

## **Lecture Two: Literary Genres (Poetry, Prose Narrative and Drama)**

### **\*Lesson Plan**

- 1-Introduction
- 2-Major Literary Genres
- 3-Fiction or Nonfiction
- 4-Main Differences between Fiction and Nonfiction
- 5-Between the Author, the Reader and the Narrator
- 6-Evaluation

### **\*Lesson Objective**

The lesson is introductory and students are expected:

- To understand the three concepts and their main characteristics.
- To make the difference between the various forms of literary texts according to their distinctive features.
- To classify various given literary texts into the appropriate genre.
- To explore the similarities and common points between the three genres

### **\*Keywords**

Genre, Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry, Drama, Prose narrative.

### **1-Introduction**

In fact, literary genres refer to the various templates a literary text is provided within for the readership. There are many types and they differentiated according to a certain number of features regarding the form, the content, the tone and the writing style. Literature may be shaped in fictional as well as nonfictional forms. Novels, tragedies or sonnets, the following sections clarify the point.

### **2-Major Literary Genres**

The French term "genre" refers to the various categories or types of literature. At various times, literary works have been divided into genres, and the criteria used to classify them vary widely. Poetry, drama, and prose—whether fiction or nonfiction—are all forms of literature. Drama can be further subdivided into tragedies, comedies, and tragicomedies, while fiction can also be broken down into short stories, novellas and novels. Essays and autobiographies are examples of nonfictional prose. Works that are both fictional and nonfictional can be included in a literary text. Nonfiction can be the result of scientific research, a theory, or the narrative of historical events, whereas fiction is essentially ignited by the author's imagination and creativity.

### **-Poetry**

Poetry is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through language choices that have meaning, sound, and rhythm to pique the reader's emotional response. Poetry is defined differently by different poets. The fact that it refuses to be defined, labeled, or pinned down is perhaps the definition of this literary subgenre that is most plausible. The polished marble of language is poetry. Poetry is the "Spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," according to William Wordsworth. Emily Dickinson wrote: "I know it's poetry when a book makes me feel so cold that no fire can ever warm me." Moreover, "Poetry is what makes me laugh, cry, or yawn, what makes my toenails twinkle, what makes me want to do this, that, or nothing," stated Dylan Thomas. For a lot of people, poetry means many different things.

Economy of language is one of the poetic form's most easily defined characteristics. Words are dispensed to a page by poets with a meekness and unrelenting criticality. Even prose writers use careful word selection to ensure clarity and conciseness, but poets go much further by taking into account a word's emotional qualities, musical value, spacing, and even its unique relationship to the page. Through inventive word choice and form, the poet seems to give meaning to nothing. Prose can be used to tell a story, explain something, argue, or define. Poem writing can be done for a variety of reasons.

However, unlike prose, poetry frequently serves a greater purpose that transcends the literal. Verse is suggestive. It typically stirs up strong feelings in the reader: poetry, on the other hand, has the power to astonish the reader with an "Aha!" moment of joy, sorrow, rage, love, and so forth. Experience—discovery, insight, and a deeper comprehension of fundamental beauty and truth. Poetry is difficult to translate from one language to another because it emphasizes linguistic form rather than using language solely for its content. The most important aspects of most poetry are the connotations and weight of the words. Different readers may hear a piece of poetry differently because of these subtleties and shades of meaning that can be challenging to decipher. There are valid interpretations, but there will never be a definitive interpretation.

## **-Drama**

The particular form of fiction that is depicted in performance is drama. A collective form of reception and collaborative modes of production are necessary for the enactment of drama on stage by actors in front of an audience. In contrast to other forms of literature, the structure of

dramatic texts is directly influenced by this collective production and reception. Drama is a type of literature that has many similarities to other kinds of literature but has one thing that sets it apart. Dramatic works use the seven elements of fiction to tell a story: a theme, a point of view, characters, a problem, a plot, suspense, and a setting.

Drama, on the other hand, stands out from other literary subgenres because it is performed in front of an audience by actors on stage or in a film. In order to help portray their characters, the actors speak the dialogue, act as their characters, and don costumes. To establish the vibe of the play or film, the stage is adorned to make the setting seem to be the setting of the story. In addition, the dramatic work's mood is influenced by music and lighting, which are used to draw attention to particular characters or parts of the stage.

Literature in the form of drama can often be very entertaining. Watching a drama unfold before one's eyes is quite interesting and a different experience from reading literature, where the story is visualized in the reader's mind. It can be a spectacle to watch if a play or movie has a talented cast that does a good job of portraying their characters, a well-designed set, and lighting and music that go well with the dramatic work. However, one of the things that makes drama less enjoyable than other forms of literature is that it prevents us from imagining the story. The fact that actors perform in front of an audience to tell a story, along with the use of a set, music, lighting, and costumes, is what sets drama apart from other literary forms.

### **-Prose Narrative**

A literary piece written in prose is based on the author's imagination. However numerous writers base their works of composition on a genuine occasion or characters, they compose unique scenes and exchange and design or change parts of the plot, setting, and character cooperations. Most of the time, when prose writers tell stories about people they've met, the characters are made up of people they know or researched. They bring historical figures, who serve as the basis for their characters, to life through fictitious and imagined dialogue and participation in events. Fictionalizing real-life events allows many prose writers to explore those events and the people who were involved with ease and freedom. Characters and events that are in line with current societal norms are a common concern for writers. Even though one of the goals of writing prose is to educate, it needs to have a good story with characters we care about

and situations where something important is in danger. Why do prose writers write? Some writers say they write to help people find answers to questions they used to have. Characters "present themselves" to be written, according to many prose writers, and tell the author their stories.

People relate real-life events and circumstances about their lives and the people they care about in personal essays and memoirs about their experiences. When an author decides to write prose, they imagine themselves in the lives of other people, altering the circumstances, creating storylines, and achieving their goals. All of a story's components can be altered by prose writers to meet their needs for storytelling. They are able to bring up and investigate facts that they did not encounter in their own lives. The prose writer observes behavior and discovers what might have been true in "real" life by following invented characters as they confront and overcome obstacles. Many prose writers say that they are able to deal with difficult situations in a way that telling the truth would be impossible. However, as with all writing, the characters' lives and circumstances begin to dictate new events and thoughts even when the author is aware of what they want to see happen.

**3-Fiction or Nonfiction:** Fiction and nonfiction sound similar, but they mean very different things in writing.

#### **A-What is fiction?**

Fiction in writing and literature is defined as "Something that is not true." Most of the information presented in fiction stories and books is made up in the author's imagination. An easy way to remember this is with alliteration in the phrase "fiction is fabricated." While fiction can contain elements that are true or real, like a real town, the majority of the work needs to be made up. Fiction genres include myths, crime thrillers, fairytales, science fiction, dystopia, and romance novels. Famous examples of fiction books include:

**-Frankenstein:** Real scientists do create some weird things, but a monster like Frankenstein isn't one of them.

**-Harry Potter Series:** There is no verifiable wizard community hiding behind magical walls.

#### **B-What is Nonfiction?**

Nonfiction in writing and literature is defined as a story that is based on true events and information. All the information in a work of nonfiction should be verifiable if possible. An easy way to remember this is with alliteration in the phrase “nonfiction is newsworthy.” Anything presented in the news is supposed to be as factual as possible. Nonfiction genres include biographies, cookbooks, travel guides, history books, and self-help books

The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language defines nonfiction as: “*The category of literature, drama, film, or other creative work, including essays, expository prose, and documentaries, whose content is based on fact and is not imagined.*”

**\*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings:** This is an autobiography written by author Maya Angelou about her actual life.

**\*Mastering the Art of French Cooking:** This cookbook presents real French cooking techniques and recipes.

**\*Merriam Webster Children’s Dictionary:** An educational dictionary presents real words and their accepted definitions.

#### **4-Main Differences between Fiction and Nonfiction**

Aside from fiction being fabricated and nonfiction being factual, these two types of writing have a few other differences:

\*The number of facts presented in a work of nonfiction directly impacts its credibility, but facts in a work of fiction don’t change the genre.

\*Fiction is usually more elaborate than nonfiction.

\*Nonfiction writing needs references, even just a sworn firsthand account.

\*Fiction is meant to tell a story mostly for entertainment while nonfiction is meant to share something believed to be true.

However, nonfiction and fiction writing have many similarities in their structures and elements. They can both contain characters, a setting, and a plot. Both types of writing can contain elements of truth or real people, places, and events.

## **5-Between the Author, the Reader and the Narrator**

In fictional and nonfictional works, there is a specific relation between the writer and the reader; a thematic discussion to be delivered through a mediator that might be direct or indirect; the latter may appear in the form of the story narrator. Who is the author, the narrator and the reader in a literary text?

### **\*Who is the Author?**

The story is written by the author, the person who makes the story. However, critics in literary theory find that the term "author" is complicated. A text can be attributed to any single author, according to Roland Barthes. According to Michel Foucault, the concept of "the author function" is working in conjunction with the fact that a reader assigning the title of the author to any piece of written work imposes a set of standards on the text.

### **\*Who is the Narrator?**

The character who is narrating the story is called a narrator; he is an essential component of any fiction piece. He is unique in relation to the Creator, the individual who really composed the story. Narrators come in a variety of forms. Narrators are typically distinguished by person by critics: narrator from the first person: It is a speaker who speaks from the perspective of the subject, usually an "I" or "we." Typically, this narrator is a character in the narrative who interacts with other characters. A PERSONAL narrator: this narrator uses the pronoun "you." In American literature, this is a very unusual circumstance. A third person's account: this is an "observer" outside of the action being described, not a character in the story. It is possible for a third-person narrator to be omniscient—that is, able to comprehend the thoughts of all of the characters—but this is not always the case.

### **\*Who is the Implied Reader?**

This term incorporates both the pre-structuring of the potential meaning by the text, and the reader's actualization of this potential through the reading process. The novel pulls the reader into another world, guiding and making him draw his own conclusions. This interaction between author and reader is at the center of the idea of the implied reader.

## 6-Evaluation

### -Task One: Fill in the blanks with the correct term

- ..... is a literary work based on the imagination of an author
- .....is the person who writes the story
- .....is the person who is telling the story
- ..... is an imaginative awareness of experience expressed through meaning, sound, and rhythm
- .....is a French term that denoted the different types, kinds or classes of literature
- ..... is the specific mode of fiction represented in performance.

### -Evaluation Test: Answer the following

- 1-What is the difference between the author and the narrator, then between the character and the reader?
- 2-Can the narrator be a character?
- 3- What are the main features that distinguish fiction and nonfiction?
- 4- Is drama a type of fiction or nonfiction? And what about poetry?
- 5-What is the difference between prose and fiction?