



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**

**BA/BSc**  
**( IV SEMESTER )**

***SPECTRUM : LITERATURE***  
***AND***  
***CONTEMPORARY ISSUES***  
**(COMMON COURSE : ENG4A06)**

**506A**

**CUCBCSS**  
**(2017 ADMISSION**  
**ONWARDS)**

# **SPECTRUM: LITERATURE AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

**STUDY MATERIAL**

**FOURTH SEMESTER**

**COMMON COURSE : ENG4A06**

*For*

**BA/BSc**

**(2017 ADMISSION ONWARDS)**



**UNIVERSITY OF CALICUT**  
**SCHOOL OF DISTANCE EDUCATION**  
Calicut University P.O, Malappuram, Kerala, India 673 635

**506A**

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### **COMMON COURSE :**

### **ENG4A06 : SPECTRUM: LITERATURE AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

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## **SPECTRUM : LITERATURE AND CONTEMPORARY ISSUES**

### **General Introduction**

*Spectrum : Literature and Contemporary Issues* is an attempt to make an awareness in the learners about the global social issues like the hazards of globalization, Xenophobia, racism, cruelty towards the marginalized and so on. The role of media and literature is very crucial in these issues. Literature, as a reflection of the society, has always been an engagement with the contemporary social and cultural truths. This book is an anthology of selected literary pieces including short stories, poems, speeches and an extract from autobiography. The objectives of this book is:

- a) To make the learners aware of the humanist dimensions of literature and media in the contemporary world.
- b) To enable the learners to understand concepts like globalization, commercialization, Intellectual Property Rights through new literature
- c) To inculcate the spirit of universal brotherhood by presenting critiques of race, xenophobia, war and national borders.
- d) To disseminate knowledge about the rights of minorities such as children, animals and the disabled and thus create a positive change in the societal perception of them.

The study material is divided into four sections. The first module entitled ‘Literature and Media’ is about the interaction between literature and media in the contemporary period. The second module consists of a short story and a poem that portray the issues of ‘Globalization and IPR( Intellectual Property Right) The third module is an exploration of the theme of “ Nation and Its Boundaries” and the last module is about the various marginalized groups and their rights.

This study material gives the background information about the authors and gist of their works. Moreover selected questions are also included in each chapters. We hope that this text will enable you to perceive literature more critically in tune with the discourse of contemporary times. Wish you a happy reading experience.

**MODULE I**  
**LITERATURE AND MEDIA**

**DIVIDED TIMES: HOW LITERATURE TEACHES US TO UNDERSTAND ‘THE OTHER’**

**Amanda Michalopoulou**

**About the Author**

Amanda Michalopoulou was born in Athens, Greece, in 1966. She has studied French Literature in Athens University and has worked for many years as a columnist for Greek newspapers. She has published six novels, three short-story collections and many children’s books. She has received the Revmata Award for her story “Life is Colorful outside” (1994) and the Diavazo Award for her highly acclaimed novel *Jantes, Wishbone Memories* (1996). The American translation of her book *I’d Like* won the International Literature Prize from the National Endowment for the Arts. The same book was also nominated for the “Best Translated Book Award” (University of Rochester). Her novels, stories and essays have been translated in ten languages. In 2013 her novel *Why I Killed my Best Friend* was published by Open Letter, USA. This article is extracted from the opening speech of the second international literature festival of Odessa and translated from Greek by Karen Emmerich.

**About the text**

Literature is generally defined as the reflection of society and what happened around us. As the time passes, literary works are viewed as the imagination of the dominant class. But since the age of classical literature, a hero was created, who was capable of challenging the perceptions of the dominant class. In other words all heroes are anti heroes. Amanda Michalopoulou rises the question of how old classics can be read innovatively in the modern age, against the majoritarian perspective of media. “Divided Times, How literature teaches us to understand the ‘other’”, is the opening speech delivered in the second international literature festival of Odessa in the backdrop of the heated discussions regarding the ‘other’, especially about refugees, sexual minorities and the marginalized people.

According to Amanda it is the right time to re-read or deconstruct the classical literatures and find out new texts and experiences that reflects the contemporary realities from it. Amanda makes an attempt to re-read the classics of European literature such as Hamlet, Odyssey, Don Quixote and the Sorrows of Young Werther in her speech and present these texts with a new perspective. These heroes are modern because they are marginalized anti heroes. They are still popular due to the universal nature of their characters. Odysseus, the ship wrecked sailor in Homer’s Odyssey, reminds us the refugees who are seeking shelter in the western countries. The diverse nature of each character makes us to think about difference. Nothing that is human is foreign to literature. It can instill imagination and empathy in the mind of readers. When we read the classics of the European tradition we begin to have a coded, radical understanding of the ‘other’ and it leads to the understanding that “the other is not what it seems”.

**Glossary**

Odysseus : A legendary Greek king of Ithaca and the hero of Homer’s epic poem the Odyssey, which is his return journey from Troy after the war.

Don Quixote: A Spanish novel by Miguel de Cervantes. Published in two parts in 1605 and 1615, the story follows the adventures of a noble named Alonso Quixano who reads so many chivalric romances that he loses his sanity and decides to become a knight errant, reviving chivalry and serving his country, under the name *Don Quixote de la Mancha*.

Werther : The central character in the loosely autobiographical epistolary novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* by John Wolfgang von Goethe, first published in 1774.

**Exercises:-**

**Answer the following questions**

1. What makes Hamlet, Odysseus, Werther and Don Quixote modern?
2. How does Amanda Michalopoulo define a hero?
3. How does the literature broaden the idea of the other?
4. How does literature transform the conservative perception of the other?

**KOMALA**

**Santhosh Echikkanam**

Santhosh Echikkanam is one of the most popular contemporary short story writer in Malayalam Literature. He is known for his political connotative in his stories. Some of his stories made some controversies too. He was born in Kanhangad, Kasaragod district in Kerala. His stories are very humble and speak about the common people and their issues. He secured Kerala Sahithya Academy Award for his short story *Komala* (2008). His famous works include *Komala Ottavathil*, *Biriyani*, *Oru Chithrakadhayile Nayattukar*. Besides, he is also known as a script writer. He has scripted for films such as *Idukki Gold* which is an adaptation of his own short story in the same name, *Annayum Rasoolum*, *Njan Steve Lopez*, and *Aby*. He has also published an Anthology of poem namely *Nanni*. Santhosh Echikkanam saves his place in the realm of Malayalam story with his unique style and craft of language. His Stories are exceptional in vividness of its themes.

**About *Komala***

*Komala*, published in *Mathrubhumi Weekly*, is one of the most critically acclaimed short story of Malayalam literature in the twentieth century. The story was written in the context of the rise of farmers suicide in Kerala due to the economic crisis in the post-globalized period. We live in a world in which everything is controlled by the media. They construct fictive things, which may seem like truths. Media transforms the politics into something fictive and churns popular interest in it. In news channels, day in and day out media people are hosting discussions on several issues, which sometimes turn into very dramatic and absurd. In the story *Comala*, the author attempts to point out the inference between the commodfiction of media and the uncelebrated lives of common people, which often plunged into trouble by all these drama.

The title of the story “*Comala*” is the name of the town of the dead in Juan Rulfo’s novel “*Pedro Parama*”. The novel draws the picture of an inhuman mob at the suffering of common people. The story which is rooted to the situation in Kerala, unveil the attitude of

people, who have become selfish and self centred as the dead people in the town of “Comala” . So the title makes sense and meaning.

The protagonist of the story is Kundoor Viswan , who hung a board in front of his house saying “owing to serve debt, we will commit suicide at the stroke of midnight on 15<sup>th</sup> August”, that causes him to get attracted media attention. His friend Sudhakaran borrowed fifty thousand rupees with Viswan standing surety. Sudhakaran did not pay the money and Viswan was cheated. He was unfortunately called for a discussion in News hour along with Bank Secretary, a psychologist and an advocate. The discussion goes on with several aspects of the issue like whether Viswan has to die or not. The whole discussion goes absurd and it makes no difference in Viswan’s life. After that, since he failed to find peace, he goes out. At the end of the story, he finds a man, met with an accident and he find himself fortunate that he could serve the last drop of water to that person. That incident makes changes in his attitude towards life and makes him to realize the life is something valuable and it can find happiness and meaning in small things. His meaning of existence or his purpose of life was fulfilled by giving the last drop of water to a dying man. Then he goes back home and throws away that suicidal board. The author exposes the hypocrisy of the news channels and the dramatization of the real life situation of the common people commodified.

**Glossary :-**

**Pedro Paramo:** A novel written by the Mexican novelist Juan Rulfo in 1955 about a man named Juan Preciado who travels to his recently deceased mother’s home town, Comala, to find his father, only to come across a literal ghost town populated, that is, by spectral figures.

**Comala:** A town and municipality located in the Mexican state of Colima, near the capital of Colima. It has been nicknamed the “White Village of America”. It is the town of the dead in Juan Rulfo’s *Pedro Paramo*

**Abundio:** A deaf mule driver who appears at the beginning and the end of *Pedro Paramo*

**Dona Eduvigis:** The ghostly hostess in *Pedro Paramo*, she is the lady who first receives Juan Preciado when he gets into Comala.

**Absurdity:** The state of being ridiculous or wildly unreasonable.

**Exercises :-**

Answer the following questions

1. How did Kundoor Viswanathan attract media attention?
2. How did Viswanathan repay seven thousand rupees to the bank?
3. Justify the title “Comala”
4. The Character of Sdhakaran
5. Examine how Santhosh Eachikkanam portrays an unsympathetic society in “Comala”
6. Describe briefly Viswanathan’s journey which led him to the realization that every human being is a debtor.

**MODULE II**  
**GLOBALIZATION AND IPR**

**THE BIG FISH**  
**N P Hafiz Mohamad**

**About the Author**

N P Hafiz Mohamad was born in 1956 in Calicut as the son of N P Muhammed, well known Malayalam writer and former President of Kerala Sahithya Academy. He is a sociologist, writer, illustrator, corporate trainer and family counselor. He taught sociology in Farook College since 1981 and retired as HoD from there in 2011. Now he works as the Head of the Department of Sociology, University of Calicut. He writes stories, essays, a novel, *Espathinayiram* and books for children in Malayalam and some of his major works are translated into English and a few other regional languages. He has received many awards including the Kendra Sahithya Academy Award for children's literature, The Edessery Award for Short Story Collection, the State Sahithya Academy Award for Children's Literature.

**About the text**

The implementation of New Economic Policy has been made drastic changes in Indian Economy. The policy which consisted of Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization was aiming at the integration of markets in the global economy. It led to the increased interconnectedness of national economies. However, what had actually happened was almost antithesis of its spokesmen's arguments. The small scale farmers and the small scale industries were completely wiped out by the new movement and India witnessed massive suicides of farmers and small scale producers. The story "Big Fish", which is the translation of the short story entitled "Cheriyam Meenukalum Valiya Matsyavum", portrays how this new economic policies affects the life of ordinary people. It is a critique of Globalization and elucidates its offers of new prospects to the third world underprivileged people, but it in turn destroys their traditional systems and way of life.

The protagonist of the story Alasankutty owns a pond and has a preoccupation of chatting and feeding the little fishes in the pond. He is quite happy as he enjoyed what he did. One day an agent wearing a hat with the stars approaches him and explains the possibilities and profits of fish farming and suggests him to be wise. Mariyam, his ambitious wife, finds it more interesting and hopes that this new plans will definitely help her family to overcome their financial crisis. Finally, after plenty of persuasion, the agent wins to convince his plan and Alasankutty decides to go on with the new plan of joining the fish growing collective. He cleans and disinfects the pond and put big fish in the pond. Slowly he finds that the small fishes are eaten up by the big fish. The big fish is getting fatter by eating the small fishes. Alasankutty gets disturbed by this act and worries about small fishes to which he has an affection and love. Then he slowly realizes that the big fish turns as a monster and engulfs all

the little fishes remaining in the pond. The image of the big fish with its mouth terrifies him and he feels that he is being dragged into the depth of the water. Actually the big fish in the story symbolizes the Multi National Companies who came to India after the implementation New Economic policy in 1991. The metaphor of the fish is a very original and competent one to explain the traps and tricks of globalization. The story exposes the influence of globalization in the life style and in the food habit of the natives and shows how the critics of globalization are treated by the state and the police. Though a translation, the story 'Big Fish' 'successfully retains all the traces of its localness along with its serious thematic focus. The story is translated into English by Dr. K M Sherrif, the Head of the Department of English, Calicut University and one of the most renowned translators in Kerala.

**Glossary:-**

**Globalization:** A process by which national and regional economies, societies and cultures have become integrated through the global network of trade, communication, immigration and transportation.

**Preoccupation:** Absorption of the attention or intellect.

**MNCs:** Multinational Companies . A multinational Company is one which incorporated in one country but whose operations extend beyond the home country and which carries on business in other countries in addition to the home country.

**Exercises :**

Answer the following questions

1. What, according to the visitor, can make Alassankutty richer?
2. Why did Mariam involuntarily take a step forward?
3. " Nothing to lose and nothing to win" What is intended by the new man here?
4. Consider the story" The Big Fish" as a critique of Global Capitalism
5. Comment the major thematic concerns in the story " The Big Fish"
6. How do you analyze the climax of the story?

**TURMERIC**

**K Sachidanandan**

K Sachidanandan is one of the most established and popular writers in India. He writes in Malayalam as well as English. He is a pioneer of modern poetry in Malayalam . He is the former editor of the literary journal Indian Literature and the former secretary of Sahitya Academy. As a modern poet, he is noted for his universal outlook and appreciation of poetry from all over the globe. Sachidanandan's works have also been translated to many languages such as, Arabic, Assamese Bengali, English, French, German and kannada. As a socio-cultural revolutionist writer, he has raised his voice for the oppressed and marginalized he is the one, who coined the term ' pennezhuthu' in Malayalam for women writing. His poetry advocated equality, secularism, environment, and human rights. Being one of the most prolific writers of contemporary literature, he has sixty books in Malayalam including

21 poetry collections and sixteen collections of world poetry in translation and twenty three collections of critical essays. He has honoured with Dante Medal from the Dante Institute, Ravenna and the India Poland medal from the government of Poland and four Kendra Sahithya Academy awards.

### **About the Text**

‘Turmeric’ is one of the famous poems of Sachidanandan, which was originally written in Malayalam with the title “Manjal”. The poem deals with the theme of globalization and how does it convert the tradition and culture into the globalized markets. One of the adverse effect of globalization is the distortion of culture, cultural values, tradition and traditional materials. It was presented before the world as a promising idea that would help the economy of third world countries. But it has taken away the minimum security they had before. In other words, this was another way of colonizing by the imperial powers. The neo colonial trade rules have made many restrictions such as Intellectual Property Rights and Patent Laws and consequently these laws strengthened the control of the imperial powers over the third world countries. The poem particularly about how an important product such as turmeric, which has cultural value in many way turns into a cosmetic product. Though the poem is very short, each of the lines speaks about the respective qualities of the turmeric and civilization.

Turmeric was one of the important and most admired thing used by people for many purposes. It is said to be the beauty secret of the women at the time. It had an important role in the daily lives of people and it benefits ranges from cosmetical to medicinal. Poet refers to ‘Kalam’, a design made with turmeric powder during festival or holy occasions. Ancestors used turmeric as a medicine, especially an antiseptic. It was even used against the poison or venom of the snakes and insects. Turmeric also has an important place in kitchen, since it is an important ingredient in the food of Indians. Turmeric is used to smear on the bride’s face at the time of marriage and it is smeared on the body of newborn babies also. It shows Turmeric’s cultural and medicinal values. In the last couplet of the poem “Turmeric”, the poet reveals how its values are simply reduced as a cosmetic product sold in tubes and bottles in supermarkets.

“Now, an expensive cosmetic cream  
Trapped in tubes and sold in the supermarket”

The word ‘Trapped’ denotes how the traditional weight of Turmeic is taken out and how it is forced into its new identity. The term is rich enough to suggest all the cultural implications that are facilitated by the new market based approach of the multinational cosmetic companies through their unjust IPR and Patent Laws.

### **Glossary**

Kalam: A design made with turmeric powder along with rice powder, chili powder, charcoal powder etc. on Hindu courtyard on festive or holy occasions.

Platter: A large shallow dish or plate, used especially for serving food

Trapped: Here it denotes how the traditional weight of Turmeric is taken out of it and how it is forced into its new identity. The term is rich enough to suggest all the cultural implications that are facilitated by the new market based approach.

**Exercises :**

1. What is meant by the adjective “Unniyarcha of the subsoil”?
2. How does the poet describe the current status of Turmeric?
3. What is meant by the phrase “ the cool moon of moist faces”?
4. Comment on the imagery of the poem
5. Consider the poem “Turmeric” as a critique of neoliberal ideologies of the West

## **WHAT WORK IS**

### **Philip Levine**

Philip Levine was one of the leading poets of his age. He was born on 10 January 1928 as the son of a Russian – Jewish Immigrants. He was born and brought up in an industrial background, where he began to working in the factories at the very young age. He underwent great depression and during 1930’s he was fascinated by the events of Spanish civil war. He admired not only the people who struggled for freedom but also the poor folks struggled against poverty to make both ends meet. He spoke for the voiceless people. His first anthology of poetry was *On the Edge* (1963), and it was followed by *Not This Pig* (1968), *They Feed They Lion* (1972) *What Work Is*(1991) *The Mercy* (2004) and *News of the World* (2009). He was honoured with the Pulitzer Prize in 1995 for *The Simple Truth*. Most of his poems were autobiographical in nature, focusing on his distorted child hood and the many tedious jobs that he was forced to do.

#### **About the poem**

The poem “What Work Is” is mostly autobiographical, which reflects the miseries he had undergone while he worked in the factories. Philip Levine addresses the terrible conditions of the workers and shows how this industrialized world represses the ‘ manual labour’. The famous critic Herbert Leibowitz commented on Levin’s poetry: “Levine has returned again and again in his poems to the lives of factory workers trapped by poverty and the drudgery of the assembly line, which breaks the body and scars the spirit.” Through his lines he exposes the loneliness, helplessness and the desperations of the workers.

The poem begins with the first person plural ‘We’ that represents the workers who are waiting for work at Ford Highland Park. It is an indicative of the collective nature and solidarity of the workers. They don’t have permanent jobs and every day they have to wait in front of the factory to be called for work. The worst part is that when their turn comes, the owner of the factory or supervisor might say there is no work on that day. The poem addresses the one who read the poem as ‘You’. He creates empathy in the reader towards the workers. He portrays the hardships and the strenuous works of the manual labours. He says “You know what work is-

If you are old enough to read this  
You know what work is  
Although you may not do it  
Forget you  
This is about waiting”

He stresses on the pronoun ‘You’, because it would facilitates to transform the emotions of the one who read the poem. Poet says that the reader cannot understand the life of the workers until the time when he/she realizes that one among them is his/her own brother. Then he adds that may be your brother is not with you because he is sleeping at home after doing his night shift at Cadillac. He has to work eight hours to meet both end of his life. Every human being work throughout their life and the sole benefit of work is to get money to support family. Someone may work for their families in their entire life. At the end nothing remains. The civilized society too often represses manual labour as a mere subject. Levin speaks of the men and women who endlessly perform repetitive tasks in the automobile factories. Workers are, in his compassionate eyes, the Achilleses, Beowulfs, Deirdres and Beatrices, the great protagonists in the literature, of an industrial age prone to overlooking “noble endeavour” This poem clearly shows how the workers are alienated from the work and how they are treated by the capitalists. The whole poem has the tone of great desperation and loneliness. It echoes the miseries of working class who have never enjoyed the colours of life and happiness. In the concluding lines the poet says that the reader cannot affiliate with his working class brother not because of his/or her inability to express their emotions or their jealous or even mean or incapable of crying in the presence of others but their total ignorance about what work is. Levin, as a writer from proletarian class accomplished his goal of giving voice to the voiceless.

**Glossary:**

Ford Highland Park: A factory owned by Ford Motor company located at 91 Manchester Avenue

Slouch: Stand, move or sit lazy

Cadillac: A division of General Motors that produces luxury vehicles.

Wagner: Wilhelm Richard Wagner (1813-1883) A composer, director and conductor of operas.

**Exercises:**

**Answer the following questions**

1. What is the opening of the poem “What Work Is”
2. How does the poet define waiting?
3. How does Levine describe ‘work’ in the poem?
4. Autobiographical elements in “ What Work Is”  
How does Philip Levine evoke sympathy for the workers in “ What Work Is”?

**MODULE III**  
**NATION AND ITS BOUNDARIES**

**HOME**  
**Warsan Shire**

**About the author:** Warsan Shire is a poet, activist, editor and teacher. She was born on 1 August 1988 to Somali parents in Kenya. When she was one year old her family migrated to the United Kingdom. In 2011, she published her first collection of poem *Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth*. She has also published *Her Blue Body* (2015), and *Our Men Do Not Belong to Us*(2015). She has contributed poems to magazines and journals such as *Poetry Review*, *Wasafiri*, *Sable LitMag*, etc. Her poems have appeared in anthologies such as *Salt Book of Younger Poets* (2011), *Long Journeys: African Migrants on the Road* (2013), and *Poems That Make Grown Women Cry* (2016)

At the age of 24, she was named the first young laureate for London.

**About the Poem:** The poem “Home” is a revised version of the prose poem “Conversations about a home (at a deportation centre)” from the collection *Teaching My Mother How to Give Birth*(2011). The poem “Home” attracted much readership in January 2016 following the refugee crisis in Europe. The opening lines of the poem ““No one leaves home unless/home is the mouth of a shark” were used in protest demonstrations demanding asylum for refugees. The poem talks about the harsh reality which forces many people to leave their homeland. The homeland is so unlivable that people are forced to migrate to other lands.

**Outline of the Text:**The poet begins by talking about how unlivable conditions make people leave home and homeland. She suggests that no one leaves home on one’s own but is forced to migrate or seek refuge. When there is a war going on, one has no choice but to escape from one’s homeland. Till they left, no one thought they were leaving.

No one would want to be a refugee, spending days inside trucks. Leaving home, one is forced to make refugee camps a home without knowing for how long the refugee camp will be their home. A refugee, who leaves home and faces many forms of violence, is again greeted with hate on the other side of the shore. Refugees are greeted with protests and are asked to go back. No matter how much the refugee wants to go back home, he/she can’t go back as home is the mouth of a shark and the barrel of the gun.

**Exercises**

Answer the following questions

1. Why do people leave home, according to the poet?
2. How are the refugees treated?
3. What are the various forms of violence the refugee has to face?
4. Why can’t the refugee go back home?

**Activity**

Read more poems on refugees by clicking on the following link

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2015/sep/16/poets-speak-out-for-refugees->

## LOVE ACROSS THE SALT DESERT

Keki N. Daruwalla

**About the author:** Keki N. Daruwalla is an Indian poet, short story writer and novelist who writes in English. He was born in 1937 in Lahore. After earning an M.A. in English Literature from Punjab University, Keki N. Daruwalla joined the Indian Police Service (IPS). His first collection of poems *Under Onion* was published in 1970. He has published several collections of poems such as *Apparition in April* (1971), *Winter Poems* (1980), *The Keeper of the Dead* (1982), *Crossing of Rivers* (1985). He has published three novels so far: *For Pepper and Christ* (2010), *Ancestral Affairs* (2015), and *Swerving to Solitude: Letters to Mama* (2018). His collections of short stories include *Love across the Salt Desert: Selected Short Stories* (2011) and *Islands: Short Stories* (2014). He was awarded Sahitya Akademi Award in 1984 for *The Keeper of the Dead*, a collection of poetry. He was awarded Padma Shri in 2014.

**About the text:**

The short story “Love across the Salt Desert” was first published in 1979 in a collection called *Sword and Abyss*. In this story, Keki N. Daruwalla narrates the adventurous journey that a man undertakes for his beloved. Najab, the man in the story defies his father, and the international border between India and Pakistan, and fights adverse conditions in the salt desert to be with Fathima, who he was deeply in love with.

The Hindi film *Refugee* (2000) directed by J.P. Dutta is said to be inspired by this short story.

**Outline of the Text**

The story is set in the Rann of Kutch, a vast, lonely desert which is very impossible to cross. Rann of Kutch is also in the border between India and Pakistan. It had been drought for three consecutive years in Kutch and there were no signs of rain. Cattle had started dying, with only camels able to survive. The droughts ended two years ago, but people still remember it because that was the day Fatimah entered the village.

Fatimah was the daughter of a spice-seller across the border and Najab Hussain would do anything for her. Najab was known for his rebellious attitude and had already crossed the Rann four times before. A man of twenty, he had accompanied his father or an old smuggler each time he crossed the border. They sold *tendu* leaves across the border for a higher price. During one of those journeys they had stayed with Kaley Shah, the spice-seller. While Kaley Shah turned out to be a rogue, his daughter Fatimah was very attractive and she liked Najab, a young man who was always in pleasant mood. Fatimah was under pressure to get married to someone in the village who is not liked by many people. Najab promised to return for Fatimah. Soon after reaching back in the village Najab began getting impatient and decided to cross the border.

One morning, Aftab, Najab's father was woken up by the news that Najab was missing. Najab had set off for Fatimah's house on his camel. Najab's father found out that his mother knew about Najab's trip as she had given her jewellery for him to purchase cloves from the spice-seller. After much adventure, Najab finally reached Fatimah's house in the middle of the night and was given shelter by her.

When Kaley Shah was woken up by a police constable before morning he had no idea that someone had illegally entered the territory. Soon Fatimah broke the news that he had a guest who had stayed the night in the cattle shed. Kaley Shah was angry to know that Najab had come unannounced and that too without anything to sell. But Najab said he was interested in buying cloves. Kaley Shah soon got busy arranging the cloves and also taking care of Najab's camel. In the night when, Najab slipped into Fatimah's room, she again complained that she was going to get married to someone else. Najab asked her if she had ever thought of crossing the border. Taking her silence for a yes, Najab started planning. The next morning itself they set off for Najab's village. As they were nearing the village there were signs of rains. When they reached home, Najab's father asked if he had brought anything without showing his joy in seeing his son back. Najab took Fatimah inside the home, and it started raining heavily, making drought a distant memory.

### **Exercises**

#### **Answer the following questions**

1. Why does everyone in the village the day it rained after three years of drought?
2. Why did Najab cross the Rann of Kutch?
3. Why did the people assume that Najab had crossed the border?
4. What makes you think that Najab's mother knew about his plans?
5. What was Fatimah's situation before she met Najab?
6. What is the significance of metaphors like drought and rain in this story?
7. How does the author drive home the point about borders?

### **Activity**

Watch the film *Refugee* and think about how the film has adapted the short story.

## **NO MEN ARE FOREIGN**

**James Kirkup**

**About the author:** James Kirkup was an English poet, translator and travel writer. He was born on 23 April 1918 and died on 10 May 2009. His works include around 40 poetry collections, six volumes of autobiography and many translations from the French. He wrote more than 30 books. He became a fellow of the Royal Society of Literature in 1962. Some of his well-known works are *The Drowned Sailor*, *The Meteor*, and *Sand Artist*.

**About the poem:** The poem "No Men Are Foreign" talks about the idea of universal brotherhood. We may belong to different races, tribes, regions, religions, nations, but

ultimately we are all human beings. As human beings we should not see anyone as foreigner or stranger. The poet calls for the peaceful co-existence of all the people.

**Outline of the text**

The poet reminds us that no one is a stranger and no country foreign. The poet talks about how beneath our uniforms all of us are equal. The poet uses uniform in two senses here—the uniform worn by soldiers who defend various countries, and the identity which we wear. We all walk upon the same earth and on which we will be buried. Like us, others are also aware of the various elements of the earth like sun, air, water, etc. They also like peaceful harvests and suffer from starvation when there is a war. They also live by working as hard as we do. Others also have organs and bodily functions like us.

The poet reminds us that when others ask us to hate those who are seen as strangers we should remember that we are asked to hate ourselves as there is no difference between us and them, the strangers. When we fight with each other it is the earth that we defy. He reminds us again, now with a change in the use of words, that no one is foreign and no country strange.

**Exercises**

Answer the following questions

1. What does the poet mean by “uniforms” in the line “Beneath all uniforms.....”?
2. How does the poet establish that all people are alike?
3. What happens when we hate others?
4. Describe the central theme of the poem.

**DEATH FUGUE**

**Paul Celan**

**About the author:**

Paul Celan, a German language poet whose original name was Paul Antschel, was born in Romania on 23 November 1920. His parents were German-speaking Jews who died in Nazi Labour camp. Paul Celan was also under Nazi imprisonment for 18 months. His parents' death in the Nazi camps and the experience of Holocaust have inspired most of Celan's poetry. While he knew six languages and translated many works, he wrote his poems in German. His first collection of poems, *Sand from the Urns* was published in 1948. His second collection of poems, *Poppy and Memory* brought him much critical attention. The sense of estrangement he felt towards German, which was his mother tongue as well as the language of his mother's murderers, enabled him to experiment with the language.

**About the text:**

The poem “Death Fugue” was written 1948, after Paul Celan escaped from the Nazi labour camp. “Death Fugue” is Celan's one of the most famous poems. It is written in the fugue form. A fugue is a musical piece which begins with a theme and then repeats it several times. The title of the poem refers to the music played by the Jew inmates while they carried

out their tasks in the camp. The poem is partly inspired by Paul Celan's experience, and deals with the experience of life in Nazi concentration camps.

### **Outline of the poem**

The speakers of the poem are a group of Jewish prisoners in a Nazi labour camp. They talk about drinking black milk throughout the day which is a symbol for life in Nazi camps. The speakers are made to do forced labour in the camp. They are forced to dig graves for those who are died in the concentration camp. They talk about a man who is actually the camp guard. Unlike the prisoners he lives in a comfortable house and thinks of himself as a writer. He seems like a lover of nature and a romantic but he is very cruel to the inmates. When he is not writing, he abuses the Jews and scares them by calling the dog to his side. He orders them to dig up graves and play music. The second stanza of the poem starts with the same lines as in the first stanza. This is a characteristic of the fugue form. As in the last stanza, the guard continues to threaten the Jews. He beats the prisoners with a rod and makes them work beyond their capacity. In the third stanza as well we see the repetition of the initial lines. The guard now wants the inmates to play the song of death more sweetly. It is ironic that when so many people are killed violently the guard asks the inmates to play the song sweetly. The guard tells them that once they are done with the music they will also be killed. In the fourth stanza, we see how the guard is compared to death. He starts shooting them with his bullets. The guard has also let loose the dogs on them. Now that the Jews are dead we see how death is the master.

### **Exercises**

Answer the following questions

1. What is a fugue?
2. Who are the speakers of the poem?
3. What is black milk in this poem?
4. Why do you think the author talks about the guard as a writer?
5. How does the guard treat the inmates?
6. How does the guard express the superiority of the German race?

### **Activity**

Find out more narratives from survivors of mass killings like Holocaust and reflect on what literature can do in times of such cruelties.

## **JAMAICAN FRAGMENT**

A.L. Hendricks

**Introduction:** Arthur Lemièrè Hendriks, known as A.L. Hendricks was a Jamaican poet, writer and broadcaster. He was born in 1922 in Kingston, Jamaica and died in 1992. His father was a Jamaican and mother French. He was a columnist and literary critic for the *Daily Gleaner*. Some of his early books are *On This Mountain and Other Poems* (1965), *Muet-Poems* (1971) and *These Green Island and Other Poems* (1971). In his works he talks about life in the Caribbeans and questions of racism and equality.

**About the text:** “Jamaican Fragment” is a personal essay in which Hendricks talks about a lesson he learnt from his usual walks to the tram line. Based on a real life experience, A.L. Hendricks presents the question of race and universal brotherhood using humour and irony. On one of his regular walks from his home to the tramcar lines, the author encounters an unusual sight. He encounters two little boys playing—one is Black and probably five years old and the other white and probably four years old. As the author watches the game unfolding he sees the white boy ordering the black boy to carry out certain tasks. Without realizing that it was part of the game, where one person plays the role of boss and the other the role of slave, the author is astonished by the fact that the black boy obeys the white boy even though he is older. The author, a Black, feels sorry for his race as he thinks it is the sense of inferiority in the black boy that makes him obey the white boy. He wonders whether it is because the white boy has internalised ideas of white supremacy that he imposes his will on the black boy. The whole day he was immersed in thoughts on his people. The next day, however, he was more astonished as there was a reversal of roles. The black boy was the master and the white boy the servant. The author saw a white man standing at the doors and watching the boys play. The author thought that he would talk to the white man. The author tells him that he knows what the white man is thinking. The white man must be thinking that the black race would overpower the white race as he sees the white boy very obedient. The author thinks that the white man must be thinking along these lines as the author was thinking the previous days. The author realizes his foolishness only when he tells the white man that it was a game and the white man replies that he knew the game well and that both the white boy and the black boy were his sons. He also shows him his wife who is a brown woman. The author’s spirit rose and he is proud about the Jamaican people as this was an instance of coexistence.

### **Exercises**

Answer the following questions

1. What amazed the author in the beginning?
2. Why was the author disturbed by seeing the boys playing on the first day?
3. What did the narrator think the white man was thinking?
4. “We are silly, we grown-ups – aren’t we?” What is the significance of this line in the essay?
5. “I smiled. My spirit laughed within me. This is Jamaica, I said in my heart, this is my country - my people”  
What is the significance of these lines?
6. How does the author present the question of race in “Jamaican Fragment”?

**Activity:** Read up on racial diversity in the Caribbeans.

## MODULE- IV

### THE MARGINALIZED AND THEIR RIGHTS

All over the world people have accepted the notion that all the living beings are entitled to and are empowered for a dignified existence. The human beings demand the realization of diverse values to ensure their individual and collective well being. However, everywhere these demands or rights are denied through exploitation, oppression, marginalization, persecution etc. The IV Module on Human Rights deals with various issues related with the marginalized groups and their rights. Of the 4 chapters in the fourth module, “The U.N speech” by Malala Yousafzai deals with issues related with women education and also it focuses on the idea of free and compulsory education for every child of the III world countries. The poem “Caring for Animals” by Jon Silkin discusses the idea of fraternity that exists between human beings and animals. The poem reminds the readers that love and care for animals is a necessary step to extend the boundaries of human world. Anne Tyler’s short story, “Average Waves in Unprotected Waters” is an outburst on the social neglect of mentally disabled children and the pang of a woman who searches for self. The last chapter in the module, is an autobiographical excerpt by Emmanuelle Laborit, draws the readers’ attention to the issues like the struggles of the disabled to survive, the stigma and shame of the disabled children’s parents. This chapter upholds the message that how parental attitude, varying social attitudes and right training can change the life of a disabled one.

## CHAPTER – I

### **U.N Speech (July 12, 2013) By Malala Yousafzai**

[A glimpse to the chapter : About the author - Mala addressing the honourable guests – expressing thanks to all who prayed for her fast recovery and new life – significance of Malala Day – struggle for achieving the goals of education and protecting other rights – expressing her attitude towards the terrorist group Taliban – influence of the teachings of Muhammed, Jesus Christ, Lord Budha – Philosophy of non-violence – importance of pens and books - the cruelties against Pakistani girls and female teachers - plea for changing strategic policies – ensuring free and compulsory education for every child - rejecting prejudices based on caste, creed, sect, religion or gender – need of unity and knowledge as a weapon –inspiring the people to fight against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism.]

About the Author:

**Malala Yousafzai (12 July 1997 - )** the youngest Nobel Prize laureate, is a Pakistani activist for female education. She is known for human rights advocacy, especially in the case of education for women and children in her native swat valley in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, northwest Pakistan, where the local Taliban had banned girls from attending school. As a

young girl, Malala defied the Taliban in Pakistan and demanded that girls be allowed to receive proper education. She was shot in the head by a Taliban gunman in 2012, and was critically injured. After receiving proper medical care she gradually came back to her normal life and continued to speak out on the importance of education. In 2013, she gave a speech to the United Nations and published her first book, *I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*. The same year she was awarded the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought by the European Parliament. In 2014, she won the Nobel Peace Prize. In congratulating Malala, Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif said: “She is the pride of Pakistan, she has made her countrymen proud. Her achievement is unparalleled and unequalled. Girls and boys of the world should take lead from her struggle and commitment.” In April 2017, she was appointed as the UN messenger of peace and also received the honorary Canadian citizenship. She stood for empowerment with the weapon of knowledge and shielding oneself with unity and togetherness. At present, she lives in England pursuing a Bachelor’s degree from Oxford in politics and economics.

### Introduction

Malala Yusafzai delivered a speech at the United Nations on her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2013. It was just nine months after being shot by the Taliban. She did not give a speech for revenge; she finds that talking about the importance of education for all people at the time of shot. In this speech Malala highlights her focus on the education and the women’s rights, urging world leaders to change their policies and she urges action against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism.

### About the speech

Malala Yusafzai in her speech on 12<sup>th</sup> July 2013, spoke at the U.N Assembly about the importance of providing free and compulsory education for all. Expressing her gratitude to the most beneficent God she begins her speech by addressing the dignitaries; U.N Secretary General Ban Ki Moon, President General Assembly Vuk Jermic, U.N Envoy for Global Education Mr. Gordon Brown, elders and all her sisters and brothers.

The initial part of her speech reflects her deep sense of love and compassion for the people who prayed for her fast recovery, the children who encouraged her, elders who strengthened her through their prayers, nurses, doctors, hospital staffs in Pakistan and finally to the UAE Govt. who has helped her to recover her strength. Through her speech she expresses her whole hearted support to Mr. Ban Ki Moon, the U.N Secretary General and Mr. Gordon, the U.N special Envoy for their commendable initiation in the field of Global Education. Further, she mentions the relevance of Malala Day in her course of speech. She says,

*“Dear brothers and sisters, do remember one thing, Malala Day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights”.*

Her focus on the cruelties of the terrorist attack in Taliban of which she herself is a victim reaches its zenith, when she mentions about the thousands of people who have been killed and injured by the terrorists. Malala says that she represents all the boys and girls and wishes to rise up her voice for those who have fought for their rights: right to live in peace, right to be treated with dignity, right to equality of opportunity and right to be educated.

Pointing out the cruelties of Taliban she continues her speech and says how Taliban shot her and her friends. By doing so they thought that their bullets can make her silent. But history has proved that no gun can cease the quench for knowledge. When the terrorists tried to pacify her from her activism with a bullet shot what actually nullified was her weaknesses like fear and hopelessness. She reminds that nothing has changed, she is the same Malala with same ambition, hopes and dream. Malala remarks that she is not against anyone and doesn't want to take revenge against Taliban or any other terrorist group. She speaks for the right of education of every child and stresses that it is very important to provide education for the children of all the terrorists especially the Taliban's. Her speech finds new lights when she says that she doesn't even hate the Taliban who tried to kill her and never would she take revenge against them. This is possible for her only because of the compassion that she has learnt from Muhammed, Jesus Christ and Lord Bhudha. Further she focuses on the importance of the following principles of non-violence practiced by the stalwarts like Martin Lutherking, Nelson Mandela, Muhammed Ali Jinnah, Gandhiji, Bacha Khan and Mother Theresa. It is there the qualities of forgiveness and love that she has learnt from her parents and teachers helps her to forgive even those who try to perish her.

Malala continues her speech by emphasizing the power of books and education. When the Pakistani people saw the guns they realized the importance of books and pens. She points out the famous quote "The pen is mightier than sword". Malala says the terrorists are afraid of the power of education and the voice of women, only because of that fear they killed many medical students, female teachers and polio workers in Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa. The terrorists blasted many schools because of their fear for change and equality that the education is likely to produce in a society. Malala points out the terrorists misuse the name of Islam and Pashtun society for their benefits and Pakistan is a peace-loving democratic country. Malala says Islam is the religion of peace, humanity and brotherhood, they believe that education is our duty and responsibility. While pointing out the challenges faced by the world in providing proper education to the young hearts, she lists out a number of issues like child labour, terrorism, early marriage, poverty, ignorance, injustice, racism and deprivation of basic rights as an obstacle in creating a young educated world.

At the end of the speech she requests all the world leaders to change their strategic policies to ensure the peace and prosperity of a nation. All the governments must ensure free and compulsory education for all children and it is the duty of the government to fight against

terrorism, violence and to protect children from all the abuses. She highlights the significance of inviting the developed nations to support the expansion of educational opportunities for girls in the developing nations. She reminds we must stop all the prejudices based on caste, creed, religion and gender. Being a woman it is very important to realize their potential.

Malala concludes her speech by reminding us the importance of education and peace. For achieving our goal we should unite here and be ready to use the most powerful weapon of knowledge. And we should not forget that our brothers and sisters are waiting for a bright future. So it is our responsibility to fight against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism. She inspires us to take the most powerful weapons; pen and books. She again reminds us education is the only solution for changing this world.

Exercises:

1. What was Malala's speech about?
2. Describe the circumstances in which Malala got shot.
3. What did Malala urge the governments to do?
4. What according to Malala does 'Malala Day' stand for?
5. Who taught Malala the philosophy of non-violence?

## CHAPTER – II

### Caring for Animals By Jon Silkin

[A glimpse to the chapter: *About the author – poet's questions about bitter eyes of small animals – questioning sky, and serene blue water – describes cruelties to animals like dogs, cart horses and birds – emphasizing the kindness of Green island – describes how to treat and take care of the animals – caring and loving for animals grow up human relations.*]

#### About the Author

**Jon Silkin (1930-1997)**, a British poet, critic and editor was born in London to a Jewish immigrant family. Until World War II, he lived in London and pursued his studies at Wycliffe College and Dulwich College. Silkin spent some years as a labourer before turning to the writing of poetry. In 1958, he was appointed as the fellow in poetry at Leeds University, but spend much of his time editing *Stand* a literary magazine which he had founded in 1957. He wrote a number of works on the war poetry of World War I. His first poetry collection, *The Peaceable Kingdom*, was published in 1954. Silkin's other important works are: *The Two Freedoms* (1958), *Living Voices* (1960), *The Re-Ordering of the Stones* (1961), *Flower Poems* (1964), *Nature with Man* (1965) etc.

#### Introduction

The poem "Caring for Animal" was published in Silkin's poetry collection, "The Peaceable Kingdom". As the title of the poem indicates, "Caring for Animal" describes the importance of caring and protecting the animals. The poet reveals the sufferings of the

animals and expresses his concern over the need of protecting them from the cruelties of human beings. Through this poem Silkin conveys a message that we the humans are responsible to protect all living beings and should inculcate a feeling of love and compassion towards our fellow beings.

#### About the poem

The poem *Caring for Animals* portrays the torments and sufferings that the animals bear in the present scenario. The poet begins by abruptly posing a question with regard to the necessity of protecting Animals. He asks 'why these small creatures with bitter eyes needed to be taken care of'? In search for an answer to this basic question he raised it before the sky, water and the entire universe, but failed finally as he received no answer from anywhere. Further he says, no answers releases in my head with regard to this, but I could clearly visualise a cluster of animals leading their life with wretched soul.

By presenting the images of a series of torment living creatures like 'dogs with clipped ears, wheezing cart horses, a fly without shadow and without thought' the poet portrays how the animals and birds are leading a death in life existence under the nose of his so called master 'Man'. Highlighting this pathetic vision, the poet raises the pertinent question: "Whether we must be concerned about this"? He conveys his opinion that the holy land and the rearing green land should be kindlier than this. In the later part of the poem he gave special emphasis to the notion of caring the animals. The lines

*Yet the animals, our ghosts, need tending to.*

*Take in the whipped cat and the blinded owl;*

*Take up the man-trapped squirrel upon*

*Your shoulder.*

*Attend to the unnecessary beasts. (13-16)*

Remind us about the noble act of protecting the injured cats, the blinded owl and the trapped squirrels. Here he preaches the gospel of love which finds no boundaries. He gently reminds us that caring for animals will make us realize that we too are human animals in need of love and care. On a positive note he concludes the poem by stating that when your kindness and love towards animals are growing up, your love towards all fellow beings are also growing up.

Exercises:

1. In what condition does the poet see the dogs and the horses in the street?
2. Why does the poet tell that the animals need caring?
3. How can the human animal experience love?
4. Consider "Caring for Animal" as a poem of environmental justice.
5. How does the poet answer his own query whether caring has to be given to animals?

### CHAPTER III

#### Average Waves in Unprotected Waters By Anne Tyler

[A glimpse to the chapter : About the author – Story take places in the protagonist, Bet Blevins' rented one-room apartment – describes the nine year old mentally retarded child Arnold – difficulties of Bet Blevin to manage the mentally disabled Arnold – Bet decides to take him to Parkinsville State Hospital – Bet prepares Arnold's things and dresses for the journey to the hospital -- sorrow of the neighbour, Mrs. Puckett while they leaving --- Bet and Arnold at the railway station --- Bet purchases gum and gives to her nervous child Arnold----- the train leaves the station --Arnold falls asleep--- Bet's memory goes back to Arnold's childhood days---- remembers her husband Avery's decision to leave them---Bet's loneliness and struggle for brought up her mentally disabled child --- Bet and Arnold finds a cab to the Parkinsville State Hospital---- She asks the cab driver to wait for her----nurse assures Bet that he will be well cared ---Bet says good-bye to Arnold---- Bet urges the driver to drive quickly to the station---train twenty minutes late----town's Mayor enters the station-- - mayor's twenty minute speech relieves Bet's mind]

#### About the Author

**Anne Tyler** is an American **novelist**, short story writer, and literary critic, was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota, in 1941, Anne Tyler spent her childhood living in various Quaker communities. She has published 22 novels. Anne Tyler's first two books, *If Morning Ever Comes* (1964) and *The Tin Can Tree* (1965), set the tone for her ability to render emotionally complex characters with impressive detail. Subsequent efforts, including *Celestial Navigation* (1974) and *Searching for Caleb* (1975), also drew strong reviews. By the time of her ninth book, *Dinner at the Homesick Restaurant* (1982), Tyler was a bona fide literary star. Her widely praised follow-up novel, *The Accidental Tourist* (1985), was made into a 1988 feature film, starring William Hurt and Geena Davis. That year she also published *Breathing Lessons*, a portrait of a sputtering middle-aged couple on their way to a funeral, which earned the Pulitzer Prize for Fiction. Tyler continued her steady output the following decade with novels such as *The Ladder of Years* (1995), and saw both new titles, like *Saint Maybe* (1991), and older ones, like *Earthly Possessions* (1977), adapted for the screen. Later books included *Back When We Were Grownups* (2001), *Digging to America* (2006) *The Beginner's Goodbye* (2012) and *A Spool of Blue Thread* (2015). Tyler has also penned several short stories, edited three anthologies and created two children's books (illustrated by one of her daughters). Along with the Pulitzer, Anne Tyler has been honored with some of the literary world's most prestigious awards, including the 1986 National Book Critics Award for *The Accidental Tourist*. She has been a member of the American Academy of Arts and Letters since 1983.

### Introduction

“*Average Waves in Unprotected Waters*”, first published in *The New Yorker* on Feb 28, 1977, is one of the well-known short stories of Anne Tyler. Memory plays an important role in this story as it is presented as a disconnecting as well as connecting force, both allowing characters to make discoveries about themselves and serving as a means of alienation. The story “*Average Waves in Unprotected Waters*” progresses in a third person point of view. The story deals with the pangs of an ordinary working class woman, Bet Blevins, who attempts to institutionalize her Nine years old mentally retarded son Arnold. The story is dealt with the themes like the family and the role of the individual in relationship to the family, parenting and memory, absent fathers, identity and self discovery.

Bet Blevins, the protagonist of the story defines herself as a mother throughout the story, and her role as a single mother in her family of two is complicated by the fact that she is the mother of a disabled son. The title, *Average Waves in Unprotected Waters* speaks about Bet’s memory of her childhood at the shore, when her father couldn’t arrange his day till he had heard the marine forecast... the height of average waves in unprotected waters. The marine forecast and height of waves determined if the water was safe for the swimmers. As a child, Bet’s father tried to teach her body surf in these average waves, but she couldn’t do it. She just stood in the waves. Now, instead of water, “the average waves” that appear in her life are the average troubles that appear in everyday life. They are the loss of her beloved husband, the loss of parents and ultimately the institutionalization of her son. The “average waves in the unprotected waters” represents both the true ocean waves of her childhood and ordinary troubles she faced in her current life. There is nothing extraordinary here in the story. Bet simply dealt with a day in her ordinary difficult life and narrates how she faces life with detachment and endurance.

### About the story

While the story *Average Waves in Unprotected Waters* begins, the protagonist Bet Blevins prepares her 9 year old mentally retarded son Arnold for a treatment in Parkins State Hospital. Avery Blevins is Bet’s husband, who left her and their son Arnold, a few weeks after learning that Arnold was mentally retarded. As Avery leaves her family Bet realizes that it will be too difficult to manage Arnold in that shabby, one roomed apartment. When they leave the apartment, Mrs. Puckett, their neighbour who is crying, stops Bet and gives cookies for Arnold. Though Bet wished Arnold would give the old lady a hug or just take the cookies offered to him, he ran off without acknowledging her.

After taking a bus from their apartment, Bet and Arnold arrive at the railway station. As Arnold was travelling for the first time on a train he was a little nervous, bounced up and down in his seat when the train started moving he crowd and pulled at her sleeve. Bet purchased gum, which she gave to the nervous Arnold. As the train leaves, he becomes calm and falls asleep. While Arnold sleeps Bet’s memory goes back to Arnolds childhood days and she remembers her husband Avery who left them a few weeks after Arnold’s mental

disability was diagnosed. Bet regrets about her decision to marry Avery at her young age evading the protest of her parents. Also Bet speculates that the gene that caused Arnold disability came from her because, “She never could do anything as well as most people.” Then she recollects her childhood days were everything had been ruled by the sea. Her father couldn’t arrange his day till he’d heard the marine forecast. He loved to fish, offshore and on. Though he tried to teach her to body surf, she couldn’t do it. She stood staunch between the waves as if it was a virtue. Her father thought she was scared, but it wasn’t that at all.

As the train leaves, he becomes calm and fall asleep. While Arnold sleeps Bet's memory goes back to Arnolds childhood days and she remembers her husband Avery who left them a few weeks after Arnold's mental disability was diagnosed. Bet's thoughts wander around their early marriage quite contrary to the wishes of her dear parents. Also Bet speculates that the gene that caused Arnold disability came from her because, “She never could do anything as well as most people”. She recollects her own childhood days were everything had been ruled by the sea. Her father couldn't arrange his day till he'd heard the marine forecast. He loved to fish, offshore and on. Though he tried to teach her to body surf, she couldn't do it. She stood staunch between the waves as if it was a virtue. Her father thought she was scared, but it wasn't that at all. Bet draws a connection between the waves and her life with Avery. While Avery left her she stayed in the apartment for a while, because she took some comfort from enduring. Her thoughts about the past were disturbed when Arnold wakes up.

On their way to Pakinsville State hospital, Arnold demands a cookie from Bet. But she refuses to give him initially. By thinking that he may get angry Bet breaks off a little piece of cookie and gives it to him. While they reached the hospital she asks the cab driver to wait for her until she comes back. Inside the hospital Bet tries to tell the nurse how to care for Arnold. When the nurse assures that Arnold will be well cared for, Bet says goodbye. With tears she climbs the cab and urges the driver to move fast towards the railway station. She knows the train has been delayed by 20 minutes. When Bet desperately waits there, the town Mayor enters the station and announces that he will be giving a twenty minute speech. Bet is relieved then and believes that they have “come just for her sake, and from now on, all the world was going to be like that, just something on stage, for her to sit back and watch.” At the end, in order to endure the pain of loss, she chooses to disconnect and become an observer of life rather than a participant. She believes that her decision will save the family and herself. At the end of the story, Ben has given up her role as a mother and finds a new identity of her own.

Exercises:

1. Who is the protagonist of the story?
2. How does Bet’s search for self end?
3. Justify the title “Average Waves in Unprotected Waters”
4. The character of Arnold Blevins.
5. Describe how the life of Bet Blevins is like “Unprotected Waters”.

CHAPTER – IV

Selections from *The Cry of the Gull* By Emmanuelle Laborit

[A glimpse to the chapter : About the author --- Laborit remembers her childhood days -- parents nicknamed her as Mouette --- mother's memories about Laborit's childhood --- describes Laborit's seafaring family ancestry --- uncle Fifou identifies her as an hearing impaired – Laborit remembers her grandparents --- parents takes her to a paediatrician --- mother explains their experience with the deaf child—parents' struggling for look after a deaf child ---interactions with the speech therapist –Borel Maisonnymethod---mother's unending love and support---- mother-child encounter----treats her like a normal child --- .positive change in the attitude of mother.]

About the Author:

**Emmanuelle Laborit** is a deaf French actress who was born on 18<sup>th</sup> October 1971. Though she was hearing impaired by birth, she became a famous French actress who appeared in more than 10 French films since 1994. Marianna Ucruya, An Air so Pure, Beyond Silence and Still Liebe are some of them. One of the most distinguishing accomplishments of Emmanuelle Laborit is her autobiography “*The Cry of the Gull.*” She begins her autobiography with a simple explanation of the difference that the sign Language has made in her life. With the help of sign language, she wrote, “I understood that yesterday was behind me and tomorrow was in front of me.” By learning this she realized that being hearing impaired could be a positive part of her identity. Later she decided to finish her schooling and fight for the rights of other deaf French people. Her autobiography was an encouraging story for young people everywhere.

Introduction

“*Selection from the Cry of the Gull*” was an excerpt from Emmanuel Laborit's autobiography “*The Cry of the Gull*” and which was published in the second edition of the Disability Studies Reader edited by Lennard J Daris. Through this work Laborit narrates the issues related with the disabled and how they overcome their difficulties. She describes parental attitude towards a disabled child and the need for training to change the attitude of the society as a whole. In this excerpt the author focuses on the need of inclusion of the disabled and how to challenge the othering or discrimination experienced by the physically challenged group. The passage is noted for its motivational and optimistic mood.

About the excerpt

The excerpt begins with a first person narrative. Laborit remembers her childhood days and how she survived as a physically challenged one. Her parents discovered that she was deaf when she was nine month old. Though it was heart breaking news, they never felt disappointed. Her screaming pierced their ears like the cries of a sea gull and so they nicknamed her Mouette, which means Seagull in French.

Laborit's parents love and unending support helped her to continue her life as that of a normal child. Their presence was enough to cope with her difficulties and hard times. Laborit's parents never worried about her differently able condition. They never gave up Laborit in her struggling times. Instead they always thought of new strategies for bringing up her as a normal child. They sent her to a speech therapist for learning, how to communicate through Maisonnny method. Laborit's mother always spent her time for the disabled daughter to enable her to communicate with this world. While the narration progresses Laborit goes back to her childhood memories in which she were recognized as a physically challenged person. She describes the pains and sufferings taken by her parents to enable the disabled daughter to face the world with a different attitude. Laborit's parents did not know what to do with their deaf child initially. Most of the time her mother was in a state of shock .Though she was not able to think rationally, she spent the major part of her time for Laborit's survival as a normal one.

Laborit remembers the effort she has taken to utter a few words and her mother's commendable support in her journey through the hard times. Here the author reminds us the role of parents in moulding up their children by accepting all her weakness or disabilities. She concludes the story by highlighting her mother's inspirational words:

*"She may be deaf but she's so cute!"*

*She'll just be that much smarter!"*

The excerpt upholds a valuable message that, proper parental attitude and the right kind of training can provide the disabled children a normal life.

Exercises:

1. Why did the author's father feel excluded from the world of her and her mother?
2. Why did the author let out screams?
3. "My life upto the age of seven is full of flashbacks". How does the author explain her situation of that age?
4. Why does the author call herself a 'perceptive seagull' ?
5. Briefly describe the ambivalence and anxiety that the author's parents went through before confirming that she was hearing impaired?

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