An Objective History of English Literature Through Multiple-Choice Questions for PGT TGT UGC-NET/SET PG and Ph.D. Entrance Test

Dr. B. B. Jain
An Objective History of English Literature Through Multiple-Choice Questions

(For PGT, TGT, UGC-NET/SET, PG & Ph.D. Entrance Test)

By
Dr. B. B. Jain
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PREFACE

What is the justification for bringing out a complete Objective History of English Literature through Multiple-Choice Questions? The justification lies in the fact that recently all Service Commissions, Recruitment Boards and UGC have started conducting their competitive examinations through the pattern of Objective-cum-Multiple-Choice Questions. Many Universities have also started setting one full Question on the same pattern in each Paper at the Post-Graduate level. As such, this Book would be immensely useful, even indispensable, for all candidates preparing for NET/JRF/SET and PGT, TGT, PG and Ph.D. Entrance Test and equivalent competitive examinations. As far as my knowledge goes, no other complete History of English Literature designed on this pattern is available in the market.

As the Contents would show, all the important phases and aspects of English Literature have been fully brought out and discussed in the Book in the Objective Form. All the literary Ages from the Chaucerian to the Modern Age, all literary Schools and Movements, all literary Forms of Poetry, Drama, Prose, Novel, and Criticism, and all the major Authors individually from Chaucer to T.S. Eliot have been fully analysed and evaluated on the same Multiple-Choice pattern. Two small Sections on Rhetoric and Prosody and Figures of Speech have also been given.

It is thus earnestly hoped and believed that everything that a sincere candidate preparing for the above noted competitive examinations would need would be found in this Book.

—Dr. B. B. Jain
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An Objective History of English Literature
(Through Multiple-Choice Questions)
Section 1
The Literary Ages

Age-wise Complete List
Of
The Major Authors and Their Works

1. The Age of Chaucer
2. The Elizabethan Age
3. The Caroline and Restoration Ages
4. The Augustan Age
5. The Romantic Age
6. The Victorian Age
7. The Modern Age
The Age of Chaucer

In the literary history, the Age of Chaucer is dated from 1340 to 1400 because in 1340 Chaucer was born and in 1400 Chaucer died. But in the history of England, this Age covers the reigns of three English monarchs, Edward III, Richard II and Henry IV. It was the Medieval period in the history of England. This was a period of glaring social contrasts and rapid political changes. In the words of W.H. Hudson, “Edward’s reign marks the highest development of medieval civilization in England. It was also the midsummer of English chivalry. The spirit of his Court was that of romantic idealism which fills Chaucer’s own Knight’s Tale, and the story of his successive wars with France, and the famous victories of Crecy and Poictiers, as written in the Chronicles of Froissart, reads more like a brilliant novel than a piece of sober history. Strong in its newly established unity, England went forth on its career of foreign conquests in a mood of buoyant courage, and every fresh triumph served to give further stimulus to national ambition and pride.”

But there was another side of the picture too. It was a dark and dismal side of social contrasts. With the increase of trade, the commercial classes rolled in wealth and lived in extravagant luxury. So did the royal families and the nobility. The masses of the people lived in deplorable poverty and misery. Further, epidemic after epidemic ravaged the country. The fierce plague, called the Black Death, broke out in 1348-49. In this epidemic nearly one-third of the population of England died in a single year. The plague reappeared in 1362, 1367 and 1370 with the same fierceness. These epidemics were followed by a fierce famine. These events took away much of the glory of England.

This was followed by a period of unprecedented degradation, hypocrisy and corruption. Its worst phase was seen in the corruption of the Church and the Clergy. This phase of corruption has been realistically painted by Chaucer in the Prologue to the Canterbury Tales in the portraits of the Monk, the Friar, the Sumnour, the Pardoner, and the Parson. This was the shocking state of things in the religious world in England in Chaucer’s Age.

In this Chapter, however, we have discussed some authors before the Age of Chaucer and some authors after Chaucer roughly upto the end of the 15th Century.

Major Authors and Their Works of Chaucer’s Age

King James I of Scotland (1394-1437)
- The King’s Quair
- Peblis to the Play
- Christis Kirk on the Green

John Lydgate (1370-1451)
- Falles of Princes
- The Temple of Glass
- Story of Thebes
- London Lickpenny

Sir Thomas Malory (15th Century)
- Morte d’ Arthur

Sir Thomas More (1478-1535)
- Utopia (English Version)

Tottel:
- Miscellany

William Tyndale (1485-1536)
- New Testament
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