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**LMD 1 LECTURES**

**Lecture Two**

**Types of Literature (Literary Genres)**

**2.1 Introduction**

Writing has undergone a significant transformation over time, encompassing various styles and forms. The literary world has witnessed the emergence of diverse genres, ranging from the conventional, age-old prose to the contemporary, alluring novels that we see today. The evolution of literature is comparable to that of music, with a growing number of ideas and experimentation leading to the inception of additional genres. Literary genres have revolutionized the range and manner of writing worldwide.

**2.2 Etymology and Definition**

The word genre originates from the French word meaning kind, type, or category. A genre is a category or type of literary work that shares common characteristics, such as form, style, subject matter, or thematic content. A literary work's genre can provide a framework for understanding and interpreting its meaning and significance, as well as for comparing and contrasting it with other works in the same category. It is an artistic type that applies to drama, music, literature, art, and entertainment; it refers to the classification of literary works according to certain characteristics they share, especially Form (structure) or/and subject matter. A genre is a style of expressing oneself in writing. It is a kind of literary or artistic work. A literary genre is a type or category of literature.

Genres can be distinguished based on a variety of factors, such as the medium in which they are presented (e.g., written, spoken, visual), their intended audience (e.g., adult, children), their subject matter (e.g., love, war, nature), their style or form (e.g., poetry, drama, fiction), or their historical or cultural context (e.g., medieval, postcolonial, contemporary).

Genres can serve a number of functions, such as providing a sense of order and predictability for readers or viewers, offering a framework for evaluating and critiquing works of literature, or creating a sense of community and shared cultural values among members of a particular society or group.

Examples of genres in literature include poetry, fiction, drama, non-fiction, and memoir, among others. Each of these genres has its own distinct characteristics, such as the use of rhyme and meter in poetry, the creation of invented worlds and characters in fiction, or the exploration of historical events and figures in non-fiction. Understanding a work's genre can provide readers with important clues about its purpose, style, and content, and can help them appreciate its unique qualities and contributions to the literary canon.

In literature there are four main genres.

**2.2 Fiction**

Fiction is a genre of literature that includes stories, novels, and other works that are imagined or invented by the author, rather than based on true events or factual information. In fiction, the author creates a world, characters, and events that are not real but are designed to be believable and engaging to the reader. Fiction is any narrative that consists of imaginary people, places, and events in any format (writing, audio recording, or theatrical performances). The term" fiction" is generally used regarding creative works written in prose or ordinary language which does not follow a meter, as in poetry. Starting in the 1590s, “fiction” began to be used to describe works of prose created in the writer’s imagination.

Fiction can take many different forms, such as realistic or fantastical, literary or genre-based, and can explore a wide range of themes and subjects, such as love, loss, politics, history, or science fiction. The main purpose of fiction is to entertain and engage the reader, but it can also serve to explore complex ideas and emotions, provide social commentary, or offer insights into the human condition.

Examples of famous works of fiction include novels such as "To Kill a Mockingbird" by Harper Lee, "The Great Gatsby" by F. Scott Fitzgerald, and "Pride and Prejudice" by Jane Austen, as well as short stories such as "The Lottery" by Shirley Jackson and "The Tell-Tale Heart" by Edgar Allan Poe.

**2.3 Non-Fiction**

Non-fiction is a genre of literature that includes works that are based on factual information and real events, rather than imaginary or invented ones. It is a type of writing that uses techniques similar to fiction to produce an interesting piece of writing about actual events. These techniques help to create non-fiction that is enjoyable and exciting to read. Unlike fiction, which often has a narrative structure, non-fiction may be presented in a variety of formats, including essays, articles, textbooks, and documentaries. Non-fiction authors often conduct extensive research and cite sources to support their claims and ideas.

Non-fiction can encompass a wide range of subjects, including history, science, politics, memoirs, biographies, self-help, and more. The main purpose of non-fiction is to inform, educate, or persuade the reader, rather than to entertain or provide an escape from reality.

Examples of famous works of non-fiction include "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" by Malcolm X and Alex Haley, "A Brief History of Time" by Stephen Hawking, "The Origin of Species" by Charles Darwin, and "The Diary of a Young Girl" by Anne Frank.

Key examples of literary non-fiction include travel writing, autobiographies, and essays that examine a particular point of view. Their main purpose is to entertain, and inform about, factual events or information. Narrative skills are needed to write great non-fiction, but the content must always be accurate.

**2.4 Drama**

Drama is a genre of literature that is primarily designed to be performed on stage by actors in front of an audience.. It is derived from the Greek word "Dram," which means "to act" or "to do" It is a form of play that can be performed on radio, television, or in a theatre. It may be defined as ‘specific mode of fiction represented through performance or dialogue’. Drama emerged in classical Greek age. It is a form of storytelling that emphasizes dialogue and action rather than narration, and typically involves conflict, tension, and emotion. Drama can be written in various styles, including tragedy, comedy, melodrama, and farce.

The plot of a drama is usually driven by the interactions and conflicts between the characters, rather than by a narrator or author. The characters in a drama are often given distinct personalities, motivations, and conflicts, and their actions and dialogue reveal their traits and shape the plot.

Drama can also address social, cultural, and political issues, and has often been used to challenge and comment on the society in which it was created. It can also serve as a reflection of a particular period or culture, giving insight into the values, beliefs, and concerns of the time.

Some famous examples of dramas include William Shakespeare's "Hamlet," Tennessee Williams' "A Streetcar Named Desire," and Arthur Miller's "Death of a Salesman."

There are four main types of drama. They are comedy, tragedy, tragicomedy, and melodrama.

**2.5 Poetry**

Poetry is a form of literary expression that has been traditionally associated with the mystical and the magical. It is charged with the task of celebrating and lamenting significant life events, as well as preserving the history of a family, clan, or kingdom in a memorable form. Additionally, it is often characterized by the use of elevated language, heightened emotional expression, and the employment of various poetic techniques, such as rhyme and meter, to create a distinct aesthetic experience for the reader or listener.

Poetry is the artistic expression or works of a poet, conveying elevated thoughts or emotions in a metrical or rhythmic form. A poet is a writer who composes verse, particularly one with exceptional powers of imagination and expression. Throughout history, poets were often regarded as possessing mystical or magical abilities and were responsible for commemorating significant events and preserving the history of families, clans, or kingdoms.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary defines poetry as the "artistic expression or works of a poet", and "an elevated form of expression that conveys elevated thoughts or emotions in a metrical or rhythmic form", and it defines a poet as "someone who writes poems", and "a writer who composes verse, particularly one with exceptional powers of imagination and expression". In the past, poets were believed to possess mystical or magical abilities and were responsible for commemorating weddings, victories, defeats, deaths, and the history of families, clans, or kingdoms.

Poetry is also a type of literature that emphasizes the use of sound patterns, rhythm, and imagery to convey meaning. According to the Cambridge Dictionary, poetry is "a type of literature in which the sound and meaning of language are used to create images or ideas". Furthermore, Wikipedia defines poetry as "a form of literature that uses aesthetic and rhythmic qualities of language -- such as phonaesthetics, sound symbolism, and meter to evoke meanings in addition to, or place of, the prosaic ostensible meaning. It is written in lines and stanzas instead of sentences and paragraphs. It expresses ideas and feelings or tells a story in verse form. It plays with words pleasantly and powerfully."