

Defining Literature

What is Literature

Literature, in its broadest sense, is any written work. Etymologically, the term derives from Latin *litteratura/litteratura* “writing formed with letters,” although some definitions include spoken or sung texts. More restrictively, it is writing that possesses literary merit. Literature can be classified according to whether it is fiction or non-fiction and whether it is poetry or prose. It can be further distinguished according to major forms such as the novel, short story or drama, and works are often categorized according to historical periods or their adherence to certain aesthetic (style) features or expectations (genre).

Taken to mean only written works, literature was first produced by some of the world’s earliest civilizations—those of Ancient Egypt and Sumeria—as early as the 4th millennium BC; taken to include spoken or sung texts, it originated even earlier, and some of the first written works may have been based on a pre-existing oral tradition. As urban cultures and societies developed, there was an increase in the forms of literature. Developments in print technology allowed for literature to be distributed and experienced on an unprecedented scale, which has culminated in the twenty-first century in electronic literature.

Definition

Definitions of literature have varied over time. In Western Europe prior to the eighteenth century, literature as a term indicated all books and writing. A more restricted sense of the term emerged during the Romantic period, in which it began to demarcate “imaginative” literature.

Contemporary debates over what constitutes literature can be seen as returning to the older, more inclusive notion of what constitutes literature. Cultural studies, for instance, takes as its subject of analysis both popular and minority genres, in addition to canonical works. Comics, Mangas and songs are considered literature in the current world. In 2016, Bob Dylan received a Nobel Prize in Literature.

Different forms of Literature

Poetry

The word Poetry derives from a Greek word *poiesis*, which means in a “making”. Poetry is a unique art of literacy, but it doesn’t have a clear definition of what it is. It is said that poetry uses a fictional plot, a specialized language, and it is written in a special form (style). When writing poems, authors try to express their thoughts in less space using that “specialised language”, not compare to novels and short stories that use much more space.

Poetry is an ancient art of literacy, before people use to carve poetry in the caves, and that is known to exist long before. There are many poets, and uncountable written poems thought the time, but there isn't a clear definition of what poetry is. Although, many poets have their "own" definition of poetry. Another quote by Aristotle: "Poetry is more philosophical and of higher value than history; for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular"(Poetry America, 2009).

There are many characteristics of poetry, the main ones are Lyrical poetry and Narrative poetry (Lethbridge & Mildroft, 2003). Lyrical poetry are short, non-narrative poems, which include subcategories, and one of them is the Sonnet, which is written in fourteen lines (Lethbridge & Mildroft, 2003). The Narrative poetry is a form of poetry that tells stories through it, for example love stories, tragedies etc. Other forms of poetry are written in four lines, which are known as stanza. Stanza is used more often in poetry, by many Albanian poets as well as poets throughout the world.

Some important (related to syllabus) types of poetry

Ode

Originating in ancient Greece, ode poems were originally performed publicly to celebrate athletic victories. Later, this poetic form was favored among English romantic poets, who used odes to express emotions using rich, descriptive language. Today, we use the term "ode" to describe any outpouring of praise, and modern ode poems have evolved to include various styles and forms. An ode is a short lyric poem that praises an individual, an idea, or an event.

Free Verse

Free verse poems are the least defined. In fact, they're deliberately irregular, taking on an improvisational bent. There's no formula, no pattern. Rather, the writer and reader must work together to set the speed, intonation, and emotional pull. Free verse is generally recited.

Epic

An epic is a long and narrative poem that normally tells a story about a hero or an adventure. Epics can be presented as oral or written stories. "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey" are probably the most renowned epic poems.

Ballads

Ballad poems also tell a story, like epic poems do. However, ballad poetry is often based on a legend or a folk tale. These poems may take the form of songs, or they may contain a moral or a lesson.

Sonnet

The sonnet is a popular classical form that has compelled poets for centuries. Traditionally, the sonnet is a fourteen-line poem written in iambic pentameter, employing one of several rhyme schemes, and adhering to a tightly structured thematic organisation.

Prose

Prose is a type of epic literature that is written in lines. Usually sentences in prose continuous in that line, not in another one. Some authors (writers) say that writing prose is the best form of writing, because words are in their best order.

Sometimes we wonder what does the word PROSE means. The word "prose" comes from another similar Latin word that is PROSA and it is used to describe facts or anybody's thoughts.

There are two basic kinds of prose: elementary forms and composed forms.

(Rahmani, Z., 1999).

In the elementary form there are: Legend, Myth, Fairy tales, and in the composed forms there are: Novel, novelette, Tale (Rahmani, Z., 1999).

A prose would contain the following features

Theme

Theme is the general idea of a story.

Setting

Setting is the information of the where the story occur and the time of the story. Setting also include a context (especially society) beyond the surround of the story, like culture, historical period, geography, and occupation.

Plot

Plot is the sequence of events.

Point of View

Point of view is the different angle to see the subject.

Character and Characterization

Character is an individual (usually a person) who play in a story. Characterization is the method used by the writer to develop a character.

Symbols

Symbols is the language style used by the author.

Atmosphere

Atmosphere is condition and emotion in a story.

The different genres of prose includes Fantasy, Adventure, Romance, Contemporary, Dystopian, Mystery, Horror, Thriller, Paranormal, Historical fiction etc.

Drama

At drama devoid the confession and description, whereas all the text surrender via dialogue and monologue. Drama differs considerably from poetry or narrative because drama it is usually written to be performed in stage by actors. Aside from the text that actors will express, didaskaliet (written dialogues) are also a component of drama, wherewith characterizes the view of scene, personages doings and behaviour, the noises that are going to be heard etc., which usually puts in brackets.

Classic drama (Greek and roman) was written in verse and was played in amphitheaters, some of them are still saved (for example in Butrint, which was Greek colony).

Classic drama have had a solid construction, they were count by strong rules, so its composition necessarily traversed in those phases: exhibition, interlacement, culmination, vicissitude and solution. A drama usually separate in small components, which are called acts, so we have dramas with five acts, three acts, one act etc., meanwhile smaller unit is scene, which hits every actors entrance and exit in stage. Another feature of classic drama was oneness of the place (the event had to came off in one place), oneness of the time (the event held out twenty-four hours) and oneness of the doings (the event didn't have a break).

Tragedy

In the ancient time handled the destiny of the kings and demigods. The affairs which civilized were unusual and big. The language of the drama wasn't daily, it style was high so just Kings and Queens and the people of the court could understand it. Later on the characters of the tragedy became the big historical characters. The main feature of the tragedy is that its conflict ends necessarily with the hero's death.

Comedy

(In Greek komo - convivial and od - song) is a dramatic work (Wikipedia, 2009). Since antique comedy attended with usual people and usual events, which had a happy ends. As tragedy designed to concuss with its tragic end, comedy designed to make you laugh. Comedy was very open divide its designed thematic, divide its yoked characters and divide its way of civilizing. From the roman authors disunited Plaut and Terenci than Shakespeare in England, Molier in France, Gogol in Russia, etc.

Fiction and Non-Fiction

Literary Fiction

Fiction refers to literature created from the imagination. Mysteries, science fiction, romance, fantasy, chick lit, crime thrillers are all fiction genres. Whether or not all of these genres should be considered "literature" is a matter of opinion. Some of these fiction genres are taught in literature classrooms and some are not usually taught, considered more to be reading for entertainment. Works often taught in literature classrooms are referred to as "literary fiction" including classics by Dickens, Austen, Twain, and Poe, for example.

Literary Non-fiction

Like fiction, non-fiction also has a sub-genre called "literary nonfiction" that refers to literature based on fact but written in creative way, making it as enjoyable to read as fiction. Of course there are MANY other types of nonfiction such as cook books, fitness articles, crafting manuals, etc. which are not "literature," meaning not the types of works we would study in a literature classroom. Some examples of these you are already familiar with, like *The Diary of Anne Frank* or *Angela's Ashes* by Frank McCourt. These works of literary nonfiction have character, setting, plot, conflict, figurative language, and theme just like literary fiction.

Relation between Law and Literature

1. <https://www.barandbench.com/columns/the-inexplicable-yet-unavoidable-relationship-between-law-and-literature-2>
2. <https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/op-ed/the-links-between-law-and-literature/article19951335.ece>