

LITERATURE IN ENGLISH

JSS 1

WEEK 3

GENRES OF LITERATURE AND THEIR ELEMENTS

1. **Genres of Literature:** There are three genres of literature which are also known as branches of literature. These three genres of literature are drama, prose and poetry. We shall discuss them briefly.
2. **Drama:** It is a branch of literature that is usually acted on stage. Drama as a representation of life is not complete until it is acted out. The following are the major types of drama.
 - A. **Tragedy:** It is a serious play with a sad ending. In tragic plays, the king, hero or heroine dies accidentally at the end resulting from weakness or flaw.
 - B. **Comedy:** This is a play with a happy scene and full of amusement.
 - C. **Tragic-comedy:** It is a play which combines the qualities of a tragedy together with that of a comedy.
3. **Prose:** It is a form of expression that is written or spoken without material structure. It is written in chapters and paragraphs. It expresses ideas, thoughts and actions in sentences. Prose is classified into two main areas which are:
 - A. **Prose Fiction:** It is any work of art that is based on imagination. The writers of fictional work try to create or invent ideas, characters and situations in order to make a story.
 - B. **Non-Prose Fiction:** This is the opposite of prose fiction. It is based on the actual lives of people. The foundation of any non-prose fiction is laid on truth and not imagination. Other aspects of prose are:
 - C. **Novel:** It is a fictional narrative of considerable length with a plot that is unfolded by the actions, speech and thought of characters. It gives a detailed analysis of everything in a story.
 - D. **Short story:** As the name implies, it is a prose fictional work that is short. The plot is so simple that it can be read at a sitting.
 - E. **Novella:** This is a type of prose narrative that is shorter than the novel, but longer than a short story. It can be called novelette.

F. Autobiography: This is the profile or true life story of a person written by the person himself.

G. Biography: It is a life story of a person written by another person.

4. **Poetry:** It is a piece of writing in which the words are chosen for their sound and the images they suggest, not just for their obvious meanings. The words are arranged in separate lines usually with repeated rhythm. It is written in verse with a regular rhythmic pattern. The following are some of the types of poetry.

A. Epic: It is a long narrative poem associated with deeds of great people, especially those men of valour that have become part of history.

B. Satire: This is the type of poem that ridicules the foolish action of a person, society or even an institution.

C. Lyric: This is a type of poem that is full of emotion and strong feelings.

D. Ode: It is a type of poem that is always in form of an address.

E. Elegy: It is a poem that expresses grief or sorrow usually caused by death.

F. Ballad: It is a folk or traditional poem that is meant to be sung. It has to do with events of great occurrence like war, adventure, love, myths and legends etc.

5. ELEMENTS OF LITERATURE

The elements of literature include the following:

A. Diction: This refers to the writer's choice of words.

B. Theme: It is the central message or idea the writer passes across to the audience.

C. Mood: It is the mindset or state of the mind of the writer.

D. Rhyme: It is the repetition of the same sound syllables at the end lines of a poem.

E. Setting: It is the physical environment or place a play is set.

F. Plot: This is the arrangement of the various actions of the characters or events in a work of art.

G. Playwright: It is a name given to a person who writes a play.

H. Novelist: This refers to the person who writes novels.

I. Protagonist: This refers to the hero or principal character in a play around whom the whole action revolves.

HOME WORK

1. Write short notes on the following words:

- A.** Drama
- B.** Prose
- C.** Poetry
- D.** Tragic-comedy
- E.** Biography
- F.** Rhyme
- G.** Protagonist