an excise collector in Dumfries, where he died in 1796; throughout his life he was also a practicing poet. His poetry recorded and celebrated aspects of farm life, regional experience, traditional culture, class culture and distinctions, and religious practice.

- He is considered the national poet of Scotland. Although he did not set out to achieve that designation, he clearly and repeatedly expressed his wish to be called a Scots bard, to extol his native land in poetry and song, as he does in “The Answer”:

Ev’n then a wish (I mind its power)
A wish, that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast;
That I for poor auld Scotland’s sake
Some useful plan, or book could make,
Or sing a sang at least.

- viewed alternately as the beginning of another literary tradition: he is often called a pre-Romantic poet for his sensitivity to nature, his high valuation of feeling and emotion, his spontaneity, his fierce stance for freedom and against authority, his individualism, and his antiquarian interest in old songs and legends.

- the very qualities which seem to link Burns to the Romantics were logical responses to the 18th-century Scotland into which he was born. And his humble, agricultural background made him in some ways a spokesperson for every Scot, especially the poor and disenfranchised. He was aware of humanity's unequal condition and wrote of it and of his hope for a better world of equality throughout his life in epistle, poem, and song.

LITERARY DEVICES

- **Simile**: Simile is a device used to compare an object or a person with something else to make the meanings clear to the readers. There are two similes used in this poem. The first is used in the first line, “O my Luve is like a red, red rose” Here, the poet compares his beloved with a red rose. The second is used in the third line, “O my Luve is like the melody”, and the poet compares his love with sweet melody.

- **Consonance**: Consonance is the repetition of consonant sounds in the same line such as the sound of /l/ in “ And fare thee weel awhile!”.
- **Enjambment**: Enjambment refers to the continuation of a sentence without the pause beyond the end of a line, couplet or stanza such as:
- “O my Luve is like the melody
That’s sweetly played in tune.”

- **Symbolism**: Symbolism means to use symbols to signify ideas and qualities, giving them symbolic meanings different from their literal meanings. Robert has used “rose” as a symbol of love.white
- **Alliteration**: Alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds in the same line such as the sounds of /l/ and /r/ in “O my Luve is like a red, red rose”.

- **Imagery**: Imagery is a distinct representation of something that can be experienced or understood through five senses. Robert has used visual imagery in the poem such as, “O my Luve is like a red, red rose”, “And the rocks melt wi’ the sun” and “While the sands o’ life shall run”.

- **Hyperbole**: Hyperbole is a device used to exaggerate a statement for the sake of emphasis. The poet has used hyperbole in the last line of the second stanza, “Till a’ the seas gang dry.” He says that his love will flow even when the seas dry up. The second is used in the third stanza, “And the rocks melt wi’ the sun.”
- **Assonance**: Assonance is the repetition of vowel sounds in the same line such as the sound of /i/ in “I will love thee still, my dear”.