

Learning Language through Literature

DEPARTMENT OF HSS, JIIT, NOIDA

Topics to be Covered

What is Literature

What is Language

Forms of Literature & its Genres

Learning Language through Literature

Resources to be consulted for further reading:

<https://www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/using-literature-introduction>

What is Literature

As per Encyclopaedia Britannica “**Literature**, (is)a body of written works. The name has traditionally been applied to those imaginative works of poetry and prose distinguished by the intentions of their authors and the perceived aesthetic excellence of their execution.”

The 11th edition of *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* considers literature to be “writings having excellence of form or expression and expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest.”

Who in the world does not listen to songs, modern poetic incarnations.

Who does not watch movies, another contemporary transformation of book literature into virtual/ visual literature.

Literature is innate in human panorama of wants.

It gives us pleasure, nurtures our creativity and broadens our understanding of the society around us.

What is Language

As per Encyclopaedia Britannica “**Language**, (is)a system of conventional spoken, manual (signed), or written symbols by means of which human beings, as members of a social group and participants in its culture, express themselves. The functions of language include communication, the expression of identity, play, imaginative expression, and emotional release”.

Forms of Literature & how does it help in Language/Communication

“ Literature just adds to reality, it does not simply describe it. It enriches the necessary competencies that daily life requires and provides; and in this respect, it irrigates the deserts that our lives have already become” **C.S.Lewis** (British Scholar and Novelist, 1898-1963).

Every genre of Literature helps in enhancing our skills of language.

Language Skills can be divided into LSRW i.e. Listening, Speaking, Reading & Writing.

Apart from LSRW, vocabulary enhancement, grammatical accuracy and correct interplay of connotation & denotation helps in our best communication skills.

Literature helps in internalising grammar and assists in learner's language development

Parts of Language essential for daily communication

Phonetics –Sound of Language

Semantics – Meaning of Language

Semiotics – Sign or symbolic interpretation in language

Linguistics – Interplay of words (lexis) and letters (morphemes –roots or suffix)

Major Genres of Literature

Poetry – Epic, sonnet, ballad, lyric, elegy, ode, dramatic monologue

Prose- Essays, Novel, Short story, Travelogues, Non fictional prose, Manga

Drama – Plays, Opera

Virtual / Visual literature – Film Scripts, Adaptations, Songs, Anime

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Poetry helps in Phonetics: intonation, rhythm, rhetoric craftsmanship.

Poetry helps in Semiotics : Expression, interplay of connotation-denotation

Poetry helps in Semantics : deliberation, emotional maturity & understanding.

Prose helps in Linguistic, semantics, semiotics & Phonetics: language enrichment, vocabulary enhancement, intellectual inferences, refined interpretation, objective-subjective expression.

Learning Language through Genres

Drama helps in Semiotics – symbolic interpretations.

Drama helps in Communication, language skills, fluency etc through dialogues and role play.

Drama helps in cultivating emotional response.

Plays and Role play enrich verbal and non-verbal spontaneity in participants.

Literature in Classroom

“When studying Literature, students can improve not only language such as vocabulary, but also the language that can be used for specific purposes:

The study of Literature can provide students with a fresh and creative angle with which they can approach their studies in particular and their lives in general.

English Literature makes students learn about their creativity and imagination, interacting with the text themselves, and playing different literary roles.

Literature must be presented as an authentic task, so the students can get through the texts discovering their different learning styles.

Students can live literature not only read it. Plays can be represented so that students can be immersed in a different time and into a different person.

By following the histories presented throughout English Literature, it is possible to understand how contemporary Western culture has developed into what it is today.

Why English???

Reading new words and new phrases can increase any one's lexicon.

“ The study of literature offers many ways to improve literacy: it gives access to language, reading, writing, a shared culture and one's own self. “ (J.Trounstine, “Literature in Prison?”).

Through the reading of literary texts, students can develop their autonomy and independence, making hypothesis and guessing unfamiliar words.

The use of authentic literary texts give learners the opportunity to connect to real world issues at the time they can learn true values for their lives”.

Language Learning: In a Nutshell

Literature is able to

- (1) provide rich and diverse exposure to language,
- (2) improve vocabulary, syntax, and structure,
- (3) develop perception and interpretation skills,
- (4) develop comprehension and motivation.

Conclusion & Relevance

Apart from LSRW skills of Language, vocabulary enhancement, grammatical learning, literature helps in understanding the people, society, culture and life as a whole.

Literature is the best vehicle carrying all linguistic elements like figurative language, vital expressions in minimum words, permutations of connotation and denotation etc.

Hence apart from entertainment, it helps in learning language without overburdening the learner under any circumstance.

It chisels the skills and inspires a layman as well to undertake intellectual interpretation of things around us.

The blogs, non fictional prose works and digital experimentations undertaken by us is just another shade of our innate liking and leanings towards literature.

Let us think...

1. What are the major genres of Literature?
2. Phonetics deals with the _____
3. Define language.
4. Semiotics deals with the sound system. T/F
5. Which of the following helps most in learning non verbal communication?
 - i. Prose
 - ii. Poetry
 - iii. Novel
 - iv. Drama

References

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